

**Bioenergy Research Initiative**  
**New and Emerging Crops Program**  
**Innovations to Advance the Agricultural Economy**

**Fiscal Year 2024-25**  
**Information and Guidelines**

**Grant Application Due Date:**

**Friday, October 25, 2024**  
**Close of Business**



**North Carolina Department of Agriculture  
& Consumer Services**

300 Providence Road

Oxford, NC 27565

(919) 693-2483

**Steve Troxler - Commissioner**

The forms in this manual may be reproduced.  
Additional copies of this publication may be obtained from our website at:  
<https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/research-stations/BRI/NECP/IAAE>

## Program Solicitation Information

### **Funding Opportunity from NCDA&CS: Bioenergy Research Initiative, New and Emerging Crops Program, Innovations to Advance the Agricultural Economy**

**Dates:** Applications must be sent **electronically** to Allison Medlin, Administrative Assistant at [Allison.medlin@ncagr.gov](mailto:Allison.medlin@ncagr.gov) by **COB on Friday, October 25, 2024**. Please email Application documents in their **Original format (WORD/EXCEL)**.

Mail one (1) original application packet with appropriate signatures to:  
NCDA&CS BRI/NECP/IAAE  
Oxford Research Station  
300 Providence Rd.  
Oxford, NC 27565

**Executive Summary:** The North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA&CS) requests applications for the fiscal year 2024-25. Projects will be reviewed, selected, and modified as necessary. The Department has \$1.5 million to support this grant program for this fiscal year. These funds are for projects that enhance the competitiveness of agricultural commodities in the following categories: Bioenergy Research Initiative (BRI), New and Emerging Crops Program (NECP), and Innovations to Advance the Agricultural Economy (IAAE). Hence the combined acronym (BRI/NECP/IAAE) might be referred to as “this/the Program.”

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## I. GENERAL INFORMATION

### PURPOSE

Agriculture is North Carolina's number one industry and contributes over \$100 billion to the state's economy each year. With funding provided by the North Carolina General Assembly since 2013, the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has led the N.C. Bioenergy Research Initiative with the mission to support the research and development of agricultural and forestry-based feedstocks for bioenergy production, agribusiness development and cooperative research for biofuels production within the state. In 2018 the General Assembly allocated funding at the Commissioner's request for a New and Emerging Crops Program. Its mission is to identify potential new crops and value-added products, and then provide the agricultural research, marketing support and grower education needed to make these crops viable options for North Carolina growers. In 2024 the General Assembly voted to expand the scope of the combined programs to include Innovations to Advance the Agricultural Economy. This expansion is a commitment to address the needs of an ever-evolving agricultural economy by supporting innovative agricultural research projects.

The Program is organized under and administered by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Research Stations Division. A competitive grant process will support this Program with \$1,500,000 for the 2024-2025 grant cycle.

While not a requirement, research projects funded through the Program can be supported by one or more of the research stations or field laboratories strategically located across the state. North Carolina has a vast network of research farms with varying soil types and climatic conditions, plus an aquaculture facility, to support the production of a wide range of crops, livestock, and aquatic species.

The Research Stations Division request research proposals that support:

- Bioenergy Research
- New and Emerging Crops
- Innovations to Advance the Agricultural Economy

### ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligible applicants include institutions of higher learning, Cooperative Extension, commodity associations, non-profit and for-profit organizations.

Funding from this Program will NOT be granted for start-up businesses, collecting proprietary data, or indirect/overhead costs.

Grant funds will be awarded for projects of up to **three (3) years**.

More than one project application packet per applicant may be submitted.

### MULTI-STATE PROJECTS

Having other states collaborate on a project is allowed.

## II. FUNDING

### FUNDING SOURCE AND AVAILABLE FUNDS

The NCDA&CS is the funding entity and has the final approval for projects submitted.

**The maximum grant request amount for 2024-25 will be no more than \$150,000.**

The BRI/NECP/IAAE reserves the right to offer an award amount less than the amount requested in the application.

### REIMBURSEMENTS

Each payment is conditioned upon receipt and approval by the Program Grant Administrator for the deliverable(s) **specified in the Scope of Work** and shall be accompanied by reasonable assurance (documentation, receipts, invoices, etc.) that the goods and services for which payment is requested were received and performed.

## III. COMPLIANCE

### GENERAL COMPLIANCE

All awarded grant projects must comply with all applicable state laws and regulations and the terms of the grant award.

### DISAGREEMENT PROCESS

The Program reserves the right to reject any application packet due to ineligibility or requirements not met as stated in this grant information packet. Disagreements will be addressed pursuant to the North Carolina General Statutes.

### INDEMNIFICATION

The parties involved with a fully executed contract awarding funds to carry out a BRI/NECP/IAAE project agree that the State of North Carolina, its departments, agencies, boards and commissions shall be indemnified and held harmless by the contractor for the vicarious liability of the State because of entering into this contract. However, the parties further agree that the State of North Carolina, its departments, agencies, boards and commissions shall be responsible for its own negligence. Each party to a contract is responsible for its own negligence.

### NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Grantee agrees to comply with North Carolina General Statutes prohibiting discrimination in employment. Information on filing a claim with the NC Civil Rights Division can be found at <https://www.ncoah.com/civil/>.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

If awarded, non-governmental grantees must provide a copy of their approved current conflict of interest policies pursuant to NCGS 143C-6-23(b) if applicable.

### STATEMENT OF NO OVERDUE TAX DEBTS

If awarded, non-governmental grantees must provide a Statement of No overdue Tax Debts pursuant to NCGS 143C-6-23(c) if applicable.

## NON-AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

Every payment obligation of the State under a Grant Award Contract will be conditioned upon the availability of funds appropriated or allocated for the payment of such obligation. If funds are not allocated and available for the continuance of the Contract, it may be terminated by the State at the end of the period for which funds are available. No liability shall accrue to the State in the event this provision is exercised, and the State shall not be obligated or liable for any future payments or for any damages because of termination under this paragraph.

## RECORDS REQUIREMENTS

Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute and 7 C.F.R. § 3015.21 & 3016.42, the Grantee shall retain and shall contractually require each subcontractor to retain all Records for a period of five years after completion date indicated in the Contract and until any litigation, claim, negotiation, audit, cost recovery, or action involving the Records has been completed. All Records shall be subject to inspection and audit by the Program during normal business hours. Upon request, the Grantee shall produce the original or electronic copy of any or all Records.

## MONITORING

The Program reserves the right to perform site monitoring visits to all grantees to ensure that work is progressing within the required time frame and that fiscal procedures are followed accurately and appropriately. Monitoring includes both financial and program information as well as site visits.

## IV. APPLICATION

### TIMELINE

September, 2024	RFP and Press Release published
October 25, 2024	Applications due by COB
November, 2024	Applications reviewed
December, 2024	Awarded projects announced by NCDA&CS
January 2025	Contracts sent to grantees

### FORMATTING

All organizations **must** adhere to the following instructions, in addition to other requirements as stated in this grant information packet, to be considered eligible for grant funding. Applications **missing any of the subsequent information may be deemed ineligible**.

The Project Profile Template must be used as the format for the application. The complete 2025 Application Packet, including the Application Cover Page and 2025 Project Profile Template can be found at <https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/research-stations/BRI/NECP/IAAP>.

The Project Profile should include the project details and necessary information to fulfill the goals and objectives of the project. Project title must be six words or less. The acceptable font size for the narrative is 12 pitch with all margins at 1 inch.

### Required Attachments:

- IRS Tax Exempt Status for your organization if applicable.
- Biographical Sketches- Provide a resume or biographical sketch of each person who has primary responsibility for developing and implementing the project.
- Letters of Support- At least one letter, but no more than three, providing evidence of support for the project.

## ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWABLE COSTS

**Indirect or administrative costs are not allowed.**

Equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more must be pre-approved by the Agency. Purchasing parts to assemble into one piece of equipment is allowed. Parts should be listed under “Equipment”.

Travel costs including meals, lodging and mileage must follow the policies set forth in the [State of North Carolina Budget Manual](#).

**Travel Subsistence Rates Effective July 1, 2023 are subject to change.**

Expense	In-State	Out of State
Breakfast	\$10.10	\$10.10
Lunch	\$13.30	\$13.30
Dinner	\$23.10	\$26.30
Lodging (actual, up to)	\$89.10	\$105.20
<b>Maximum Allowed Daily Subsistence</b>	<b>\$135.60</b>	<b>\$154.90</b>
<b>Justification must be included for rates that exceed those in the above chart.</b>		
<b>Mileage: \$.67/mile</b>		

The Program has the right to disallow costs determined inappropriate or unreasonable. If you have questions concerning the allowability of costs after reviewing this section, please contact the Program Grant Administrator.

## APPLICATION REVIEW AND SCORING

All qualifying applications will be evaluated by the BRI/NECP/IAAE Review Committee. The Committee will review each application using standard and consistent review criteria. After the applications have been evaluated and rated, contract offer recommendations will be made to the Director of the Research Stations Division based on the rating and the strength of the project proposal as determined by the Committee. Upon approval, all projects will be compiled for final approval by the Commissioner.

The Review Committee may recommend adjustments to the project proposal, scope of work and/or project budget. The Program reserves the right to fund the project in part, add or delete tasks, and ask for clarification.

## V. POST AWARD INFORMATION

### NOTIFICATION OF AWARD

Successful applications will be chosen on the merits of the project and previous performance as determined by the Program Review Committee and will be recommended for funding to the Commissioner. Following approval by the Commissioner, applicants will be notified and will then be required to supply several supplemental forms (i.e. Conflict of Interest Policy, Sworn Statement of No Overdue Taxes, etc.) prior to being sent a Contract Award Agreement. The Contract Award Agreement will require grantees to agree to the clauses of the General Terms and Conditions. The Program anticipates that contract awards and notifications will be made in early 2025.

## REPORTING

- **Interim Performance Reports:**

Grantees must submit interim performance reports on a quarterly basis.

- **Final Report:**

A Final Report **will be due within 60 days following the completion of the project** or expiration of the Grant Award Contract.

Forms for reporting are available at <https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/research-stations/gafpri>.

**Failure to submit timely reports may result in the forfeiture of reimbursements.**

20% of the Grant Total will be withheld until the Final Performance Report is approved by the BRI/NECP/IAAE.

## REIMBURSEMENTS

Reimbursement requests may be submitted no more than monthly. Reimbursement request forms can be found at <https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/research-stations/gafpri>. An official invoice showing expenditures for the current period is acceptable.

## AMENDMENTS

Grantees are highly encouraged to include ample time for project completion. There is no penalty for completing all tasks in the work plan early. **Contract extensions are discouraged and will only be granted in extreme circumstances. All Contract extensions must be submitted at least six (6) weeks prior to the Contract end date.**

A Contract Award shall be modified by mutual written consent only through a Contract Award Amendment executed by the Program and the Grantee. Unauthorized changes to a Contract Award shall be void and without effect, and the Grantee shall not be entitled to any claim under a Contract based on those changes. Prior to initiating any paperwork, the Program Grant Administrator should be contacted. The Administrator will provide the information needed to begin the initial steps and forms needed to request a Contract Award Amendment.

## BUDGET REVISIONS

If a project budget adjustment is needed during the project period, a written request may be made to the Program Grant Administrator to reallocate budget funds between budget categories. However, the total budget amount, as dictated by the approved grant award, cannot be adjusted. **Any deviation from the approved budget will not be allowed without prior written approval by the BRI/NECP/IAAE.**

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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