

Economic Viability Micro Grants Program July 2019

Watershed Agricultural Council
Economic Viability Program
nycwatershed.org



ECONOMIC VIABILITY MICRO GRANTS PROGRAM

Purpose: Encourage the implementation of activities that can enhance the economic viability of farm and forest businesses in the NYC West of Hudson Watershed.

Eligibility: Any farmer, logger, forester, forest landowner or Pure Catskills member with business property inside the NYC West of Hudson Watershed, preference will be given to WAC participants. Visit us online at nycwatershed.org/economic-viability/initiatives/micro-grants-program to view a map of the watershed boundary line.

Please return completed application by mail to Watershed Agricultural Council c/o Economic Viability Program, 44 West Street, Walton NY 13856. If you need assistance with completing this form please contact the Economic Viability Program at (607) 865-7090 ext. 293.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name

Business Name

Physical Business Address

Town

State

Zip

Phone

E-Mail

Preferred Contact Method (Check all that apply):

☐ Phone ☐ Email ☐ Mail ☐ Other _____

Watershed Agricultural Council Program(s) Participant(s)
(Check all that apply):

- ☐ Farm
☐ Forest
☐ Pure Catskills
☐ Other

GRANT CATEGORIES

Please check one grant category you wish to apply for:

- ☐ Training Reimbursement (pg. 3)
☐ Marketing Reimbursement (pg. 4)
☐ Event/Mileage Reimbursement (pg. 5)
☐ Staffing Reimbursement (pg. 6)

MUTUAL AGREEMENT

We the undersigned have agreed to procedures and participation requirements of the proposed Economic Viability Micro Grant Program as outlined in this application. Following signed, approval of practice completed, participants will be paid for services directly from the Watershed Agricultural Council.

Applicant's signature (required)

Date

TOTAL COST REQUEST

Amount *Cannot exceed \$5,000

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Eligible applicants must submit a complete grant application by the application deadline listed in the RFA in order to be eligible for review.
2. Applicants may only apply for one activity in one of the micro grant categories in each grant cycle.
3. The application deadline for this round is July 31, 2019. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated against scoring criteria included in these instructions. A minimum score of 70 must be met. Applicants will be notified of the approved/denied status 30 days after the deadline.
4. Grant applications will be awarded based on availability of program funding and evaluation using evaluation criteria included in this application.
5. These are reimbursable grants. Closeout packages must provide necessary documentation per each category before reimbursement is issued. All closeout packages, materials, bills and/or invoices provided as proof of completion must be submitted to WAC by the date provided in approval letter in order to receive reimbursement.
6. Payment will not be issued to participants who are not in good standing with WAC.
7. In order to receive the grant award, applicants must submit W9, receipts, invoices and other proper documentation following requirements described for each grant category.
8. Applicants may apply for up to \$5,000 in grant funding. There is a \$5,000 cap per applicant per fiscal year.
9. Approved applications are subject to cancellation after six months. Staff may grant extensions upon request pending approval by the WAC's Economic Viability Committee.

Prior to issuing payment, WAC will review the Closeout Package to ensure conformity with the approved application and EV guidelines. After this review WAC will submit payment directly to the applicant in accordance with the criteria in each category. These are reimbursable grants. Closeout packages must provide necessary documentation per each category before reimbursement is issued. All materials, bills and/or invoices provided as proof of completion of the project must be submitted to WAC by the date provided in approval letter.

The Economic Viability Micro Grants Program is funded by the NYC Department of Environmental Protection, the City and its residents. Consumers of City water are the beneficiaries of the measures to be implemented under the grants program because of its effect on the NYC Watershed. The Council is funded by the NYC DEP, USDA, U.S. Forest Service and other sources. EOE/EOP © 2019

Grant recipients agree that a copy of any and all materials and documents, written or otherwise, which has been funded by this grant, may be available to WAC upon request to confirm project completion.

One of the benefits of the Economic Viability Program is its ability to explore innovative methods for enhancing economic viability in the Watershed. To maximize this benefit the WAC Economic Viability Committee encourages a creative atmosphere that is receptive to new grant categories consistent with funding requirements.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Send letters to: Applicant

Approved By: _____

Approval Date: _____

Practice Selected: Training Reimbursement

Marketing Reimbursement

Event/Mileage Reimbursement

Staffing Reimbursement

TRAINING REIMBURSEMENT

To encourage continuing education intended to enhance the economic viability profitability and sustainability of eligible applicant's businesses by providing grant funding to help applicants offset the cost of online courses, workshops, seminars, conferences and college courses.

- i. Only training opportunities that occur after the approval date will be eligible for funding.
- ii. An overview of the training including: web links, an agenda or syllabus, and other supporting documents must be included with the application prior to approval.
- iii. Demonstration of projected impact the training will have on diversification, continuing education, profitability and/or sustainability of your business.
- iv. Prior to payment the applicant must complete and submit a Training Reimbursement Closeout Package. The Closeout Package includes proof of training attendance, an invoice identifying total cost of the training, a completed W9 and a completed EV Micro Grants Application. The payment will be based on the training invoice.
- v. To be eligible for funding the training must occur within six months of the approval date.

TRAINING REIMBURSEMENT CRITERIA:

1. Please provide an explanation of your business operation, and provide a clear demonstration of how training will be used or applied to improve profitability and sustainability of business:

2. Please attach and identify necessary documents including description of training, agenda, syllabus, workshop overview, and/or other documents:

MARKETING REIMBURSEMENT

To encourage branding, advertising and communications related to the marketing of products and services provided by eligible applicants.

- i. Eligible Marketing activities are: farm signs, product labels or packaging, logo development, webpage development, advertisement design and placement.
- ii. Applicants must submit a project timeline and overview for completion based off of cost quotes.
- iii. Applicants must submit two cost quotes (qualified consultants, online web links, etc.) Both quotes must be comparable and identify the same needs. All estimates of cost must be provided by qualified web links, businesses, or professional. In addition, we ask that the applicant state which quote/consultant they prefer to use and why. If you do not submit two comparable cost quotes, your application will be denied.
- iv. Only marketing activities that occur after the application approval date are eligible for reimbursement.
- v. Prior to payment the applicant must complete and submit a Marketing Reimbursement Closeout Package. The Closeout Package includes .pdf, .eps and/or .jpg design files for logos, digital copies of advertisements, final web link, a completed W9 and a completed EV Micro Grants Application.

MARKETING REIMBURSEMENT CRITERIA:

1. Please describe business operation, your business' marketing strategy, and how funding for the requested activity will support that strategy and improve your businesses profitability and viability:

2. Please provide a project timeline and overview:

3. Please identify which consultant/quote you would like to use and why:

EVENT/MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT

To enhance the economic viability of farm and forest businesses by off-setting the cost of attending new events, fairs, farmers' markets and/or transporting products to new markets or venues through mileage reimbursement and/or vendor fees reimbursement. Funding will be considered for applicants that demonstrate new events are assisting in the expansion of their market reach. This is a one time, offset reimbursement not intended to be used for continual attendance.

- i. WAC will reimburse applicants at the current federal mileage reimbursement rate. Google map directions should be submitted round trip.
- ii. WAC will reimburse applicants for the cost of attending an event/fair/new market located in New York State.
- iii. Applicants must submit an application prior to travel that identifies the eligible market, event, or new venue desired to attend, the date and the distance. All mileage will be calculated using the applicant's business address.
- iv. Prior to payment the applicant must complete and submit an Event/Mileage Reimbursement Form provided by the Watershed Agricultural Council when accepted and receipts from event confirming attendance. The Closeout Package includes the travel starting point (the business location), destination, pictures, financial impact, a completed W9 and a completed EV Micro Grants

EVENT/MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT CRITERIA:

1. Please provide an explanation of your business operation, markets and marketing strategy and how this activity/event will assist business in reaching to new consumers:

2. Please provide an event overview including cost, location, date, etc:

STAFFING REIMBURSEMENT

To enhance profitability, productivity and/or assist with business expansion.

- i. Applicants must submit a business/operation overview identifying how funding for a new staffing position will support business/operation expansion, increased viability and/or productivity.
- ii. Applicants must provide specific expansion information including list and description of new market(s) if applicable, and metrics for measuring success.
- iii. Applicants must submit a job description clearly identifying the role of the new position, how the new position will assist in operation expansion, increased profitability and/or productivity.
- iv. Applicants must submit a timeline including pay rate (at least minimum wage), length of position(s), hours per week, and how they plan to track those hours (pay stubs and mileage will be requested for the closeout package.) Only positions hired after the application approval date are eligible for reimbursement.
- v. WAC is not responsible for the work, direction, IRS reporting, or personal conduct of the proposed staff. The applicant accepts full responsibility for the proposed staff.
- vi. One-time payment per business. Businesses cannot reapply to fill position if seasonal.
- vii. Prior to payment the applicant must complete and submit a Staffing Reimbursement Closeout Package. The Closeout Package includes pay stubs, mileage if attending markets/events, a signed sheet from the employee and employer that they were paid the correct rate, metrics of increased sales, a completed W9 and a completed EV Micro Grants Application.

STAFFING REIMBURSEMENT CRITERIA:

1. Please provide a description of current business/operation overview identifying how funding for a new staffing position will support business/operation expansion, increased viability and/or productivity:
2. Please describe the role of the new job providing specific expansion information including list and description of new market(s) if applicable, and metrics for measuring success (if the position is seasonal please explain how position will support long term profitability and viability of the business):
3. Please provide the job description, timeline for the new position, and your plan for tracking time and wages:

PLEASE USE THIS PAGE FOR ADDITIONAL SPACE IF NEEDED: