



Show-Me Entrepreneurial Grants for Agriculture (SEGA) *Technical Assistance Grants* Program Guidelines

The Missouri Agricultural and Small Business Development Authority's (MASBDA) objective for this program is to provide partial funding in the form of grants for technical assistance related to the creation and expansion of Missouri businesses that add value to Missouri agricultural products.

An agricultural product is defined as: An agricultural, horticultural, viticultural, or vegetable product; growing of grapes that will be processed into wine; bees; honey; fish or other aquacultural product; planting seed; livestock; livestock product; forestry product; or poultry or poultry product, in its natural state.

Value-added agriculture is defined as:

- A change in the physical state or form of the product.
- The production of a product in a manner that enhances its value, as demonstrated through a business plan.
- The physical segregation of an agricultural commodity or product in a manner that results in the enhancement of the value of that commodity or product.

As a result of the change in physical state or the manner in which the agricultural commodity or product is produced and segregated, the customer base for the commodity or product is expanded and a greater portion of revenue derived from the marketing, processing or physical segregation is made available to the producer of the commodity or product.

APPLICATION TIMELINE

To be considered for June 2023 funding, MASBDA must receive one original, one hard copy, and an electronic version of the application no later than 5 p.m. on April 28, 2023.

***SEGA Technical Assistance Grants* must be completed by December 31, 2023 unless MASBDA allows an extension based on a written request.**

CONDITIONS

MASBDA will not be held liable for any costs incurred by any firm for work performed in the preparation and production of a proposal or for any work performed prior to the date of grant award.

MASBDA reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all applications received;
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in applications received after prior notification and applicant agreement;
- Clarify the scope of this program, within the application requirements and with appropriate notice to all applicants, to better serve the interests of the State of Missouri;
- Amend the program specifications after their release, with appropriate written notice to all potential applicants;
- Approve the submitted budget on a line-by-line basis;
- Require a good faith effort from the grant recipient to work with MASBDA subsequent to project completion to develop or implement the project results in Missouri; and
- Withhold any payments if contract conditions are not met.

All proposals submitted in response to a call for applications will become the property of MASBDA.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

One original, one copy, and an electronic version of the *Technical Assistance Grant Application* should be received no later than 5 p.m. on April 28, 2023:

Missouri Agricultural and Small Business Development Authority
P.O. Box 630
1616 Missouri Boulevard
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Email: masbda@mda.mo.gov
Fax: (573) 522-2416

For additional information or to access the program application, call (573) 751-2129, or visit our website at masbda.com

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

1. Eligible applicants must be an individual(s) who is at least 18 years of age and a legal Missouri resident. Applicant may also be a group of individuals, businesses or organization related to agriculture whose proposed value-added agricultural business concept is based in Missouri.
2. Eligibility will not be determined or otherwise affected by any consideration of race, religion, sex, creed, color or residence, other than that the individual recipient must be a legal Missouri resident.
3. Grant recipients must be able to provide proof of citizenship; identity; residence; and enrollment in E-verify, the federal work authorization program. Please see www.e-verify.gov for more information about the program and the enrollment process.
4. Applications will be scored on a competitive basis principally on how they conform to the grant program's intent, objectives and criteria and the proposal's cost effectiveness.
5. The grant recipient will be responsible for any federal or state taxes applicable for funds received, if awarded, and it is recommended the applicant consult with a tax professional prior to submitting an application, and upon potential award.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Applications will be considered to fund up to 75% of eligible project expenses, up to \$7,500, associated with obtaining technical assistance or consulting services related directly to the creation or expansion of a Missouri value-added agriculture business. This may include expenses such as:

- Project Marketing Plans
- Slotting fees/distribution costs
- E-commerce
- Website development
- Assistance with completing federal grant applications
- Legal expenses including business structure and transition planning
- Compliance costs associated with local, state and federal regulations (example: Food Safety Modernization Act, HACCP, GAP, organic certification)
- Tax planning
- Human Resources: accounting, payroll, workers compensation, etc.

RESTRICTIONS

Grant funds are NOT intended to pay for production expenses, operational expenses or capital expenditures. The program does not provide funds for the following:

- 1) Business start-up and expansion, except as detailed above
- 2) Paying off existing debt
- 3) Costs incurred prior to the date of grant award
- 4) Production costs
- 5) Operational costs such as payroll, supplies, utilities, inventory, insurance and advertising
- 6) Implementing feasibility studies, marketing plans or business plans (except as detailed above)
- 7) Salaries/fringe benefits of those involved in the grant project
- 8) Buying land, buildings or equipment; construction work; or hiring a general contractor
- 9) Grant writing expenses, except as detailed above
- 10) Each applicant may only receive funding for a form of technical assistance one time.

FUNDING LEVEL AND MATCH REQUIREMENT

The maximum cumulative award to any individual, group of individuals, businesses or organization under this grant program is \$7,500. Applicants are required to meet a minimum 25% cash match. Cash Match is defined as cash that is contributed by the applicant specifically toward the cost of the project. The Confirmation of Cash Contribution statement included on Attachment B must be completed. Applicants must be able to produce bids for equipment/services to verify costs, if requested.

MULTIPLE PROPOSALS

Multiple applications from the same applicant will be considered if each application covers distinctly different forms of technical assistance. Applications that have been submitted to other state or federal grant programs may also be considered, but the same activities may not be funded by multiple sources.

CHANGES

All changes to contracts and/or budgets as presented in the grant application must receive prior

approval from MASBDA before payment of invoices will be approved.

FEES

There are no application fees for the *Technical Assistance Grant Program*.

EVALUATION AND FUNDING CRITERIA

Proposals will be selected on a competitive basis. Each proposal will be evaluated and rated within a framework of 100 maximum points with a minimum of 60 points necessary for funding consideration. Projects will be evaluated based upon the following scoring criteria:

Importance to the success of the value-added agriculture enterprise (45 points possible)

This category will be evaluated in terms of: 1) the extent to which the proposed technical assistance is necessary and instrumental to the creation or expansion of the agriculture enterprise 2) reasonable and feasible work plan and 3) potential for leading to an increase in new jobs, capital investment, and use of Missouri agricultural products.

Credibility and Implementation (35 points possible)

The qualifications of the project's principals are critical to the success of each proposed project. MASBDA will evaluate each proposal for: 1) its perceived feasibility, from both a technical and practical perspective and 2) potential for timely application of learned material and anticipated results.

Merit: (20 points possible)

Each member of the MASBDA Board of Directors may award up to 20 additional points per proposal. These points are based largely on individual judgement of the proposal's likely success.

Applications and anticipated project results should demonstrate a reasonable and feasible work plan and time frame for completion. The potential for near term application of funded resources, and the anticipated results, will be major considerations.

APPLICATION EVALUATION AND GRANT AWARD PROCESS

No partial applications will be considered. All applications will be screened for completeness and eligibility upon receipt.

MASBDA will consider each application individually. Each application will compete for limited funds. All proposals must include sufficient information to allow the funding criteria to be evaluated.

MASBDA reserves the right to decrease the amount of requested funding based on its findings and on its level of available funds. Should the process produce a funding level less than the amount requested in the application, MASBDA staff will confer with the applicant(s) to determine whether the amount recommended would alter the project's feasibility.

Each applicant will be notified of the MASBDA's decision. **The decision is binding and not subject to review or appeal.**

MASBDA may recover grant funds not used per the contract or if a misrepresentation should occur.

Grant recipients must enter into a contract with MASBDA. Once the applicant and MASBDA staff

agree to a contract, it will be considered for final approval by MASBDA's executive director. MASBDA program staff will monitor and evaluate each funded project. The contract will establish an approved project plan of work and budget and will list responsibilities of project personnel.

Principals of a project awarded a grant will be responsible for the approved project plan of work, project budget, and responsibilities of project personnel.

Grant recipients may be reimbursed for approved expenditures upon receipt of invoice and proof of payment such as a cancelled check and receipt of payment.

The cash match commitment must be documented by proof of payment in each approved budget category as "Contributed Cash Match" as shown on the Project Budget and in the Work Plan, before the final grant funds can be disbursed.

Basic project information including the award amount and a brief project description may be used in media releases upon grant award.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Final Report

Grant recipients will be required to submit an original and two (2) copies of a final report to MASBDA within 60 days following project completion. In 300 words or less, the final report shall include:

1. A brief description of the original intent of the project, including the use of grant funds.
2. A summary of how the project achieved one or more of the following:
 - Job creation
 - Job retention
 - Increase in sales/revenue
3. An evaluation of project results, including how they are being used by your agriculture enterprise.

Failure to submit the required report in a timely manner will result in delay of invoice reimbursement, possible grant termination and ineligibility for future awards under the SEGA Program.

In addition to the final project report, MASBDA reserves the right to conduct a follow-up survey of funded projects to determine long-term economic impacts.