

North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund Commission Agricultural Education Grant Application/Project Important Items to Remember

Below are some critical details that need consideration as you plan your NC TTFC Agricultural Education Program Improvement Grant applications.

1. Make sure that your application provides its readers with a clear and definitive understanding of the purpose and value of the project. This should be clearly explained in the Project Goals and Objectives section of the application. Make sure to reference the NC TTFC project goals and outcomes that are listed in the Scoring Guide.
2. Applications are judged based on the content of the application. Spend some time to make sure that the grant purpose, funding needs, description of the project, how it benefits students and how you plan to complete the grant is explained completely. Be very clear. The judges must be able to read your application and have all of their questions answered. Anticipated costs need to be real and not inflated.
3. This grant is designed to provide funding for sustainable projects that will impact your present and future students. Grant requests that are for short term, one-time purchases of consumable materials, or to fund one-time activities are not recommended.
4. If a project requires more funds than the maximum (\$15,000) from the grant, share in the application the source and reliability of the additional funds. Indicating that you have requested funds from another source is not sufficient. You need to have a firm commitment from your additional sources detailing the fund amounts and date of delivery of the funds. The grant evaluators will be looking, via your application, for evidence that a project can be started and finished in the time frame of the grant.
5. Don't let your projects be bigger than you can handle. If you are questioning whether this project is a good idea or bad, we would suggest you not apply. You need to be completely committed to this project.
6. Make sure you have permission from your local school administration and LEA administration (CTE Director) for your project before you apply. For example, you could apply to set up a small animal lab with live animals in your department and

then find out after receiving the grant that your administration is not going to allow you to have live animals.

7. Keep in mind that construction projects on your school campus likely will require some type of permitting process. New permanent buildings on school campuses require approval from NC DPI and will require engineer-signed or stamped design drawings. Some municipalities and counties will require additional plans prior to issuing permits. This process can be lengthy and may require more time than this grant cycle to complete. Typically non-permanent construction does not require permits and approvals. Discuss your project ideas with your administration and school system facilities personnel prior to applying for a grant if you plan construction.
8. Grant funds can be handled by your school or school system. Good bookkeeping is a necessity for this grant. These are State of North Carolina funds and are subject to audit by the state auditor. Our suggestion is to run your funds through your school system accounts. They handle state money and know the accounting requirements. Please do not include any administration fees/charges in the grant application.
9. The point of contact for the grant is the person who will correspond with the state office. We expect all reports to be on time and accurate. If the agricultural education teacher is the point of contact, we expect good communication between the NCSU project coordinator and yourself.
10. Any middle or high school agricultural education program can apply for the NC TTFC Agricultural Education Program Improvement Grant in public, private, or charter schools. Priority will be given to schools that have not received a previous grant. Grant applications will be evaluated and ranked by our grant evaluators. Therefore, if you have received previous grants and have a good grant project idea, you should apply.
11. Grant funds can be used to purchase equipment, computers, textbooks, resource materials, FFA equipment, etc. as well as upgrades, additions, or to build new labs.
12. Projects should have an impact on your school and community. Refer to the impact table in the application for some of the measurable impacts.
13. Schools that are awarded grants are required to send one or more persons to a grant meeting prior to the dispersal of the first half of the grant funds. These meetings will be held regionally across the state and announced shortly after the

grant winners are chosen. We prefer that the person that will be heading the grant and completing grant reports attend this meeting.

14. The North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund Commission asks that you provide as much publicity of your project as possible within your community, school system, and state. We further ask that you display the NC TTFC signage with your projects. The state agricultural education staff and representatives of the NC Tobacco Trust Fund Commission are likely to visit your school to observe your project any time in the future.
15. Please note that one half of the grant funds will be provided after you have turned in your signed contract and check presentation information. The second and final half of the grant funds will be provided once you submit your expense workbook with receipts proving that the project has been completed. Please note that you must have someone (usually the school or CTE department) to fund the project until its completion and payment of the second half of the grant.
16. This grant will run through parts of two different school years. If you know that you are planning to leave your present school before next year we ask that you do not apply.
17. A great deal of paperwork is required in the reporting portion of this grant. Grant reports must be completed on time and costs must be backed up with receipts for expenses. Make sure you are willing and committed to completing the reports prior to submitting your application.
18. The intent of the grant cannot change after the grant is started. Project alterations are allowed due to price increases or other factors; however, major changes are not allowed.
19. Items purchased with grant funds cannot be used for other purposes. Should an agricultural education program close within five years of the close of the contract date, any equipment purchased must be sold at fair market value and the funds returned to the Tobacco Trust Fund Commission.
20. Grant projects must be finished in one year (by the end of December 2020).