



NAAE “Teachers Turn the Key” Professional Development Application

Purposes and Eligibility for the Professional Development Program

Agricultural education is continually faced with a shortage of qualified teachers. Unless those who have been trained enter and remain in the profession for a period of several years, the shortage of qualified teachers will prevail. As a means of encouraging young teachers to remain in the profession and to encourage and recognize participation in professional activities. NAAE members who are in their second, third or fourth year of teaching agriculture at the time they apply are eligible for this program. (When the program is held at the subsequent NAAE convention, the program participants will be in their third, fourth or fifth year of teaching agriculture.) Applicants must be an active member of NAAE during the year of application (2025-2026) and be an active member of NAAE at the time of the convention at which they receive the scholarship (2026-2027). Applicants must be currently teaching agriculture and employed in a middle/secondary school at the time in which they participate in the program. All state winners must agree to attend and participate in the entire NAAE convention as well as participate fully in the professional development which will be held on-site at the NAAE Convention.

Program Participant Information

Each selected applicant must participate in special programming for early-career teachers during the NAAE convention in order to receive travel and lodging to the 2026 NAAE Convention. “Teachers Turn the Key” participants will receive the travel and lodging to aid in their participation in the “Teacher Turn the Key” program at the 2026 NAAE Convention. Details on allowed travel expenses include: (1) registration for the 2026 NAAE convention; (2) round trip, coach airfare to the NAAE convention from the commercial airport nearest the recipient’s home (those choosing to drive a personal vehicle to the convention will be reimbursed at the current NAAE mileage rate up to the dollar amount of the round trip airfare); (3) lodging for four nights at the NAAE convention (roomed with a fellow Teacher Turn the Key participant).

Spouses/guests/co-teachers are welcome to attend the convention with the program participant; however, **NAAE will not pay for travel expenses, registration fees, or room cost related to guests of program participants.**

For this program, all evaluation will occur at the state level. All eligible (based on national requirements) state program applicants will be selected for this special professional development program.

The deadline for submitting state program participant applications to the national NAAE office is June 15, 2026. All applications must be submitted online. No printed or emailed applications will be accepted.

NAAE is an equal opportunity organization. NAAE will not discriminate against any individual based on race, creed, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental handicap, or veteran status.

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Professional Development Program Application Instructions:

Eligibility: NAAE members who are currently in their 2nd, 3rd, or 4th year of teaching agriculture are eligible to apply for this program. Applicants must be an active member of NAAE during the year of application and be an active member of NAAE at the time of the convention at which they receive the scholarship. Applicants must be currently teaching at the middle/high school level at the time they participate in the Teacher Turn the Key program and be employed by a school district as an agricultural educator. All selected program participants must agree to attend and participate in the entire NAAE convention and engage in other professional development for their cohort throughout the 2026-2027 school year. Current members of the NAAE board of directors and previous program participants are not eligible to apply.

Required Components of the Application:

1. **Online Application** – the first portion of the application must be the completed online. No other cover pages should be included. (The cover sheet is not considered a part of the page limitations.)

All items listed below should be saved as electronic files and uploaded to the online application form. Printed copies of the items below will not be accepted. Supported file types include .pdf, .doc, .txt, .jpg, .png, .gif, .tif, or .bmp.

2. **Narrative** – the narrative is limited to eight 8 1/2" x 11" pages. The narrative must be typewritten and uploaded to the online application form. Use a font no smaller than 12 points. Multiple text formats are acceptable, including paragraphs, lists, and tables. The narrative must follow the outline specified as follows:
 - a. Overview** – brief description of your agricultural education program and the community in which your program exists. (10%)
 - b. Teaching Philosophy** – a brief reflective statement (not to exceed one page) of your personal teaching philosophy. (10%)
 - c. Instruction** – examples of your effective classroom and laboratory instruction including curricula you have developed. (15%)
 - d. Experiential Learning** – examples of your accomplishments in getting students involved in work-based learning such as supervised agricultural experience programs, cooperative education, and internships. (15%)
 - e. Leadership Development** – examples of your accomplishments in developing leadership skills of your students. Students' participation and successes in student organization activities, such as FFA, PAS, and NYFEA but not limited to these organizations may also be included. (15%)
 - f. Partnerships** – examples of your relationships with partners such as volunteers, school and community leaders, industry leaders, and others who have the capacity to support your agricultural education program. (10%)
 - g. Marketing** – examples of how you market (or promote) your local program with groups such as prospective students, parents, school administrators, and community leaders. (10%)
 - h. Professional Growth** – examples of how you stay professionally prepared and up to date in teaching techniques and technical content including information regarding your participation in professional organizations such as NAAE and programs offered by NAAE. (15%)

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3. **Letters of References** – one letter of reference should be uploaded to the online application form. The letter of reference should be from the applicant’s direct supervisor (principal, Career Tech Director, etc.). The letter of reference is not considered in the page limitations.
4. **Supporting Materials** – The supporting materials are limited to five 8 1/2” x 11” pages and saved in a format that can be uploaded to the online application. Supporting materials (such as photographs with captions, news articles, and other items) must be formatted to 8 1/2” x 11.” Evaluation of supporting materials will be included with the evaluation of the components of the narrative (2.a.- 2.h. above) and should reflect mentoring situations.
5. **Application Signature Sheet** – the application signature page must be signed by the requested individuals and uploaded to the online application form. The application signature page can be found on page 4 of this document.
6. **Professional Photo or Headshot** – A high resolution photo in .gif, .jpeg, .png, .bmp, .jpg, or .tif form must be uploaded as part of the online submission of your application.

Requested Components of Application:

1. **Photos Showing Instruction, Experiential learning, Student Organizations, Partnerships, and Marketing** – High resolution photos in .jpeg, .png, .bmp, .jpg, or .tif form can be uploaded as part of the online submission of your application.

State-level Competition

When and Where to Submit: Entries must be submitted to the state association by the deadline established by the state association.

Evaluation Procedures: Each respective state association will determine the selection process for state participants.

National-level Competition

What to Submit: All required components of the application must be submitted online by June 16. No printed or emailed applications will be accepted.

When and Where to Submit: The online application and instructions can be found at <https://www.naae.org/professional-development/explore-naae-professional-development-opportunities/national-programs/teachers-turn-the-key/>

State presidents will authenticate state program participants using the NAAE State Winners’ Validation Form provided by NAAE. All state participants must be validated by June 16.

NOTE: Teacher Turn the Key professional development program participants must agree to attend and participate in the **entire** NAAE convention as well as the special programming provided at NAAE Convention.

