



South Carolina DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Hugh E. Weathers, Commissioner

SPECIALTY CROP MULTI-STATE PROGRAM APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

The South Carolina Department of Agriculture (SCDA) has developed this document to assist applicants, or “multi-state partners,” to meet the requirements of the Specialty Crop Multi-State Program (SCMP) **Request for Applications (RFA)**. Instructions for each component of the application are below.

Templates for the Project Narrative, Outcome Measures, Budget Spreadsheet, and Budget Narrative are available on SCDA’s website at agriculture.sc.gov/specialty-crop-multi-state-program.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

The Project Narrative must respond to each section described in the SCMP RFA and below. The Project Narrative must be typed, single-spaced, in an 11-point font, not to exceed 15 pages.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Include a summary in 250 words or less. The summary should include a concise outline of the project purpose, activities to be performed, expected deliverables and outcomes, intended beneficiaries, and any other pertinent information.

ALIGNMENT AND INTENT

PROJECT PURPOSE

Multi-state partners must develop projects that bring together teams for solutions to practical problems that cross state boundaries and address the needs of specialty crop growers in the areas of food safety, plant pests and disease, research, crop-specific projects addressing common issues, or marketing and promotion.

OBJECTIVES

List the objectives of the project. The objectives must be related to addressing the issue(s), problem(s), or need(s) in relation to the statutory language of the program.

PROJECT BENEFICIARIES

Provide the number of affected producers and processors as well as a description of the benefits you intend to achieve as a result of the project.

TECHNICAL MERIT

WORK PLAN

Describes the activities and timeline associated with each project objective, including the following:

- A timeline for each activity
- The anticipated date of completion
- How and where the activities will take place
- Required resources
- Milestone(s) for assessing progress and success
- Person(s) responsible for completing the activity (includes all collaborators and contractors)
- If conducting training and technical assistance, how participants will be recruited; and how you will help guide program development and delivery.

SUPPORT FROM OTHER FEDERAL OR STATE GRANT PROGRAMS

Indicate whether the proposed project has been or will be submitted to another federal program for funding. If the proposed project has or will be, provide the grant program name.

HOW THE SCMP PROJECT DIFFERS OR SUPPLEMENTS THE OTHER GRANT PROGRAM'S EFFORTS

Indicate whether the proposed project builds on work previously funded by a federal program. If the proposed project does, provide the year and grant program name, and describe how the proposed project, if funded, would not duplicate work previously funded by the federal government.

ACHIEVABILITY

EXPECTED MEASURABLE OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS

A complete list of Outcome Measures can be found in the RFA under [SCBGP Evaluation Plan](#). Projects must select at least one outcome and one associated indicator (and sub-indicator, if applicable). For each completed outcome and indicator, describe how you derived the numbers, how you intend to measure and achieve each relevant outcome and indicator, and any potential challenges to achieving the estimated targets and action steps for addressing them.

PROJECT DISSEMINATION

Describe how you will disseminate the project results (positive and negative) to similar organizations, stakeholders, and others that may be interested in the project results or implementing a similar project.

RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Provide a detailed and clear risk management plan.

EXPERTISE AND PARTNERS

KEY PERSONNEL

List key staff, including personnel and external project partners and collaborators that comprise the Project Team, their roles, and their relevant experience and past successes in developing and operating projects similar to this project.

MANAGEMENT PLAN, DATA SHARING, AND PUBLIC ACCESS

Describe your management plan for coordinating, communicating, and sharing data and reports among members of the Project Team and stakeholder groups,

both internally to personnel and externally to partners and collaborators.

PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

Describe how the project, and its partnerships and collaborations, will be sustained beyond the project's period of performance (without grant funds).

FISCAL PLAN AND RESOURCES

BUDGET SPREADSHEET

The Budget Spreadsheet must show the relevant expenditure categories and the dollar amount requested for each category. Multi-state partners are asked to provide separate Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, and cumulative budgets. Relevant cost categories include:

- Personnel
- Fringe Benefits
- Travel
- Special Purpose Equipment
- Supplies
- Contractors/Consultants
- Other
- Indirect Costs
- Program Income

BUDGET NARRATIVE

The Budget Narrative must explain how the funds requested in the Budget Spreadsheet were derived and a description of what the funds will cover.

Note: The Fiscal Plan and Resources does not count toward the 15-page Project Narrative maximum.

PERSONNEL QUALIFICATIONS

Provide a one- to two-page resume or summary of relevant experience and/or qualifications of the principal investigator(s) and for each of the other major project participants. Longer resumes will be disregarded.

Note: The Personnel Qualifications does not count toward the 15-page Project Narrative maximum.

LETTERS OF COMMITMENT

Applicants must provide letters of commitment (in MS Word or PDF) from all project partners and collaborators. The letters must state the partner or collaborator agrees to the project management plan presented in the Project Narrative. Emails will not be accepted. Commitment letters must include the following:

- Project applicant
- Project title
- A short introduction describing the partnering organization's mission and its interest in SCMP development
- What the organization commits to participating in and supporting
- The time period of the partnership
- Roles of the participating individuals, as applicable, and any individual time commitment
- A statement that these individuals and the organization agree to abide by the management plan contained in the application

Submit Letters of Commitment on letterhead and address them to the applicant (i.e., Project Director). Clearly indicate at the top of the documents that they are LETTERS OF COMMITMENT. Letters must accompany the proposal at the time of application. Unsigned letters will not be accepted.

Note: SCMP does not require Congressional letters of support and such letters do not carry additional weight during the evaluation process. Additionally, the Letters of Commitment do not count toward the 15-page Project Narrative maximum.

NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATE AGREEMENT

SCMP has a statutory indirect cost cap of 8 percent. Negotiated indirect cost rate agreements that exceed 8 percent will not be accepted. Applicants that have an indirect cost rate lower than 8 percent must submit their negotiated indirect cost rate agreement.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

FILE FORMAT

All sections of the application must be submitted in the original file format.

- Project Narrative – Word document
- Budget Spreadsheet – Excel document
- Budget Narrative – Word document
- Personnel Qualifications – Combined PDF document
- Letters of Commitment – Word or PDF document
- Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) – PDF document

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

All sections of the application are to be submitted in one email to bjeffcoat@scda.sc.gov by 11:59 p.m. ET on January 19, 2024. Late submissions will not be accepted. It is encouraged to submit your application prior to the deadline to ensure application completeness and delivery.