



SAMPLE 2024 Bull Pen Application is intended to familiarize applicants with application questions. Statement confirmations, questions and supporting documents highlighted in RED are required and must be properly affirmed, answered or uploaded. Discussion questions are limited by the number of words for each response; word counters (ex. 0/120) included. Uploaded attachments are limited in file size to 10MB each. The actual application requires an electronic signature. The actual application may be saved, edited and printed before submitting it on-line via Jotform.com. An application cannot be edited once it has been submitted. To enter the Bull Pen contest, go to <https://vafairs.com/bullpen/> and select the 2024 contest application link.

2024 Virginia FAIRS Agriculture and Forestry Innovation Challenge "Bull Pen" Application

Welcome to the application for the **2024 Virginia FAIRS Agriculture and Forestry Innovation Challenge**, referred to herein as the "**Bull Pen**". The Bull Pen is a statewide business competition for Virginia entrepreneurs who are addressing issues affecting Virginia farmers, forest landowners and rural communities. Up to five finalists will be selected from among all eligible contest entries. These five businesses will compete live December 2–3, 2024 during the 2024 Virginia Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at The Omni Homestead Resort in Hot Springs, Virginia.

By the conclusion of the Bull Pen, the Virginia Foundation for Agriculture, Innovation and Rural Sustainability will have awarded up to \$30,000 in startup funds to the Bull Pen winner and finalist businesses. Each finalist will receive a \$2,500 prize. The second-place entry will receive an additional \$5,000 prize. The overall winning entry will be awarded an additional \$10,000 prize. All finalists are eligible to compete for an additional \$2,500 People's Choice award.

The content of the application and required additional information will be used to compare all Bull Pen applications during Round 1 judging to determine the 2023 Bull Pen Finalists.

To apply for the 2023 Virginia FAIRS Agriculture and Forestry Innovation Challenge "Bull Pen", complete and submit this application form and required supporting entry materials no later than **September 16, 2024 at 11:59 pm EDT**. *Applicants may save and print both draft and final versions of the application; however, you may only submit one final application per account. If an application is submitted in error, please contact bullpen@vafairs.com.*

Your entry into the 2024 Virginia FAIRS Agriculture and Forestry Innovation Challenge. "Bull Pen", is deemed acceptance of the Contest Rules. Please review the Contest Rules at [VAFAIRS.COM/BULLPEN](https://vafairs.com/bullpen). **You must be able to affirm items 1 thru 7 below to complete this application.**

REQUIRED *

1. You must be at least 18 years of age as of September 16, 2024 to be eligible to compete in The Bull Pen. I (team lead) am at least 18 years of age.

REQUIRED *

2. Businesses eligible to compete in The Bull Pen must be for-profit. Non-profit businesses are not

eligible. I certify that the startup I am representing is a for-profit business.

REQUIRED *

3. Businesses who have received a funding round beyond Series A are not eligible to compete in The Bull Pen. I certify that the startup I am representing has not received funding beyond a Series A offering.

REQUIRED *

4. Previous Bull Pen winners are not eligible to compete in The Bull Pen for the same business idea. I certify that I understand the business idea I am representing is not eligible to compete in The Bull Pen if it is the same as one my business' has previously entered and won the Virginia FAIRS Agriculture and Forestry Innovation Challenge.

REQUIRED *

5. I understand that if I am selected as a Finalist business, I will be required to provide content for various types of communications pieces, about my business solution, and my experience competing.

REQUIRED *

6. I understand that if I am selected as a Finalist business, I will be required to compete live in-person at the Virginia Farm Bureau Federation Annual Convention December 2-3, 2024, in Hot Springs, VA. (Virginia FAIRS will provide hotel accommodations and up to three meals for up to two team members.)

REQUIRED *

7. I hereby certify that all statements I have made, and information provided in this application are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that a false statement will disqualify me from the competition.

OPTIONAL

8. I agree to allow Virginia FAIRS to share my contact information with incubator programs, investors, and stakeholders that wish to contact me or my business.

Applicant Contact Information



Company Name, or Name of Sole Proprietor *

Please use the exact spelling that you wish to see in communications and promotional materials. Sole proprietors may use their personal name.

Company Mailing Address *

Street Address

Street Address Line 2

City

State

Company Physical Address *

Street Address

Street Address Line 2

City

State

Zip Code

Team Lead Name *

Team Lead will serve as the main point of contact throughout the competition.

Team Lead Title / Position *

Team Lead Email Address *

example@example.com

Team Lead Phone Number *

Please enter a valid phone number.

Eligibility Requirements



Virginia FAIRS employees, officers, and directors, including members of their respective households and any business in which any of the above has an ownership interest are ineligible to compete in the Bull Pen.

Eligibility 1.a. Are you an employee, officer or director of Virginia FAIRS? *

Eligibility 1.b. Are you a household member of an employee, officer or director of Virginia FAIRS? *

Eligibility 1.c. Does an employee, officer or director of Virginia FAIRS, including members of their respective households, have any ownership interest in the business applying to the Bull Pen? *

If you answered "Yes" to any of 1.a. through 1.c., you are not eligible to compete in the Bull Pen.

Directors, officers and employees of Virginia Farm Bureau Federation (VFBF), including members of their respective households and any business in which any of the above has an ownership interest are ineligible to compete in the Bull Pen.

Eligibility 2.a. Are you an employee, officer or director of VFBF? *

Eligibility 2.b. Are you a household member of an employee, officer or director of VFBF? *

Eligibility 2.c. Does an employee, officer or director of VFBF, including members of their respective households, have any ownership interest in the business applying to the Bull Pen? *

If you answered "Yes" to any of the 2.a. through 2.c., you are not eligible to compete in the Bull Pen.

Eligibility 3. Are you a current Virginia resident and/or is your business domiciled in Virginia? *

If you answered "No" to 3. above, you are not eligible to compete in the Bull Pen.

Eligibility 4. Describe where in Virginia your business solution is being or will be implemented. *

0/60

An applicant's business idea or solution must have practical application within Virginia for the application to be eligible.

Eligibility 5. Have any lawsuits been filed against you or your business within the past 10 years related to your business? *

A lawsuit does not disqualify the applicant from the competition, but we must be aware of the details.

Eligibility 5.a. If the answer to 5 above is "Yes", please list the plaintiff(s) and defendant(s) in the case, state of jurisdiction and a brief summary of the case and outcome.

0/120

Business Overview



1. Describe your business. Please write this paragraph in the third person. Succinctly explain your business idea or business in a few sentences. If selected as a finalist, this description will be shared publicly on VAFAIRS.COM/BULLPEN. DO NOT INCLUDE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION IN THE DESCRIPTION. *

0/120

2. What issue affecting Virginia farmers, forest landowners or rural communities does your business address or offer a solution? *

0/30

3. What industry sector does your business serve? Please select all that apply.

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Row crops | Specialty crops |
| Livestock | Poultry / Eggs |
| Dairy | Agribusiness |
| Agritourism | Softwood crops |
| Hardwood crops | Christmas Trees |
| Rural Communities | Other |

4. The 2024 Bull Pen Priority Areas are as follows. Please select all areas that apply.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Agricultural and Forest Labor | Agricultural and Forest Sustainability |
| Food Safety | Rural Health |
| Supply Chain Resiliency | None of the above apply. |

5. Please describe your target customer. *

0/120

6. How do you identify the need and market opportunity for your business? *

0/30

7. Have you collaborated with any universities, researchers, or Extension to develop your concept and your business? *

7.a. If the answer to 7 above is "Yes", please describe your collaboration.

0/120

8. Have you participated in any incubator programs to support your business development and growth? *

8.a. If the answer to 8 above is "Yes", please describe your participation.

0/30

9. What is the development stage of your company?

Idea / Concept

Prototype

Beta / Pilot Customers

Entry Sales

Other

10. Which funding stage best describes your business? Businesses that have received a funding round beyond Series A are not eligible to compete in the Bull Pen. If you have questions, please contact BULLPEN@VAFAIRS.COM. *

Pre-Seed Funding

Seed Funding

Series A Funding

Series B or C Funding

11. Have you participated in other pitch competitions or competitive incubator programs? Your response will not impact your competition eligibility. *

11.a. If the answer to 11 above is "Yes", please describe the competition or incubator program.

0/30

Business Case



1. What makes your business innovative, or novel? *

0/600

2. Why is your business viable? Why is/will your business be competitive, profitable and sustainable? Include financial projections for items such as revenue, profit, sales growth, etc. *

0/500

3. How do you plan to scale your business? What does your business' success look like to you? *

0/300

4. Who are your competitors? What is your competitive advantage? *

0/500

5. What is the biggest opportunity for your business? *

0/200

6. What is the biggest challenge facing your business? *

0/200

Your Story

Why should you be the Virginia FAIRS Agriculture and Forestry Innovation Challenge "Bull Pen" Winner?



1. Tell us your team's story. Why did you decide to start this business and why is it important to you? This response will be shared with the public. Do not include confidential information. *

0/500

2. If you are the Bull Pen Winner, how do you plan to use the \$12,500 prize for your business? *

0/200

3. How will the growth of your business cultivate a rural economic impact in your community or statewide? *

0/200

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED APPLICATION MATERIALS



Photos

Applicants must submit at least one (1) image, but no more than five (5) images, that highlight your product, service, team or business along with this application. Images will be shared with the public. Do not include any confidential information in your image(s). Submitted images will only be used for Bull Pen presentations and promotion.

Photo Guidelines:

- You must own the rights to any photos you submit.
- Do not include photos of recognizable people who are not affiliated with your business unless you have their written permission.
- High Quality Digital Image (may be taken with a smart phone)

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Format - JPG at 2400 X 3200 pixels (300 pixels/inch)

- Recommended Images
 - Product Image
 - Action Shot (not posed)
 - Team Photo

Video Pitch

Applicants must submit a three-minute or shorter video pitch for your business or business idea. Videos will be shared with the public. Do not include any confidential information in your video. Submitted videos will only be used for Bull Pen presentations and promotion.

Video Guidelines:

- You must own the rights to any video you submit.
- Do not include images of recognizable people who are not affiliated with your business unless you have their written permission.
- **Video Format**
 - Length - Maximum of 3 minutes
 - Aspect Ratio - 16 X 9, filmed horizontally
- **Video should address these items**
 1. Introduce your team and share your story of how and why you started your company.
 2. Provide an overview of your business.
 3. Describe the challenge affecting farmers, foresters and/or rural communities that your business will address.
 4. Explain why you should be the Bull Pen Winner and how winning this competition will impact you/your business.

Upload your video to YouTube as a **non-private** video. You can designate the video as "Unlisted" if you wish but be sure the video is not "Private". *Your video will be shared with the public. Do not include any confidential information in your video.*

ENTER your YouTube video URL Here. *

IRS Form W-9

All prize money and the value of any lodging or meals provided by Virginia FAIRS to Bull Pen Finalists are taxable, and payment of any applicable taxes is the sole responsibility of the winner.

A completed IRS Form W-9 must be submitted along with this application. The information provided in Form W-9 must match the name and address of the individual or business entering the Bull Pen competition. IRS Form W-9 is available at **IRS Form W-9**. Complete the W-9 and save a file copy or image that can be uploaded below.

Authorization

I hereby certify that all statements I have made, and information provided in this application and additional required application materials are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Printed Name

Title

Applicants may print, save and return to their incomplete, draft or final application prior to submission. **Once an application is submitted below, the application form and uploaded files cannot be edited online.** Applications will not be accepted after September 16, 2024 at 11:59pm, EDT. *If the application is submitted in error, contact bullpen@vafairs.com.*