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**PRE-PROPOSAL DEADLINE 5:00 PM EST, AUGUST 31, 2020**

The Southern Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Professional Development Program (PDP) is requesting pre-proposals for projects of one to two year(s) duration that provide training on sustainable agriculture for agricultural professionals, educators, and mentor farmers\* who serve farmers and other interested people in USDA’s Southern Region. This region includes Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands, and Virginia.

**FUNDING LEVEL**

There is no funding cap for projects. To fund a broad portfolio of projects, priority will be given to those less than

$80,000.

**WHO MAY APPLY?**

SARE is an inclusive program and encourages pre-proposals from land grant and non-land grant universities, colleges, USDA agencies, community-based organizations, and non-governmental organizations.

**CRITERIA FOR CONSIDERATION**

To be considered for funding, a project must meet the following two criteria:

1. Project outcomes must focus on developing sustainable agriculture systems or moving existing systems toward sustainability, as defined in the 1990 Farm Bill. The 1990 Farm Bill defines 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 nonrenewable resources and on-farm resources, and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls.
   * sustain the economic viability of farm operations.
   * enhance the quality of life of farmers and ranchers, and of society as a whole.
2. A project’s central purpose must be to provide or enable training to one or all of the following: Cooperative Extension Service agents, USDA field personnel from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Farm Service Agency and other USDA agencies, and other agricultural professionals and educators, including mentor farmers\* who will serve as trainers. Research projects and farmer-outreach or education projects do not qualify for this funding.

*\*Mentor Farmer – In Southern SARE, we use the term “mentor farmer” in addition to limited resource farmer. While there is no strict definition, we see mentor farmers as innovators in sustainable agriculture who teach others what they have learned. They may be active in a farmer’s market, farmer cooperative, associations, or simply be a producer who tries innovative practices and hosts field days, trainings, demonstrations, and other events. PDP is a train the trainer program and the main idea is that mentor farmers participate in sustainable agriculture education events and take the information home to teach other producers.*

**2021 PDP GRANT CYCLE**

Call for Pre-Proposals released PDP Pre-Proposals due

Pre-proposals invited to submit full proposals Full proposals due

Full proposals awarded

July 17, 2020

August 31, 2020

October 2020

November 13, 2020

February 2021

**IMPORTANT**

Pre-proposals must be submitted on the Southern SARE Online Proposal Submission website

<https://projects.sare.org/proposals/create/#/form/686165>

Once you have read through this call for pre-proposals, click on the link above and follow the directions to begin your pre-proposal. Complete all of your editing and modifying before you finalize your pre-proposal. **Once your pre- proposal is finalized, it cannot be modified. Also, once the August 31, 2020 deadline passes, the online system will close and pre-proposals- even those in progress that haven’t been finalized- can no longer be submitted.**

Please print your pre-proposal and have it reviewed (if required) by your institution or organization, execute any necessary modifications to the pre-proposal, then perform the online submission.

**GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION OF A PRE-PROPOSAL**

All of the guidelines, program goals, and review criteria for submitting a Southern SARE PDP pre-proposal can be found in the following pages of this call for pre-proposals. Pre-proposals must include all of the elements listed in the “Pre- Proposal Format and Outline” below and comply with length restrictions. We recommend that you compose the lengthy sections of your pre-proposal in Microsoft Word, then copy and paste into the online submission forms.

Projects should include or involve the following:

* the development of a case for relevancy to southern agriculture and significance to the state(s) involved
* participation or support from both 1862 and 1890 land grant universities
* how the training need was determined
* effective participatory training methods
* systems approach that includes environmental, societal, and economic impacts to the community
* interdisciplinary efforts and multi-institutional partnerships that can endure beyond the life of the project
* farmer involvement in planning, evaluation, and delivery of training
* when possible, multiple formats should be used in the delivery of training material; while other formats are allowed, final deliverables should be in an internet-ready format

**PRE-PROPOSAL FORMAT AND OUTLINE**

Pre-proposals should include the following elements:

1. **Title Page** – This will include the project title, project director information, institutional administrative contact (cannot be the same as the project director), institutional financial contact, and key words.
   * Project Director Demographic Data – This information will not be part of the review process. It will be confidential and will not appear on any copy of the submitted proposal, including the applicant’s copy.
2. **Project Summary** – *(maximum of 1000 words)* The project summary should reflect the gist of the proposal by including the following information:

* Key collaborators and major partnership(s),
* Project goals and objectives, include target audience,
* Activities proposed- how does this reach the target audience and achieve objectives
* How results will be evaluated
* Project duration and timetable – State whether this will be a 1 or 2 year project. Timetable includes project schedule

1. **Funding Request** – **An itemized budget is no longer required at the pre-proposal stage.** We only require an estimate of your total funding request, as well as estimates of any funds you will budget for cooperating institutions. SARE PDP will cover indirect costs (IDC) up to 10%. Matching funds are not required.

An example would look like:

Lead Institution -- $50,000 Cooperating Institution -- $20,000 Cooperating NGO -- $10,000

**Total Proposed Budget Request** -- **$80,000**

**INDIRECT COSTS**

USDA-NIFA will allow recovery of indirect costs (IDC). If your institution has a federally negotiated rate agreement (NICRA), you may include IDC as a line item in your budget at the USDA-NIFA capped rate of 10% total federal funds. This is equitable to 11.111% total direct costs. This is only allowable if your institution’s NICRA is higher than the USDA-NIFA capped rate.

If your institution has a NICRA that is less than the USDA-NIFA capped rate of 10% total federal funds (11.111% total direct costs), you may include IDC as a line item in your budget calculated using your lower negotiated indirect rate. A rate higher than your negotiated rate will not be approved as an allowable cost.

If your institution has never had a federally negotiated indirect rate agreement (NICRA), you may include indirect costs as a line item in your budget at a maximum rate of 10% modified total direct costs. This is the de minimus rate approved under Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200.414). The calculation of the modified total direct cost base must adhere to the definition of modified total direct costs in 2 CFR 200.68.

If your institution accepts IDC, watch for items being charged as direct costs that are normally covered under indirect costs. Direct charging costs to federal grants, which are typically considered Facilities and Administrative costs (F&A), may be appropriate if specific conditions are met.

These conditions include:

1. Items are required by the project’s scope of work.
2. Costs can be specifically and easily identified to this project.
3. The number and/or cost of the items needed is clearly in excess of what would normally be considered F&A costs.

**If you have any questions, please contact the Southern SARE PDP Staff: DAVID REDHAGE SHELLEY SHIPMAN**

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**SARE Logic Model – Professional Development Program**

**Outputs**

**Outcomes**

**2. Participants**

**Who participates:**

* 1. Extension educators and specialists
  2. NRCS and other ag professionals
  3. State coordinators
  4. NGOs
  5. Farmers & ranchers

**SARE provides:**

**1. Inputs**

* 1. Funds for competitive grants and state grants for train-the-trainer professional development in sustainable agriculture
  2. Outreach information, instructions and guidance for applicants and grantees

## Learning

**(short term)**

**Project leaders produce:**

Activities:

* 1. Educational events and opportunities, e.g. workshops, tours, webinars, classes, training support

Products:

* 1. Information products, e.g. fact sheets, hand books, manuals, bulletins, video, web content
  2. Educational tools,

e.g. computer programs, data bases, decision tools, curricula

**3. Activities/Products**

**Project participants gain or increase:**

* 1. Knowledge, skills, awareness about sustainable ag topics, systems, principles, technologies, practices and resources
  2. Motivations and skills to effectively educate farmers and ranchers about sustainable agriculture

## Initial Actions

**(intermediate term)**

**Project participants use information learned to:**

* 1. Conduct educational programs about sustainable ag topics, systems, principles, practices, technologies, resources
  2. Incorporate information into products and educational tools.
  3. Share project materials and/or SARE and other sustainable ag resources with farmers and others
  4. Develop and/or strengthen professional collaborations and involvement in teaching, research and demonstration of sustainable ag topics, systems, principles, practices

**Secondary Actions**

**(intermediate term)**

* 1. Producers who learn from project leader or participants adopt sustainable systems, approaches and practices
  2. Others who learn from project participants include acquired sustainable ag concepts in their work

## Conditions

**(long term)**

**What’s improved: (over time)**

* 1. Market and employment opportunities in agriculture
  2. Economic well- being for producers
  3. Quality of life for producers and communities
  4. Environmental quality
  5. Efficiency of nonrenewable and on-farm resources use
  6. Capacity of organizations (resources, staff) for programs in sustainable agriculture