

Watershed Agricultural Council

Economic Viability Program

nycwatershed.org



Successful Grant Applications Tips:

The Watershed Agricultural Council's (WAC) Economic Viability Program wants to help get you started on creating and submitting successful grant proposals. The purpose of our Economic Viability Micro Grants Program is to encourage the implementation of activities that will enhance the economic viability of farm and forest businesses in the NYC West of Hudson Watershed.

We understand that grant writing can be stressful and daunting, but with the help of the five tips below we hope this will make it easier for you. We are aware no two grant proposals are the same. We also acknowledge that every farm and forest operation are different with different needs, but below are some common themes and characteristics of successful grants proposals.

- 1. Successful grant proposals have a clear focus.**
 - a. Be sure when applying for a grant that you always tie your answers back to: 1) the original purpose of the Micro Grants program, 2) the goal of the category (Marketing, Event/Mileage, Staffing and/or Training) and 3) the ask of the question.

- 2. Successful grant proposals are supported with documents, data and necessary research.**
 - a. Before starting your grant proposal, take the time to do your research and make sure that every document submitted is from an accredited source or consultant. Less is not more!
 - b. For example:
 - i. **Marketing Category:** When applying for a new website we need both consultant proposals or your application will be denied. When applying for new marketing materials such as logo stickers: DO NOT just submit an excel sheet with the costs, you MUST submit two cost quotes (whether they are images, attached documents, emails etc.) PER item to support your application or it will be denied.
 - ii. **Event/Mileage Category:** When applying make sure to include how attending will positively impact profitability and reach.
 - iii. **Staffing Category:** When applying make sure to provide a clear job description that will be submitted to the public if approved, a timeline for the job, and a plan on how you intend to track wages with a specified process/service.
 - iv. **Training Category:** When applying make sure to provide all necessary documents that support the merit of the host and how it will directly impact profitability and sustainability.

- 3. Successful grant proposals are well-organized.**
 - a. Your answers should be thorough, well thought through and very organized – all to the best of your ability. Make sure to pay close attention to the requirements in the request for applicants (RFA). Your submission and all accompanying attachments, which should include any cost quotes, consultant proposals, web links, etc. should adhere precisely to our guidelines.

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- 4. Successful grant proposals are tailored to our Micro Grant Program's purpose.**
 - a. Ask yourself:
 - i. What are WAC's values, written mission, and goals?
 - ii. How is what you want to do aligned with the overall mission the category?
 - iii. Do your priorities match the vision of the category?
 - iv. Will this grant cover the entire cost of your activity or will you need to find additional funds?

- 5. Successful grant proposals are proofread.**
 - a. We recommend checking for spelling and errors, prior to grant submittal.

In closing, we are here to help! Contact our Economic Viability Team at (607) 865-7090 or evprogram@nycwatershed.org for additional support navigating the Micro Grants Program.