Western SARE Competitive Grants
Graduate Student
2020 Call for Proposals
Submission Deadline: February 11th, 2020, 12:00 pm MST (noon)

The Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program announces a Call for Proposals for Graduate Student Grants in Sustainable Agriculture for 2020. Western SARE funds projects that are relevant to producers and provide readily adaptable technologies and information that advance sustainable agriculture in the Western region. Funded projects must contain distinct research and education components and have producer involvement.

Producer Involvement: Congress mandates that the SARE grant program depart from "business as usual." To that end, the Administrative Council requires that agricultural producers (farmers and ranchers) be involved in any SARE-funded Graduate Student project.

Western SARE Graduate Student projects should:

- Conduct research and education, *both elements are required*.
- Demonstrate measurable impacts and outcomes that can increase the body of knowledge of sustainable agriculture.
- Produce scholarly products and educational materials to assist others in acquiring new knowledge.
- Communicate the project goals, activities, and findings to producers and other stakeholders.
- Collaborate with farmers and ranchers throughout the life of the project from inception to finish.

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Submit proposals online
https://projects.sare.org

Graduate Student Grant Program Schedule

- February 11th, 2020– Proposals are due by 12:00 pm (noon) MST.
- April 2020– A Technical Review Panel reviews and recommends proposals for funding.
- July 2020– Western SARE Administrative Council makes final selections.
- September 2020 – Contracts for selected projects will be initiated.

Western SARE Host Institution

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

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Bozeman, MT 59717-2840
Phone: 406-994-4789
Email: wsare@montana.edu

Alaska, American Samoa, Arizona, California, Colorado, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Micronesia, Montana, Nevada, Northern Mariana Islands, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming

USDA United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture

Sustainable Agriculture	Western SARE Goals
Congress has defined sustainable agriculture as an integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site-specific application that will over the long-term: • Satisfy human food and fiber needs; • Enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agricultural economy depends; • Make the most efficient use of non-renewable resources and on-farm resources and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls; • Sustain the economic viability of farm operations; and • Enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole. – U.S. Code Title 7, Section 3103	• Promote **good stewardship** of the nation's natural resources by providing site-specific, regional and profitable sustainable farming and ranching methods that strengthen agricultural competitiveness; satisfy human food and fiber needs; maintain and enhance the quality and productivity of soil; conserve soil, water, energy, natural resources and fish and wildlife habitat; and maintain and improve the quality of surface and ground water. • Enhance the **quality of life** of farmers and ranchers and ensure the viability of rural communities, for example, by increasing income and employment, especially profitable self-employment and innovative marketing opportunities in agricultural and rural communities. • Protect the **health and safety** of those involved in food and farm systems by reducing, where feasible and practical, the use of toxic materials in agricultural production, and by optimizing on-farm resources and integrating, where appropriate, biological cycles and controls. • Promote crop, livestock, and enterprise **diversification**. • Examine the regional, economic, social and **environmental implications** of adopting sustainable agriculture practices and systems.

About Graduate Student Grant Proposal

Overview: Graduate Student Grant proposals must address issues in sustainable agriculture of current and potential importance to the Western region. ***Proposals must be written by the student who will coordinate and conduct the project*** with the guidance of her or his major professor/advisor and agricultural producers. Because universities typically do not allow students to manage institutional grant awards, the student ***major professor/advisor will be the Principal Investigator***. Grants provide a maximum of $25,000 (including Indirect Cost) and may last for up to two years. Western SARE projects ***must contain both*** research and education components and involve agricultural producers in the planning, design, implementation, and educational outreach of the project.

Eligible Students: Only graduate students (Master or Ph.D.) enrolled at accredited colleges or universities in the Western region are eligible to apply. At the time of proposal submission the student ***must*** be considered full-time according to her or his institution's requirements. The research must be conducted in the Western region. Applicants may receive only one Western SARE Graduate Student Grant award during

their graduate studies. Cross-region applications will be considered when the Principal Investigator or a Co- Principal Investigator are within the region. Cooperators may be from outside the region.

Funding: Western SARE Graduate Student Grants provide a maximum of $25,000 (including Indirect Cost) for up to two years. Funds are awarded to the applicant's university, with the funds to be dedicated to the graduate student's research project.

Public Domain: While proposals and reviews will remain confidential, the Western SARE program considers all funded proposals, subsequent reports, and related information to be in the public domain. See details of this stipulation in the Public Access of Research Data section in USDA Grant Policies.

Following Directions*:** An important and practical element of the proposal submitting process is following directions. ***Western SARE disqualifies proposals before review because applicants do not follow the instructions of the Call for Proposals and/or submit incomplete Supporting Documents.

Writing the Proposal

Proposals are submitted online at https://projects.sare.org. The submission includes seven sections: 1) acknowledgement of reading the Call for Full Proposal, 2) project's basic information, 3) information about the project team, 4) project summary, 5) project narrative, 6) budget and budget justification, and 7) supporting documents.

You can write each portion of the proposal in a word processor (e.g., Microsoft Word) and copy and paste it into the fields of the online application (be aware that some format features of the word processor might be lost when you paste the text in the online form). In addition to text, you can insert a table or graph in all Narrative sections. Tables and graphs do not count against the word limits, but figure's captions do. It is best to insert tables as a table (see: "[Inserting Tables")](Inserting Tables") and not as an image. This makes your text searchable and the text will wrap and display properly when viewed on different devices. More importantly, it makes it ADA compliant. Attachments are preferred in pdf format but images in jpg or png formats are accepted. Proposals that do not follow the guidelines will be disqualified.

Please check the documents located in Proposal Preparation Documents section of Western SARE website to strengthen your proposal. The *Research and Education Logic Model* outlines what Western SARE hopes its project investments will achieve in terms of who is participating, outputs, outreach activities, and impact on participants.

Proposal Application

A. Project Basic Information
This section prompts for general information about your project including: the ***primary*** subject matter, proposed starting and ending dates, the state(s) where the project will be conducted, and the main commodities and practices of the proposed project. ***Please choose a start date that corresponds with the first-of-the-month. The earliest***

possible start date is August 1, 2020.

B. Project Team (5% of the review criteria)

Leadership team refer to people who are *key players in the implementation of the project and are responsible for the achievement of a project objective(s)*. These include, but is not limited to Principal Investigator (PI), Co-Principal Investigator(s), graduate student, producer cooperators, and educators. For each leadership team member indicate their role (researcher, educator, producer cooperators, etc.); their institution, organization, or business; and contact information (address, email, and phone number). For each project objective indicate which leadership team member(s) is responsible for the objective and associated activities.

Western SARE requires the involvement of producers (hereafter "producer cooperators") throughout the project. Clearly identify the level of involvement of each producer cooperators at all stages – from inception to completion of the project.

Principal Investigator: The PI is the major professor/advisor of the graduate student and is responsible for carrying out the contractual provisions of the project and for all its expenditures. The PI should be affiliated with an institution that has demonstrated fiscal responsibility and is able and qualified to receive funds from the U.S. Government; has the capability to comply with the requirements of Institutional Review Board (IRB) for research that involves human subjects, and with the requirements of an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) for research that involves animals.

Co-Principal Investigator(s). The Co-PI(s) is responsible for the implementation of the project objective(s) and may include the graduate student, other researcher(s), Extension specialist(s), educator(s), etc.

Graduate Student: The full-time graduate student (Master or Ph.D.) enrolled at accredited colleges or universities in the Western region at the time of appliction is responsible for writing, coordinating, and conducting the activites of the project. The graduate student will work under the guidance of her or his major professor/advisor and agricultural producers.

Producer cooperator(s): At least three producers cooperators must be involved in the project. Each producer cooperator must be an independent operator. Non-profits do not count as producers. A person qualifies as a producer (farmer/rancher) if they have a for-profit operation *and*:
• Their primary occupation is farming or ranching, and they have a farm/ranch tax number; *or*
• They are a part-time producer with at least $1,000 documented annual income from farming or ranching activities.

Each producer cooperator *must* provide a dated and signed letter of cooperation indicating their commitment (resources, time, activities, etc.) at the time of submission. Dated and signed letters of producer cooperation must be attached in the Supporting Documents section of the online application. *Failure to provide dated and signed letter for each producer cooperator will disqualify the proposal before review*.

Except for "producer cooperators" all leadership team members need to provide a Curriculum Vitae, Current and Pending form, and Conflict of Interest form (see the Supporting Documents section below).

Other participants: refer to people that will help carry on tasks associated to the project objectives, including field managers, technicians, additional students, and others with appropriate expertise.

C. Summary (Limit 250 words)
The summary should include a brief description of the problem or need to be addressed by the project, a creative approach for solving it, and why solving this problem is important. Clearly identify the research question(s). Explain how your project will disseminate the findings of your study among producers, agricultural professionals, and academic community. Identify the significance of the project and the expected project outcomes. A clear and concise summary of your proposal is important for the review process.

D. Narrative (Limit 5,000 words total)
The project narrative includes the following sections: 1) Relevance to Sustainable Agriculture, 2) Objectives, 3) Research Materials and Methods, 4) Educational Outreach Plan, 5) Scholarly Publications & Educational Materials, 6) Evaluation of Producer Adoption, 7) Timeline, and 8) Innovations and Contributions to Sustainable Agriculture.

Relevance to Sustainable Agriculture: (15% of review criteria, 800 words maximum)

Explain why this project is needed and how it addresses a critical problem in sustainable agriculture. Clearly identify any limitations in the current system and how your project will address those limitations. Articulate how the project and its possible outcomes are relevant to the three   basic components of sustainable agriculture,

- Improve the profitability of farmers/ranchers and the economic well-being of rural communities;
- Sustain and improve the environmental quality and natural resource base on which agriculture depends; ***and***
- Enhance the quality of life for farmers/ranchers, communities, and society as a whole.

Document the source of the needs you identified in your proposal. You can use the following databases in addition to peer-reviewed research.
- National SARE database (http://sare.org/Project-Reports)
- National Agricultural Library (http://www.nal.usda.gov)
- USDA-NIFA-CRIS Research (http://cris.csrees.usda.gov)

Objectives: (5% of review criteria, 300 words maximum)
List the objectives of your project. Each objective should be a statement describing an intended achievement. Objectives must be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound. For more details see *Successful Objectives.*

Research Materials and Methods: (30% of review criteria, 1,500 words maximum)

For each objective, describe the project experimental design, research methods, materials, project site (experimental station research plots, private farm/ranch, nonprofit demonstration farm, greenhouse, etc.), and method(s) for data analysis. Include sufficient detail so that reviewers can determine if the approach(es) will achieve the objectives. Avoid the use of jargon and acronyms that may be unfamiliar outside your industry or specialty area.

Educational Outreach Plan: (10% of review criteria, 500 words maximum)
Explain how you will communicate your project activities and its findings to producers (specifically) and the general public. Create a yearly plan for outreach (see the Timeline section below). This plan should identify dates, locations, and methods for outreach using field days, workshops, demonstrations or other networking events. Address how the project outreach products will be disseminated among producers not directly involved in your events.

Scholarly Publications and Educational Materials: (10% of review criteria, 500 words maximum)
Both, refereed scientific journal publications and targeted Extension/outreach publications are *required* outcomes. Additional educational outcomes, such as 4-H publications, videos, posters, slideshows, brochures, fact sheets, surveys, and web-based materials are encouraged. ***Explain how the project educational material will get into the hands of producers.*** Proper citation of Western SARE in all materials is required. Logos and associated information will be included in the contracting packet for funded projects.

Evaluation and Producer Adoption: (5% of review criteria, 300 words maximum)
Indicate how the project educational material and extension/outreach activities will be evaluated. This section should describe how changes in producers' knowledge, awareness, attitudes, new skills, and practices will be measured with approaches such as a pre-post survey, surveys, interviews, etc. If the evaluation plan includes the use of questionnaires, interviews or a survey other than the WSARE Survey or if data from the WSARE Survey will be used for research/publication purposes, applicants must include the Institutional Review Board approval or a document indicating that the IRB process was initiated. An approved survey (see *WSARE Survey*) is expected to be filled out by *every participant at each outreach event in addition of any other evaluation form*. Evaluation results are required as part of the annual progress and final reports.

Timeline: (5% of review criteria, 300 words maximum)
Provide a timeline, such as a *Gantt Chart* for accomplishing each objective. Identify the major milestones or activities that will be completed and when each of those milestones will occur.

Innovations and Contributions to Sustainable Agriculture: (10% of review criteria, 500 words maximum)
Provide evidence of the originality and innovativeness of the project, and its contributions to the body of knowledge of sustainable agriculture. Describe the potential impacts of your project and its findings for sustainable agriculture at local, state, and

regional levels. For example, how will the project outcomes affect overall farm/ranch productivity levels, profits, soil or water quality or quantity, communities, and society as a whole? If possible, use specific estimates of benefits – for example, dollars saved per acre, tons of soil protected from erosion, pounds of chemical reduced, number of acres or people affected, markets expanded, jobs created, etc.

E.   Budget and Justification (5% of review criteria)
Provide a detailed budget and budget justification that are appropriate to the proposed project using the *Western SARE Budget Worksheet* found on the online application site, Budget section. Applicants ***MUST use this document for budget submission; no other document will be accepted*. *Please note***, you will be asked to enter the TOTAL funds requested; this amount must match the total funds indicated on the *Western SARE Budget Worksheet* document.

If your institution will be issuing subawards to other institutions/organizations as a part of your proposed project, you are required to provide a detailed budget and justification for each subaward. ***Subaward budgets MUST be submitted on the Western SARE Budget Worksheet for Subawards***. You may ask the subaward recipient(s) to fill out the Western SARE Budget Worksheet for Subawards or you may fill it out on their behalf using details they have provided to you. The application needs to include both your institution's *Western SARE Budget Worksheet* and those of any subawards to be issued.

Graduate Student Grant funds must be budgeted in the following categories:
- Salaries and Benefits: compensating you (student) and other employees (including other students) of your institution for performing work directly related to the project. Provide base salary, FTEs, fringe benefit rates, and salary/benefits amounts requested. Any compensation to the PI (major professor/advisor) is discouraged and should be kept to a minimum.
- Subawards: includes paying project collaborators who are not at your institution and/or to cover costs associated with the subrecipient's portion of the proposed project.
- Contracted Services: includes paying for professional services such as testing and analysis services, survey development and administration, computational services, website development or maintenance, professional production services (videographer to produce educational electronic media), consultants, honoraria, speaker fees, producer labor, etc.
- Supplies: includes paying for basic supplies and materials needed to carry out the project. Examples include: agricultural supplies (fencing, seeds, plants, fertilizer), field and lab supplies, minor equipment and tools (less than $5,000), paper/envelopes, in-house photocopying of materials for workshops/meetings, software, books, shipping materials, etc. Any shipping costs associated with the purchase of supplies/materials should be included as supply costs. The purchase of food/refreshments for meetings/field days (it must be necessary to maintain meeting continuity) is also considered a supply cost.
- Communication: includes paying for postage and mailing expenses (including shipping samples for analysis), printed materials (flyers, brochures, posters). This category also includes expenses for publishing articles in a scientific journals or other types of

publications, or for commercial photocopying (note: in-house photocopying falls under supplies)

- Travel: includes paying for mileage reimbursement, airfare, lodging, meal *per diem*, car rental, taxi, bus, shuttle expenses and parking, conference fees and registrations, etc. ***Please note***, travel *per diems* and mileage need to correlate with your organization's approved rates. If no rate is available, please use the Federal Government rate listed on the U.S. General Services Administration website. **Note:** foreign travel is typically NOT allowed under the SARE program except in cases where sufficient justification has been provided, and requires Western SARE approval. All foreign travel must be directly related to the project, must be essential for project completion, and well justified (*i.e.*, explain why this activity cannot be done in the USA, relevance to Western agriculture sustainability, provide the foreign institution's and colleagues' qualifications, etc.). USDA-NIFA requires that foreign travel be done in an U.S. flag air carrier.
- Rent: includes paying for fees associated with renting equipment, land, facilities (e.g., meeting rooms, lab space) and user fees.
- Repairs and Maintenance: includes paying for minor repairs and maintenance of equipment, facilities, etc., including service contracts for repairs and maintenance.
- Participant / Trainee Support: includes paying for costs associated with conference, workshop, or symposium for participants who are not employees of the applicant or a subaward recipient institution(s). Participant/Trainee Support costs are associated with educational projects that support trainees. Participants/Trainees can receive a set amount for participation in the above stated functions. Participant/Trainee travel expenses must be itemized (not a lump sum payment) and included in the Travel budget category.
- Capital Equipment: Defined as a single, autonomous piece of equipment that costs $5,000 or more and has a useful life of more than one year. Capital Equipment purchases are generally not allowed under the SARE program and should be ***essential*** for the completion of the proposed activities. Equipment expenses beyond $5,000 may be leveraged by non WSARE funds. Purchasing multiple components of single equipment that cost under $5,000 each in an attempt to circumvent the $5,000 cap ***is not allowed***. Equipment under $5,000 is allowed. ***Please include equipment purchases in the Supplies budget category.***
- Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Costs, also referred to as Indirect Costs (IDCs): Under the SARE program, NIFA states IDCs may not exceed 10% of the Total Federal Funds Awarded (TFFA); this calculates to roughly 11.111% of Total Direct Costs (TDC). ***Note***: the 10% limit is a cap on the portion of an applicant's budget that may be requested for IDCs; it is not an IDC rate. Additionally, some institutions may not be eligible to request IDCs or may be limited to the 10% de minimis. You must indicate the rate you are using on the *Western SARE Budget Worksheet.* Detailed information about Indirect Costs rates and calculations can be found on the Western SARE website.

More information about each budget category is provided on the *Budget Categories and Guidance* tab found on the *Western SARE Budget Worksheet.* Please note, however, there are some restrictions for what Graduate Student Grant funds may be used. See below.

Graduate Student Grant funds may NOT be used for the following purposes:

- Tuitions and fees
- Preparation of thesis/dissertation copy
- Purchase of classroom books
- Capital Equipment purchases – see above for more information.
- Starting or expanding a farm or farm operation.
- Major renovations/permanent improvements to a farm or ranch, such as constructing or remodeling a building.
- Providing meals during events that are not necessary to maintain the continuity of a scheduled meeting; breakfasts and dinners typically do not qualify.
- Testing of commercial products.

F. Supporting Documents
All supporting documents should be attached into the Supporting Documents section of the online application. PDF documents are preferred but images in jpg and png formats are accepted.

> ***Failure to provide all the required supporting documents will disqualify the application. It is your responsibility to include all required supporting documents prior to the submission deadline.***

Signature Page: It documents that the PI (student major professor/advisor) is responsible for all expenditures and for achieving the stated research and education objectives of the proposal. This form should include all signatures from the relevant parties including the PI (graduate student major professor/advisor) and the PI's Authorized Organizational Representative. For a college or university, this person is usually the Director of the Sponsored Programs Office. This form may be downloaded from the online application site and is also included in the following section of this Call for Proposal.

Current Curriculum Vitae: All members of the Leadership Team, with exception of the "producer cooperators" are required to provide a current Curriculum Vitae (two-page maximum). ***Failure to provide a*** Curriculum Vitae ***for all LeadershipTeam members (with the exception of producers) will disqualify the proposal before review.***

Letters of Producer Cooperator: Each producer **must** submit a dated and signed letter of cooperation. This letter should include the title of the project, verify their willingness to participate in the project, and describe their role and commitment (resources, time, activities, etc.) towards the project. ***Failure to provide all dated and signed Letters of Producer Cooperator will disqualify the proposal before review.***

Letter(s) of Commitment from Partner Institution(s): If your proposal includes issuing subaward(s) to partner institution(s), attach a letter of commitment from each institution(s). The letter of commitment must be dated and signed by the subaward Principal Investigator (Co-PI) and include the following information: period of performance, total funds requested, and a Scope of Work outlining activities to be

performed, the deliverables created, and the project timeline. ***Failure to provide all Letter(s) of Commitment from Partner Institution(s), if applicable, will disqualify the proposal before review.***

Current and Pending Support: All Leadership Team members with exception of the producer cooperators are required to provide a Current and Pending Support form. This form may be downloaded from the online application site and is also included in the following section of this Call for Proposal. ***Failure to provide Current and Pending Support for all Leadership Team members (with exception of producers) will disqualify the proposal before review.***

*Conflict of Interest***:** All Leadership Team members with with exception of the producer cooperators are required to provide an updated Conflict of Interest form. This form may be downloaded from the online application site and is also included in the following section of this Call for Proposal. ***Failure to provide Conflict of Interest for all Leadership Team members (with exception of producers) will disqualify the proposal before review.***

*Animal Welfare Assurance Statement***:** This form ***must*** be completed by all applicants to identify whether or not their proposed project includes the use of animals. This form may be downloaded from the online application site and is also included in the following section of this Call for Proposal. ***Failure to provide Animal Welfare Assurance Statement will disqualify the proposal before review.***

Institutional Review Board Approval: For projects that collect data from human subjects using tools or methods other than the WSARE Survey or if data from the WSARE Survey will be used for research/publication purposes, applicants ***must*** provide evidence of review and acceptance or exemption by their Institutional Review Board (IRB) or its equivalent. At the time of submission proof that you initiated the IRB process is acceptable; however, if awarded, contracts will not be initiated until complete approval. If the applicant does not have access to an Institutional Review committee, he/she must work with an accredited institution to obtain IRB approval.

*Citations***:** Citations must be attached in the Supporting Documents section of the online submission and is not part of the word number limitation.

Please print this document, obtain **BOTH** required signatures and upload into the Supporting Documents section of your online grant application.

Project Title: _____

Total Funds Requested: _____

Requested Project Period:

Start Date (MM/DD/YYYY): _____   End date (MM/DD/YYYY): _____

Principal Investigator

USDA defines a Principal Investigator as one who has the authority to write and submit a proposal and carry out its contractual provisions.

As the project PI, I affirm I am responsible for all expenditures and achieving the stated research and education objectives of the proposal.

_____

Signature: Principal Investigator   *Date*

Printed Name:_____

Authorized Organizational Representative

USDA defines the Authorized Organizational Representative as one who has authority to enter into contractual agreements with the Western SARE Host Institution, Montana State University.

As the AOR for the institution/organization project of the PI submitting this proposal, I affirm that [enter institution/organization name here] has authority to enter into a contractual agreement with Montana State University.

_____

Signature: Authorized Organizational Representative   *Date*

Printed Name and Title: _____

CURRENT & PENDING SUPPORT

Leadership Team Member Name:

How this template is completed:
- Record information for active and pending projects, including this proposal.
- All current efforts to which PD/PI(s) and other senior personnel have committed a portion of their time must be listed, whether or not salary for the person involved is included in the budgets of the various projects.
- Provide analogous information for all proposed work which is being considered by, or which will be submitted in the near future to, other possible sponsors, including other USDA programs.
- For concurrent projects, the percent of time committed must not exceed 100%.

Note: Concurrent submission of a proposal to other organizations will not prejudice its review by CSREES.

NAME (List/PI first)	SUPPORTING AGENCY AND AGENCY ACTIVE AWARD/PENDING PROPOSAL NUMBER	TOTAL $ AMOUNT	EXPIRATION DATES	% OF TIME COMMITTED	TITLE OF PROJECT
	Active:				
	Pending:				

This file MUST be converted to PDF prior to attachment in the electronic application package.

WESTERN SARE
Sustainable Agriculture
Research & Education

Conflict of Interest

Leadership Team Member Name:_____

How this template is completed?
- List alphabetically – with last name first -- the full names of the following individuals:
  - All co-authors on publications within the past three years, including pending publications and submissions
  - All collaborators on projects within the past three years, including current and planned collaborations
  - All thesis or postdoctoral *advisees/advisors*
  - All persons in your field with whom you have had a consulting/financial arrangement/other conflict-of-interest in the past three years
- Indicate the person's relationship to you (Co-Author, Collaborator, etc.) with an "x".

Additional pages may be used as necessary. Other individuals working in the applicant's specific area are not in conflict of interest with the applicant unless those individuals fall within one of the listed categories.

Name	Co-Author	Collaborator	Advisees/ Advisors	Other – Specify Nature

This file MUST be converted to PDF prior to attachment in the electronic application package.

Animal Welfare Assurance Statement

The applicant acknowledges that work may require Institutional Animal Care and Use Oversight and that Montana State University (MSU), and thus Western SARE, is subject to the [Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching](). This includes, but is not limited to: beef, swine, poultry, fish, etc. If awarded the applicant acknowledges that it is his/her responsibility to ensure that a USDA-acknowledged IACUC reviews, approves, and oversees the animal welfare issues of the project.

_____   Date: _____

  Signature: Applicant

NOTE: If animal welfare is NOT applicable, check and sign below:

Not Applicable [ ]   _____   Date: _____

       Signature: Applicant

The Review Process

Only eligible proposals ***received by the due date with all supporting documents*** will be evaluated by a Technical Committee, a diverse group of people from the Western region with broad scientific and agricultural expertise. The Technical Committee evaluates the proposals based on the review criteria stated below and meets to discuss and appraise the merits of each proposal. Their recommendations are forwarded to the Western SARE Administrative Council for additional review and final selections.

Proposals are evaluated based on the following criteria:

Project Team	5%
Relevance to Sustainable Agriculture	15%
Objectives	5%
Research Materials & Methods	30%
Educational Outreach Plan	10%
Scholarly Publications & Ed. Materials	10%
Evaluation & Producer Adoption	5%
Timeline	5%
Innovation and Contributions to Sustainable Agriculture	10%
Budget & Justification	5%
Total	100%

Priority will be given to projects that:
- Deal with a critical need in sustainable agriculture
- Provide evidence that producers were involved in the development of the proposal
- Support the graduate student research
- Utilize an innovative approach or idea
- Produce materials and outcomes that are useful to producers
- Have objectives that are tangible and attainable.

Reporting Requirements (for awarded proposals)

Annual and final reports should describe the progress made on the research project, detail the findings observed, describe the educational activities carried out by the project, and document outputs and impacts. All educational activities should include an evaluation component that measures changes in knowledge or awareness, attitudes and opinions, and/or the adoption of new practices.

Please review the documents located in WSARE Reporting Documents for Grantees section to understand what will be expected if your project is awarded:
- The *Research and Education Logic Model* outlines what SARE hopes its project investments will achieve in terms of who is participating, what are the outputs, what outreach is done and

what participants learn, do, or improve -- at least in part -- due to the project.
- The *Graduate Student Reporting Expectations* list shows what results you should report during the project, and what SARE may assess two to four years after the project's completion.
- The *Survey Instrument* is a sample tool of how grantees can gather results from a project's outreach activities. This survey is one important way for collecting required data to measure changes in knowledge, attitude, skills and awareness of participants of the project outreach and educational activities (e.g., producers, students, general public).

Selected Proposals

If the Western SARE Administrative Council selects your project for funding, you may expect the following:

Notification: The Western SARE Administrative Council will select proposals for funding in late July 2020. (The Administrative Council reserves the right to restructure or reduce the budget of any grant proposal before final approval.) Western SARE staff will notify applicants of the status of their proposals immediately after the selection of proposals by early August 2020.

Award: If your proposal is selected for funding, the Office of Sponsored Programs at Montana State University will initiate a Subaward Agreement to you. The Subaward Agreement will identify all Terms and Conditions for the award, including reporting requirements. Acceptance of the initial payment is the recipient's acceptance of the terms and conditions of the grant. **NOTE:** If animals or human subjects are involved in the research proposal, USDA NIFA requires review by the appropriate compliance boards before MSU can issue the Subaward Agreement. If the grant recipient does not have access to an Institutional Review Board or an Institutional Animal Care and Use Board, the applicant will need to submit compliance documents to MSU for review and approval prior to receiving their award. MSU will work with the grant recipients to coordinate the process and will provide the necessary reviews of human subject and animal work.

Funds: All Subawards are cost reimbursable. Subrecipient will be responsible for invoicing MSU for all expenses to be reimbursed. Invoices are to be submitted according to the guidelines in the Subaward Agreement. 10% of the awarded amount will be withheld pending receipt and approval of the final report.

Photographs and Videos: Grant recipients are ***required*** to document their project with photographs and/or videos, which can be useful to them and helps Western SARE highlight and promote their work on its website and in publications. High-definition digital photographs and videos are preferred.

Proper Citation: The Western SARE program must be credited as the funding source in any publications or outreach materials generated. Please refer to the Western SARE website for complete guidelines for acknowledging funds.

Reports: A yearly report is required – an annual progress report or final report depending on your project status – for each year the project is conducted. Project reports are compiled each year and shared with producers, interested policymakers, and leaders at community, state, regional and national levels. All educational materials and products must be produced in electronic format. This format will be required in your reports. ***Annual Reports will be due on July 31st of each year of the project. You will have up to 60 days from the Period of Performance end date to submit the Final Report.***

Site visits: SARE recognizes there are limits to what can be accomplished, measured and reported during the life of a project. In addition to compiling your reports, Western SARE staff plan to conduct post-project assessments of representative projects to get a fuller measure of your project and WSARE impact in areas such as:

- o Who is participating in SARE-funded projects?
- o What is being created by the projects (e.g., new knowledge, new approaches)?
- o What are people learning from these projects?
- o What changes are farmers and ranchers making?
- o How WSARE project impact graduate students' career?
- o What economic, environmental, social or productivity benefits are farmers and ranchers seeing as a result of having made a change?

Changes: Grantees ***must report*** changes regarding project information (e.g., address, phone number, etc.) to the Western SARE office in a timely manner. Grantees ***must request permission and get approval*** from Western SARE for major changes, such as change of Principal Investigator, institution, project goals, etc.

How to Apply

Go to https://projects.sare.org

Look for programs under "Western" [region]

We strongly encourage applicants read the entire Graduate Student Grants Program Call for Proposals before beginning to write the proposal.

Proposals are due by 12:00 pm (noon) MDT – February 11, 2020

In compliance with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, this material can be made available in other formats upon request.

Resources

Check the resources in the WSARE Proposal Preparation Documents section. If you have further questions, please contact our office at 406-994-4785 or wsare@msu.edu

Information on past projects including summaries and reports can be found here .We encourage you to visit this website to learn more about sustainable agriculture and the Western SARE program. Tips for writing proposals are available under Writing a Successful Grant on the Proposal Preparation Document webpage. If you have further questions after

consulting these documents, please contact our office at 406-994-4789 or wsare@montana.edu

The Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (AFSIC) at the National Agricultural Library specializes in locating, collecting, and providing information about sustainable agriculture. Information specialists can answer questions, highlight resources, and share search techniques for literature reviews and background research. AFSIC resources are available at http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/ or contact AFSIC at 301-504-6559 or by e-mail, afsic@nal.usda.gov.