



**NORTH CENTRAL  
EXTENSION  
RISK  
MANAGEMENT  
EDUCATION**



National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# **Extension Risk Management Education Competitive Grants Program**

**2024 RFA  
Applicant Webinar  
September 27, 2023**



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## **Outline**

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- **Risk Management Overview**
- **Request for Applications**
- **Evaluation Criteria**
- **Completing the Application**



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## Risk Management Overview



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## Risk Management Overview

### **Risk:**

Possible adverse event that has the potential to interfere with:

- Business entity's financial stability
- Ability to achieve mission



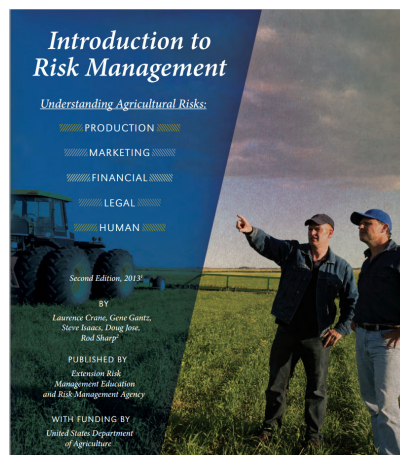
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## Risk Management Overview

### Universe of Risk:

- Production
- Marketing
- Financial
- Legal
- Human



Available in English and Spanish on the following webpage: <https://ncerme.org/about-risk-management-education>

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## Risk Management Overview

### Risk Management

- Tools and strategies reducing financial effects of risk
- Ability to run a business in rapidly changing business environment



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## Risk Management Overview

### Extension Risk Management Education



#### Mandate and Mission

- Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000
  - Education for producers in the “full range of risk management activities”
- 2018 Farm Bill
  - Education for producers underserved by Federal crop insurance



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## Risk Management Overview

### Program Goal:

To help farm and ranch families improve their economic viability through targeted risk management education.

- Participants in education programs achieve specified risk management outcomes



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## **Risk Management Overview**

### **What are Proposed Risk Management Outcomes?**

- Measurable and verifiable risk management actions that participants understand, develop, or implement
- Within 6 to 18 months



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## **Risk Management Overview**

### **Proposed Outcomes and the Theory of Change**

- How will your project lead farmers and ranchers to the desired risk management outcomes?
- What are your assumptions and rationale?
  - Why will your efforts/activities make a difference
  - What gaps does your project aim to fill
  - Why is this significant



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## **Risk Management Overview**

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### **Proposed Outcomes and the Theory of Change**

- Why does your project matter?
  - Improved risk management outcomes for farmers and ranchers
  - Improved project performance
  - Increased impacts for broader risk management education efforts



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## **Risk Management Overview**

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### **What are the Long-Term Impacts?**

- Projects help participants learn, achieve, or apply “best risk management practices”
- Methods and indicators that measure the use of these practices help document long-term impact



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## Risk Management Overview

A grant awarded is **an investment** made by the North Central Extension Risk Management Education Center to help producers achieve the proposed risk management outcomes.

**Return on investment:** changed behavior or actions taken by participants resulting in increased ability to manage risk.



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## Risk Management Overview

The Extension Risk Management Education program is committed to:

- **Fostering** risk management outcomes with real impacts for producers
- **Documenting** impacts through comprehensive, retrospective evaluation efforts
- **Demonstrating** impacts through evaluation results, success stories, and outstanding projects



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## Request for Applications



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## Request for Applications

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### **2024 RFA**

- Two Program Areas
  - Education Grants (incl. Exploratory Projects)
  - Producers Underserved by Crop Insurance Grants
- Released on September 14
- Applications are due no later than **5:00 PM CST on November 16, 2023**
- All applicants will be notified by February 9, 2024



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## Request for Applications

### Education Grants

- Education for producers in the “full range of risk management activities”
  - Education Projects
  - Exploratory Projects

### Producers Underserved by Crop Insurance Grants

- Education for producers underserved by federal crop insurance
  - Identification and justification of targeted producer audiences left to applicant



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## Request for Applications

### Education Grants

#### Education Projects: can address any of the five risk areas

- Programs should provide decision tools, practices, and other risk management strategies that producers can adopt to manage risk and improve their economic viability
- Consider emphasis on North Central Center regional priorities
- \$75,000 maximum
- Project timeline is April 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025 (18 months)
- No extensions



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## Request for Applications

### Education Grants

#### Exploratory Projects: for planning, development, or piloting efforts

- Goal of establishing an educational program, delivery plan, and collaboration that leads to an application for competitive grant funding in a future RFA
- \$10,000 maximum
- Project timeline is April 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025 (18 months)
- Abbreviated application template
- See instructions: <https://ncerme.org/erme-rfa> (see Step 7)



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## Request for Applications

### Education Grants Priority Language

- Cybersecurity
- Farm and Ranch Family Well-Being
- Labor Management and Retention
- Pest Management
- Weather and Climate Resilience
- Exploratory Projects



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## Request for Applications

### Producers Underserved by Crop Insurance Grants

- Projects can address any relevant risk area, recognizing that funding is specifically designated for the delivery of risk management education to agricultural producers underserved by crop insurance
  - Programs should provide decision tools, practices, and other risk management strategies that producers can adopt to manage risk and improve their economic viability
  - Consider emphasis on the North Central Center regional priorities
  - \$100,000 maximum
  - Project timeline is April 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025 (18 months)
  - No extensions



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## Request for Applications

### Producers Underserved by Crop Insurance Priority Language

- Crop Insurance Decisions
- Integrated Insurance Decisions, Price Risk Management, and Financial Business Management



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## Evaluation Criteria



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## Evaluation Criteria

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### Education Grants

- Proposed Outcomes 40%
- Regional Priorities 10%
- Outcomes Verification 10%
- Producer Demand 15%
- Team/Organizational Capacity & Collaborators 15%
- Review of Past Projects, Innovative Approach and Wide Application 10%

### Producers Underserved by Crop Insurance Grants

- Proposed Outcomes 40%
- Regional Priorities 10%
- Outcomes Verification 10%
- Underserved Audience 20%
- Team/Organizational Capacity & Collaborators 15%
- Innovative Approach and Wide Application 5%



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## Evaluation Criteria

### Proposed Outcomes – 40%

- Single most important factor in funding decisions
- Clear statement of what you “anticipate producers will understand, develop or implement”
- Realistic and attainable producer numbers
- Relative level of rigor associated with producer actions
- Specific actions, measurable and verifiable



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## Evaluation Criteria

### Looking at Proposed Outcomes

- What is the risk management improvement for producers?
- What is the producer action?
  1. Understand → Knowledge
  2. Develop → Actions
  3. Implement → Change/Conditions
- Plan outcomes to get the strongest actions possible



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## Evaluation Criteria

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### Looking at Proposed Outcomes

What is farm or ranch economic viability?

- To improve profitability
- To increase opportunities for equity growth over time



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## Evaluation Criteria

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### Regional Priorities – 10%

- The degree to which proposed outcomes address regional priorities as identified in the RFA
- Caveats
  - If addressing regional priorities, ensure they are an integral part of the project
  - Projects that do not address regional priorities are still valued and will be considered



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## Evaluation Criteria

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### Outcomes Verification – 10%

- How effective is the plan for evaluating and tracking producer progress toward achieving the proposed risk management outcomes?
  - How and when will outcomes be measured
  - How will you verify risk management outcomes were achieved
  - How will you establish & identify indicators for long-term outcomes



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## Evaluation Criteria

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### Why verify?

Think about the why measure question as you create the what to measure plan.

- Serve interests/relevance to producers
  - Measure changes in producer knowledge
- Serve interests of your program and the overall ERME program
  - Improve program planning and performance
  - Demonstrate impacts and public value



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## Evaluation Criteria

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### How will you verify?

What methods and questions will allow you to verify your outcomes and impacts?

- Make sure proposed outcomes are measurable or have measurable indicators (this impacts not just your evaluation plan but also the validity of your proposed outcomes)
- Consider evaluation and verification steps when planning education efforts
- Frame questions to appropriately and effectively deliver evaluation measures



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## Evaluation Criteria

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### Education Grants

#### Producer Demand – 15%

- Document the willingness of producers to participate
- Survey results; follow-up evaluations from prior workshops; benchmark information on participants' knowledge level and attitude
- A statement of risk management needs without any evidence of actual producer demand will not meet the requirements of this criterion.

### Producers Underserved by Crop Insurance Grants

#### Underserved Audience – 20%

- Evaluation based on the ability to define:
  - Who the producers are that are underserved by crop insurance
  - Why there is a low level of crop insurance participation and availability
  - Why existing crop insurance products do not provide an effective risk management tool
  - Why these producer types are not normally reached through other risk management tools of education offerings; this may include targeted underserved producer groups as identified in the RFA.
- Demonstrate how this audience will achieve access and participation through the proposed risk management education.



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## Evaluation Criteria

### Team/Organizational Capacity & Collaborators – 15%

- Equal value to team and collaborators
- Skills, knowledge, and experience of team and organization to effectively deliver risk management education projects
- Important to identify your project team and project collaborators and the specific role each will have in the project.



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## Evaluation Criteria

### Team/Organizational Capacity & Collaborators – 15%

- Evaluate how well-engaged collaborators will increase the likelihood of farmer/rancher participation and strengthen the project
- Collaborators provide technical expertise/knowledge
- Collaborators provide access to your target audience



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## Evaluation Criteria

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### Education Grants

#### Review of Past Projects, Innovative Approach & Wide Application – 10%

- The ability to build upon or collaborate with at least 2 previously funded ERME projects or alternatively, how it is a unique and innovative project
- Innovative approaches to develop or deliver training, materials, or tools
- Potential application of program, materials, and techniques to other areas, audiences and situations.

### Producers Underserved by Crop Insurance Grants

#### Innovative Approach & Wide Application – 5%

- The extent to which a project employs innovative approaches to develop or deliver training, materials or tools
- The extent to which program might have wide application; including adopting materials to specialized audiences, marketing and promotion techniques, eliciting high interest in crop insurance strategies with new methodologies, etc.



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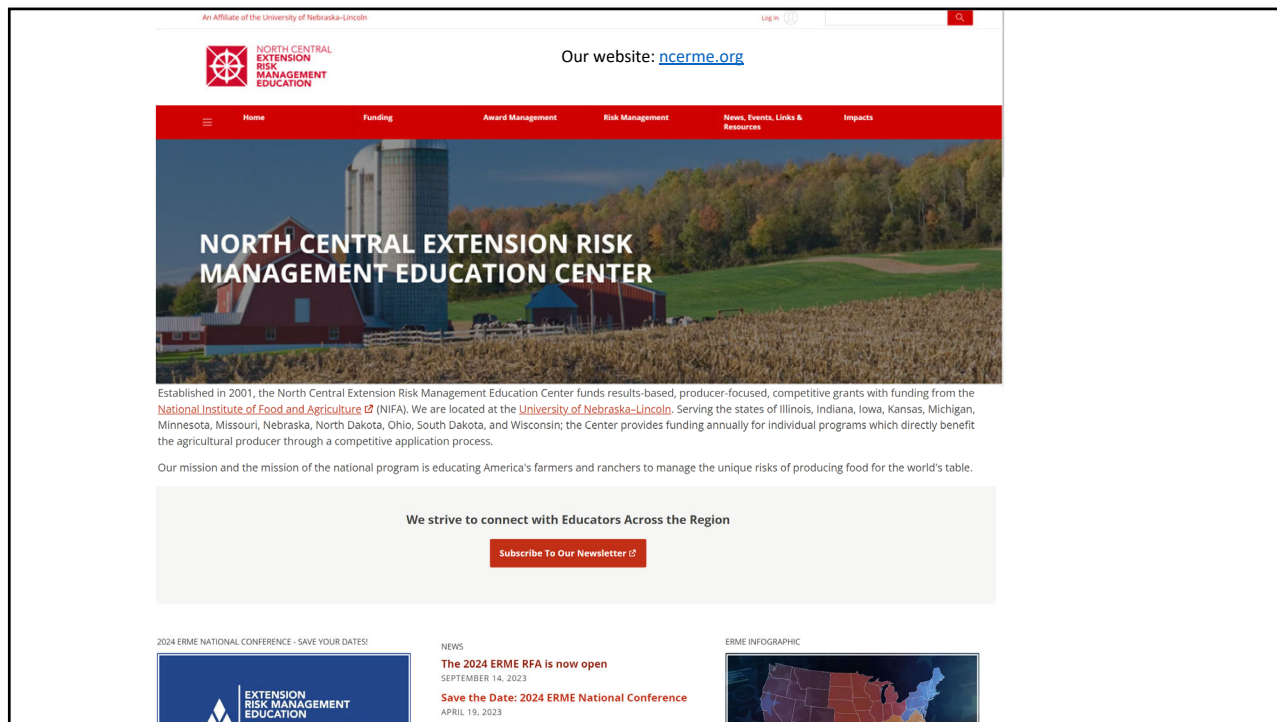


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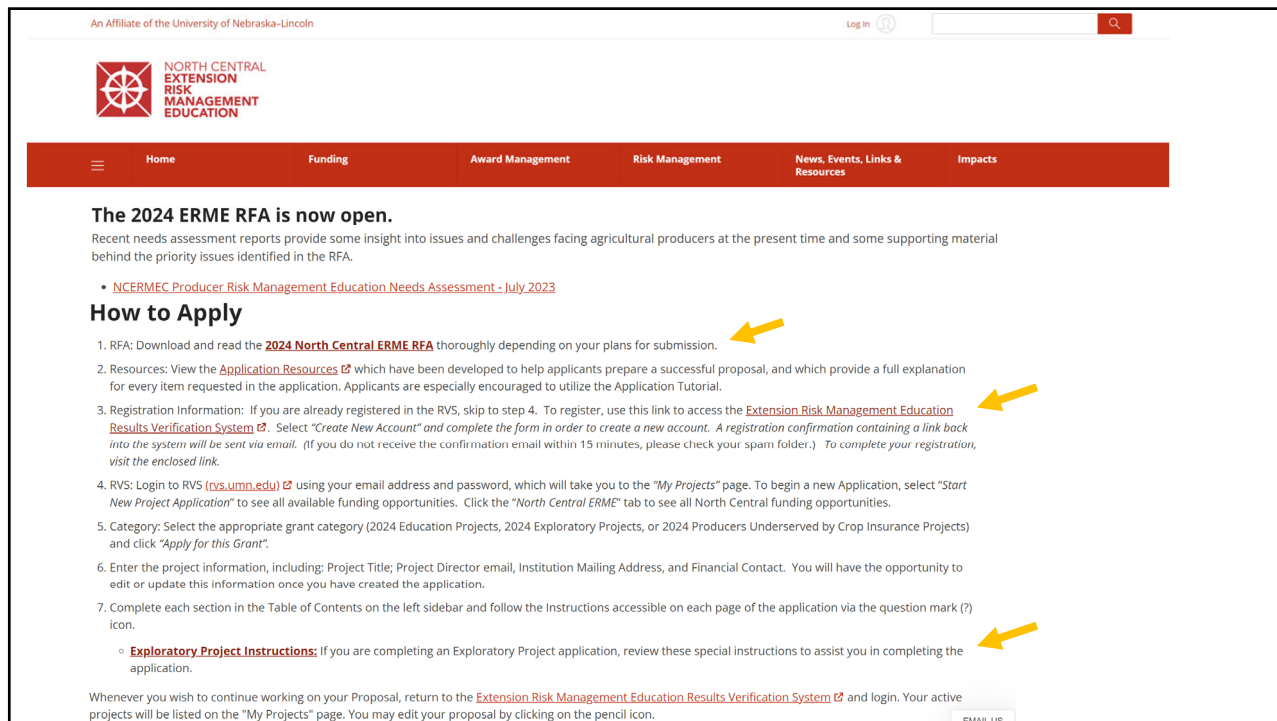
## Completing the Application



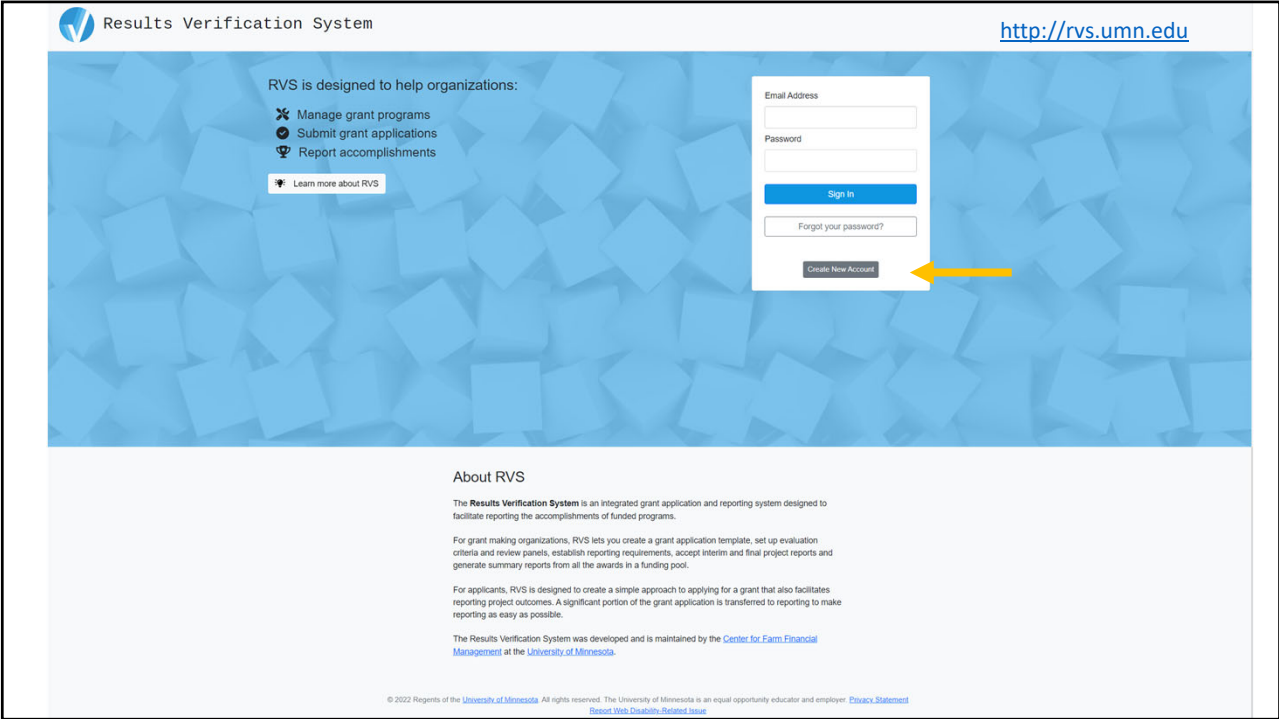
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## Completing the Application

- **Register** and log back into the system
- **My Projects:** click on “Start New Project Application”

Year	Project	Project Director	Stage	Status	Funder
2023	2023 Test ERME Education	Curtis Mahriken	Application	LATE: Due 9/15/2022 at 12:00 AM (Central)	D
2023	TEST-2023 Underserved	Curtis Mahriken	Application	LATE: Due 9/15/2022 at 12:00 AM (Central)	D
2023	TEST-2023 ERME Exploratory	Curtis Mahriken	Application	LATE: Due 9/15/2022 at 12:00 AM (Central)	D

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# Completing the Application

Results Verification System

Admin Tools

New Project Application

Step 1: Choose Funding Opportunity

Step 2: Initiate Application

Step 3: Enter Application

All Available Funding | North Central ERME | Northeast ERME | SDFR Policy Center | Southern ERME | Western ERME

**NC North Central ERME**

2024 Education Projects  
Grant Closes: 11/16/2023  
Read the RFA | Application Resources  
Apply for this Grant

**NC North Central ERME**

2024 Producers Underserved by Crop Insurance Projects  
Grant Closes: 11/16/2023  
Read the RFA | Application Resources  
Apply for this Grant

**NC North Central ERME**

2024 Exploratory Projects (\$10,000 max)  
Grant Closes: 11/16/2023  
Read the RFA | Application Resources  
Apply for this Grant

- Select the correct funding opportunity
- Initiate project by completing the Project Title, Project Director and Financial Contact Details

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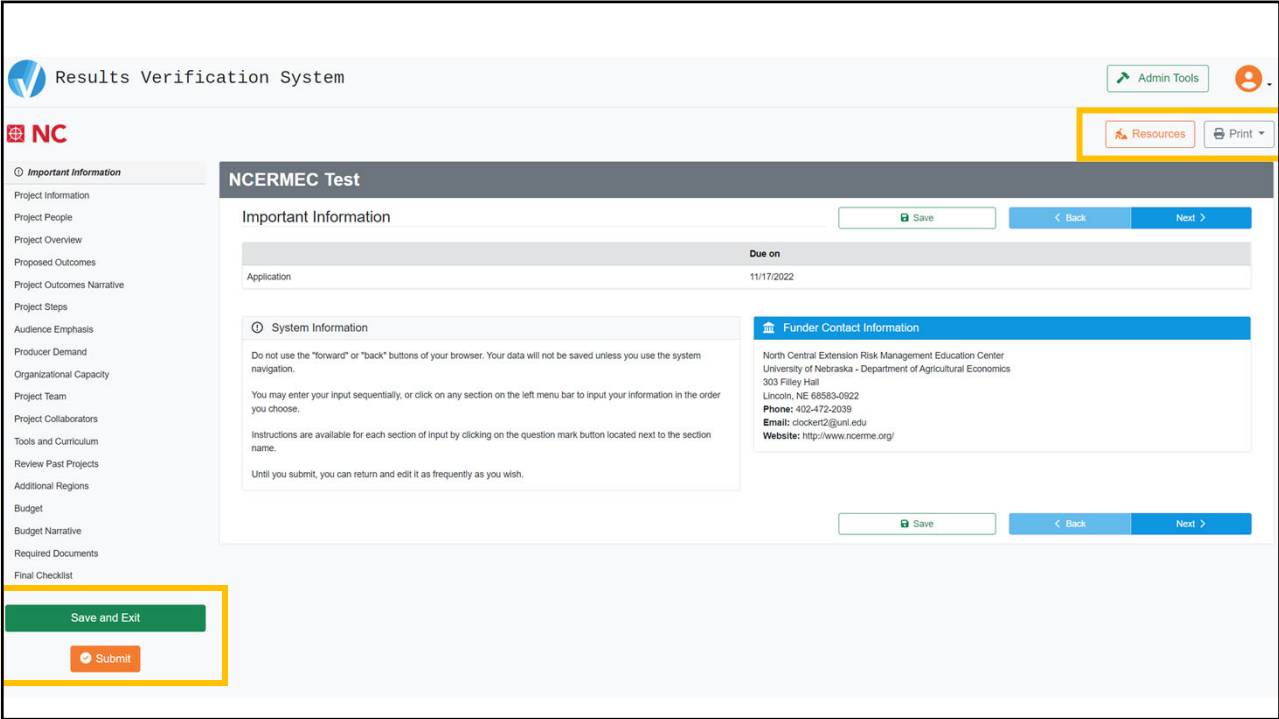
**Resources**

**Review these valuable resources and the Help tab available on each application section in RVS**

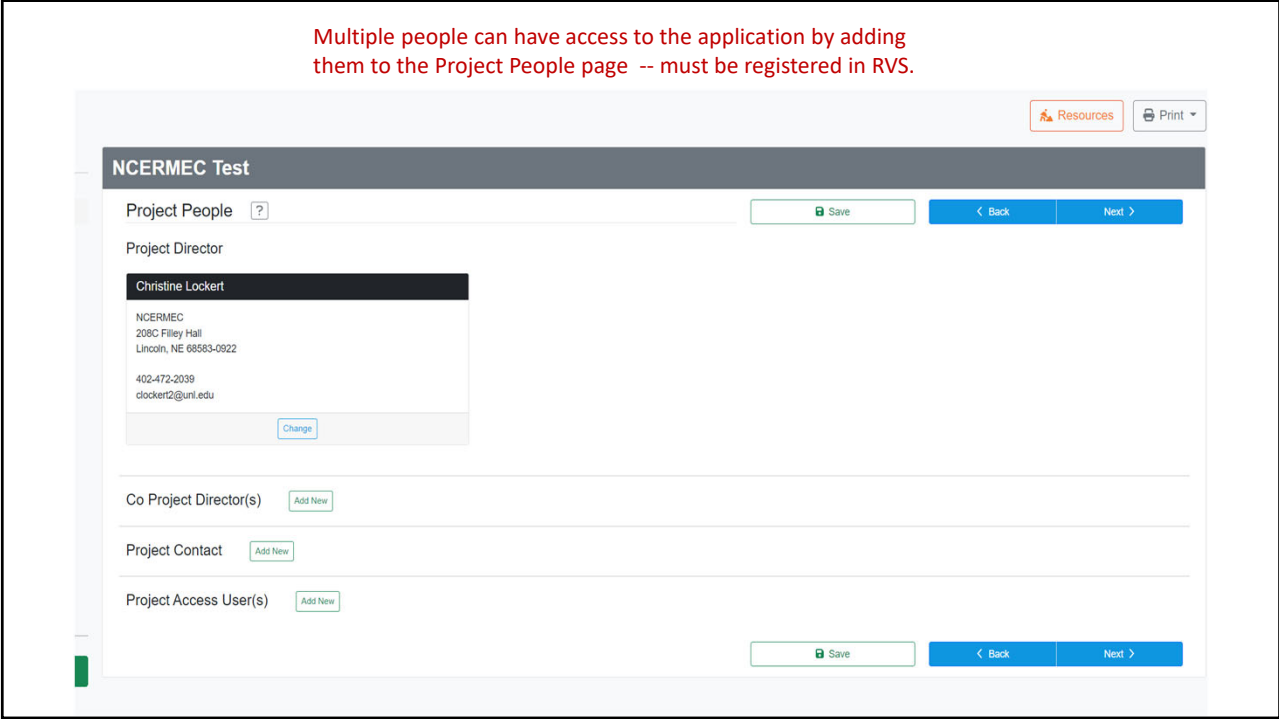
- Application Tutorial
- Application Tutorial - Underserved Audience Funding Opportunity
- Reporting Tutorial
- ERME Budget Form
- ERME Budget & Budget Narrative Instructions
- ERME Sample Budget Narrative
- ERME Cover Sheet (SF 424)
- ERME Cover Sheet Instructions
- RFA Definitions
- ERME Retrospective Evaluation Presentation

<http://extensionrme.org/Resources.aspx#RVS>

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**\*\*You will be able to enter up to 12 outcomes maximum\*\***

Resources Print

**NCERMEC Test**

Proposed Outcomes ? Save Back Next

What Producers Will Understand, Develop, or Implement

Proposed risk management outcomes are what you anticipate participants will learn, achieve, and apply through their participation in your project. At the end of your program delivery, the proposed risk management outcomes should put producers in a better position to manage their overall financial risk. Do not confuse the actions your project team takes or materials they develop with the proposed risk management outcomes for producers.

+ Add New Item

Outcome	Topic	Producer Action	Est. #	When Verified?	How Verified?
1 Participants will understand the multiple components of a farm succession plan	Transition and estate planning	Understand	100	Immediately After Program	Pre-Post survey
2 Participants will understand the need for effective communication and goal setting as it relates to successfully implementing a succession plan	Health, stress, family & business relationships	Understand	75	Immediately After Program; Prior to end of grant	Pre-Post survey, follow-up survey
3 Participants will develop a succession plan for their operation	Transition and estate planning	Develop	50	During Program; Prior to end of grant	Assignments during workshop series and 3-month follow-up survey
4 Participants will utilize at least one new communication tool to improve family communications	Health, stress, family & business relationships	Implement	45	Prior to end of grant	6-month follow-up phone survey
5 Participants will implement the actions needed to have a legally recognized succession plan to serve the needs of their farm and family	Transition and estate planning	Implement	25	Prior to end of grant	6-month follow-up phone survey

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See list of topic area definitions on the Help page, RFA and Tutorial

Pre-test

Auto response system

Post test, or retrospective

Follow-up surveys, consultations, etc. after workshops or trainings

Surveys, phone calls, individual consultations

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## Completing the Application

### Proposed Outcomes

Questions to ask yourself:

- Do the proposed outcomes that I have listed have a direct relationship to the producers' ability to manage risk?
- What is the producer action?
  - Is it identified correctly related to how the outcome is written?
- Are the proposed outcomes specific, measurable and verifiable?
  - Make sure it is not a project step



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## Completing the Application

### Project Outcomes Narrative (400-word limit)

- Describes rationale for project
  - Identifies risk areas related to proposed outcomes
  - Demonstrates appropriate educational approach for target audience
  - Estimates anticipated economic impact
  - Addresses contingency planning

### Project Overview (200-word limit)

- Describes estimated number of participants/workshops/locations/risk topic areas/outcomes



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## Completing the Application

### Project Steps

- Plan of work with an accurate and realistic timeline for program delivery (how will these activities lead producers to the desired outcomes)
- Timeline for Evaluation (when completed date)

### Tools and Curriculum

- Describe educational tools and curriculum
- Describe delivery methodology

### Audience Emphasis

- Check up to 3 primary farmer and rancher audiences your project will intentionally target



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## Completing the Application

### Project Team

The Project Director (co-PD) and all others who will actively participate in the development, delivery, and management of the project – whether from the applicant organization or not.

- Letters of commitment are not required unless the person is a consultant or part of a sub-award
  - Any required documents will need to be uploaded on this page at the time of entry. The contributor **cannot be saved** until the consultant/sub-award materials have been **uploaded**



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## Completing the Application

### **Project Collaborators**

People or organizations who will bring expertise or provide access to your target audience, but who are not involved in the day-to-day management of the project.

- A letter of commitment is required from every collaborator (letters are not required for Exploratory projects)
- The collaborator **cannot** be saved until the required letters/documents have been uploaded to this page



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## Completing the Application

### **Letters of Commitment**

- Letters are required from those listed as Project Collaborators, and all consultants/sub-awards
- Must identify their specific **responsibilities** and/or **contributions**
- Form letters will *not* be considered
- Signed and dated letters must be written on the letterhead of the collaborators' organization, addressed to Dr. Bradley Lubben
- Upload as PDF



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## Completing the Application

### **Sub-Award**

- Not to exceed 49% of the requested budget
- Separate Budget
- Separate Budget Narrative
- Letter of Commitment from the subcontractor organization that also includes a clear Scope of Work outlining their portion of the work to be completed



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## Completing the Application

### **Consultants**

- Letter of Commitment that also outlines their Scope of Work, rate of pay, hours to be paid, travel, etc.
  - See the allowable rates of pay as identified in Appendix A of the RFA
- Abbreviated 2-page resume or CV for each consultant



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Results Verification System

2023 Test ERME Education

Project Collaborators

Name

Add New Letter of Commitment

Name

Organization

Organization Type  
1962 Land Grant University

Email Address

Phone Number

Role

Collaborator Type

Applicant Organization Member

Non-Applicant Organization Member

Consultant

Sub-Award

Upload File

Select

Save

Back

Next

Save

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## Completing the Application

### Budget Narrative

- The budget narrative should provide an explanation of how the proposed expenditures support your project
- Refer to the budget instructions for required information for each line item
  - Resources or Appendix A of the RFA
  - Sample Budget Narrative
  - Make sure amounts on the budget and budget narrative correspond



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## Completing the Application

### Budget Narrative

- Please budget for *estimated* travel expenses to attend the Project Director Training Workshop to be held in conjunction with the 2024 ERME National Conference
- All Project Directors (PDs) are required to attend this training when possible:

PD Training Workshop

Salt Lake City, Utah

April 9, 2024

Approx 8:00 – 12:00 PM

We also encourage you to budget to attend the 2024 ERME National conference as well which will be held April 9-11, with a pre-conference beginning at 1:00 PM on April 9<sup>th</sup>.



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## Completing the Application

### FAQ about the Budget

Can we claim Indirect Costs (Facilities and administrative costs)?

- Indirect Costs on awards under this program may not exceed the lesser of the institutions official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 30% of the total Federal funds awarded
  - The 30% of total Federal funds limitation is equivalent to 42.857% of the total direct costs of an award
- If your organization does not have, nor ever has had, a federally negotiated indirect cost rate, then a F&A rate of 10% Modified Total Direct Cost will be allowed



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## Completing the Application

### FAQ about the Budget

Can we use grant funds for food/meals?

- Generally, no. Only if it is a working meal conducted in a business atmosphere and maintains the continuity of the meeting and to do otherwise will impose arduous conditions on the meeting participants
  - Solution - use registration fees to cover these meal expenses or have a sponsor
  - Meals consumed while in official travel status do not fall in this category



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## Completing the Application

### Required Documents

- ERME Cover Sheet (SF424) signed by Authorizing Official
  - Must be downloaded and opened in Adobe
  - Need a certified electronic signature or actual signature scanned in
- Completed ERME budget form
- Upload as PDF files
- Other Required Docs
  - Letters of Commitment
    - Upload on Project Collaborators page
  - Consultant/Sub-Award documents
    - Upload on Project Team or Project Collaborators page as appropriate



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## Completing the Application

- ✓ Project Information
- ✓ Project People
- ✓ Project Overview
- ✓ Proposed Outcomes
- ✓ Project Outcomes Narrative
- ✓ Project Steps
- ✓ Audience Emphasis
- ✓ Producer Demand
- ✓ Organizational Capacity
- ✓ Project Team
- ✓ Project Collaborators
- ✓ Tools & Curriculum
- ✓ Review of Past Projects
- ✓ Additional Regions
- ✓ Amount Requested - Budget
- ✓ Budget Narrative
- ✓ Required Documents
- ✓ Final Checklist – identifies any missing portions of applications



When completely done with your application click  Submit for official submission. You will receive an email confirmation.



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## Thank you for joining us!

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