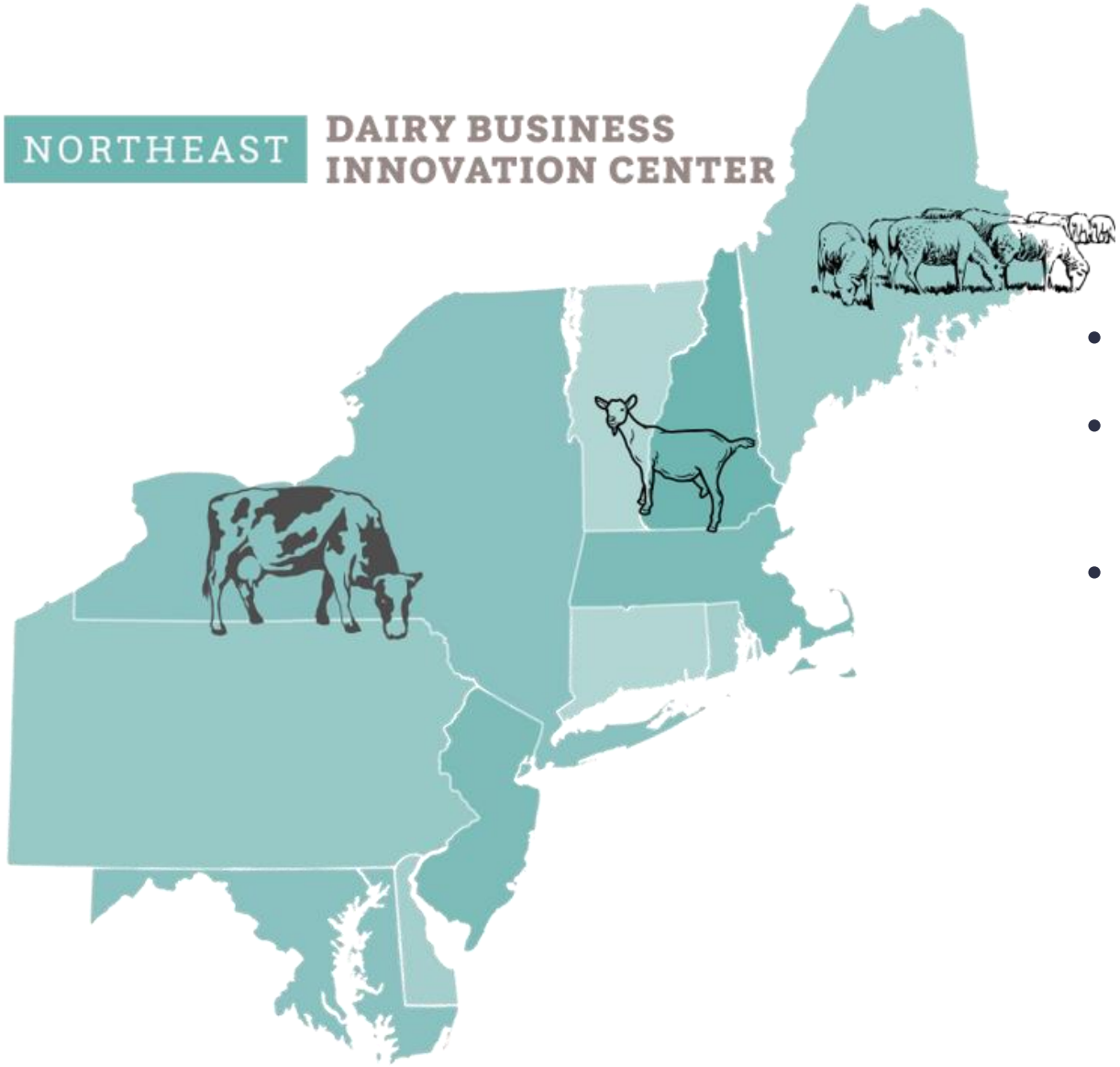
NORTHEAST

DAIRY BUSINESS INNOVATION CENTER

How to Apply to NE-DBIC Grants

What is the NE-DBIC?

- One of four USDA-funded regional centers – Vermont, Wisconsin, Tennessee, and California
- Authorized by the 2018 Farm Bill and extension
- Investing in dairy farms and processors to promote the development, production, marketing, and distribution of dairy products supported by market research and technical assistance



Who is the NE-DBIC for?

- Cow, goat, and sheep farmers and processors
- 11 states of the Northeast: New England, New York, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New Jersey
- Partners:
  - State Agency/Department of Agriculture and state extension offices
  - Dairy sector stakeholders: farmers, cooperatives, producer associations, watershed alliances, independent processors
  - Viability and business assistance organizations

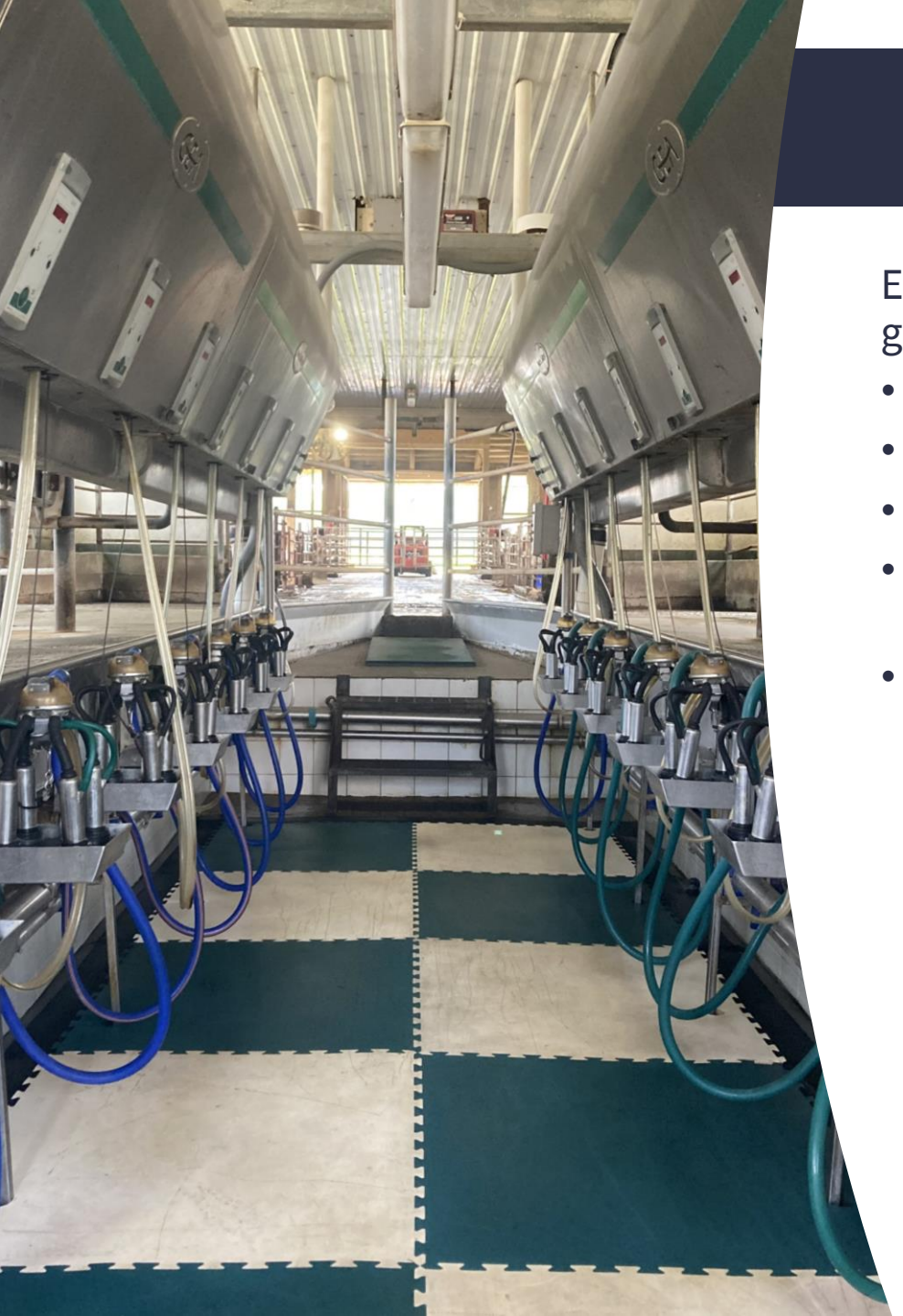
Dairy Funding Opportunities

NE-DBIC offers a wide range of grants for dairy farmers, processors, and technical assistance providers.

These include funding for things like:

- Food Safety Improvements
- Marketing and branding services
- Farm Modernization
- Processor Modernization

Visit our website to see our current grant programs:
nedairyinnovation.com/grants



What Grants Can Pay For

Each program has different specific funding priorities and eligible costs, but generally, grant funds can be used for:

- **Training** (e.g. in food safety, dairy technology, animal management, etc.)
- **Consulting/Contractual** (for project-related and necessary costs)
- **Travel** (for project-related reasons)
- **Supplies** (individual costs under $5,000, must be necessary for the project and allowable)
- **Specialized equipment** (not general-purpose)
  - Milk storage tanks, including bulk tanks and milk silos
  - Milk handling equipment: pipelines, loading systems, chillers, sampling systems, plate coolers, etc.
  - Dairy processing equipment: pasteurizers, homogenizers, ice cream machines, fillers, bottlers, etc.
  - Installation of approved specialized equipment

Refer to program RFAs for full details. Approval is required **in advance** for costs not listed in the RFA.

Ineligible Costs

What Grants Can’t Pay For

- Construction, including concrete work
- Purchase or lease-to-own of land/buildings/facilities
- Purchase of general-purpose equipment (over $5k)
- Purchase of vehicles or trailers
- Projects that solely support raw milk for human consumption
- Costs incurred outside the grant award period

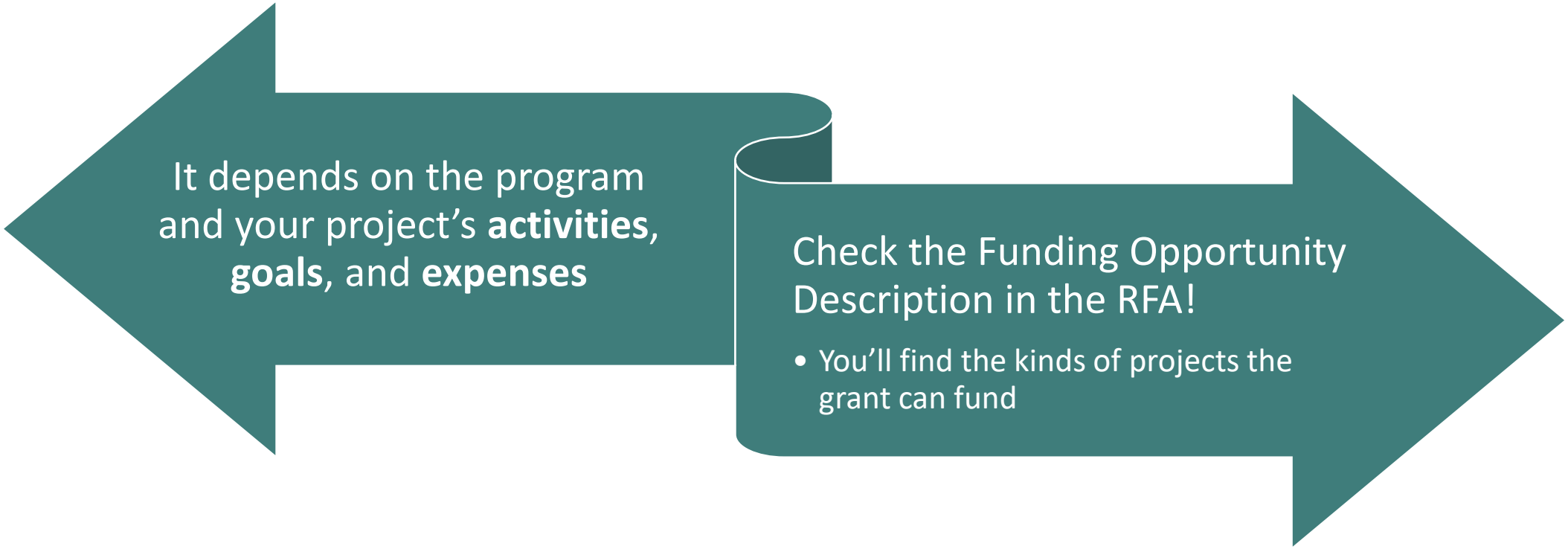
Important: these costs **can** be covered by the grantee as match

Example Budget Table & Matching Funds

Example of an eligible budget that shows 25% matching funds for a $100,000 grant request:

Expense Category	Grant Funds Requested	Applicant Contribution - Cash Match	Applicant Contribution - In-kind Match	Project Total
Equipment	$80,000.00	$12,000.00	$0.00	$92,000.00
Personnel	$0.00	$1,500.00	$0.00	$1,500.00
Fringe	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Training	$2,050.00	$0.00	$0.00	$2,050.00
Contractual/Consultant	$0.00	$3,000.00	$0.00	$3,000.00
Supplies	$12,950.00	$5,950.00	$0.00	$18,900.00
Travel	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Other	$5,000.00	$1,500.00	$1,050.00	$7,550.00
TOTALS	**$100,000.00**	**$23,950.00**	**$1,050.00**	**$125,000.00**

Is your project aligned with the grant?



You can find the Request for Applications (RFA) for each grant program on our website. Access information at nedairyinnovation.com/grants

How to Apply

Start with the Request for Applications (RFA)

- RFAs with full details are posted 2 weeks before applications open
- Make note of Eligible Projects, Funding Priorities, and Scoring Criteria
- Contact program staff with questions

Prepare your project

- Register in WebGrants (www.agriculturegrants.vermont.gov), if you haven't
- Seek Technical Assistance for project planning
- Get equipment quotes and budgets
- Develop a workplan
- Ask for Letters of Commitment or Support from partners and stakeholders

Fill out your application in WebGrants

- Applications are open for at least 6 weeks
- Draft responses in a document, then copy into WebGrants
- Contact NE-DBIC staff for WebGrants assistance
- Plan to submit ahead of the deadline to avoid issues

Make your project clear

Try breaking down your project ahead of time to make sure you're hitting important points in your application.

Activities

- What you need to do to accomplish the project
- Outline your different activities in your workplan
- Keep in mind you'll need to finish all activities within the grant period

Goals

- Why you need to do the project
- Tell us why the project will be impactful for your or other businesses
- Provide metrics where possible

Expenses

- What you will need to spend money on to accomplish the project
- Separate any unallowable costs into your match
- Sort your expenses into the categories outlined in the RFA

Grant & Application FAQs

(Visit our website for more FAQs at nedairyinnovation.com/resources/faq)

Do you need a grant writer?

- No! Many successful applications are completed by the farmer or processor. You can work with one if you want to, however, and it can be helpful to bounce your draft off someone no matter what to make sure you are being clear.

Can you apply if you have a current or past NE-DBIC grant?

- Yes! Just make sure the grant projects aren't duplicative and explain how the project builds on or relates to past work.

Can other grants or loans be part of your match?

- Yes, if the grant funds are non-federal and not restricted from being match. Keep in mind NE-DBIC grants cannot be match for other grants, and funds cannot be duplicative.

Your application doesn’t need to be fancy!

- Read the full Request for Applications (RFA)
  - Don't forget the Scoring Criteria
- Key elements of strong applications:
  - Aligned with the funding goals
  - Identify the problems this grant will help solve and clearly write your plan
  - Answer all parts of each question
  - Clear to people unfamiliar with your business
  - Include all required documentation
- Submit early to avoid technical issues
- Questions? Reach out to us! You can find the Grant Program Manager’s contact on the grant webpage.

Contact Us

Email:

agr.dairyinnovation@vermont.gov

Web:

nedairyinnovation.com

Stay in the Loop!

Sign up for our monthly newsletter:
bit.ly/dbic-newsletter

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