



## Show-Me Entrepreneurial Grants for Agriculture (SEGA) *Workforce Development Grants* Program Guidelines

The Missouri Agricultural and Small Business Development Authority's (MASBDA) objective for this program is to provide reimbursement of expenses to producers or businesses associated with hiring, training and certifying new and/or current employees of an entity that is adding value to a Missouri agriculture product.

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 copy, and an electronic version no later than 5 p.m. on April 28, 2023.**

***SEGA Workforce Development 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 on the part of the project sponsor 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 *Workforce Development Grant* Application should be sent to:

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

For additional information, call (573) 751-2129, or visit our website at [masbda.com](http://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 or a business duly organized and validly existing under the laws of the State of Missouri whose proposed agricultural business workforce development 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; and residence.
4. Applications will be scored on a competitive basis. Each proposal will be evaluated and rated on how they conform to the grant program's intent, near-term measurable results, 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.

6. Multiple applications may be submitted by the same entity, but must be for different workforce development needs. However, the maximum cumulative award to any one entity for workforce development may not exceed \$5,000.

### **PROJECT ELIGIBILITY**

Applications will be considered to fund up to 75% of eligible project expenses, up to \$5,000, associated with hiring, training or certifying new and/or current employees involved in a Missouri value-added agriculture business. This may include expenses such as:

- Specialized education/certification (CDL, equipment operation, food safety etc.)
- Advertising or recruiting expenses associated with hiring new employees
- Travel expenses associated with training programs
- Third-party on-site training costs

### **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) Salary/benefits of current or new employees or managers
- 2) Equipment or supplies
- 3) Expenses incurred prior to date of grant award
- 4) Costs of training by current employees, managers, or owners.

### **FUNDING LEVEL AND MATCH REQUIREMENT**

The maximum cumulative award to any individual, group of individuals, businesses or organizations under this grant is \$5,000. 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.

### **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 *SEGA Workforce Development Grant Program*.

### **EVALUATION AND FUNDING CRITERIA**

Proposals will be selected on a competitive basis. Each proposal will be evaluated and scored 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:

#### **Potential to Increase Key Employee Measures: (45 points possible)**

This category will be evaluated in terms of: 1) the potential number of new full-time or part-time hires for the business, 2) the potential to increase the average wage of employees from the development activity, 3) the potential to increase business sales, or 4) any other ways this project will add value to the business.

**Credibility and Implementation:** (35 points possible)

The merit of the proposed grant will be based on: 1) perceived technical and practical feasibility of the project, 2) reasonable and feasible work plan, 3) potential for timely application of learned material and anticipated results, and 4) use of professional third-party training or certification programs.

**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.

**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 to determine whether the amount recommended would alter the project's feasibility.

Each applicant will be notified of 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 an organized business (such as an LLC) 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 Attachment C, Project Budget Summary, before the final grant funds can be disbursed. Grant funds can be disbursed upon receiving documentation of expenditures and a summary of completed activities for which funds are requested.

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
2. A summary of how the project achieved one or more of the following:
  - Job creation
  - Job retention
  - Employee training/certification
3. An evaluation of project results and benefits to your value-added business

**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.