

Maine DACF PFAS Fund: Major Grants for the Study of PFAS in Agricultural Systems, Round 1 Attachment B- Scoring Rubric

Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Description	Sub-Criteria Max Points	Description for Reviewers ^a	Percentage of Sub-Criteria Max Points Awarded ^b				
					0%	25%	50%	75%	100%
1. Research Priority (10 points total)	1A	A proposal directly related to the priorities established by the Commissioner based upon RAP recommendations will score higher.	10	The research priority should be CLEARLY stated, and included in the Abstract and Narrative to indicate its importance. Proposals that are somewhat related may be awarded partial points at reviewer's discretion. If unsure whether a proposal fits into a priority category, consider that priority categories were chosen specifically to help farmers determine their best options for maintaining and enhancing viability despite the presence of PFAS on their property.	Proposal is not related to one of the priorities listed in the RFA (0 points)	Proposal is related to one of the priority categories listed in the RFA but would not help commercial farmers make informed decisions about how to utilize agricultural property impacted by PFAS, OR the proposal is only tangentially related to one of the priority categories (2.5 points)	Proposal is not related to one of the priority categories listed in the RFA but would help commercial farmers make informed decisions about how to utilize agricultural property impacted by PFAS (5 points)	The proposal addresses one research priority category (7.5 points)	The proposal addresses two or more research priority categories (10 points)
	2A	Proposal has potential importance and benefits, including economic, for the Maine agricultural community.	10	Since this grant is distributed by the Maine DACF, it's essential that proposed projects demonstrate specific benefits to Maine's agricultural community. For information on agricultural production in Maine, consider referencing the USDA 2022 Census of Agriculture for Maine.	Proposal does not have any obvious importance or benefits for the Maine agricultural community (0 points)	Potential benefits are described but insufficient details are provided to appropriately determine if the project is potentially important or beneficial to the Maine agricultural community (2.5 points)	Potential has the potential to benefit a small number of niche producers in Maine (5 points)	Proposal has the potential to benefit a portion of the Maine agricultural community (7.5 points)	Proposal has the potential to benefit most or all of the Maine agricultural community (10 points)
2. Identification of Need, Opportunity, and Justification (30 points total)	2B	Proposal meets the needs of agricultural producers impacted by PFAS contamination.	20	Producers need to know what products they can safely raise on their property given the presence of PFAS in soil and/or water. They also need guidance on harvesting and storing crops to minimize PFAS transfer, recommendations for livestock feeding strategies, and advice on managing waste and byproducts.	The proposed research results will not meet the needs of producers impacted by PFAS. There are no letters of support. (0 points)	The proposed research results will indirectly meet the needs of producers impacted by PFAS. There are no letters of support. (5 points)	The proposed research results will indirectly meet the needs of producers impacted by PFAS. There are one or more letters of support. (10 points)	The proposed research results will directly meet the needs of producers impacted by PFAS. There are no letters of support. (15 points)	The proposed research results will directly meet the needs of producers impacted by PFAS. There are one or more letters of support. (20 points)
	3A	Project deliverables clearly stated	5	Deliverables should be clear and realistic	Project deliverables are not stated (0 points)	Project deliverables are stated but are unrealistic when considering the scope of work, timeline, and/or budget (1.25 points)	Project deliverables are stated and appear appropriate when considering the scope of work proposed, timeline, and budget, but some deliverables may be missing or lack detail (2.5 points)	Project deliverables are stated and appear appropriate when considering the scope of work proposed, timeline, and budget, but some minor details may be missing (3.75 points)	Project deliverables are clearly stated and appear appropriate when considering the scope of work proposed, timeline, and budget (5 points)
3. Deliverables (15 points total)	3B	Plan to distribute research results specified	5	The narrative should include plans for distribution to DACF and the public, if applicable. Projects which do not limit the distribution of results will score higher.	Plans to distribute research results to the public and to the DACF are not specified (0 points)	Plans to distribute research results to the public and to the DACF are included but distribution plans lack detail or are missing crucial elements (e.g., data) (1.25 points)	Plans to distribute research results to the public and to the DACF are included but distribution plans lack minor details or elements OR plans to distribute research results are severely limited as key unique resources, which may impede the advancement of further research, will not be shared (2.5 points)	Plans to distribute research results to the public and to the DACF are clear but plans to distribute research results are somewhat limited as some minor resources will not be shared (3.75 points)	Plans to distribute research results to the public and to the DACF are clear and all key resources will be shared (5 points)
	3C	Proposal includes an intention and budget to publish results in an open access journal	5	Ensure that publishing to an open access journal is included in the relevant documents. This is a PASS/FAIL credit subcategory.	Proposal does not include the intention and budget to publish results in an open access journal. (0 points)				The proposal includes the intention and budget to publish results in an open access journal. (5 points)
4. Project Methodology and Schedule (20 points total)	4A	The methodology must be clear and scientifically valid	15	Ensure that the methodology is clearly defined, appropriate for the scope of work, and that there are no gaps in process.	The methodology is not clear and/or not scientifically valid (0 points)	The methodology is relatively clear but there are gaps in the process or quality issues that may impact the reliability of the results unless addressed prior to contract award (3.75 points)	The methodology proposed is clear but the validity of the scientific method described could be improved OR the methodology proposed could be improved but the validity of the scientific method described is clear (7.5 points)	The methodology is clear and scientifically valid but some more minor details are not considered or explained and may need to be addressed prior to funding if project is chosen (11.25 points)	The methodology is clear and scientifically valid (15 points)
	4B	The project timetable is realistic	5	The project timeline should be realistic, ensuring completion within the designated period of performance. Ideally, it should also be resilient to external influences or changing conditions.	The project timetable is not realistic (0 points)	The project timeline proposed could be possible but seems either over or under ambitious considering factors such as budget, scope of work, staffing (1.25 points)	The project timetable is realistic but could be easily impacted by outside factors in such a way that the project would be significantly incomplete at the end of the period of performance (2.5 points)	The project timetable is realistic and somewhat resilient (3.75 points)	The project timetable is realistic and resilient (5 points)
5. Project Management (15 points total)	5A	The proposed work is consistent with the qualifications and abilities of the persons involved	7	The key personnel should be qualified through academic background or relevant experience, and any training for research or lab assistants should match the work required. Ideally, projects will include already trained and hired staff, given the short period of performance (PoP). If this is not the case, the proposal should include a brief discussion of the training plans, demonstrating that consideration has been given to the process.	The qualifications and abilities of the PI involved in this project are not appropriate for the proposed work (0 points)	The qualifications and abilities of the PI are appropriate but other key staff lack qualifications (1.75 points)	The qualifications and abilities of the PI and all key staff on this project are appropriate for the proposed work but other staff may not be qualified or training of research/lab/field staff is not mentioned (3.5 points)	The qualifications and abilities of the PI and all key staff on this project are appropriate for the proposed work and other project staff appear qualified but significant training is discussed and will be required for accurate completion of the proposed project (5.25 points)	The qualifications and abilities of all individuals identified in this proposal are appropriate and minimal training will need to occur (7 points)
	5B	The proposed work includes collaborations with multiple institutions	2	A collaborative approach is preferred. Each collaborator/institution should have clearly defined roles and responsibilities.	The proposed work is not collaborative with other institutions (0 points)	The proposed work includes another institution, but roles and responsibilities are not defined (0.5 point)	The proposed work includes collaborations with at least one institution and roles and responsibilities are somewhat defined (1 point)	The proposed work includes collaborations with at least one additional institution. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. (1.5 points)	The proposed work includes collaborations with multiple institutions. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. (2 points)
	5C	The proposed work includes collaborations with agricultural service providers.	2	A collaborative approach is preferred. Applicants may be planning on working with agricultural service providers or farmers, and they should be listed accordingly, with the most points going to projects in which the agricultural service provider has already been identified. Each collaborator should have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Collaboration can be as simple as using soil from an impacted farm. Additional points are not awarded based on a threshold of involvement.	The proposed work is not collaborative with an agricultural service provider (0 points)	The proposed work intends to include an agricultural service provider but they have not yet identified a candidate (0.5 point)	The proposed work intends to include an agricultural service provider and a candidate has been identified, but roles and responsibilities are not well defined (1 point)	The proposed work includes collaborations with one agricultural service provider who has been identified, and roles and responsibilities are well defined (1.5 points)	The proposed work includes collaborations with multiple agricultural service providers who have been identified, and roles and responsibilities are well defined (2 points)
	5D	Project is conducted within the State of Maine or by a Maine-based institution	4	Conducted in Maine = members of the research team will be in Maine conducting research for at least a portion of the project. This is a PASS/FAIL subcategory	The project will not be conducted in Maine or by a Maine-based institution (0 points)				The project will be conducted in Maine and/or by a Maine-based institution (4 points)
6. Budget (10 points total)	6A	Proposals must be able to show clear and realistic descriptions of how the funds will be allocated.	7	Budgets will need to follow USDA guidance, and should be clear and realistic, and all documentation such as NICRA or P/L are included. If no NICRA is established, indirect spending can only make up 10% of the budget.	Budget is not clear or realistic for the proposed work, and/or does not follow USDA guidelines (0 points)	The budget is somewhat clear and follows USDA guidelines but there are obvious items missing (1.75 points)	The budget is relatively clear and follows USDA guidelines but some sections may be unrealistic or low-level items are missing. (3.5 points)	The budget is a mostly clear and realistic portrayal of how the funds will be allocated and follows USDA guidelines (5.25 points)	The budget is a clear and realistic portrayal of how the funds will be allocated and follows USDA guidelines. (7 points)
	6B	Projects leverages funding from other sources.	3	Projects may leverage funding or be planning on leveraging funding. Unless funding is already committed and documented, no points should be awarded for this section. This is a PASS/FAIL subcategory.	The project does not leverage funding from other sources (0 points)				The project leverages funding from other sources (3 points).

TOTAL: 100

Notes:

^aPeer Reviewers should only use these descriptions as a guide. Please review the full packet (available only to reviewers) and refer to the detailed descriptions of each category.

^bCategories (0, 25, 50, 75, 100) refer to the percentage of points suggested to be awarded for the sub-category. Points can be awarded in between these values when appropriate.