

County Fair Grant Programs

Fiscal Year 2022 Notice of Intent to Apply and Request for Proposals

Updated December 10, 2021

County fairs must have completed the Notice of Intent to Apply by November 30, 2021 to be eligible.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this information is available in alternative forms of communication upon request by calling 651-201-6000. TTY users can call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711. The MDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

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Grant Summary

Overview

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture is offering grants to help Minnesota county fairs preserve and promote Minnesota agriculture, and provide access to the arts and the state's historical and cultural heritage. Funds come from the Minnesota Legislature through the [Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation Program \(AGRI\)](#) and the [Legacy Amendment](#).

Fiscal Year 2022 Grant Changes

We are making three changes to the grant programs for this year.

- Every county fair must respond to the [Notice of Intent to Apply](#) for AGRI and Legacy funds by November 30, 2021 to indicate if they plan to apply for AGRI and/or Legacy grants. We will presume that fairs that do not respond to the Notice will not be applying. Therefore, they will not be eligible to apply this year. The total amount of funds available in each category will be divided by the number of fairs indicating that they plan to apply.
- The AGRI and Legacy funds will be contracted separately. Most fairs will receive two contracts. The AGRI funds will be available until spring 2025 (up to three years after the start date). The Legacy funds will be available until June 30, 2023.
- Fairs may request to receive up to 50% of their AGRI award as an advance in their application. These advances will not be automatic as in previous years.

Eligible Applicants

Each of the state's county fairs is eligible to apply for the grants. Applications must come from the county agricultural society. All applicants must be in good standing with the State of Minnesota.

Fairs MUST respond to the Notice of Intent to Apply by November 30, 2021. This lets us know how many fairs are intending to apply for AGRI and Legacy funds. Only fairs that indicate they plan to apply will be eligible to apply.

Eligible Projects and Expenses

Category 1 (AGRI): Preserving and Promoting Minnesota Agriculture

A total of \$935,000 is available. Each county fair will be eligible for up to \$10,400. Category 1 (AGRI) grant funds must be used to preserve and promote Minnesota agriculture. The funds are intended to be used for your 2022 fair, but they may be also be used in 2023 and 2024. Examples of eligible projects include:

- sound equipment for judging in livestock barns
- hand sanitizing stations

- fans for livestock barns
- agricultural education displays

Category 2 (Legacy): Providing Access to the Arts or the State’s Agricultural, Historical, and Cultural Heritage

A total of \$400,000 is available. Each fair will be eligible for up to \$4,444. Grant funds must be used to enhance access and education to preserve and promote Minnesota arts and agricultural history. Projects must provide access to the arts or the state’s agricultural, historical, and cultural heritage. Funded activities must supplement (i.e., add something to enhance something) traditional programming and not substitute (i.e., take the place of). The funds must be used before June 30, 2023 (likely during your 2022 fair). Examples of eligible projects include:

- spinning demonstrations
- blacksmith or primitive cooking workshop
- antique equipment display that shows how farming was done in the past
- Native American storyteller

How to Apply

Grant applications from counties that submitted a Notice of Intent to Apply are due on **February 3, 2022, at 4:00 pm Central Time**. Applications will not be accepted after the grant deadline under any circumstances.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their proposals through our [online application system](#). It is best practice to submit your application at least 24 hours in advance to prevent unforeseen delays.

If an applicant cannot submit through the online system, they should contact the Grant Administrator by calling 651-201-6500 or emailing MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us at least one week before the application deadline.

The MDA is not responsible for any technical or logistical problems resulting in the MDA not receiving the application on time. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that submission is received by the MDA before the deadline.

Timeline and Deadlines for Grant Program

Notice of Intent to Apply Due.....	November 30, 2021
Notification of Maximum Award Request.....	December 7, 2021 (estimated)
Applications Due.....	February 3, 2022, 4:00 pm Central
Notification of Award Decisions.....	February 17, 2022 (estimated)

Ineligible Expenses

Ineligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- Expenditures incurred prior to contract execution
- Expenses not approved or listed in the grant contract
- General purpose public use items and areas (e.g., restrooms, commissary, and parking lots)
- Meals, food, lodging, transportation, tickets to shows or sporting events
- Cash or gift cards
- Advertising and public relations
- Entertainment, amusement, and social activities not meeting the objectives of the grant (selected exceptions made for Category II)
- Donated or volunteer (in-kind) goods and services
- Indirect costs (expenses of doing business that are not readily identified with the project)
- Fundraising, including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions
- Lobbyists, political contributions

Application Review Policies

Review Process

MDA staff and leadership will review all applications for appropriateness. If a particular project is deemed inappropriate, MDA staff will inform the county fair of the ineligible components and will provide the county fair with another opportunity to submit an eligible project. The Commissioner of Agriculture is responsible for award decisions.

Privacy Notice and Data Classification

The information provided by an applicant will be used to assess the applicant's eligibility to receive a grant under the AGRI and Legacy Programs. The decision to apply for this grant is voluntary, and applicants are not legally required to provide any of the requested information. Applicants may decline to complete this application without any legal consequence. However, only completed applications will be considered for a grant; incomplete applications will not be considered.

Data provided in this application is initially classified by the Minnesota Data Practices Act as private or nonpublic, although some or all of the data will generally become public at various points of the application process unless the data are otherwise classified by state or federal law. Access to private or nonpublic data is limited to those authorized by law, including but not necessarily limited to MDA staff and contractors with a valid work assignment to access the data, parties authorized by the applicant, parties identified in a valid court order or federal subpoena, Minnesota Management and Budget, Minnesota Department of Administration, the state auditor, and the legislative auditor. If necessary, the MDA may also share the data with law enforcement or the Office of the Attorney General.

Per [MINN. STAT. 13.599](#):

- Names and addresses of grant applicants, and the grant amount requested, will be public data once application responses are opened.
- All remaining data in application responses (except trade secret information, see below) becomes public data after the evaluation process is completed (for the purposes of this grant, when all grant agreements have been fully executed).
- All data created or maintained by the MDA as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret information, see below) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed.
- **Procedure for Claiming Protection of Trade Secrets:** Trade secret information is classified as not public data. In order to qualify as trade secret information, the data in question must be provided to the MDA by the affected person (i.e. the data must be about the applicant) and otherwise meet the legal definition ([MINN. STAT. 13.37, subd. 1\[b\]](#)). In order for an applicant to assert trade secret protection for data submitted as part of this application: the applicant must: 1) clearly identify the specific formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique, or process that the applicant believes to be trade secret information; 2) describe what efforts the applicant takes to maintain the secrecy of the data; and 3) adequately explain how the data derive(s) independent economic value from not being generally known to, and not readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons. Merely asserting trade secret protection does not, in and of itself, classify the data in question as not public; determining what data meet the definition of trade secret information is ultimately the legal responsibility of the MDA, and the MDA cannot guarantee that data identified as trade secret information by an applicant will be classified as such. If the MDA determines that data do not meet the definition of trade secret information, the data in question will be available to the public unless the applicant secures a court order saying otherwise.

Requirements for Grant Recipients

Grant Award Agreement and Payments

Upon approval of an application and prior to beginning work on the grant project(s) and receiving reimbursements, the applicant is required to do the following:

- Complete an IRS W-9 form or register as a vendor in SWIFT, the State's accounting system, and submit other required documentation within 30 days of award notification: and
- Sign a Grant Contract Agreement for each category indicating their intention to complete the proposed tasks. The agreements also authorize the MDA to monitor the progress of the projects. Grant contract agreements must be signed within 30 days of being sent to the grantee.

Eligible expenses may only be incurred after the contract has been signed by all parties.

- AGRI contracts will be effective until spring 2025. These grant contract agreements may not extend beyond three years from the effective date of the contract.
- Legacy grant contract agreements will be effective until June 30, 2023.

AGRI Payments

Grantees may request to receive 50% of their AGRI grant as an advanced payment. County fairs that would like to use this option should indicate so in their application. The MDA has the right to not issue advance funds to a fair, including those that have open grants from prior years. Any cash advance that violates the terms of the grant contract agreement or is not adequately used to support the approved project will need to be repaid. Grantees that receive advanced payments must submit annual reports until the grant is closed out. The remaining 50% will be available to grantees after completion of the entire project.

Legacy Payments

Legacy grants will only be dispersed on a reimbursement basis.

Reimbursement Procedures

All grantee requests for reimbursement must correspond to the approved grant budget. To receive grant payments, grantees must provide proof that grant project work has been done by submitting details of each purchase on receipts or invoices, and proof that the vendors have been paid. Each reimbursement request must be accompanied by a Closeout Form. Grant payments shall not be made on grants with past due progress reports unless the MDA has given the grantee a written extension.

Bidding Requirements

All funded applicants will be required to abide by the state's bidding requirements for larger purchases. See a detailed list of the state's [bidding requirements](#) for details.

Publicity

All projects funded must publicly credit the AGRI and Legacy funding, including on the grantee's website when practicable.

Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination Policy

The grantee agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status in regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, or age in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified ([MINN. STAT. 363A.02](#)). The grantee agrees to take affirmative steps to employ, advance in employment, upgrade, train, and recruit minority persons, women, and persons with disabilities.

The grantee must not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of physical or mental disability in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The grantee agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment, and otherwise treat qualified disabled persons without discrimination based upon their physical or mental disability in all employment practices such as the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other

forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship ([Minnesota Rules, part 5000.3500](#)).

The grantee agrees to comply with the rules and relevant orders of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights issued pursuant to the [Minnesota Human Rights Act](#).

Audits of Project

The grantee's books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant or transaction are subject to examination by the granting agency and either the legislative auditor or the state auditor, as appropriate ([MINN. STAT. 16B.98, subdivision 8](#)). This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant agreement end date, receipt, and approval of all final reports, or the required period of time to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

Voter Registration Requirement

The grantee will provide voter registration services for its employees ([MINN. STAT. 201.162](#)).

Questions and Assistance

If you have questions about the program or need technical assistance with the online application system, you can contact us by calling 651-201-6500 or emailing MDA.AGRIGrants@state.mn.us with "County Fair Grants" in the subject line.

Background and Program Goals

The Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation Program (AGRI) was established to advance Minnesota's agricultural and renewable energy industries (MINN. STAT. 41A.12). AGRI has made significant economic impacts by increasing productivity, improving efficiency, and assisting the development of agricultural products. AGRI funds are for projects that preserve and promote Minnesota agriculture.

The Legacy Amendment was established to support and preserve Minnesota's arts, history, and cultural heritage. Legacy funds are used to support projects and events that enhance arts access and education and to preserve and promote Minnesota's history and cultural heritage as embodied in its county fairs.

Notice of Intent to Apply

County fairs interested in submitting a full application must respond to the [Notice of Intent to Apply](#) by November 30, 2021. Below is a preview of the questions you will be asked.

Contact Information

Name of Fair:

Contact Person:

Contact Person Email:

Contact Person Phone:

Intent to Apply

Does the fair plan to apply for the AGRI funds (anticipated to be at least \$9,842)?

Does the fair plan to apply for Legacy funds (anticipated to be at least \$4,210)?

Review Request for Proposals and Notice of Intent to Apply

Please review the Request for Proposals and Notice of Intent to Apply. Check here to confirm that you have reviewed the document.

Application Questions

County fairs that complete the Notice of Intent to Apply must submit a full application by February 3, 2022, at 4:00 pm. The application is available by logging into our online grants management system through a link on the [County Fair Grant webpage](#). Below is a preview of the questions you will be asked.

Contact Information

Applicant Information

- Applicant Name
- Name of County Fair
- Organization Mailing Address
- Organization Telephone
- Organization Email

Authorized Representative

If awarded a grant, the person that will sign the County Fair Grant contract agreement(s) for this organization:

- Name
- Email
- Telephone

Eligibility

Are you representing the county agricultural society? Yes/No

Project Name

- Name of County Fair

Category 1 (AGRI): Promote and Preserve Minnesota Agriculture

Summary of AGRI Proposed Project

Describe your AGRI project briefly, in a way that the public would easily understand.

AGRI Project Potential Impact

Explain how your AGRI project will preserve and/or promote Minnesota agriculture. If the proposal includes agricultural education, be specific what fairgoers will learn about Minnesota agriculture.

Category 1 (AGRI) Budget

The budget table is an overview of how grant funds will be spent. Purchases made prior to a fully executed contract are not eligible for this grant. Create a budget using the example format below.

Item	Quantity	Cost Per Unit	Total Estimate	Source of Estimate
<i>Hog Barn Concrete</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>\$15,000</i>	<i>\$15,000</i>	<i>ABC Concrete Company</i>

Additional AGRI Budget Notes

Please describe anything that may be unclear or need more explanation. For example, if you list items such as trophies or awards, add additional detail about these items, such as for showing an animal or winning the produce competition.

AGRI Advance Funds

Would you like to receive 50% of your AGRI award up front to assist with expenses? (Yes/No)

AGRI Project Oversight

List the name and title of individual who will oversee your AGRI project activities.

- Name
- Title

AGRI Work Plan

Create a work plan for your AGRI project using the example format show below. You should include the steps that you will take to successfully complete your project.

Timeframe	Description of Task/Action Item
<i>May 2022</i>	<i>Place order for fence panels</i>

Category 2 (Legacy): Providing Access to the Arts or the State’s Agricultural, Historical, and Cultural Heritage

Summary of Proposed Legacy Project

Describe your Legacy project briefly, in a way that the public would easily understand.

Legacy Project Potential Impact:

Explain how your Legacy project will provide access to the arts or Minnesota’s agricultural, historical, and/or cultural heritage.

Category 2 (Legacy) Budget

The budget table is an overview of how grant funds will be spent. Purchases made prior to a fully executed contract are not eligible for this grant. Create a budget using the example format below.

Item	Quantity	Cost Per Unit	Total Estimate	Source of Estimate
<i>Blacksmith Demonstration</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>\$500</i>	<i>\$500</i>	<i>Blacksmithers</i>

Additional Legacy Budget Notes

Please describe anything that may be unclear or need more explanation.

Legacy Project Oversight

List the name and title of individual who will oversee your Legacy project activities.

- Name
- Title

Legacy Work Plan

Create a work plan for your Legacy project using the example format show below. You should include the steps that you will take to successfully complete your project.

Timeframe	Description of Task/Action Item
<i>May 2022</i>	<i>Sign work order with Blacksmithers</i>

Certification

I certify to the best of my knowledge that the information in this application is true and correct and that I am legally authorized to sign and submit this application on behalf of this organization, which is legally eligible to enter a grant contract agreement. (Yes/No)