

R027-A: Gateway to Science Ethanol Exhibit
Submitted by North Dakota Ethanol Council
Principal Investigator: Deana Wiese
Request for \$50,000; Total Project Costs \$110,000

Technical Advisor Comments

- Both reviewers recommended fund.
- The 54% match comes from the applicant (\$25,500 – cash, \$10,000 – in-kind) and industry stakeholders (\$24,500.)
- Both reviewers felt that the objectives were likely achievable. However, one reviewer commented that “There is no indication of estimated exhibit size or level of complexity to assess the budget. The illustrations provided suggest a single counter display – perhaps 10’ deep and 30’ long. It is difficult to tell.”
- Regarding the methodology, the reviewers made the following comments:
 - “...I didn’t have a complete picture of what the display would do or the complete learnings from students.”
 - “...I really like the pilot exhibit to assess needs and direction of the permanent exhibit. Defining and capturing the exhibit results will be the challenge. The ability to connect visitor interaction with long-term ethanol use or increased interest in STEM fields will be next to impossible to correlate. A possible measure of success might be to incorporate project-based curriculum for educators and then follow up to determine how many educators/visitors are incorporating the ethanol exhibit curriculum in the classroom.”
- Both reviewers felt the background of the team was knowledgeable.
- Regarding the management plan, 1 reviewer stated, “Plan for timeline and budget were provided, but milestones/\$ were general. There was no stated communication plan other than progress reports.”
- 1 reviewer commented, “Overall, the proposal was good, but would have liked to know more about the product and what overall the learning from it could be...My scoring reflects that this is a good project and the right thing to do for the industry; however, the proposal doesn’t give adequate detail in that regard. General reviewer knowledge was used for some gaps in information and in other areas, good intent needed to be assumed as no detail was provided.”
- Regarding the budget, 1 reviewer stated “Would suggest consideration of additional budget dollars for more detailed or varied post-exhibit assessment to better reflect actual value of exhibit.”

Technical Advisor Recommendations

Fund. For a small amount of funds, the Renewable Energy Program has the opportunity to help provide the education regarding the ethanol industry to generations of North Dakotans.

One concern is that it is unclear if Gateway to Science has secured all of the needed funds for the expansion project. If they would fail to secure the funds, it is unclear if there is a contingency plan in place. For example, would the pilot exhibit just stay in place in the current facility? Would the costs for the permanent exhibit still be incurred?

Suggested Contingencies If Funded

- The NDIC and the Renewable Energy Program are acknowledged through signage on both exhibits.