

Competitive Grants Applicant Training Webinar

Wednesday, October 4th 1:00 p.m.



EXTENSION RISK MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

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Competitive Grants Applicant Training Webinar

• 2024 Education Grants

• 2024 Producers Underserved by Crop Insurance Grants

Application Deadline: November 16, 2023



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Competitive Grants Applicant Training Webinar

Participants' microphones should be muted. Please use the chat function to ask questions.



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What will be covered?

- Extension Risk Management Education Overview
- Northeast ERME Overview
- Request for Applications and regional priorities:
 - Education Projects
 - Producers Underserved Crop Insurance Projects
- Evaluation Criteria
- Website Navigation
- Completing the Proposal



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ERME Overview

- Legislative mandate in Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000
- Education for producers in the "full range of risk management activities"



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ERME Mission

Educating America's farmers and ranchers to manage the unique risks of producing food for the world's table.

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ERME Risk Categories

- Risk, specifically agricultural risk, falls into 5 categories for the purpose of the ERME program:
 - Production
 - Marketing
 - Financial
 - Legal
 - Human
- ERME funds programs that are designed to educate producers about risk management tools and strategies so they can achieve specified risk management outcomes.



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Definitions of Risk Categories

Production Risk – Any production-related activity or event with a range of possible outcomes which could limit ag producers' ability to achieve their financial goals is a production risk.

Marketing Risk – Marketing is the part of a farm business that transforms production activities into financial success. Marketing risk is any market related activity or event that leads to the variability of prices ag producers receive for their products or pay for production inputs.

Financial Risk – Financial risk encompasses those risks that threaten the financial health of the business, including: 1) Capital cost and availability; 2) Ability to meet on-time cash flow needs; 3) Ability to maintain and grow equity; and 4) Ability to absorb short-term financial shocks.

Legal Risk – Legal risk involves commitments that have legal implications, such as production activities that fail to take appropriate safety precautions, marketing products which can involve contract laws and human issues dealing with employer/employee rules.

Human Risk – Human risk management is the ability to keep all people who are involved in the business safe, satisfied and productive such as: 1) Human health and well-being; 2) Family and business relationships; 3) Employee management; and 4) Transition planning.



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Aspirational Goals*

Area of Risk	Aspirational Goal
Production Risk	Enhance understanding of yield variability, insurance products, technology, diversification and management systems to control costs and improve farm or ranch income.
Marketing Risk	Improve producer understanding and use of commodity price risk management, product (niche) marketing strategies, differentiated (branding) marketing focus and relationship marketing to enhance farm or ranch viability.
Financial Risk	Grow farmer and rancher capacity to address strategic business planning, production cost management, recordkeeping analysis, asset management and financial planning to enhance cash flow, profitability and financial performance.
Legal Risk	Cultivate farmer and rancher ability to address business organization, contracts, regulatory policies and liability issues to manage businesses' legal risk exposure.
Human Risk	Develop farmer and rancher understanding of employee recruitment, retention and management; internal and external business communication; business transition and farm safety systems to improve business and worker success.

*refer to page 5/6 of the ERME RFA



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What are ERME Proposed Outcomes?

- Measurable and verifiable risk management actions that participants understand, develop, or implement
- Within six to 18 months
- With long-term impacts

Note: Proposed Outcomes replaced the "proposed results" language that was formerly used by ERME, although we still use RVS as the platform to submit applications and for reporting.



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What are Long-Term Impacts?

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



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ERME Awards

A grant awarded is an investment made by the ERME program to help producers achieve the proposed risk management outcomes.

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ERME Return on Investment

Return on Investment is defined as (documented*) changed behavior or actions taken by participants resulting in increased ability to manage risk.

*Documented participant actions or behavior changes are reported as outcomes and as success stories.



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Northeast Extension Risk Management Education Center (NERME)

- One of four regional ERME Centers across the U.S.
- University of Delaware, College of Ag & Natural Resources
- Administers a competitive grants program in the 12 states and the District of Columbia
- Supported by funding from USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).



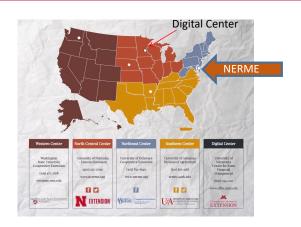




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Northeast Extension Risk Management Education Center





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Northeast Extension Risk Management Education Center

The Northeast Extension Risk Management Education Center serves 12 states:

Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia **and** the District of Columbia.



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Northeast Extension Risk Management Education Center

Laurie Wolinski – Director – <u>lgw@udel.edu</u>

Michelle McCullough – Program Coordinator – mmccull@udel.edu

Jill Shilling – Administrative Assistant – <u>jilshill@udel.edu</u>



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Request for Applications



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Request for Applications (3 choices)

2024 Education Applications

- Standard Educational Project Applications Up to \$75,000
- Exploratory Project Applications Up to \$10,000

2024 ERME Producers Underserved by Crop Insurance Project Applications - Up to \$100,000



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Request for Applications

2024 ERME RFA

- 1) Standard Education Projects: Projects can address any of the five risk areas (up to \$75,000)
 - Programs should help participants mitigate potential risk.
 - Include emphasis on the Northeast Center regional priorities.



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Request for Applications

2024 ERME RFA

- 2) Exploratory Projects for planning, capacity building, or piloting efforts (up to \$10,000)
 - Intended to support planning, development, or pilot project activities that
 have a goal of establishing an educational program, delivery plan, and
 collaborative effort leading to a project and that could be proposed for
 competitive grant funding in the future.



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Request for Applications

2024 ERME Producers Underserved by Crop Insurance RFA (up to \$100,000)

- Applicants must articulate the primary source(s) of risk faced by their target audience and develop training activities that will help those producers take specific actions that generate measurable outcomes from managing these risks.
- Proposed educational programming should align with one or more of the five areas of risk.



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What does Underserved by Crop Insurance mean?

This program aspires to enhance farm and ranch profitability and economic viability by enabling producers underserved by crop insurance to successfully manage these risks. Proposed educational programming should align with one or more of the five areas of risk. Key objectives are to help producers who are underserved by crop insurance understand the risks inherent in their operation, the methods and tools available to mitigate these risks, how to effectively use these methods and tools, and how to manage risk by implementing these methods and tools.



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What does Underserved by Crop Insurance mean?

Applicants must be able to define the producers that are underserved by the Federal crop insurance program and describe 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; or why these producer types are not normally reached through typical risk management tools or education offerings.



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Who are producers Underserved by Crop Insurance?

This might include the following producer groups:

- 1. beginning farmers or ranchers;
- 2. veteran farmers or ranchers;
- 3. socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers*;
- 4. farmers and ranchers using dairy risk management policies or plans for coverage.

^{*}The USDA defines socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers (SDFRs) as **those belonging to groups that have been subject to racial or ethnic prejudice**. SDFRs include farmers who are Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Hispanic or Latino, and Asian or Pacific Islander. For some but not all USDA programs, the SDFR category also includes women. ERME includes women in the definition.



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Regional Priorities

Stakeholder Input Advisory Council Recommendations



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Regional Priorities

The Advisory Council encourages all applicants to consider and determine:

- If there are any special audience needs and/or accessibility concerns that should be addressed related to educational delivery in your application. Will the audience benefit from translation services, modified presentation or handout materials, alternative delivery methods, or other efforts?
- If collaborating with public and non-profit ag service providers will strengthen or otherwise benefit the application outcomes. There are many federal and state programs that farmers can utilize to support their agribusiness and have similar goals. Federal agencies such as USDA FSA, NRCS, and RMA have programs designed to improve farm viability and minimize business risks.



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2024 ERME RFA Regional Priorities (pages 9 and 10 of RFA)

Education programs that build business knowledge and resiliency to mitigate the effects of family emergencies, natural disasters (including extreme weather and climate variability), regulations, economic conditions, and other unpredictable events are priority topics. Specific topics might include:

Climate and Weather Risk	Mental and Physical Health & Wellness and Safety		
Leadership for Developing Farm Managers	Labor Management		
Marketing	Legal Risk Topics		
Financial Literacy and Recordkeeping	Urban Agriculture		
Diversification of Agricultural Businesses			



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2024 ERME Producers Underserved by Crop Insurance RFA Regional Priorities (page 11 of RFA)

This ERME funding is specifically designated for the delivery of risk management education to agricultural producers underserved by crop insurance, including producers of specialty crops and diversified operations, and users of dairy risk management policies and programs.

Programs targeted toward beginning producers, socially disadvantaged and specialty crop producers	Educational efforts to increase accurate and effective recordkeeping practices to ensure financial viability and crop protection	
Educational efforts to help small farmers understand which policy best fits their operation	Crop Acreage Reporting	
Awareness of Risk Management Agency's Pasture, Rangeland, and Forage program for small-scale livestock producers	Diversification of Agricultural Businesses	
Education of alternatives to federal crop insurance	Marketing	



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Regional Priorities

Longevity of resources developed utilizing grant funds

While ERME funds are not generally used for development of resources, there are situations where that type of activity receives funding, because it has an immediate educational value and use.

If this type of activity is included in the application and some significant portion of the budget is designated for product development, the Advisory Council would encourage applicants to include a statement regarding longevity of the product to be developed and potential for wide application.



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Evaluation Criteria

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ERME Educational Application Pages 22 - 23			Underserved Applications Page 23 -24
Proposed Outcomes	40%	40%	Proposed Outcomes
Regional Priorities	10%	10%	Regional Priorities
Outcomes Verification	10%	10%	Outcomes Verification
Producer Demand	15%	20%	Underserved Audience
Team/Organizational Capacity & Collaborators	15%	15%	Team/Organizational Capacity & Collaborators
Review of Past Project, Innovative Approach & Wide Application		5%	Innovative Approach & Wide Application

Evaluation Criteria

Proposed Outcomes – 40% Maximum of 12

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



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A closer look at proposed outcomes

- What is the goal or what will producers achieve as a result of being exposed to this risk management education?
- What is the producer action?
 - Understand, Develop, Implement
 - "Understand" is the weakest action; "Implement" is the strongest action



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Evaluation Criteria

A closer look at proposed outcomes

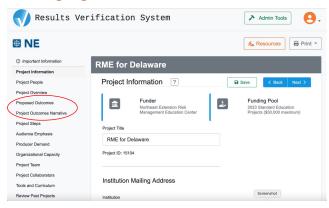
- What is farm or ranch economic viability?
 - Improved profitability
 - Increased opportunities for equity growth over time
 - Sustainability
- When considering how many proposed outcomes are needed for a good application...*more does not equal better*.
- A change was made this year there is a maximum number of outcomes **twelve**



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A closer look at proposed outcomes

Proposed outcomes are supported by the project steps. Projects steps should not be confused with proposed outcomes. However, the project steps assist project directors toward seeing producers achieve the proposed outcomes.





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Evaluation Criteria

Examples of well-written proposed outcomes:

Educating Farmers on Avoiding Risks in Farm Labor Law Compliance

- Participants will **understand** risks related to labor law compliance and resources for support in addressing labor law issues. (Estimated number = 100).
- Participants will **develop** an employee handbook. (Estimated number = 30).
- Participants will **implement** at least one identified human resource management strategy to reduce legal and human resource risks. (Estimated number = 60).
- Participants will access one-on-one legal guidance from Legal Food Hub attorneys to develop individualized human resource management plans and address compliance. (**Implement**) (Estimated number = 20).



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These are **NOT** risk management outcomes:

- Producers will attend a workshop on...
- Project will develop a workbook.
- Educators will be trained to deliver the program.
- An end-of-workshop evaluation will be conducted.
- The Final Report will be submitted.



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Evaluation Criteria

Outcomes Verification— 10%

How effective is the plan for evaluating and tracking producer progress toward achieving the proposed 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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Regional Priorities – 10%

Applications will be evaluated on the degree to which proposed outcomes address regional priorities.

Regional Priorities are listed in the RFAs in the following pages:

2023 ERME Educational Application – pages 9 - 10 2023 Underserved Applications – page 10 - 11



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Evaluation Criteria

Producer Demand - 15%

- Document the willingness of producers to participate, utilizing for example:
 - 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.

Underserved Audience- 20%

- Applicant must define who the producers are that are underserved by crop insurance.
- Explain why there is a low level of crop insurance participation and availability.
- Explain why existing crop insurance products do not provide an effective risk management
- Describe why these producer types are not normally reached through other risk management tools or educational.



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Team/Organizational Capacity & Collaborators – 15%

Equal value attributed to team/organization and collaborators

- Skills, knowledge, and experience of team and organization to effectively deliver risk management education projects.
- Evaluate how well-engaged collaborating public or private organizations will increase the likelihood of farmer/rancher participation. Will collaborators increase likelihood of farmer/rancher participation and strengthen the project?



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Evaluation Criteria

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

- Innovative approaches to develop or deliver training, materials, or tools.
- The ability to build upon or collaborate with at least two previously funded ERME projects *or* alternatively, how it is a unique and innovative project.
- Can the program and techniques be applied elsewhere?
- Can materials and techniques be adapted to other situations?

Innovative Approach and Wide Application – 5%

- The extent to which the project employs innovative approaches to develop or deliver training, materials, or tools;
- How is it a totally unique and innovative project?
- The extent to which the proposed might have wide application, including adapting materials to specialized audiences, marketing a promotions techniques, eliciting high interest in crop insurance strategies with new methodologies.



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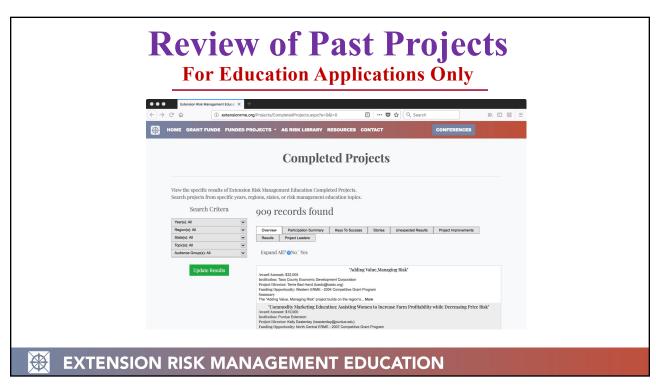


Website Navigation

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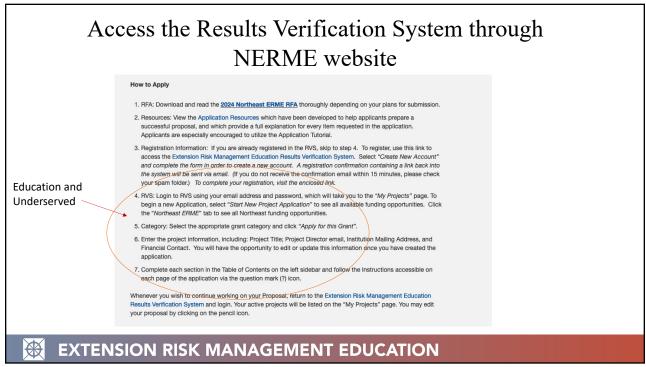
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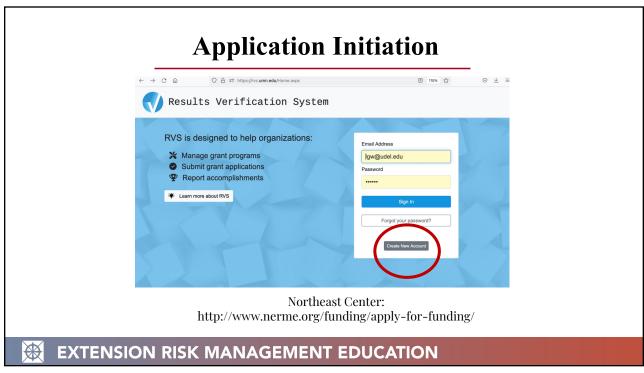


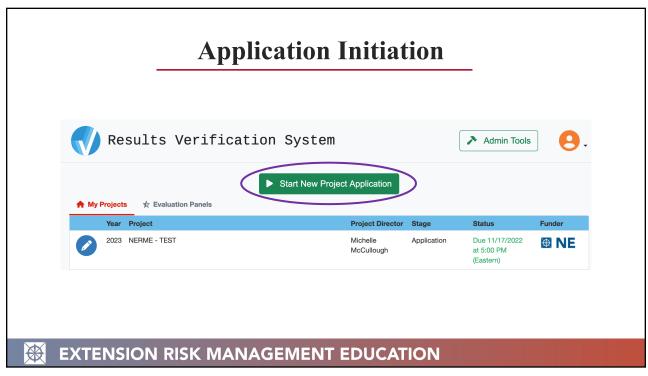


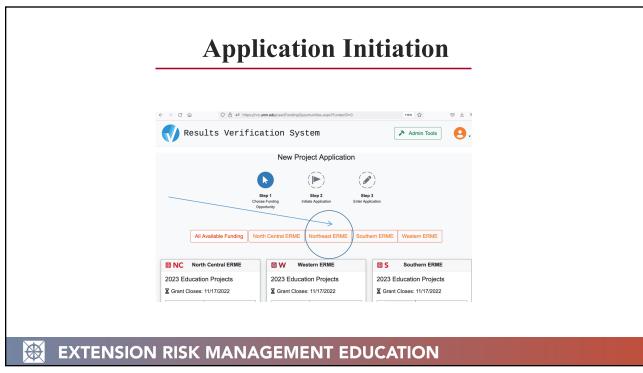
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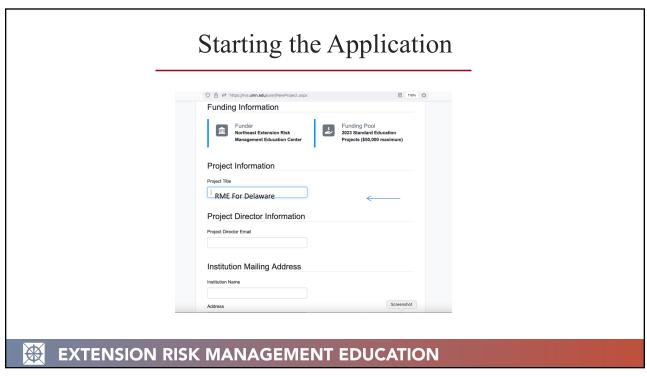


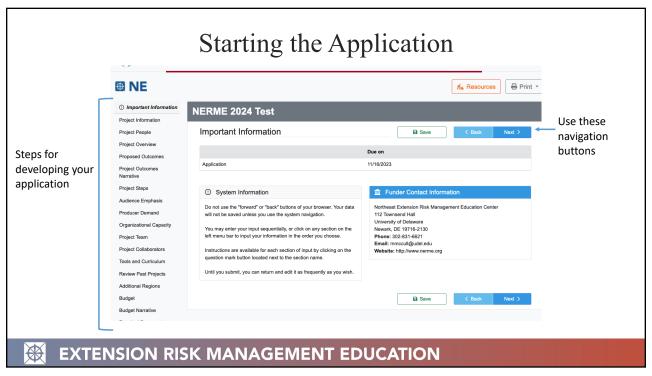




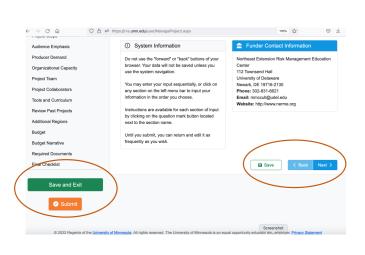








Completing & Submitting the Application



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Application Process

- Deadline: 5:00 PM EST, 11/16/23
- Applications reviewed by Advisory Council
- Notifications announced by 2/9/2024
- Administrative budget review and issue of sub-awards by 4/1/24

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Project Timeline

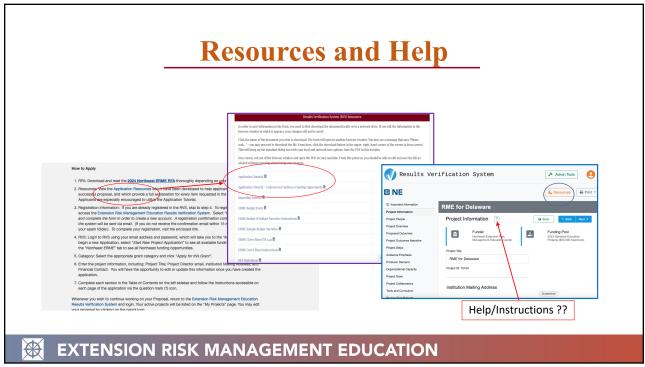
18 Month Award

- Start date April 1, 2024
- End date September 30, 2025
- Quarterly progress reports & final report
- No extensions!!
- Apply: <u>www.nerme.org</u>

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