

Virginia Wine Board Grant Report Template

PROPOSAL

1.0 INSTRUCTIONS

Use this grant report template to communicate progress on your project objectives to the Virginia Wine Board and its administrative agents.

This simplified form focuses attention on the intended and achieved results of the project, including how project results are separately shared with their intended beneficiaries. This report is not the place for a detailed technical discussion of research methodology or results.

- During the proposal stage, applicants complete the first (WHITE) sections to summarize the project's objectives, deliverables, and intended impact plus planned communication to stakeholders.
- At the midpoint of the project (December 1, due December 15), Research and Education grantees complete the center (GRAY) sections to note progress as well as expenditures to date.
- Finally, upon project conclusion (May 31, due June 30), all grantees complete the final (BLUE) sections to describe the project's results and communication, as well as final expenditures.

2.0 GRANTEE INFORMATION

Project Title		VWA Technical & Reception Programs			
Organization		Virginia Wineries Association			
VWB Proposal #	26-29	Proposal # (if needed)		Award # (if needed)	
Project Lead		Mailing Address		Research	◇
Name	Christina Sandridge	250 West Main Street, Suite 100		Education	X
Title	Executive Director	Charlottesville, VA 22902		Marketing	◇
Email	director@vawine.org			Recurring?	◇
Phone	(434) 326-9815			Continuing?	◇
				Year	1 of 1

3.0 PROJECT OBJECTIVE, PROGRESS, AND IMPACT

3.1 PROPOSAL (February)

Identify the specific deliverable or result that the project will produce. (1-2 sentences or bullets; Narrative section I.b.)

- The Virginia Wineries Association will plan and conduct the technical portions, including the Governor's Cup Case® tasting, of the Annual Conference and the Virginia Wineries Association Awards Reception, an event for winery owners, marketers, winemakers, and staff to learn the latest in industry compliance, winemaking techniques, and marketing in a collaborative, peer-to-peer setting.
- Consisting of a one-day meeting in November 2025 and a full Annual Meeting & Conference in Spring 2026 to better align with the industry's availability and maximize participation and effectiveness.

Summarize the project objective the result serves, including expected impact. (1-3 sentences or bullets; Narrative section I.a and II.a.)

- The VWA Annual Meeting & Conference is dedicated to technical training and educational seminars and programs with the goal of creating a stronger and more informed workforce that will result in higher recognition and greater accessibility of Virginia wine.
- An annual opportunity that brings together over 200 industry representatives, owners, marketers, winemakers, cellar workers, and tasting room staff while also recognizing industry leaders through the VWA awards reception.

- Celebrating the year's top scoring wines as a result of the judging from the VWA Governor's Cup® Competition.

Summarize the project's workplan. (1-5 sentences or bullets; Narrative section III.b.)

- Collaboration of the Education Committee (15 members), Research & Technical Committee (10 members), and the Winemakers Research Exchange to identify topics, speaker suggestions, program agenda.
- VWA staff contracts the facility, makes food & beverage choices, promotes the events, works in conjunction with the VWA Nominating Committee to call for award nominations, and handles all registration logistics. Staff arranges travel and lodging for speakers.
- VWA staff arranges for all Governor's Cup Case® winning winemakers to attend and provide insight about the nuances of making these celebrated wines, tricks of the trade, why they chose their specific techniques, and future desired outcomes for the Governor's Cup® tasting portion of the conference.
- Onsite staffing
- Post conference budget reconciliation
- Gather feedback through an attendee survey to plan for future events

List the indicators that will show the project has a) made progress on its workplan, b) achieved its objective, and c) reached its audience. (1-5 sentences or bullets; Narrative section III.c.)

- Aim to increase overall attendance by 10%, while ensuring a diverse representation of industry professionals including small, medium, and large-scale producers.
- In 2024, the conference welcomed 156 attendees over the two-day event, with participation from 17 exhibitors and 4 sponsors. Looking ahead, our goal for the 2026 conference includes securing at least 20 exhibitors and 5 event sponsors.
- In addition to quantitative benchmarks, we will measure success through post-event survey feedback. A high satisfaction rating—targeting an average of at least 4.5 out of 5—will serve as a key indicator of the value delivered. Insights gathered from these surveys will be instrumental in shaping and enhancing the structure and content of future conferences.
- We are currently working on updating our distribution database to better reflect the broader industry. There are 200 inactive farm winery contacts who may have previously been VWA members. Staff, along with the VWA Board and Membership Committee, are actively reviewing this list as part of an ongoing membership drive. This initiative is expected to add around 100 new contacts to our database, enhancing our reach for event marketing.
- More activity and posts through the social media channels in addition to emails and inclusion in the VWA Vine quarterly newsletter.

3.2 Mid-Year Report (December)—Research and Education Grants only

Provide project indicator status information. Describe project/workplan progress. Include any obstacles the project has encountered and the plan to overcome them.

Conference Feedback and Future Planning

Survey results showed an average rating of 4.2 out of 5 for the overall value of the meeting. As this year marks a transition for our conference, the November event was held in a one-day business format. Attendance exceeded expectations for this format, making it a successful event.

Next Steps

Due to our conference coinciding with the completion of harvest season, the Education Committee and the Board of Directors have partnered with the Eastern Winery Exposition, being that they will be in Richmond, for 2026. The conference will be held on March 24-26 with the VWA content taking place on Tuesday, March 24th and the brand new 2026 Governor's Cup Case® tastings being held on Wednesday, March 25th.

3.3 Final Report (June)

Compare the project to the objective, workplan, and project indicators. Provide (as a link or attachment) the project deliverable or result. Describe the realized or expected impact of the project.

The project successfully met its objective of providing technical education, professional development, and networking opportunities for Virginia's wine industry while transitioning to a new conference format. The November 2025 Annual Meeting was held as a one-day business meeting with 115 attendees representing 52 wineries and vineyards, industry partners, six sponsors, and technical experts. Educational sessions covered industry regulations, tourism partnerships, committee updates, and featured two guided Governor's Cup Case® tasting flights led by award-winning winemakers. The 2026 educational conference, held in partnership with the Eastern Winery Exposition, increased participation by taking place immediately following harvest and expanded its technical programming. The conference attracted more than 1,100 attendees, including 265 from Virginia. All registered attendees had access to VWA educational content, including the Governor's Cup Case® tastings, broadening the reach of Virginia's educational programming and providing winemakers from across the country with the opportunity to taste Virginia wines and engage directly with Virginia winemakers.

Goals & Lessons Learned:

Our increase in attendance goals will be dependent on the year's that we host our own conference vs. the partnership years with EWE. We will look to increase attendance based on our numbers from the 2025 conference. Because we did partner with EWE, they handled all exhibitor details. We referred our regular exhibitor partners to the EWE contact, and she worked with them to contract and secure. The November one-day meeting venue did not accommodate exhibitors.

Based on our conference survey that targeted a 4.5 success rate, suggestions for session topics were provided; some feedback provided was out of our hands including better meals, more organization of the welcome wine reception, and better glassware for the Gov Cup tastings. All of those details were organized and managed by the EWE. Next year's EWE will be held in Lancaster, so VWA will look to hold our own conference and are able to address all of the feedback.

Now that we are familiar with EWE staff, their systems, and the Richmond venue, we have an advantage to make suggestions and be involved in the planning process from the beginning for the next partnership event. VWA is in discussion to partner on a biennial basis.

4.0 COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

4.1 PROPOSAL (February)

Identify the specific audience/s for this project. (1-2 sentences or bullets; Narrative section II.b.)

These seminars are designed to educate Virginia's wine industry professionals, including owners, marketers, winemakers, cellar workers, and tasting room staff, with the latest techniques and technological advancements.

Summarize how you will share project information or results with this audience. For example, will you submit for publication in a peer reviewed journal? Present at a technical conference? Conduct a training? Post on a site?. (1-3 sentences or bullets; Narrative section II.b.)

- Speaker presentations, photos, and highlight reels from the Governor's Cup Case® tastings will be available on www.vawine.org, VWA social media pages, and for marketing use through the Wine Marketing Office.
- Email blasts will be sent to industry.
- The VWA Vine, a quarterly electronic newsletter will feature updates and links to session recordings, photos, and award winners will be prominently featured and highlighted.

4.2 Mid-Year Report (December)—Research and Education Grants Only

Describe communication with stakeholders to date. Note dates and locations of events or publications, as available/relevant, and cite or estimate the number reached.

The VWA Annual Meeting was held November 10, 2025 at PVCC in Charlottesville with attendance of 115 people. We had 6 sponsors, and 52 Wineries/Vineyards represented as well as partner members. The one-day business format was devoted to industry updates, committee updates, a Regulation & Rules Round Up, an update from DMV on the new Mobile ID and a presentation from Visit Loudoun that highlighted their successes and opportunities for tourism partnerships. The day also included two tasting flights that highlighted the 2025 Governor's Cup Case® winning wines. Frank Morgan moderated the panels and asked questions of the winning winemakers or winery representative. A networking reception concluded the day hosted at the Virginia Wine Collective and was a wonderful time of conversation and connection within the industry!

Some conference feedback received:

"I enjoyed this format and length of time allotted for this tasting."

"Great recognition of sponsors. There might be an opportunity to add some interactive sessions into the line up but overall it was a great balance between casual and business."

"It was well done. Very much enjoyed it."

"Great meeting, thank you all!"

4.3 Final Report (June)

Describe how the technical or material content of the project was or is planned to be shared with stakeholders or beneficiaries, and cite or estimate the number reached. List title, date, type (article, brochure, presentation, or other), purpose, and estimated audience reached. Provide a copy or link if (when) available for inclusion on the virginiawine.org site.

The technical content developed through this project was shared directly with Virginia wine industry professionals during the November 10, 2025, VWA Annual Meeting in Charlottesville. Educational sessions included regulatory updates, committee reports, tourism partnership opportunities, and moderated Governor's Cup Case® tasting panels featuring award-winning winemakers discussing production techniques and best practices.

The VWA Annual Conference held in March in conjunction with EWE hosted 265 Virginia attendees. A post conference survey reflected a 4.1/5 overall valuable rating with the format and sessions receiving excellent reviews.

The Industry Celebration dinner included our annual networking and awards reception, an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the significant contributions to individual in the industry. Award honorees included:

2026 Legislator of the year – Senator Russet Perry
 2026 David King Advocate of the Year – Maureen Kelley
 2026 Wine Person of the Year – Frank Morgan
 2026 Gordon Murchie Lifetime Achievement – Doug Fabboli

<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/VWA-2026-Award-Honorees.html?soid=1139729863632&aid=v2tljqQ2OrY>

Following both conferences, project information, photographs, award highlights, and conference updates were distributed through VWA email communications, social media platforms, and the quarterly VWA Vine electronic newsletter to reach the broader Virginia wine industry.

November 10 Presentation Slides:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/ov6sf3xpvx89sotmfag0o/AAMVoPMKxkhMGdiZQJLvQIE?rlkey=9cmewo7mv42to0qboab421r3a&st=7b3wvpfe&e=1&dl=0>

March 24 Presentation Slides:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/6dapjzpcuhtca87dbblnd/AP9GwzMXD0U3DYbLAMxNHiQ?rlkey=7d2jn1u3ib2pdkn1wkjn8ldl8&st=1hcrh1nf&e=1&dl=0>

Eastern Winery Expo/VWA Annual Conference Photos:

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/wbk9mafaomjzvpethfjbi/AL5u4Xxv_HMjX3Vvzy15-eo?rlkey=kxmc7ozy0g0wo777fzj6x2wa3&st=wglumci3&e=1&dl=0

5.0 BUDGET

Budget Summary			Mid-Year Research/Education only		Final	
Expense Category	5.1 Request	5.2 Awarded	5.3 Spent	5.4 Remaining	5.5 Spent	5.6 Remaining
Personnel						
Fringe Benefits						
Contractual	\$37,250	\$37,250			\$2,000	
Travel	\$750	\$750			\$741.24	
Supplies	\$2,000	\$2,000			\$5,781.20	
Equipment (Rental)	\$4,200	\$4,200			\$0	
Other	\$800	\$800			\$4,512.38	
Total	\$45,000	\$45,000			\$13,034.82	\$31,965.18