




March 21, 2022

TO: Eligible Applicants

FROM: Dr. Carmen I. Ayala 
State Superintendent of Education

SUBJECT: **NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO) / REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP):**
Fiscal Year 2023 Agricultural Education -- FCAE -- Work-based Learning

CSFA Number: 586-41-2829
CSFA Title: Agriculture Education FCAE - Work Based Learning
Program Overview

Eligibility and Application Information

Eligible Applicants: Community colleges and universities that offer a postsecondary agricultural program of study, Regional Offices of Education (ROEs), Intermediate Service Centers (ISCs), and nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply. For the purposes of this funding opportunity, a postsecondary agricultural program of study means a community college or university that offers a series of courses in agriculture, food, and natural resources (AFNR).

NOTE: The State of Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) requires applicants to complete Pre-qualification requirements before applying for any grant. This includes completion of the Grantee Registration and pre-qualification process through the Illinois GATA Web Portal at <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/GATA/Grantee/Pages/default.aspx>. Grant applications must be submitted by the application deadline indicated in this NOFO/RFP. Applicants are advised to complete the pre-qualification requirements well in advance of the NOFO/RFP deadline

Successful grant applicants will be required to complete an FY 2023 Fiscal and Administrative Risk Assessment in the form of an Internal Controls Questionnaire (ICQ) available through the GATA Web Portal, an FY 2023 Organizational Risk Assessment through the ISBE Web Application Security (IWAS) system, and the FY 2023 Programmatic Risk Assessment that is found within the electronic Grant Management System budget. Grant awards will not be executed until the FY 2023 ICQ, Organizational Risk Assessment, and Programmatic Risk Assessment are completed.

Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management (SAM): Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or federal or state awarding agency that is exempt from those requirements under 2 CFR § 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the federal or state awarding agency under 2 CFR § 25.110(d)) is required to:

- (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. If you are not registered in SAM, you may do so at www.sam.gov;
- (ii) Provide a valid DUNS number in its [application](#); and
- (iii) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active federal, federal pass-through, or state award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal or state awarding agency. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) may not consider an application for a federal pass-through or state award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements.

Code of Federal Regulations / Title 2 - Grants and Agreements / Vol. 1 / 2014-01-01192: Guidance is found at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2013-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2013-title2-vol1.pdf>.

This grant is subject to the provisions of:

- Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA), 30 ILCS 708/1 et seq. <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=3559&ChapterID=7>
- Administrative Rules for GATA, 44 Ill. Admin. Code Part 7000 <https://ilga.gov/commission/JCAR/admincode/044/04407000sections.html>.

Merit-Based Review and Selection Process for Competitive Grants: ISBE is required to design and execute a merit-based review and selection process for applications. This process is incorporated by reference in all applicable funding opportunities. Applicants are advised to refer to the ISBE merit-based review policy, which can be found at https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Merit_Based_Review_Policy.pdf.

Grant Award/Cost Sharing or Matching: One grant of \$146,500 is expected to be awarded. This grant can be renewed for up to two subsequent years pending appropriation and satisfactorily meeting grant requirements. Funding Information is on page 9. This NOFO/RFP does not have a cost matching requirement

Proposals that score less than 70 points will not be funded.

Grant Period: The grant period will begin no sooner than July 1, 2022, and will extend from the execution date of the grant until June 30, 2023. Successful applicants may reapply via continuing application for up to two additional year(s). Funding in the subsequent years will be contingent upon compliance with federal and state law, state grant-making rules, passage of sufficient appropriations for the program, and satisfactory performance in the preceding grant period. No promise or undertaking made in this NOFO/RFP is an assurance that a grant agreement will be renewed, nor does this NOFO/RFP create any right to or expectation of renewal.

Submission Dates and Times/Other Submission Requirements: Proposals can be submitted electronically through the ISBE Attachment Manager, or email no later than 4 p.m. on May 2, 2022. Directions for submission method are found below.

Electronic Submission: Completed proposals submitted electronically should be scanned into PDF with all supporting documents and required signatures. The ISBE Attachment Manager is found at <https://sec1.isbe.net/attachmgr/default.aspx>. Choose **Staci Hardin** from the drop-down menu in Receiver Information. Submit the application using the button at the bottom of the page.

Late proposals will not be accepted.

Grant Award Notice: It is anticipated that successful applicants will receive a Notice of Award via email approximately 90 days after the application deadline. The award letter is NOT an authorization to begin performance or expenditures. After the merit-based appeal timeframe has ended, awardees will receive additional information from the program area that includes the next steps for finalizing the grant. Monies spent prior to programmatic approval are done so at the applicant's own risk.

Technical Assistance Session: A technical assistance session will be held at **March 28, 2022**. Registration information is found at <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Agriculture-Education.aspx>. Live attendance **is not** required; however, proposals will not be accepted by anyone who does not attend the live technical assistance session or watch the recording.

Changes to NOFO/RFP: ISBE will post any changes made to the NOFO/RFP prior to [April 25, 2022](#), at <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Request-for-Proposals.aspx>. Applicants are advised to check the site before submitting a proposal.

Agency Contact/Contact to Request Application Package: For more information on this NOFO/RFP, contact [Staci Hardin](mailto:ag_ed@isbe.net) at ag_ed@isbe.net or [Marci Johnson](mailto:marci.johnson@isbe.net) at cte@isbe.net. All questions asked concerning this NOFO/RFP will be responded to in a Frequently Asked Questions document found at <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Agriculture-Education.aspx> so all respondents can see all questions and the responses to the questions. Changes to the FAQ will not be made after [April 25, 2022](#). Applicants are advised to check the site before submitting a proposal.

General Information

Program Background and Description

Program Purpose:

Legislation [105 ILCS 5/2.3.80] directs ISBE to establish a state program for agricultural education as part of the curriculum of the prekindergarten-through-adult public school system. ISBE has established the Facilitating Coordination in Agricultural Education (FCAE) project to award one or more grants to facilitate and coordinate agricultural education programs in Illinois. This FCAE grant, called Work-based Learning (WBL), is intended to provide students and teachers in Illinois with school-based agricultural education programs information and resources relating to student engagement in Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) programs. This project is also intended to coordinate efforts between school-based agricultural education (SBAE) and the agricultural science and business community to improve SAE programs. Coordination of SAE-related statewide contracts as economically advantageous for agricultural education programs and SAE-based awards and recognition programs is also included.

Program Description:

The successful applicant of this grant program will provide professional staff to implement activities and initiatives to accomplish the purposes outlined above. Regular activities that should result from this project are:

1. Attending and participating in agricultural education-related meetings (staff, advisory, project, professional, section/district, etc.).
2. Training educators on current professional topics relating to implementation of SAEs in the local agricultural education program of study.
3. Developing, updating, and disseminating teacher resources for topics relating to the implementation of SAEs in the local agricultural education program of study.
4. Coordinating and implementing ISBE initiatives, such as the incorporation of the Illinois Learning Standards (including the Common Core State Standards for English language arts and mathematics and the Next Generation Science Standards), into learning and growth plans for SAE programs.
5. Coordinating a statewide system of student-led agricultural science fair projects.
6. Implementing a statewide system of individual student awards and recognition for demonstrated proficiency in one or more areas of the agriculture, food, and natural resources industry.

Program Background/History:

Section 2-3.80 of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/2.3.80] established the agricultural education program to ensure the provision of agricultural education in the curriculum of the prekindergarten-through-adult public school system. Under the law, ISBE is to establish and maintain an agricultural education program such that the state has an adequate supply of trained and skilled individuals that is representative of racial and ethnic groups for the agriculture industry.

As part of its responsibilities for agricultural education, ISBE in coordination with the Illinois Committee for Agricultural Education (ICAE) and the Illinois Leadership Council for Agricultural Education (ILCAE), must:

1. Develop a curriculum and strategy for the purpose of establishing a source of trained and qualified individuals in agriculture,
2. Promote a strategy for articulating Illinois' program in agricultural education throughout the public school system, and
3. Offer a consumer education outreach strategy regarding the importance of agricultural education in Illinois.

The FCAE grant program is how ISBE, in large part, facilitates the accomplishment of these collective goals. Each NOFO/RFP utilizes defined program objectives specific to that particular FCAE grant and then utilizes align performance measures to regularly assess the achievement, progress, and efficiency of the selected grantee.

Program Objectives:

Aligned with the responsibilities outlined above, the FCAE project to be funded under this NOFO/RFP must include activities and services designed to meet the following goals:

1. Coordination of the identification, compilation, and dissemination of information and resources relating to SAE programs and maintenance of said resources on the agricultural education website found at www.ilaged.org.
2. Coordination of efforts among the agricultural science and business community and agricultural educators to improve SAE programs.
3. Coordination of statewide contracts as economically advantages for agricultural education programs. Statewide contracts funded through this NOFO/RFP must be relating to work-based learning opportunities and recordkeeping of SAE programs.

Policy Requirements:

Please refer to 105 ILCS 5/2-3.80 and 23 Ill. Adm. Code 75 Subpart E Facilitating the Coordination of Agricultural Education.

Terms:

The applicant must certify that he or she has read, understood, and will comply with the assurances listed below, as applicable to the program for which funding is requested.

1. No subcontracts or subgrants are allowed without prior written approval of the State Superintendent of Education. If subcontracts or subgrants are allowed, then all project responsibilities are to be retained by the grantee to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the grant. All subcontracts and subgrants must be documented and must have the prior written approval of the State Superintendent of Education. Approval of subcontracts and subgrants shall be subject to the same criteria as are applied to the original proposal/application.
2. The grantee shall submit a mid-term report and final narrative report regarding the services and activities provided and their impact on agricultural education in a format and according to timelines specified by the State Superintendent of Education or designee. The final report shall include either one copy of printed materials developed through the project or electronic access to those materials.
3. Funds received under this program must be used to supplement, and not supplant, state or federal funds that would otherwise be used for authorized activities.
4. The grantee shall designate a project director, who will have responsibility for coordinating all grant activities with staff in the ISBE Department of CTE and Innovation. The project director will attend monthly project meetings with the agency's principal consultant for agricultural education and prepare, submit, and maintain all written project documentation, including, but not limited to, budget amendments, mid-year and final reports, expenditure reports, and other information related to personnel.
5. The grantee shall be required to attend the meetings of ILCAE and the ICAE.
6. Funds may not be used for out-of-state travel unless first approved by the State Board of Education at least 30 days in advance of the first day of travel. Requests for approval shall contain the name or description of the function that personnel will be attending, number of travelers, projected cost, dates of travel, and benefit to the project. Out-of-state travel will be approved only if it is related to or benefits the project.
7. The initial NOFO/RFP and each continuation application shall specify the indirect cost rate to be used for the grant period, provided that in no case shall the indirect cost rate exceed 8 percent.
8. Staff changes for district program advisers may only be made contingent upon an initial six-month program evaluation. Grantee may designate new project director, administrative support staff, and other positions as proposed in their original application. Program adviser roles may not be changed until after initial six-month program evaluation is completed.

Performance Measures:

The following Performance Measures identify those quantifiable metrics that will be utilized to biannually assess the effectiveness of the coordination of this FCAE project.

1. 100 percent of students enrolled in SBAE programs participate in a Supervised Agricultural Experience project documented through comprehensive project records.
2. 100 percent of SBAE teachers in Illinois participate in professional development opportunities specific to management and promotion of SAE programs.
3. 100 unique employers in the AFNR industry are engaged in statewide programs or advisory roles relating to SAE programs.
4. 100 percent of students enrolled in SBAE programs in Illinois participate in SAE-based awards and recognition programs, such as FFA Proficiency Awards and/or Agriscience Fair.

Targets:

The following targets identify those quantifiable goals that will be utilized to biannually assess the effectiveness of the coordination of this FCAE project.

1. At least 15 percent of students enrolled in SBAE programs participate in a Supervised Agricultural Experience project documented through comprehensive project records.
2. At least 25 percent of SBAE teachers in Illinois participate in professional development opportunities specific to management and promotion of SAE programs.
3. At least 25 unique employers in the AFNR industry are engaged in statewide programs or advisory roles relating to SAE programs.
4. At least 5 percent of students enrolled in SBAE programs in Illinois participate in SAE-based awards and recognition programs, such as FFA Proficiency Awards and/or Agriscience Fair.

Performance Standards:

The following Performance Standards define the minimum achievement desired for each of the measures outlined above. Successful applicants must plan to meet or exceed these standards on an annual and ongoing basis.

1. At least 10 percent of students enrolled in SBAE programs participate in a Supervised Agricultural Experience project documented through comprehensive project records.
2. At least 10 percent of SBAE teachers in Illinois participate in professional development opportunities specific to management and promotion of SAE programs.
3. At least 10 unique employers in the AFNR industry are engaged in statewide programs or advisory roles relating to SAE programs.
4. At least 3 percent of students enrolled in SBAE programs in Illinois participate in SAE-based awards and recognition programs, such as FFA Proficiency Awards and/or Agriscience Fair.

Deliverables and Milestones:

The following deliverables are annually required from the grantee:

1. Submit a mid-year report that includes information on all Performance Measures.
2. Complete a final narrative report prior to the approval of the following fiscal year's grant indicating the program impact and achievement of the designed Performance Measures.
3. Document and keep on file work product and/or evidence of completed activities, partners, documents, publications or other educational tools that are developed, time and data summary reports, and expenditures. These items should be uploaded or linked in the final narrative report.
4. Attend and report at regularly scheduled meetings of ICAE and ILCAE to include information on all Performance Measures.

Quarterly Report Measure

Each quarter of the fiscal year, the successful applicant of this grant program should submit a form created by ISBE each quarter by email to ag_ed@isbe.net which reports on meeting the report measures identified below:

Quarter 1 Report Measures (July 1-September 30):

1. Progress report on the percentage of students enrolled in SBAE programs with an SAE project documented in the reporting period.
2. Progress report on the percentage of teachers that have participated in professional development specific to SAE programs in the current fiscal year.

3. Progress report on the number of employers in the AFNR industry engaged in SAE improvement to include prospective employers not yet contacted.

Quarter 2 Report Measures (October 1-December 31):

1. Progress report on the percentage of students enrolled in SBAE programs with an SAE project documented between July 1-December 31.
2. Progress report on the percentage of teachers that have participated in professional development specific to SAE programs in the current fiscal year.
3. Progress report on the number of employers in the AFNR industry engaged in SAE improvement to include prospective employers not yet contacted.

Quarter 3 Report Measures (January 1-March 31):

1. Progress report on the percentage of students enrolled in SBAE programs with an SAE project documented between July 1-March 31.
2. Progress report on the percentage of teachers that have participated in professional development specific to SAE programs in the current fiscal year.
3. Progress report on the number of employers in the AFNR industry engaged in SAE improvement to include prospective employers not yet contacted.
4. Progress report on the number of students enrolled in SBAE that have participated in SAE-based awards programs to include a breakdown by award program.

Quarter 4 Report Measures (April 1-June 30):

1. Progress report on the percentage of students enrolled in SBAE programs with an SAE project documented between July 1-June 30.
2. Progress report on the percentage of teachers that have participated in professional development specific to SAE programs in the current fiscal year.
3. Progress report on the number of employers in the AFNR industry engaged in SAE improvement to include prospective employers not yet contacted.
4. Progress report on the number of students enrolled in SBAE that have participated in SAE-based awards programs to include a breakdown by award program.

Funding Information

Introduction:

The final amount to be awarded will depend upon the satisfactory progress toward the grant objectives and goals and the total appropriation for the project. One grant for \$146,500 is expected to be awarded in each of fiscal years 2023, 2024, and 2025 for the purposes outlined in this NOFO/RFP, for a total of \$439,500 over those three years.

Cost Sharing or Matching:

This NOFO/RFP does not have a cost matching requirement.

Indirect Cost Rate:

The federal Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 requires that grantees be provided the opportunity to seek indirect cost reimbursements based on negotiated indirect cost reimbursement rates. Rates are determined and applied as follows.

Local Education Agencies

- Local Education Agency (LEA) indirect cost rates are developed in accordance with a delegation of authority agreement between ISBE and the U. S. Department of Education (ED). The plan includes both a restricted and unrestricted rate for each individual LEA. Both the restricted and unrestricted LEA rates are published on the ISBE website. The FY 2019 rates are available at <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Indirect-Cost-Rate-Plan.aspx>. In the past, only the restricted rate was allowed when budgeting indirect cost reimbursements.

LEAs have the ability to seek indirect cost reimbursement at the published unrestricted rate for any program other than those identified as restricted by ED.

- Newly organized LEAs, ROEs, ISCs, area vocational centers, charter schools, university laboratory schools, and governmental entities formed by a joint agreement among LEAs utilize either the statewide average of LEA unrestricted or restricted indirect rates as appropriate, depending on program.
- LEAs that jointly administer federal program(s) utilize either the approved unrestricted or restricted indirect cost rates for the administrative district of the joint program as appropriate, depending on program.

Non-LEAs

- Programs eligible for an unrestricted indirect cost rate; not-for-profit entities; community-/faith-based organizations; and other non-LEA, non-university subgrantees utilize rates negotiated through the Governor's Office of Management and Budget centralized process in which they will have the option to:
 - o Select the 10 percent de minimis rate.
 - o Submit documentation supporting a rate determined through negotiation with their federal cognizant agency.
 - o Negotiate a rate.

Non-LEA, non-university grantees may initiate the unrestricted indirect cost rate negotiation process through the GATA grantee portal at <https://grants.illinois.gov/portal/>.

- Federal programs requiring the use of a restricted indirect cost rate, not-for-profit entities, community-/faith-based organizations, and other non-LEA subgrantees shall utilize the 8 percent default rate described at 34 CFR 76.564.
- Colleges and universities will be limited to a maximum indirect cost rate of 8 percent or other indirect cost rate calculated by their cognizant federal agency, whichever is less, for grants administered by ISBE.

Costs associated with Fiscal Support Services (2520), Internal Support Services (2570), Staff Support Services (2640), Data Processing Services (2660), and Direction of Business Support Services (2510) charged to the Educational Fund are properly budgeted as indirect costs.

Funding Restrictions: [Rules Part 75 Section 75.440](#)

This state grant will use indirect cost rates not to exceed 8 percent.

Reporting Requirements

Periodic financial reporting should be completed at a minimum of quarterly via the IWAS system. Programmatic reporting should be completed at a minimum of annually via the IWAS system. Additional reporting requirements are listed below.

Additional reporting requirements:

1. One mid-year progress report. (See Deliverables and Milestones on page 7.)
2. Final end-of-year progress report. (See Deliverables and Milestones on page 7.)
3. Attendance and progress report at scheduled meetings of ICAE.
4. Attendance and progress report at scheduled meetings of ILCAE.
5. Attendance at monthly Illinois agricultural education state staff meetings to include representation from all FCAE grant projects (Local Program Support, Work-based Learning, and Curricular Resource Management), the Illinois FFA Center, and ISBE.

Content and Form of Application Submission

Instructions: Each application must be submitted in the format outlined below to be considered complete. A complete application will include all required components (the numbered items below) and signatures when mentioned. Please use the checkboxes in front of the numbers as a checklist when assembling your completed application. It is advised to attach a copy of the completed checklist with the application.

- 1. Uniform Application for State Grant Assistance (Attachment 1):** Include the name, address, and telephone and fax numbers of the entity; email, name, and telephone number of the contact person; Federal Employer Identification number; DUNS number; SAM CAGE Code; and all other listed information. The Application page must be signed by the official authorized to submit proposals.
- 2. Proposal Abstract (Attachment 2A):** Include a summary of your proposal. *Not to exceed one page.*
- 4. Program Narrative (Attachment 2B):** Include a maximum 10 pages. *Follow the specifications found under Program Narrative Requirements on page 12.*
- 5. Objectives and Activities (Attachment 3):** Include a maximum 10 pages. *Follow the specifications found under Objectives and Activities Requirements beginning on page 12.*
- 6. Proposal Evaluation Design (Attachment 4):** Include a maximum 5 pages. *Follow the specification found under Program Evaluation Design Requirements on page 13.*
- 7. State Budget Summary and Payment Schedule (Attachment 5A):** The budget MUST be submitted on this form. No other budget form will be accepted. District budgets MUST be signed by the district superintendent. Other applicants should have an official who is authorized sign the form. The payment schedule should be based on the projected date of expenditures. Salaries and fringe benefits should be requested in equal intervals on the schedule. Supplies, equipment, contracted services and professional development should be requested in the month for which the expenditure is anticipated.
- 8. Budget Summary Breakdown (Attachment 5B):** The Budget Summary Breakdown MUST include descriptions of the anticipated expenditures, correlated to the line items set forth on the State Budget Summary and Payment Schedule. The Budget Summary Breakdown should also include subcontract information, if applicable.

Program Narrative Requirements

The purpose of the Program Narrative form is to establish the comprehensive need for the program and the credibility of the proposed applicant in managing the program.

A. Complete the Program Narrative form to include at least the following items:

1. Explain the need for facilitation and coordination of agricultural education in the State of Illinois, specifically addressing the need for the facilitation and coordination of Supervised Agricultural Experience programs.
2. Explain the need for identifying and addressing barriers for inclusion, equity, and diversity in the agricultural industry.
3. Explain the need for identifying and addressing barriers for inclusion, equity, and diversity in education and especially agricultural education, specific to implementation of SAE programs.
4. Provide detailed biographies of individuals involved in the project and their experiences with agricultural education, including middle and high school, postsecondary, administration of related programs, and engagement with agricultural industry. (Attach as an addendum to the application.)
5. Explain how state resources will be used cost-effectively, as evidenced by the amounts requested for the proposed activities in relation to the numbers to be served and the services to be provided, and sufficient evidence is presented of the applicant's financial stability.

B. Objectives and Activities Requirements

The purpose of the Objectives and Activities form is to describe the activities proposed as they align with the established goals for this specific FCAE grant project. This form should be organized using the following goals in the order they appear below:

- Goal 1. Coordination of resources relating to SAE programs and on www.ilaged.org.
- Goal 2. Coordination of efforts among industry and educators to improve SAE programs.
- Goal 3. Coordination of statewide contracts relating to WBL and SAE recordkeeping.

Ensure that this section includes each of the components listed below:

1. Professional learning opportunities and technical assistance activities that will accomplish the purposes and objectives set forth in this NOFO/RFP. Approaches to these components are effective, relevant, and comprehensive in scope.
2. Understanding of the AFNR industry, generally, and of agricultural education in prekindergarten-through-adult audiences, specifically. The services and activities that are proposed will be accessible to teachers and others throughout the state.
3. Capabilities to review, modify, and develop (as needed) agricultural education instructional resources designed to improve and enhance the quality of SAE programs. Understanding of the relationships of SAE programs to the Illinois Learning Standards is evident.
4. Skills related to website management are clearly articulated and adequate for maintaining and updating, as needed, the FCAE agricultural education [website](#) and support content for the ISBE agricultural education webpage.
5. Qualifications of staff and any proposed subcontractors demonstrate extensive experience in delivering the services and activities proposed. The applicant has presented convincing evidence of its ability to manage large-scale programs on a statewide or comparable basis.
6. Evaluation strategies are likely to gauge the effectiveness of the services that are provided and measure the impact that the activities will have on agricultural education statewide, while yielding sufficient data that can be used to improve agricultural education through the project.
7. Use of existing resources, leveraging a variety of state and local resources in delivering and coordinating its activities and work.
8. Strategies to incorporate principles of equity and inclusion, using National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE) resources as a foundation. This plan should consider, at a minimum, the following:

- a. Home postsecondary institution;
- b. Nontraditional college students (married, parent/guardian, or first-generation college student);
- c. Students identifying as a minority group in agriculture (race/ethnicity, gender/sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religion/spirituality, citizenship, etc.).

C. Evaluation Design Requirements

The purpose of the Evaluation Design form is to outline and describe an annual, third-party evaluation of the project to measure the effectiveness of the project on an ongoing basis. The third party must be experienced with the needs of local agricultural education programs. At a minimum, ensure this section includes:

1. Continuous improvement plan and methodology is aligned with the minimum Performance Standards and Performance Measures listed on page 6 of this NOFO/RFP and with the components outlined in 2, 3, and 4 below.
2. Plan for Illinois agricultural education teachers to provide both formative and summative feedback to project staff and the designated coordinator.
3. Process for external evaluation of partners and subcontractors and a response to the evaluations and feedback for program improvement.
4. Process for external evaluation of this FCAE project to include feedback from Illinois agricultural education students, teachers, and administrators and a response to the feedback for program improvement. Feedback sought by the external evaluating organization must not be filtered or selected in any way by project staff.

Review Criteria

Application Review and Selection Process

The selection of the grantees will be based upon the overall quality of the application. The scoring is based upon the following criteria:

- Need is defined as the identification of stakeholders, facts, and evidence that demonstrate the proposal supports the grant program purpose.
- Capacity is defined as the ability of an entity to execute the grant project according to the project requirements.
- Quality is defined as the totality of features and characteristics of a service, project, or product that indicate its ability to satisfy the requirements of the grant program.
- Evaluation is defined as the overall impact of planned activities toward meeting or exceeding Performance Standards and measures through qualitative and quantitative evaluation methodologies and data collection.

Proposals that score less than 70 points will not be funded.

Priority Points

The proposal includes a plan for identification and recruitment of new industry partners for the betterment of agricultural education statewide programs relating to student participation in SAE projects. (Five points are possible.)

Tiebreaker

In the event of a tie, the proposal with the best plan for identification, development, and dissemination of resources relating to innovate, non-traditional SAE programs to increase access to SAE-related agricultural education activities will be selected as the winner.

Evaluation Criteria

These overall criteria are built into the rubric below. The attachment number in the parenthesis following the criteria lists the portion of the proposal that will be used to determine if the criteria has been met. The points for each criterion section as well as the individual criteria are also included in the rubric.

Criteria	Points
Section 1: Need	15
Section 2: Capacity	10
Section 3: Quality	55
Section 4: Evaluation	20
Total	100
Priority Bonus Points	5
Grand Total	105

Following the notification of grant awards, an applicant may request copies of reviewer scores and comments by contacting [Staci Hardin](mailto:Staci.Hardin@ag_ed@isbe.net) at ag_ed@isbe.net.

Selection criteria and point values are as follows:

Not Provided	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited	Moderate	Strong	Very Strong
0	1	2	3	4	5
Proposal requirements are absent.	Proposal provides very few details to meet the project outcomes.	Proposal is unclear and lacks enough evidence to meet project outcomes.	Proposal provides moderate detail and conveys potential to meet project outcomes.	Proposal provides good detail and solid evidence to meet project outcomes.	Proposal exceeds expectations and provides a strong plan to meet project outcomes.

Section 1: Need (15 Points) In describing the need for a statewide system of agricultural education...	Possible Points
The proposal includes an explanation of the need for facilitation and coordination of agricultural education in the State of Illinois, specifically addressing the need for the facilitation and coordination of Supervised Agricultural Experience programs. Program Narrative Requirements, 1	5
The proposal includes an explanation of the need for identifying and addressing barriers for inclusion, equity, and diversity in the agricultural industry. Program Narrative Requirements, 2	5
The proposal includes an explanation of the need for identifying and addressing barriers for inclusion, equity, and diversity in education and especially agricultural education, specific to implementation of SAE programs. Program Narrative Requirements, 3	5
Section 2: Capacity (10 Points) In describing the ability of the applicant to achieve the project goals...	Possible Points
The proposal includes detailed biographies of individuals involved in the project and their experiences with agricultural education, including middle and high school, postsecondary, administration of related programs, and engagement with agricultural industry. (Attach as an addendum to the application.) Program Narrative Requirements, 4	5
The proposal represents a cost-effective use of state resources, as evidenced by the amounts requested for the proposed activities in relation to the numbers to be served and the services to be provided. Sufficient evidence of the applicant's financial stability is presented. Program Narrative Requirements, 5	5
Section 3: Quality (55 Points) In describing the activities proposed as they align with the established goals of this NOFO/RFP...	Possible Points
The proposal includes professional learning opportunities that will accomplish the purposes and objectives set forth in this NOFO/RFP. Approaches to these components are effective, relevant, and comprehensive in scope. Program Narrative Requirements, B	5
The proposal includes technical assistance activities that will accomplish the purposes and objectives set forth in this NOFO/RFP. Approaches to these components are effective, relevant, and comprehensive in scope. Program Narrative Requirements, B	5
The proposal demonstrates an understanding of the agriculture, food and natural resource industry, generally, and of agricultural education in prekindergarten-through-adult audiences, specifically.. Program Narrative Requirements, B	5

The services and activities that are proposed will be accessible to teachers and others throughout the State. Program Narrative Requirements, 1	5
Sufficient evidence is presented of the applicant’s capabilities to review, modify, and develop (as needed) agricultural education instructional resources designed to improve and enhance the quality of SAE programs. Understanding of the relationships of SAE programs to the Illinois Learning Standards is evident. Program Narrative Requirements, B	5
Skills related to website management are clearly articulated and adequate for maintaining and updating, as needed, the FCAE agricultural education website Program Narrative Requirements, B	5
Skills related to website management are clearly articulated and adequate to support content for the State Board of Education’s ISBE agricultural education web page. Program Narrative Requirements, B	5
The qualifications of staff and any proposed subcontractors demonstrate extensive experience in delivering the services and activities proposed. The applicant has presented convincing evidence of its ability to manage large-scale programs on a statewide or comparable basis. Program Narrative Requirements, B	5
The evaluation strategies are likely to gauge the effectiveness of the services provided and measure the impact that the activities will have on agricultural education statewide, while yielding sufficient data that can be used to improve agricultural education through the project. Program Narrative Requirements, B	5
The applicant proposes use of existing resources, leveraging a variety of state and local resources in delivering and coordinating its activities and work. Program Narrative Requirements, B	5
The proposal identifies strategies to incorporate principles of equity and inclusion, using NAPE resources as a foundation. This plan should consider, at a minimum, the following: (1) Home postsecondary institution; (2) Nontraditional college students (married, parent/guardian, or first-generation college student); and (3) Students identifying as a minority group in agriculture (race/ethnicity, gender/sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religion/spirituality, citizenship, etc.). Program Narrative Requirements, B	5
Section 4: Evaluation (20 Points) In describing the proposed plan for evaluation and continuous improvement of the project...	Possible Points
The proposal’s continuous improvement plan and methodology is aligned with the minimum Performance Standards and Performance Measures listed on page 5 of this NOFO/RFP and with the components outlined in the next three boxes. Program Narrative Requirements, C	5
The proposal includes a plan for Illinois agricultural education teachers to provide both formative and summative feedback to project staff and the designated coordinator. Program Narrative Requirements, C	5
The proposal includes a process for external evaluation of partners and subcontractors and a response to the evaluations and feedback for program improvement. Program Narrative Requirements, C	5
The proposal includes a process for external evaluation of this FCAE project to include feedback from Illinois agricultural education students, teachers, and administrators and a response to the feedback for program improvement. Feedback sought by the external evaluating organization must not be filtered or selected in any way by FCAE project staff. Program Narrative Requirements, C	5

