



FY 23 Veterans and Heroes to Agriculture Grant Program

Request for Applications (RFA)

Application Due Date:

May 17, 2023, 4:00 P.M.

Overview

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) is pleased to announce the FY 2023 competitive Request for Applications (RFA) for the Veterans and Heroes to Agriculture Grant Program. The purpose of this program is to provide funding to organizations around the state who work directly with or provide support to law enforcement, fire fighters, emergency medical service, first responders, veterans, active-duty military, and/or their spouses and family within an agricultural capacity. Grants may not exceed **\$24,000**, and are awarded through an application process.

Contact

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Agriculture Business Development Division
Veterans and Heroes to Agriculture
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Legislative Authority

Legislative authority is provided under Veterans and Heroes to Agriculture Program and fund (WV §19-1-12).

Purpose

The Veterans and Heroes to Agriculture Grant Program (VHAGP) assists applicants in providing support to law enforcement, fire fighters, emergency medical service, first responders, veterans, active-duty military, and/or their spouses and family within an agricultural capacity.

The VHAGP provides an opportunity for organizations to develop and enhance programs and activities targeted at our veterans and heroes entering or currently working in agriculture to benefit their health

and welfare, as well as the state's agricultural economy. The program also seeks to further promote the development of agricultural industries, products, and marketing opportunities across the state.

Definition of a Project

A project is a set of interrelated tasks with a cohesive, distinct, specified, and defined goal. It follows a planned, organized approach over a fixed period of time and within specific limitations (cost, performance/quality, etc.). Additionally, it uses resources that are specifically allocated to the work of the project and usually involves a team of people. Projects are different from other ongoing operations in an organization because they have a definitive beginning and end—they have a limited duration. One way to think about this is that a project has an overarching goal that the applicant wants to accomplish through a series of individual activities or tasks.

Outreach to Identify Funding Priorities

West Virginia funding priorities were derived from the Veterans and Heroes to Agriculture Program purpose, as well as the strategic plan for West Virginia agriculture "A Shared Agenda for Growing West Virginia's Agricultural Economy". This plan features recommendations from a lengthy community engagement process to include surveys and community meetings. The project MUST aim to address at least one (1) of the following strategic goals:

- Goal 1: Connecting Agribusiness with Knowledge
- Goal 2: Connect producers with Each Other
- Goal 3: Create Agritourism Clusters
- Goal 4: Expand and Support Development of Co-ops for Processing and Selling Products
- Goal 5: Support Efforts to Expand Broadband
- Goal 6: Grow the Next Generation of Producers
- Goal 7: Create an Agriculture Leadership Development Program
- Goal 8: Enhance Mentorship & Training for New Farmers
- Goal 9: Grow the Next Generation of Consumers
- Goal 10: Connect Farmers with Underutilized Land

Project Funding Priorities

- Providing support to the veterans and heroes program beneficiaries;
- Support the agriculture economy;
- Demonstrate quantifiable impact in terms of the integration and support of the veterans and heroes entering or currently working in agriculture to benefit their health and welfare.

Competitive Grant Application Review Process

The competitive application review process follows state policies and procedures and includes the use of an independent review panel of experts or qualified individuals, which will recommend applications to WVDA for funding. The review panel will evaluate proposals based on predetermined criteria. All documentation affecting the decision to approve, disapprove, defer, or otherwise not fund an application will be maintained in an accessible, centralized program file. Review panel members will be free from conflicts of interest and will conduct fair and impartial reviews. WVDA will notify successful and unsuccessful grant applicants once a final determination is made.

Duration

Proposed projects require prior WVDA approval. The grant period will begin **June 1, 2023 and will end no later than May 31, 2024.**

How to Apply

For the application and all attachments please visit:

<https://agriculture.wv.gov/ag-business/veterans-and-heroes-to-agriculture/>

Click on the Member Benefits tab in the center of the page

Specific questions? Email: vetstoag@wvda.us