

**The North Dakota Department of Agriculture is Soliciting  
Bioscience Innovation Grant Program  
Request for Grant Proposals**

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**Application Due Date:**  
July 30, 2021 at 4:00 PM CST  
No late submissions accepted.



Doug Goehring, Agriculture Commissioner  
North Dakota Department of Agriculture

## CONTENTS

<b>1. Funding Opportunity Description</b>	
a) Legislative Authority .....	2
b) Purpose.....	2
<b>2. Award Information</b>	
a) Available Funding.....	3
b) Period of Performance .....	3
c) Matching Funds.....	3
<b>3. Eligibility Information</b>	
a) Eligible Applicants.....	4
<b>4. Application and Submission Information</b>	
a) Application Requirements .....	4
b) Application Review Information .....	5
c) Review and Selection Process .....	5
d) Anticipated Award Announcement and Award Dates.....	5
<b>5. Award Administrative Information</b>	
a) Award Notices .....	6
b) Policy Requirements .....	6
c) Reporting.....	7
d) Payment.....	8
e) Contact .....	9

## 1) FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

### a) LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Bioscience Innovation Grant Program (BIG) is authorized under chapter 4.1-01-20.1 of the North Dakota Century Code. The agriculture commissioner shall administer the program with advice of the Bioscience Innovation Grant Committee.

The committee consists of three statutory members consisting of one representative from the North Dakota Department of Agriculture, one representative from the Bioscience Association of North Dakota, and one representative from the North Dakota Department of Commerce.

### b) PURPOSE

The purpose of the BIG program is to foster the growth of the bioscience industry in the state.

Applicants applying should focus on one or more of the following areas:

- Supporting biotechnology innovation and commercialization in areas including:
  - Crop genetics;
  - Biofuels;
  - Biomaterials;
  - Biosensors and biotechnology in relation to food, nutrition, animals, humans, equipment, medical and health products and services;
  - Medical diagnostics;
  - Medical therapeutics; and
  - Farm-based pharmaceuticals;
  
- Promoting the creation of bioscience jobs in the state to be filled by graduates from institutions under the control of the state board of higher education;
  
- Encouraging the development of new bioscience technologies and bioscience startup companies in the state;

- Leveraging the agriculture industry in the state to support the development of bioscience technologies impacting livestock operations and crop production;
- Promoting bioscience research and development at institutions under the control of the state board of higher education;
- Encouraging coordination and collaboration among other entities and programs in the state to promote bioscience innovation goals.

## **2) AWARD INFORMATION**

### **a) AVAILABLE FUNDING**

The North Dakota Department of Agriculture (NDDA) has a total of \$5.5 million in grant funding to be awarded to projects to develop the bioscience industry in North Dakota for the 2021-2023 biennium.

### **b) PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE**

The Period of Performance begins July 1, 2021 and ends June 30, 2023. Performance can be less than the time allocated, but cannot extend past the grant period end date.

### **c) MATCHING FUNDS**

Applicants must have a minimum of fifty percent match of the grant funds received.

### 3) ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

#### a) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

All applicants must meet the following requirements to be considered eligible to apply for the BIG:

- Employ at least two employees;
- Have documented sales of less than \$2,500,000; and
- Be a corporation, partnership, limited liability company, limited partnership, or limited liability partnership registered in North Dakota.
- Funding cannot be used for:
  - Capital improvements;
  - Academic programming or curriculum;
  - Workforce training

### 4) APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

#### A) APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applications must be submitted via email to [bdean@nd.gov](mailto:bdean@nd.gov). Applications must include the 2021-2023 BIG Project Template and BIG Program Request for Grant Proposals as posted on the NDDA website: <https://www.nd.gov/ndda/big>.

All applicants must adhere to the following instructions, in addition to other requirements as stated in this RFP to be considered eligible for grant funds. The following information is addressed on the 2021 BIG Template. Applications missing any of the subsequent information may be deemed ineligible.

- Each proposal must list the name of the company or individual submitting the proposal, street address, mailing address, telephone number, email address, and the person(s) who will be responsible for the project.
- Proposals must describe in detail which of the previously described services (Purpose) the bidder wishes to complete.
- Applicants may include any additional information that they consider pertinent and that will enhance the quality of their proposal.
- Applications are not limited to a specific minimum or maximum project amount. NDDA

reserves the right to offer an award amount less than the amount requested.

- Documentation verifying annual sales

**B) APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

NDDA will review grant applications to ensure the Project Template meets the statutory purpose of the program, all application criteria are fulfilled, and that costs are allowable.

Once applications are reviewed by NDDA, the BIG committee will complete an evaluation for each project. Below are the evaluation criteria:

<p><b>A. POTENTIAL IMPACT (30 points MAX)</b></p> <p>Does the project have a positive impact on expanding the bioscience industry in North Dakota? How effective will the project be at enhancing the mission of the program?</p>
<p><b>B. EXPECTED MEASURABLE OUTCOMES: (25 points Max)</b></p> <p>Does the project include one or two measurable outcomes that directly support the project’s purpose? Are they of direct importance to beneficiaries? Does each measurable outcome include a specific goal, benchmarks, and performance measure? How clear, appropriate and realistic are the goals and objectives?</p>
<p><b>C. WORK PLAN (20 points Max)</b></p> <p>Is the work plan feasible? Is the timeline reasonable? Do the tasks relate to the project objectives and expected measurable outcomes?</p>
<p><b>D. MATCHING FUNDS &amp; PROJECT COMMITMENT: (10 points Max)</b></p> <p>Is industry support for the project demonstrated? Do stakeholders have an active role in any activities outlined in the project work plan? Are industry stakeholders providing matching or in-kind contributions? Is the project matched at a higher than fifty percent rate?</p>
<p><b>E. PROJECT OVERSIGHT: (10 points Max)</b></p> <p>Is the scope of the project meeting the goals for broad geographic consideration and multiple product application? Does the project impact multiple sectors within the value chain?</p>
<p><b>F. MERIT: (5 points Max)</b></p> <p>Each committee member may award a proposal up to five (5) additional points.</p>

**C) REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS**

All applications will be reviewed by the BIG committee. Applications are evaluated on the merits of the proposals based on the scoring criteria listed above. Applicants will be notified during the review process if monetary adjustments to grant requests, project proposal scope of work and/or project budgets are necessary.

**D) ANTICIPATED AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT AND AWARD DATES**

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing as to whether or not they received a grant award. Successful applicants will also be sent a Notice of Grant Award (NOGA) to sign.

## **5) AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **a) AWARD NOTICES**

Prior to beginning work on the proposed project or receiving funding, successful applicants will be required to sign a NOGA with the NDDA indicating their intention to complete the proposed tasks, report results, and authorizing NDDA to monitor the progress of the proposed project.

NOGA's must be signed and returned to NDDA within 30 days of receipt. Failure to submit an executed copy of the NOGA within 30 days of receipt may result in the loss of awarded grant funds, unless the delay was caused by circumstances outside the control of the grantee. Once the NOGA has been fully executed, grantees are able to work and expend money on their project. No work or expenditures are allowed before this date.

### **b) POLICY REQUIREMENTS**

#### **General Compliance**

All awarded grant projects must comply with all applicable state laws and regulations and the terms of the grant award as specified in the Notice of Grant Award Requirements.

#### **Monitoring**

NDDA reserves the ability to perform site monitoring visits to any and all grantees to ensure that work is progressing within the required timeframe and that fiscal procedures are followed accurately and appropriately. Monitoring includes both financial and program information, as well as site visits.

#### **Ineligible Costs**

NDDA will not reimburse for any costs incurred by any grantee for work performed in the preparation and production of this grant proposal, nor for any work performed prior to the formal execution of the grant award.

#### **Open Records**

Proposals submitted for funding and all related grant awards and reports shall be subject to disclosure under the North Dakota open records law.

### **Other Considerations**

All proposals submitted in response to this RFP become the property of NDDA. NDDA reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish, otherwise use, and to authorize others to use materials produced under this grant agreement.

### **NDDA also reserves the right to:**

- Post funded proposals or final reports to the NDDA website
- Reject any or all proposals received
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in proposals received after prior notification and agreement of applicant
- Use any or all ideas submitted unless those ideas are covered by legal patent or proprietary rights
- Clarify the scope of this program, within the RFP requirement and with appropriate notice to potential applicants, to best serve the interests of the State of North Dakota
- Amend program specifications after their release, with appropriate written notice to potential applicants
- Require a good faith effort on part of the project sponsor to work with NDDA subsequent to project completion to develop or implement project results
- Withhold any payments when grant award conditions are not met

### **c) REPORTING**

The grantee will be responsible for setting up and maintaining a project file that contains all records of correspondence with NDDA, receipts, invoices and copies of all reports and documents associated with the project. The grantee shall retain all data and other records relating to the acquisition and performance of the NOGA for a period of three years after the

completion of the agreement. All records shall be subject to inspection and audit by state personnel at reasonable times. Upon request, the grantee shall produce a legible copy of any or all such records on a timely basis.

NDDA reserves the right to modify reporting requirements during the course of the project. Information submitted in any report to NDDA will be a public record. All quarterly, annual, and final reports must be submitted using the required format.

### **Final Reports**

A final performance report will be required on the last day of the grant agreement. The final report may be posted on the NDDA website and is important for sharing project findings with state agencies and the public. The final report will include the following:

- Project Summary
- Project Approach
- Goals and Outcomes Achieved
- Lessons Learned
- Beneficiaries
- Contact Person
- Additional Information

In addition to the final project report NDDA reserves the right to conduct a follow-up survey of funded projects in order to determine long-term impacts of the project.

### **Reporting Compliance**

Applicants who do not submit the final report or who submit an incomplete report may be required to return previously distributed funds to NDDA.

### **d) PAYMENT**

Requests for reimbursements will be accepted on a quarterly basis. Each reimbursement request must include an itemized invoice and documentation of the work or expenses for which payment is requested. Itemization shall include the purpose, amount, and date incurred.

Grantees must provide assurance that the work has been completed (i.e. include receipts, invoices) and clearly outline expenditures. Ten percent of the total grant funds will be retained until receipt of the complete final report including receipts for all expenditures.

Below is the reporting period and due date for the quarterly reimbursement request:

<b>Quarterly Reimbursement Reporting Period</b>	<b>Reimbursement Due on or Before</b>
July 1- September 30, 2021	October 15, 2021
October 1 – December 31, 2021	January 15, 2022
January 1 – March 31, 2022	April 15, 2022
April 1- June 30, 2022	July 15, 2022
July 1- September 30, 2022	October 15, 2022
October 1 – December 31, 2022	January 15, 2023
January 1 – March 31, 2023	April 15, 2023
April 1 – June 30, 2023	July 15, 2023

### **Budget Adjustments**

If a material change (20% of the total grant amount or greater) in the budget is needed during the project period, a written request must be made to NDDA to reallocate budget funds between budget categories.

#### **e) CONTACT**

For questions or assistance, please contact:

North Dakota Department of Agriculture

Attn: Bradley Dean

600 E Boulevard Ave Dept. 602

Bismarck ND 58505-0020

Phone: 701.955.0181

[bdean@nd.gov](mailto:bdean@nd.gov)