Professional Development Grant Program
2023 Call for Full Proposals

Proposals are submitted online at: projects.sare.org

Important Dates

The online system will open to accept proposals starting on: **September 6, 2022**

Proposals, with all required attachments and signatures, are due no later than: **5:00 p.m. ET, October 25, 2022**

As part of Northeast SARE's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice Strategic Plan we will be examining our grant programs and procedures and may make structural changes to our grantmaking systems. To accommodate that work, this grant program **will not** call for preproposals or proposals in 2023.

Questions?

Visit the Northeast SARE website at: **www.northeastsare.org/PDP**. For questions about this call, contact Katie Campbell-Nelson at: **kc2233@cornell.edu** or 413-834-1090.

About Northeast SARE

The Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program offers competitive grants to farmers, educators, service providers, researchers, nonprofit staff, graduate students and others to address key issues affecting the sustainability of agriculture throughout our region. Northeast SARE is one of four regional SARE programs funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

The program—including funding decisions—is driven by the Northeast SARE **outcome statement**:

Agriculture in the Northeast will be diversified and profitable, providing healthful products to customers. Farmers and the people they work with will steward resources to ensure sustainability and resilience, and foster conditions where farmers have high quality of life and communities can thrive.

The Northeast region includes Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, West Virginia, Vermont, and Washington, D.C.

Inside

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United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture

Northeast SARE, one of four regional SARE programs, is hosted by the University of Vermont and is funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Northeast SARE programs are offered to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status.

About Northeast SARE Professional Development Grants

Overview

The Northeast SARE Professional Development Grant program funds projects that develop the knowledge, awareness, skills and attitudes of agricultural and other service providers about sustainable agriculture practices to teach, advise or assist farmers. An agricultural service provider is a professional who assists farmers. Projects that develop the ability of other service providers (for example, real estate agents, bankers, and attorneys) to work with farmers are also eligible. These service providers then use what they've learned through participation in project activities in their work with farmers.

Professional Development Grant projects use an outcome funding approach with a "performance target" to describe the changes in practices, behaviors or conditions among service providers expected to result from the proposed project. To learn more about outcome funding and the use of performance targets, visit our "Guide to Outcome Funding" at: **www.northeastsare.org/outcomefunding**.

A wide variety of topics can be funded by Northeast SARE, including marketing and business, crop production, raising livestock, aquaculture, social sustainability, urban and Indigenous agriculture and much more. Other aspects of projects funded through the Northeast SARE program include those that address climate-smart agriculture practices intended to improve ecological, social, and economic resilience to climate change; increase carbon sequestration; and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Climate-smart practices include reduced and no-till, cover crops, prescribed grazing, ruminant feed management, manure management, fertilizer management, and on-farm energy efficiency. In addition, projects may address traditional ecological knowledge.

Eligible Applicants

Professional Development Grants are open to anyone who works with service providers and farmers[1], including personnel at nonprofit organizations, colleges and universities, Cooperative Extension, municipalities, tribal governments, state departments of agriculture, federal agencies, research farms and experiment stations, and for-profit business entities (such as farms, private consultants, veterinary practices and other businesses that serve the farming community).

Northeast SARE encourages projects submitted from or in collaboration with women, the LGBTQIA+ community, and Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC). Additionally, we encourage projects submitted from or in collaboration with Minority Serving Institutions (including 1890s and other historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and tribal colleges and universities) and other organizations in the Northeast that work with historically underserved communities.

Your organization must have the legal structure and financial capacity to receive and implement a Northeast SARE contract, including expending funds needed for the project prior to receiving reimbursements from Northeast SARE; advance payments are not possible.

Projects must take place within the Northeast region, described on page 1. Applicants and host organizations may be located outside of the Northeast region if the project activities and the farmers served are located within the Northeast region.

Current SARE grant recipients who are behind in their reporting will not be awarded a new project.

Northeast SARE will not fund proposals that appear to duplicate work that has been approved for funding by another grant program (within or external to SARE).

Northeast SARE is committed to accessibility for all eligible applicants. We encourage you to reach out to us regarding any challenges you experience as you plan and submit your proposal. To do so or to

[1] View Northeast SARE's Definition of a Farm at **https://northeast.sare.org/farmdefinition**

specifically request a disability-related accommodation, please contact Northeast SARE as soon as possible at 802-651-8335 or **northeastsare@uvm.edu**. Depending on the type of request it may take our team two or more weeks to provide accommodations. We appreciate advance notice so we have time to effectively address your request.

Changes to an Approved Preproposal

You may submit only one full proposal per year to Northeast SARE's large grant programs, including Research and Education, Research for Novel Approaches and Professional Development, even if you received multiple invitations to submit a full proposal. *You may not change the project leader (PL) of an approved preproposal to accommodate multiple full proposal submissions.*

Minor revisions to your approved preproposal are acceptable, especially if such changes were suggested by preproposal reviewers. Reviewers will not accept a full proposal that differs significantly from the preproposal unless the changes made were those specifically suggested by preproposal reviewers. Reviewers will have your preproposal, along with the suggestions and comments sent to you from the preproposal review team. Please be sure that the content of your full proposal addresses all reviewer questions and concerns.

Funding Available

Approximately $1 million has been allocated to fund projects for this cycle of Professional Development Grants. There is no proposal funding cap for this program. Awards typically range from $30,000 to $150,000 depending upon a project's complexity and duration. Reviewers may increase scrutiny of proposals with proposed budgets over $150,000. Northeast SARE encourages project leaders to include the real costs to implement a project.

We estimate that 8 to 12 awards will be made in 2023 in this program.

Project Duration

Typical project length is 2 to 3 years. All projects must be completed by November 30, 2026.

Conflict of Interest

Members of the Northeast SARE Administrative Council, SARE staff, and SARE State Coordinators are not permitted to be funded or named in proposals. Members of proposal review teams are not permitted to discuss or vote on proposals that are submitted by organizations they work for, organizations for which they serve as a board member or paid consultant, former graduate student advisees or advisors, family members or close personal friends. Reviewers may not review a proposal in which their collaborators on research projects or co-authors on peer reviewed publications (including pending publications and submissions) serve as project leaders; the timeline for this prohibition is for any projects or publications within the past three years. Northeast SARE's full Conflict of Interest policy can be found at: **www.northeastsare.org/COI**.

Public Domain

Proposals and reviews are kept confidential, shared only among Northeast SARE staff, Administrative Council, and grant program reviewers. However, Northeast SARE, as a USDA NIFA program, is committed to public accessibility of results of funded projects; therefore, funded proposal text, and funded project reports will be in the public domain.

Use of Funds

Eligible and ineligible expenses for this grant program are listed below. All grant expenses must be incurred during the contract period, which will be defined before the project begins.

Eligible Expenses

Funds may be used for the following expenses, if they are specific to the project:

- **Labor**, including wages, stipends, salary and benefits
- **Graduate student tuition remission** when a component of an assistantship compensation package
- **Materials and supplies**, including research and education supplies, outreach materials, and software
- **Travel and per diem expenses**
- **Journal and other publication fees** if they are incurred during the contract period as well as copies, postage and other communications expenses
- **Compensation for services** like farmer stipends, presenter fees and other services rendered, lab fees, as well as research incentives and compensation for interviewees, and subscriptions for project-specific services, e.g., for video conferencing or online data storage
- **Meeting and training expenses**, including facility rental and participant support costs
- Equipment purchases and fabrication necessary for, and specific to, the project (equipment with general uses, like a computer or tractor, are not eligible)
- **Rental or operating charges** for farm equipment, land, or greenhouse space
- **Subawards** for portions of the project conducted by other organizations
- **Indirect costs** up to 10 percent of total direct costs. Please note that for-profit businesses generally cannot include indirect costs in the budget)

Ineligible Expenses

Funds may NOT be used for:

- **Capital costs** including the purchase of land, buildings, livestock, general use machinery, greenhouses, and major improvements, fixtures and expansion expenses
- **Normal operating expenses** that would be incurred in the absence of the project such as utilities, general maintenance, or general supplies
- **Promotional items**, including clothing (hats, tee shirts, aprons, etc.), swag, giveaways, subsidies, raffles, and branded promotional material
- **Travel to conferences and other meetings** unless essential to the project's success, such as presentation of project results or to explicitly bring information back to project participants
- **International travel** unless integral to the project's success and described in the full proposal's budget justification (Note: There are certain restrictions on costs and carriers)
- **Cell phone charges**, even if cell phones are used during the course of the project
- **Food expenses** unless necessary for the continuity of a training event or project meeting
- **Expenses outside of the grant period** (before the start date or after the end date on the grant contract)

Costs for copiers, cameras, computers, video equipment, and other items that have uses beyond the project must be provided by the applicant, as they are considered indirect costs. To be considered as a direct cost, the item must be clearly essential and specific to the proposed project.

Matching funds are not required for SARE grants. If your organization is providing facilities, resources, or significant in-kind contributions to the project, these are best described in the proposal text and not in the budget justification.

Grant Timeline

Online system opens for submission	September 6, 2022
Feedback sent to invited applicants	early September 2022
Feedback sent to not invited applicants	early October 2022
Full proposal submission deadline	5 p.m. ET, October 25, 2022
Tier 1 Review* decisions announced to applicants	mid December 2022
Final award decisions announced to applicants	late February 2023
Contract start date for awarded projects**	March 1, 2023
New grantee orientation meetings with Northeast SARE staff	March 2023
Contract finalized by SARE and awardee	April 2023

*There are two tiers of full proposal review. Applicants will be notified whether their proposal moves on from Tier 1 to Tier 2 review.

**All contracts will have a start date of March 1, 2023. However, it often takes about a month for Northeast SARE and the awardee organization to finalize the contract.

Proposal Selection Process

Proposals are evaluated by independent review teams made up of farmers, researchers, non-profit staff and agricultural service providers. Reviewers evaluate proposals on a scale of 1 to 5 using the criteria listed beside the **Step-by-Step Instructions**. A score is then generated for each proposal using the weights for sections listed in the review criteria. Full proposals undergo two tiers of review. Tier 1 teams review a subset of all full proposals, forwarding the strongest proposals to a single Tier 2 review panel. The Tier 2 review panel then forwards a slate of proposals recommended for funding to the Northeast SARE Administrative Council, who make final decisions about funding allocations. When selecting proposals for funding, the Administrative Council may give additional consideration to audiences, topics, and geographic locations that are underrepresented in Northeast SARE's grant portfolio.

Preparing your Proposal

You will submit your proposal online at: **https://projects.sare.org/**. Please prepare your proposal well in advance of the deadline. Most organizational sponsored programs offices or grant support staff need several weeks to review and approve proposals, so plan accordingly. We recommend that you allow for a full day to enter and submit your proposal online.

The Grant Commitment Form must be signed by you and your organization's authorized official (individual who can sign on behalf of your organization) and uploaded at the time of submission. If any subawardees subrecipients are included in the proposal, each must also complete a Grant Commitment Form and these must also be uploaded at the time of submission. Letters from each key individual must also be uploaded. Incomplete proposals will not be reviewed.

There are word limits for most entries. We suggest you use a word processing program to develop your proposal content offline, ensuring it is accurate and complies with the word limits before pasting into the online system. A Word document of the proposal questions is available at: **www.northeastsare.org/PDPrepDoc.**

Keep your writing clear and simple. Avoid scientific jargon and specialized vocabulary -- write for a mixed audience that including farmers, researchers from multiple disciplines, Extension and non-profit educators, and other agricultural service providers. You can assume that grant reviewers have solid agricultural knowledge, but not necessarily deep expertise in your subject area.

Do not include links to external sites, except as needed in the citation list, as they will not be considered by reviewers.

Full Proposal Outline / Checklist

Components of the full proposal and their word limits appear below, listed in the order they appear in the online grant management system within section headings. You may use the outline as a checklist to ensure the proposal is complete before submitting.

Items with an asterisk (*) are required documents that need to be uploaded. Proposals with missing or incomplete required documents will not advance to grant review.

- ☐ Project Title (150 character-limit)
- ☐ Project Description (300 character-limit)

General Information

- ❑ Project Start Date
- ❑ Project End Date
- ❑ Primary State
- ❑ (Optional) Geographical Scope
- ❑ Primary Commodities
- ❑ Primary Practices
- ❑ Primary Benefits and Impacts
- ❑ Was a full proposal of this work submitted previously to Northeast SARE?
- ❑ Does this project involve research with vertebrate animals?
- ❑ Does this project involve human subjects research?
- ❑ Plan for IACUC/IRB Determination (no word limit)
- ❑ (Optional) Additional Context (150-word limit)
- ❑ Response to Preproposal Comments (250-word limit)
- ❑ Project Summary (450-word limit)

Performance Target

- ❑ Performance Target (200-word limit)

Statement of Need

- ❑ Description of Problem or Opportunity (400-word limit)
- ❑ Solution and Benefits (400-word limit)
- ❑ Farmer Interest (300-word limit)
- ❑ Historically Underserved Famers (200-word limit)

Project Team

- ❑ Key Individuals (400-word limit)
- ❑ *Letters of Commitment from Key Individuals (Upload)
- ❑ Project Advisory Committee (350-word limit)

Achieving the Performance Target

- ❑ Education Plan (750-word limit)
- ❑ (Optional) Curriculum/Supporting Document (Upload)
- ❑ *Draft Verification Tool (Upload)
- ❑ Milestones (900-word limit, suggested total limit of 12 milestones of 75-word limit each)

Previous Work

- ❑ Previous Work (1,200-word limit)
- ❑ Citation List (no word limit)

Budget

- ❑ Organizational Affiliation of Subrecipients
- ❑ *Budget Justification and Narrative Spreadsheet(s) for PI's organization and each organization receiving funds as subawards (Upload)
- ❑ Total Direct Costs
- ❑ Total Indirect Costs
- ❑ Total SARE Request

Host Organization Approval

- ❑ *Grant Commitment Form(s) for PI's organization and each organization receiving funds as subawards (Upload)
- ❑ Authorized Official Contact Information
- ❑ FDP Clearinghouse Information

SARE's Grant Management System

Proposals are submitted online at: **projects.sare.org**.

SARE's Grant Management System supports the following web browsers: Edge, Chrome, Firefox, Safari, Opera and Brave. Please plan to use one of these browsers when entering your proposal.

The Grant Management System will be open for proposals from September 6, 2022, until the deadline, **5:00 p.m. ET on Tuesday, October 25, 2022.** Staff are available to answer questions until 5 p.m. ET on the due date. Proposals submitted after 5:00 p.m. ET on October 25 will not be accepted. We strongly suggest you submit your proposal well in advance of the deadline in case you experience technical issues that take time to resolve. Please look for an application confirmation email early on Wednesday October 26; if there were any issues that need to be resolved with your application, you will be notified via email at that time.

Entering Your Proposal

Go to **projects.sare.org** and log in with the account you used to submit your preproposal. Click "**Manage my grant proposals.**" Under "**Unsubmitted Proposals**" you will see the proposal created with the same title as your approved preproposal. Click the link to begin.

If you wish to edit the title, click "**Edit Title**" and enter a clear and succinct title, in title case, of under 150 characters (including spaces) that captures the essence of the project's intent. Avoid acronyms, jargon and unnecessary words. You may edit the brief "**Project Description**" of 300 characters or less by clicking "**Edit Description**." This is a short description of what the project intends to accomplish and, should your project be funded, will show up as the search result in the SARE database.

Be sure to click "**Save**" after each entry. .

Your name, as the grant applicant, and the name of project leader/principal investigator (PI) have been auto-populated from the preproposal. If it is necessary for the applicant and the PI to be different from the preproposal, you must contact Katie Campbell-Nelson at **kc2233@cornell.edu** or 413-834-1090 immediately. Note: The PI is responsible for oversight of the project and must be housed at the same organization as the project's authorized official (the person authorized to sign for the organization hosting the grant, if funded).

Next, complete the proposal sections. Click on each section and submit responses to the questions; some have been automatically transferred from your preproposal, and you may still edit them. To enter information, click "**Edit Answer**" for each question and be sure to click "**Save**" after each entry. See the step-by-step instructions that follow for additional guidance. At any time during the writing of your proposal, you may preview a draft from the Proposal Overview Page by clicking "**View Draft**". Once there, you can also share the draft of your proposal with collaborators by either sending the "**Link to Share**" found at the top of the draft page or by creating and sending a PDF of the proposal.

When all proposal questions are answered to your satisfaction, go to the Proposal Overview page and click the "**Submit Proposal**" button at the bottom of the page. The "**Submit**" button will not appear until you have answered all required questions. Select "**I understand**" to confirm your submission. You will receive an email confirmation of your submission. *Your submission is not complete until this final step, and it is important that you see the email confirmation to be sure your submission went through.*

Prior to the deadline, you may unsubmit to revise the proposal, but if you do so, do not forget to submit it again when you are done, otherwise it will not go forward to review. When you unsubmit, the most recent version of your proposal can be edited (i.e., you do not have to start over). Each time you submit or unsubmit the proposal, you will receive an email confirmation.

Step-by-Step Instructions

The proposal is divided into sections that contain multiple questions. Instructions for all questions are presented below. Review criteria and their associated weights used in evaluating the proposals appear next to their associated questions throughout the instructions.

To navigate the proposal online, each section appears on the menu in the left sidebar of the **Proposal Overview** page; clicking on the section heading will open the fields for entering responses to questions. To enter a response, click the "**Edit Answer**" button after each question. Answers should be written per the instructions below and should adequately address the associated review criteria when applicable.

Please note: Do not include links to external sites in your submission (except as needed in the citation list); they will not be considered by reviewers.

General Information

Note: This section has no review criteria and is not scored by reviewers.

Project Start Date: Choose a start date from the calendar pop-up that is on or after March 1, 2023. Contract start dates will be March 1, 2023 but project work may begin after that date. Note: SARE cannot reimburse expenses incurred before the project start date.

Project End Date: Choose an end date from the calendar pop-up. All projects must be completed by November 30, 2026.

Primary State: Select the state where the majority of work will be carried out, i.e., the primary location of the grant activities. Usually this is the home state of the project leader.

***Optional:* Geographic Scope:** If this project will take place in more than just the primary state, list all the states where this project will take place.

Primary Commodities: Choose *only* the primary production commodities being addressed or investigated by the project, *not* every commodity that might potentially be affected. If your project is not commodity-specific, select "Does not apply to specific commodities".

Primary Practices: Choose *only* the primary production practice(s) being addressed or investigated by the project, *not* every practice that might potentially be affected. Go to **projects.sare.org/practices/** for the complete list of choices that may help you select the appropriate categories. This information will be used to categorize projects and aggregate project results.

Primary Benefits and Impacts: Choose *only* the benefits and impacts most likely to be produced by the project, not every benefit or impact that could potentially occur. Go to **projects.sare.org/benefits-and-impacts/** for example lists that may help you select the appropriate category. This information will be used to categorize projects and aggregate project results.

Was a full proposal of this work submitted previously to Northeast SARE? This answer will be prepopulated from your preproposal.

Does this project involve research with vertebrate animals? Please answer either "yes" or "no". If your project is funded and involves vertebrate animals, SARE will require certification of protocol review from an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). Federal animal welfare regulations require all activities involving the use or intended use of live vertebrate animals in research, research training, experimentation, biological testing or for related purposes are reviewed to ensure animal welfare and humane care.

Does this project involve human subjects research? Please answer either "yes" or "no". If your project is funded and involves human research subjects, SARE will need a completed approval document from an Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Protection of Human Subjects in Research. If your organization does not have IRB protocols in place, please consult this resource: www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/decision-charts-2018.

Plan for IACUC/IRB Determination (no word limit): If your project does not involve vertebrate animal research or human research subjects, please write "not applicable." Otherwise, describe your plan for obtaining IRB or IACUC determinations. Confirm that your organization has an IRB/IACUC board that will review this project or identify a partner (typically compensated) that has agreed to provide this review. If your project is awarded, you will be required to provide the documentation before any research expenses can be reimbursed.

***Optional:* Additional Context (150-word limit):** If relevant, describe for reviewers any challenges or opportunities that you and others conducting the type of work you intend to do face in accessing resources. If you entered an answer to this question at the preproposal stage, it has been carried over to your full proposal. You may choose to edit or remove it.

Response to Preproposal Comments (250-word limit). Refer to "Changes to an Approved Preproposal" on page 2. Provide the following:

- A summary of the changes you made to respond to reviewer comments, if any.
- The rationale for your decision to incorporate comments or not.
- Any additional feedback you may have to reviewer comments.

Project Summary (450-word limit). This is a standalone summary of the project; it must not refer to subsequent parts of the proposal by using language like, "This will be described later." If your project is approved for funding, the project summary will appear on the Project Overview page in the public SARE grant reporting site. We recommend you return to this question to write it or refine it after completing the rest of the application.

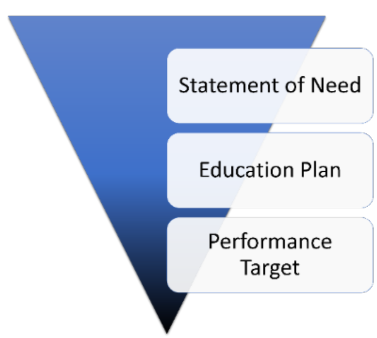
The summary has two elements, as follows. Include subheadings in the text you enter, to identify each element.

<u>Problem or Opportunity and Justification</u>: A A brief description of the problem or opportunity to be addressed, the specific farm audience affected, and justification for the project, from the perspective of farmers.

<u>Solution and Approach</u>: The proposed solution to the problem or opportunity and the approach to achieving or implementing the solution.

Full Proposal Questions

When designing your proposal and responding to the questions below, please consider the Statement of Need should include a description of the full population of service providers and farmers (type, number, scale, and location) who could benefit from the project, the Education Plan should describe how many service providers in that population will be reached by project activities, and the performance target describes the number of service providers reached by the education plan who actually make a verifiable change (often some subset of those who participate in the education plan).



It should be clear to reviewers how the information in the Statement of Need section and the Achieving the Performance Target (which includes the Education Plan and Milestones) flow and lead to the Performance Target. Not all service providers and farmers described in the Statement of Need would be reached in a normal project timeline, but all activities in the Education Plan and the measurable changes described in the Performance Target should be achievable by the project's end date.

Performance Target

Performance Target Criteria
Weight: 15%

Performance Target (200-word limit)

This answer will be prepopulated from your preproposal and you may edit it. The performance target defines the specific, beneficial, and verifiable actions service providers will take as a result of participating in project activities (you may wish to finalize this section of the proposal last). The performance target represents your best, informed estimate of what will happen if all goes according to plan.

The performance target is a project's measurable goal, not a guarantee. The target should be ambitious yet realistic. It is the logical outcome that service providers are expected to achieve as a result of participating in the project. The performance target should be measurable by the planned project end date.

Write your performance target in one to two sentences, using the following three required components. *For example, "X number of service providers will take X action to help X farmers who represent X units production."*

1. The **number of service providers** who will take action to educate/advise farmers. Please use a number here, not a percentage. *Examples include 35 dairy advisors in New York; 20 aquaculture extension educators in the mid-Atlantic; 40 realtors in central PA who specialize in farmland.*
2. The **actions that service provider participants will take** to use their new knowledge, awareness, skills and attitudes to teach, advise and/or assist farmers. *Examples include deliver new workshops; develop new educational curricula; mentor farmers; implement on-farm trials, implement professional learning plans.*
3. The **total number and type of farmers who the service providers will teach and/or assist**. *Examples include: 50 grass-based dairy farms in New York; 200 shellfish farms in the mid-Atlantic; 60 farmers in central PA farming on rented land.*

(Optional) The **extent of farmer adoption**, expressed in measurable units. *Examples include: 5000 acres of grain crop land; 4000 head of dairy cows; 50 acres of oyster planting ground lease; $800,000 in gross sales.*

Review Criteria:
The performance target describes: 1) the number of service providers; 2) the actions they will take to use their new knowledge, awareness, skills, and attitudes to teach, advise, and/or assist farmers; 3) the total number of farmers they will engage; and, optionally, the extent of production that these farmers represent, expressed in measurable units.
If a farmer performance target is included, the number of farmers adopting new practices or behaviors is measurable within the project timeframe. The performance target/s is/are specific, meaningful, measurable, ambitious, and realistic.

(Optional) Farmer Performance Target

Enter a farmer performance target if it is practical to verify behavior change at the farmer level as a result of their direct participation in project activities or as a result of their contact with the project's service provider participants. If this component is included, it must be measurable by the planned project end date.

This optional performance target is written in one to two sentences, using the following two required components. For example, "X practice will be adopted by X number of farmers on X number of acres."

1. The **specific practice or behavior** farmers will adopt by the end of the project as a result of working with the service provider participants. *Examples include a new crop or livestock production practice; an improved system for food safety, product processing, or pest management; a new approach to business management, marketing, or value-added enterprise; specific actions for intergenerational farm transfer or improved human resource management; and improved ties among food system stakeholders.*
2. The **number and type of farmers** who will adopt the new practice, change or behavior.

(Optional) The **extent of farmer adoption**, expressed in measurable units. *Examples include: 5000 acres of grain crop land; 4000 head of dairy cows; 50 acres of oyster planting ground lease; $800,000 in gross sales.*

Do not include educational activities conducted by the project team in the performance target. These should be described in the **Achieving the Performance Target** section.

Performance targets must not include percentages of unknown numbers.

Statement of Need

Statement of Need Criteria
Weight: 20%

Description of Problem or Opportunity (400-word limit)

This answer will be prepopulated from your preproposal and should be reviewed based on the following guidance, which has changed from the preproposal. Explain the problem or opportunity for farmers in the Northeast that service provider project participants will address, the source of the problem or opportunity, and why it is important to sustainable agriculture as described by Northeast SARE's outcome statement (see page 1). Include a description of the full population of farmers in the Northeast (type, number, scale, and location) that could benefit from the project.

Provide evidence to justify claims made in the description of the problem or opportunity. Evidence may include but is not limited to published literature, unpublished reports, survey data, focus group data, cultural experiences and stories, records of meetings, the Census of Agriculture, etc.

Review Criteria:
The problem or opportunity is described and there is a strong connection to Northeast SARE's outcome statement.

The type, number, scale, and location of farms that could potentially benefit from the project are described. The need to address the problem or opportunity is substantial and is supported by specific evidence.

Solution and Benefits (400-word limit)

State the proposed solution(s) that will be the focus of the project's efforts. State how the project will benefit service providers with new tools, knowledge, skills, attitudes or awareness in a way that improves their ability to serve farmers. Provide evidence that supports how and why the solution is expected to be effective. Claims made about the proposed solution must be justified; the same sources listed in the section above may be used. What are some potential barriers to this project, and how do you propose addressing them? How are the potential benefits related to the Northeast SARE outcome statement?

Review Criteria:
The project proposes a feasible and realistic solution capable of leading to the targeted changes and measurable benefits that will improve sustainability. Compelling evidence is provided, such as data from previous work or quantified observations of farmer or service provider experience.

Service Provider Interest (300-word limit)

This answer will be prepopulated from your preproposal and should be reviewed based on the following guidance, which has changed from the preproposal. Describe the total pool of service providers from which you will recruit, including their numbers and geographic range. Describe evidence you have that service providers and farmers need or want the work proposed by your project. Explain service provider commitment or interest in helping farmers address the problem or opportunity through participation in the project. Justify statements of interest with substantial numerical data (not expressed as percentages of unknown numbers) from surveys or other quantified inquiries conducted by the applicant (or others) that demonstrate service provider interest in participating in the project.

Review Criteria:
The size and type of the service provider audience engaged in this project is well described and appropriate to the proposal. Their educational needs and interest in participating in the project are clearly explained and supported with substantial evidence (numerical data). Statements of interest are not expressed as percentages of unknown numbers.

Optional Historically Underserved Service Providers and Farmers (200-word limit)

This answer will be prepopulated from your preproposal and you may edit it. Northeast SARE does not require projects serve or engage historically underserved service providers and farmers. However, proposals that advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) will be elevated by reviewers in the final ranking in relation to proposals that do not. You can either write "N/A" or provide a description of how your project serves, centers leadership by, or otherwise engages historically underserved service providers and farmers. Describe which audience(s) these service providers and farmers represent and any plans to compensate participants.

USDA defines historically underserved audiences to include socially-disadvantaged producers, limited resource producers, beginning farmers/ranchers, and veterans. They further define socially-disadvantaged farmers and ranchers belonging to the following groups: American Indians or Alaskan Natives, Asians, Blacks or African Americans, Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, and women. Northeast SARE also considers LGBTQIA+ farmers to be historically underserved.

Review Criteria:
Northeast SARE does not require that projects focus on historically underserved farmers. Reviewers will elevate proposals in the final ranking that contribute to Northeast SARE's DEIJ goals (to prioritize proposals that support historically underserved farmers), provide a description of the historically underserved farmers the project will serve or engage, and how this will be done.

Project Team

Project Team Criteria Weight: 15%

Key Individuals (400-word limit)

This answer will be prepopulated from your preproposal and should be reviewed based on the following guidance, which has changed from the preproposal. Briefly describe yourself as the project leader and other key individuals (cooperators) who will devote significant time to the project. All personnel and contractors who will be receiving funds should be included, as well as any who are contributing significant money, labor, facilities, or equipment in kind. Descriptions include name, position or role, business or organization, skills, relevant experience (may include lived experience), and primary responsibilities on the project. You should demonstrate your team's ability to manage the project and conduct its activities. If some key individuals have not yet been identified, provide a description of the role/qualifications of the persons who would be recruited to fill those positions.

Review Criteria:
The key individuals have the skills and experience to conduct the project. Their roles are well defined, and letters of commitment are included.

Letters of Commitment from Key Individuals (Upload)

Each key individual (other than you, the applicant) must provide a letter of commitment. Each letter should indicate the individual understands their role, describes what they will bring to the effort, and acknowledges their willingness to participate. Letters should be written by the individual team members (not you) and addressed to you as the project leader.

Do not upload: Letters of general support from individuals who are not part of the project team or key individuals, letters from Advisory Committee members, curricula vitae, or sample promotional materials about your organization.

Project Advisory Committee (350-word limit)

An advisory committee consisting of at least two farmers and one agricultural service provider is required to provide input on project design and implementation. Additional people representing other affiliations, such as researchers, may also be included on the committee. The committee must not include Key Individuals but may include others involved in the project. Provide the names and affiliations of those who will serve on the advisory committee.

Describe the extent to which advisory committee members have provided input during proposal development and how they will be engaged during the project, for example in assessment of farmer interest, providing feedback on preliminary findings, and sharing project activities and findings. Describe how and when advisory committee meetings will occur.

Review Criteria:
Advisory committee members are appropriate to the project and include at least two farmers and one agricultural service provider. Committee members have provided input into proposal development and there is a clear plan to engage the committee throughout the project.

Achieving the Performance Target

Achieving the Performance Target Criteria Weight: 25%

This section consists of the Education Plan and Milestones. The Education Plan provides an overall description of the project's plan for engaging participants, creating learning opportunities, and evaluating the results of these activities. Milestones provide the steps that detail what the service provider participants do in each of the three categories (engagement, learning and evaluation). It might be helpful to think about milestones as a project timeline of participant actions to achieve the performance target.

Northeast SARE offers the following resources that may be helpful to you as you develop this section.

Guide to Outcome Funding (**http://www.northeastsare.org/outcomefunding**) – Describes outcome funding and provides example performance targets and milestones.

Sustainable Agriculture through Sustainable Learning: An Educator's Guide to Best Practices for Adult Learning (**https://www.sare.org/resources/sustainable-agriculture-through-sustainable-learning/**)– Provides information for offering adult education.

Education Plan (750-word limit)

Include the following subheadings in your proposal to identify each element: Engagement, Learning and Evaluation. Describe how key individuals and advisory committee members are involved, where appropriate.

Review Criteria:
The engagement, learning, and evaluation elements of the education plan are all specifically outlined.
Methods for engaging service providers are sufficient to reach potential participants and to help them apply new knowledge and skills.

The educational content is appropriate and effective for the service providers that who will benefit from the project.

The knowledge, awareness, skills and attitudes to be gained by service providers are described and are necessary to achieve the performance target. The educational approach, methods, and curriculum are described.

Evaluation will verify service provider learning and adoption. It describes the methods, data to be collected, and how the performance target will be verified.

Engagement:

Describe the process you will use to make potential service provider participants aware of the project and its benefits, and how you will gain the commitment of participants for the duration of this project.

Specify the number and type of service providers you will engage in this project as participants, and state whether you plan to enroll a cohort of service providers for the entire project, or whether you intend to recruit new participants for successive portions of your project.

Outline the ways in which participants will be supported as they learn, plan, and take actions (for example, post-training contact by email, phone, in-person; record-keeping tools or templates; fact sheets, videos and other instructive materials; etc.). Explain how service providers will be assisted to overcome challenges they may face in applying the new knowledge, awareness, skills, and/or attitudes they gain through the project. Describe incentives for participation and any follow-up action you will provide, such as support for travel and stipends for supplies and materials for participants to conduct their own trainings.

Learning:

Describe the educational content of the project. This must be based on information already proven suitable for adoption by service providers.

Describe the knowledge, awareness, skills, and/or attitudes service providers will acquire and how it will lead them to take action to implement the practice or behavior that addresses the problem or opportunity as described in the Performance Target.

Describe the educational approach and methods you will use. Include your curriculum with a description of topics and educational experiences in which service providers participate (e.g., workshops, demonstrations, webinars, consultations, etc.).

Evaluation:

Describe methods for evaluating the progress of your project by documenting what and how service providers learn, plan, and take action through each phase of the education plan.

Describe the information (data) to be collected, when and how it will be collected. Describe your plan for verifying the extent to which all components of the performance target are achieved.

Make note of how you will use verification feedback from participants to make adjustments in the education plan.

(Optional) Curriculum/Supporting Documents (Upload)

You may upload a draft curriculum and other types of educational tools to be used in your project here. Do not upload more than 5 total pages of curriculum/supporting documents – reviewers will not review more than the first 5 pages of uploaded documentation.

Note: Allowable file types include PDFs, images and Excel spreadsheets.

Draft Verification Tool (Upload)

Upload a draft of the tool you will use to verify the extent to which the components of the service provider performance target are achieved. Note that surveys are not the only method of verification.

• The number of service providers who took action to educate/advise farmers.

• The actions that service provider participants took to use their new knowledge, awareness, skills and attitudes to teach, advise and/or assist farmers, categorized as follows:

- o Consultations
- o Curricula or educational tools
- o On-farm demonstrations
- o Online trainings and webinars
- o Published articles
- o Focus Groups
- o Tours and Field days
- o Workshops
- o Other Educational Activities

• The total number and type of farmers who the service providers served.

•(Optional) The extent of farms these farmers manage, expressed in measurable units.

If you have chosen to include a farmer performance target, your draft verification tools should also include methods for verifying the extent to which its components are achieved:

• The number and type of farmers who adopted the new practice, change or behavior.

• The specific practice or behavior farmers adopted by the end of the project as a result of working with the service provider participants.

• (Optional) The extent of farmer adoption, expressed in measurable units.

Note: Allowable file types include PDFs and Excel spreadsheets.

Review Criteria:
The verification tool is designed to verify the extent to which the performance target is achieved.

Milestones (900-word limit; suggested limit of 12 milestones, 75-word limit for each milestone)

Milestones describe the sequential project activities that lead to knowledge gain, skills acquisition, increased awareness or changes in attitude by service providers.

The Performance Target is not a milestone—rather, milestones are the changes or actions that will lead to the performance target, including recruitment, engagement, educational activities, and support for service providers as they offer new services or content to farmers.

If funded, the project's milestones will become the benchmarks for required progress reports; as such, they must be verifiable (measurable). Describe how and when data will be collected to measure the extent to which each milestone was achieved and, ultimately, how the performance target was reached.

Write the milestones sequentially. Like the performance target, each milestone should be an ambitious but realistic goal.

Number the milestones and choose whether to give each milestone one of these labels: "Engagement", "Learning" or "Evaluation".

Each milestone includes the following elements.

- Number of participants: A realistic number of service providers (and farmers, if appropriate) who will participate.
- What service providers learn or do: Provide a brief summary of how participants will participate in each project activity (in the Education Plan), and the specific knowledge, skills, attitudes and/or awareness they gain as a result.
- Proposed completion date: *This is essential* for establishing a project timeline and accountability. If a project activity and resulting participant experience or action will be repeated multiple times during the project, please treat these as a single milestone, describing the pattern of planned occurrence and final completion date of the entire set.
- (Optional) Project Team involvement: Include this element in a milestone if relevant--describe how the project team and or advisory committee will be involved in each milestone.

The following are examples of milestones.

1) Engagement*: <u>January 30 (annually).</u> 100 service providers learn about the soil health workshop through email newsletters. This will be tracked by J. Doe (communication specialist) via newsletter open rates.*

2) Learning*: <u>June 30 2023, August 30 2023, June 30 2024, August 30 2024.</u> 30 service providers participate in each of 4 soil*

Review Criteria:
The milestones describe a sequence of project activities that lead to knowledge and skills acquisition or changes in awareness or attitude by service providers, as well as interim changes service providers make or measurable steps they take during the project.

The milestones are likely to lead to the performance target.

Milestone descriptions include the number of participants, what service providers learn or do, anticipated completion dates, and describe project team involvement if relevant.

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health workshops (100 individual service providers total after removing repeat participants) and learn about indicators of soil health and soil health tests. A sign-up sheet will be distributed at each workshop to collect participant contact information for involvement in follow up focus groups.

***3) Engagement and Evaluation**: September 30 2023, September 30 2024. Of the 100 service providers who participated in the workshops, 50 participate in at least one annual focus group to support implementation of soil health practices and to plan each year's subsequent workshops to build on participant needs. Evaluation of service provider learning will also occur during annual focus groups. Project Leader, J. Smith will lead focus groups and a member of the advisory committee will participate each year.*

Previous Work

Previous Work Criteria Weight: 10%

Previous Work (750-word limit)

What efforts have been made by others to solve the problem or use this opportunity? Describe the current knowledge and practice on this topic to show your familiarity with what has been tried and how your project builds on existing efforts. If the practice is known but has not been applied in your community, explain how you will test what has worked elsewhere or make adaptations for your area.

Include only those sources most relevant to your project. This section is the place to convince reviewers that there is a body of knowledge that provides a compelling foundation for the project.

Show you are informed about previous relevant research and/or initiatives. References may include but are not limited to published literature, SARE project reports, unpublished reports, survey data, focus groups data, cultural experiences and stories, records of meetings, the Census of Agriculture, etc. The national SARE database of projects (projects.sare.org/search-projects) contains projects from all four SARE regions and is searchable by state, type of grant, project coordinator and keyword.

Review Criteria:
Previous relevant work is described and connected to the proposed work.

Citation List (no word limit)

Provide a list of citations referenced in the previous work section and elsewhere in your proposal. Only include citations directly related to the project. Use the citation style most familiar to you. Many resources exist online to support with citating references, such as **https://www.scribbr.com/apa-citation-generator/**, **https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/create-a-bibliography-citations-and-references-17686589-4824-4940-9c69-342c289fa2a5**, and more...

Review Criteria:
A citation list is provided with relevant references included.

Budget

A detailed budget is required for the host organization and each subaward on the project. The budget is provided by completing and uploading Budget Justification and Narrative Spreadsheet(s) and entering totals into the online proposal.

Funding requests should align with project duration, scope of the work, and intensity of the education program you offer. Projects are invited to include funding to address and assess social dimensions of the proposed work.

Northeast SARE strongly encourages farmers (and others who take time out of their normal work to provide a service to the project) be paid for the time they contribute to a project at a reasonable rate. For example, Northeast SARE compensates farmers who serve on its Administrative Council and review teams at a rate of $300 per day.

Budget Criteria Weight: 15%

Review Criteria:
Review criteria:
Budget items reflect the realistic needs of the project, and the total budget request is appropriate in terms of the magnitude of the project's expected results. All expenses are well justified.

Organizational Affiliation of Subrecipients

Enter any additional organizations that will receive funding.

The organizational affiliation of the project leader (you, the principal investigator) is already defined in the applicant profile and does not need to be entered again.

Budget Justification and Narrative Spreadsheet (Upload)

Use the Northeast SARE Budget Justification and Narrative Template (Excel spreadsheet) available at: **www.northeastsare.org/FullProposalBudget**. The template can accommodate one-, two- or three-year budgets. In the template, please carefully review the instructions on row 3 of the "Budget" tab, the "Instructions" tab, and the "Example Budget" tab.

A Budget Justification and Narrative Template is required for each organization that will receive funds through subawards. The completed template(s) must be uploaded as an Excel file (.xls or .xlsx) to your online submission.

An overview of allowable and unallowable uses of funds is given on page 4 of this Call.

In the Template, itemize and justify all expected expenses and calculate their costs as precisely as possible to show reviewers what funds are needed to carry out your project, and why they are needed.

Include the quantity and per-unit cost of each expense and include a narrative description that explains the need for and use of each expense. This level of detail is required by USDA NIFA and the University of Vermont. It also shows reviewers you have carefully considered the funding needed for your project. The competitiveness of proposals is undermined by an inadequately justified budget.

The Template should calculate the total cost of each item, the category subtotals for each year, and overall project totals. Budget categories in the Template are explained in the Instructions and are also provided in the Appendix for your convenience. All totals for each category should be calculated using the formulas in the Template.

Matching funds are not required for SARE grants. If your organization is providing facilities, resources or significant in-kind contributions to the project, these are best described in the proposal text and not in the budget justification.

Total Direct Costs

Enter the total direct dollar amount requested from the Template ("TOTAL DIRECT COSTS" from the Budget Justification and Narrative Template).

Total Indirect Costs

Enter the total indirect dollar amount requested from the Template ("TOTAL INDIRECT COSTS" from the Budget Justification and Narrative Template). Please note for-profit businesses cannot include indirect costs in the budget (see the Appendix for more information).

Total SARE Request

Enter the total dollar amount requested from the Template ("TOTAL SARE Request" from the Budget Justification and Narrative Template). The totals of indirect and direct costs requested above should add up to this number.

Host Organization Approval

Grant Commitment Form (Upload) Please complete the Grant Commitment Form(s), available at: [https://northeast.sare.org/largegrantcommitment]. You, the project leader (principal investigator), must sign as the applicant. An authorized official at your organization (typically a sponsored programs officer or organization's financial manager or executive director) must also sign. You may share your proposal with your host organization's authorized official by clicking on the "View Draft" button on the Proposal Overview Page, then print the proposal or share the proposal by providing the "Link to share" URL.

Upload a PDF or image copy of the completed, signed Grant Commitment Form and enter the information from the Form into the next two questions.

Note: Completed Grant Commitment Forms are required from all organizations that receive SARE funds under subawards—so if your project includes subawards please be sure to work with your project partners to receive their completed (and signed) Grant Commitment Forms well in advance of the deadline. You must upload PDFs (or image files) of these forms with your submitted proposal. If an organization or partner will not receive a subaward, no Grant Commitment Form is required.

Authorized Official Contact Information

For the organization serving as host organization for the project, provide the name and contact information of the authorized official for the organization who will serve as fiscal agent for the project.

FDP Clearinghouse Information

Please check the response to the question, "Is this organization registered in the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) Expanded Clearinghouse?" A list of participating organizations can be found at: fdpclearinghouse.org/organizations.

Expectations for Funded Proposals

If the Northeast SARE Administrative Council selects your project for funding, you may expect the following.

Notification

The Northeast SARE Administrative Council will select proposals for funding by the end of February 2023 and Northeast SARE staff will notify applicants of the status of their proposals soon after that.

Contracting and Disbursement of Funds

The Sponsored Programs Office or Authorized Official of the grant recipient will receive a Subaward Agreement from the University of Vermont, the host organization for Northeast SARE. Recipients who are businesses will receive a vendor services agreement instead of a subaward agreement. Funds are to be used exclusively for the proposed project, subject to the restrictions outlined in "Use of Funds" (page X, above) Funds are released on a reimbursement basis to the organization in response to invoices from the organization's financial office. This process can take a while so, if funded, be sure to initiate it as soon as possible. Northeast SARE will hold the last 10 percent of the award until the final project report has been received and approved.

IACUC and IRB Documentation

If your project is funded and involves research with vertebrate animals, SARE will require certification of protocol review from an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). If your project is funded and involves human subjects research, SARE will need a completed approval or exemption document from an Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Protection of Human Subjects in Research.

Acknowledging SARE

All funded projects are required to acknowledge Northeast SARE as the funding source in all project publications and outreach materials. You can find more information about acknowledging Northeast SARE at: **https://northeast.sare.org/about/northeast-sare-logo-and-acknowledgement/**.

Required Reporting

Northeast SARE requires annual progress reports and a comprehensive final report for all projects. All reports will be submitted online in SARE's Grant Management System using our reporting template. Reports should describe the progress made on the project, detail the findings observed, and document any outputs and impacts. All outreach and educational activities should be reported as well as any measured changes in participant knowledge and skills, attitudes and awareness, and/or the adoption of new practices. Publications and educational tools should be added to the report as attachments. Photographs should be included to help document and promote the project.

Progress reports are due by January 15 each year the project is active and a final report is due within 60 days of the project's end date. The final report should include full, detailed results of project activities defined in the proposal, regardless of pending or published journal articles. At the close of projects, SARE asks for contact information of 8-12 project participants whom SARE may contact in the future for program evaluation.

It is useful to review SARE's logic models and to be familiar with performance indicators that will be evaluated as part of grantee and post-project reporting. SARE logic models provide a description of the resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes of the program. For more information, please visit: **www.northeastsare.org/logicmodels**.

Northeast SARE asks grant recipients to provide us with their contact information for at least two years after the project has ended to allow for follow-up and response to inquiries about the project.

Appendix: Explanation of Budget Categories

This information is available directly in the Budget Justification and Narrative Template in the Instructions tab and is included here as well for your convenience.

Salaries and Wages

Include salaries and wages for the project leaders, support staff, and/or student wages. These must be shown as either an hourly rate multiplied by the anticipated time needed to complete the project or as a percentage of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) at a given salary. Provide narrative detail of each person's role in the project or the services they are providing through their work on the project.

If salaries are expected to change, enter each year on a separate line.

Only people employed by the host organization should be listed in this category. In most circumstances, the salaries of administrative or clerical staff at educational institutions and nonprofit organizations are included as part of indirect costs. Those employed elsewhere should be listed in the appropriate category below, or, if individuals are to be paid by another organization via a subaward, they should be included in a separately detailed subaward budget and the subaward total should be listed below under “Subawards” in “Other Direct Costs.”

Fringe Benefits

If applicable, provide the cost of fringe benefits. These should be calculated as a percentage of the salary and/or wage amounts above. Tuition remission for students with assistantships should go in the "Other" section.

Materials and Supplies

Materials and supplies are items that are not depreciated over time. Supplies can include items such as project-specific software, specialized tools, measuring devices, and other materials that will be used during the project. Property that has a useful life beyond one year should be included in the “Purchase of Equipment or Cost of Fabrication” category below. Individual materials and supplies with a value greater than $1,000 may need to be prorated based on the project length. See the "Purchase of Equipment or Cost of Fabrication" section for more details.

Any requests for funds to purchase materials and supplies must clearly describe why they are essential to the project. Please itemize the quantity and per-unit cost of each expense. In general terms, indicate the types of required expendable materials and supplies and their estimated costs.

It is important to include narrative justification about why the item is necessary and why not otherwise available through the organization. Items must be project-specific and able to be tracked as being used for the project. General-use items such as office supplies are not allowable unless the items can be tracked and itemized for a project-specific purpose. Promotional items are not allowed, including items of clothing (hats, tee shirts, aprons, etc.), swag, giveaways, subsidies, raffles, and branded promotional material.

Travel

This section is only for the travel of employees/personnel of the host organization only; list consultant travel under the "Consultant Services" section and list participant travel under the "Trainee Support" section. Specify the purpose of the trip and who is traveling, the destination, dates of trip or number of days of trip if dates are not known, and expenses per trip. We recommend you break out costs onto different lines (such as registration fees, lodging, airfare or mileage, per diem, etc.) so your estimates are clear to reviewers. Travel expenses for conferences are not allowable unless essential to the project, such as presentation of project results or to explicitly bring information back to project participants.

When requesting funds for travel by car, use the mileage reimbursement rate set by the organization administering the grant (cannot be more than the Federal rate). If your organization does not have a rate, then you should use the current Federal mileage rate, which can be found at: https://www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/standard-mileage-rates.

If the budget includes air travel, these trips must clearly be justified as necessary to the project. Foreign travel is typically not allowed under the SARE program except in cases where sufficient justification has been provided and it must be pre-approved by Northeast SARE staff if your project is funded. To justify foreign travel, grant applicants need to demonstrate the travel is 1) directly related to the project, 2) important for project completion, and 3) well justified (i.e., provide explanation for why the activity cannot be done in the USA, detail relevance to Northeast agriculture sustainability, and provide foreign institution and colleagues' qualifications when relevant, etc.). All airline travel must be booked according to the guidelines of the Fly America Act which roughly states that, except under certain circumstances, flights must be booked on U.S. flag carriers. In addition, all flights must be booked in coach class.

Communications and Printing

This category includes costs of developing, printing, and distributing all publication, education, and outreach materials. Include publishing costs for scientific or technical journal articles here. You may include the cost of developing web-based publications here, but web hosting expenses belong in the "Subscriptions" category. Show a per-piece cost for any publications you plan to develop.

This category also includes postage, fax and telephone expenses. Please note charges for cell phones are not allowable.

Consultant and Other Services

If outside entities will be compensated on a temporary basis to carry out specific tasks, these charges are listed here. All personnel of the host organization should be listed under the "Salaries and Wages" section. Expenses for specific services, consultants and speakers/presenters should all be included here. Include the names (if applicable) of those receiving stipends or payments for services, the organizations or farms, a description of the services they are providing, and a breakdown of the number of days or hours of service, rate of pay, and expenses to be reimbursed (travel), etc. If the project is funded, the host organization will need to keep a scope of work and resume on file for all consultants.

Farmer collaborators are often paid stipends if conducting work on behalf of the project team and this expense belongs in this category. Stipends for farmer trainees or participants belong in the "Trainee Support" section. SARE strongly encourages farmers (and others who take time out of their normal work to provide a service to the project) be paid for the time they contribute to a project at a reasonable rate. For example, Northeast SARE compensates farmers who serve on its Administrative Council and review teams at a rate of $300 per day.

Research incentives and compensation for interviewees or other research participants should also be included here when clearly necessary for the success of the program. These individuals do not need to be named.

Subscriptions

Costs of subscriptions, such as internet service, web hosting, online meeting, storage, survey platforms, and trade publications can be included here if they are specific to the project.

Conferences, Meetings and Workshops

Costs of holding project conferences, meetings, training events, and workshops are included in this category. Expense examples include the rental of facilities and equipment for meetings, and signage for field days. Details of costs for each conference or meeting should be itemized.

Meal expenses may be included in the budget only in situations where providing the meal maintains the continuity of a formal group meeting or educational training, and not offering such a meal would impose inappropriate discomfort for the meeting participants. If this is the case, include the phrase, "necessary for continuity," in the justification column.

Conversely, meals may not be charged as project costs when individuals decide to go out for breakfast, lunch or dinner together when no need exists for continuity of a meeting; this kind of activity is considered an entertainment cost.

Reminder: List expenses for a project leader or staff employed by the host organization attending a conference under "Travel". List presenter expenses under "Consultants and Other Services". List trainee-participant expenses under "Trainee Support".

Other Direct Costs

Note: If your organization uses Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC), the costs in this section are exempt from indirect cost calculations. This typically affects only a small number of applicants and is calculated automatically when the “de minimus rate” indirect cost option is selected at the bottom of the Budget Justification and Narrative Template. If you are not using the de minimus rate, the costs in this section are included in the indirect cost calculation.

Trainee Support (participant support costs)

If meals, registration costs, transportation, lodging, stipends, or other travel expenses are to be paid on behalf of participants who are receiving training as project beneficiaries, these expenses should be listed as "Trainee Support" costs. If you request participant support costs for conferences/meetings, indicate the purpose, dates, and place of the conference/meeting. Payments for services rendered should be listed above in "Consultants and Other Services". Other event expenses should be listed in "Conferences, Meetings, and Workshops".

Office Rental

These costs are most often covered under the host organization’s indirect costs (see below) and would only be applicable if a remote site was specifically needed to carry out the project.

Purchase of Equipment or Cost of Fabrication

Equipment is defined as 1) an item that has an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more (unless the organization has established lower levels) and/or 2) an expected useful life of more than one year (ie. a $1,000 item with a useful life of 5 years would belong in this category). Allowable items ordinarily will be limited to project-specific equipment not already available for the conduct of the work. General-purpose equipment, such as a personal computer or a tractor, is not eligible for support unless primarily used in the conduct of project-specific research.

Fabrication of equipment is only appropriate when a project's plan of work calls for a piece of equipment to be constructed as an integral part of the project.

Requests for funds to purchase or fabricate equipment must clearly justify: 1) why the equipment is essential to the project and 2) why it is not part of the organization’s normal inventory. When possible, equipment should be rented, but if the equipment is relatively inexpensive or not available for rent, an applicant can propose to buy the equipment. Shipping and delivery costs may be included.

When the applicant is a for-profit business: typically, if equipment to be purchased has a useful life beyond the project period SARE funds should be requested using a pro-rated share of the total cost based only on the time it will be used for the project. The allowed expense should be calculated as the purchase price, divided by expected useful life (typically five years for farm equipment) times the number of years used for the project. If the equipment's effectiveness is unknown (i.e., the project will determine whether it is useful in a particular application) or will be used only for education/research in perpetuity, it may be funded in full.

Rental of Equipment or Land-use Charges

Requests for funds to rent or operate equipment must clearly justify: 1) why the equipment is essential to the project and 2) why it is not part of an organization's normal inventory.

Land-use charges are most typical in field or greenhouse research situations when a rental rate is applied or a research station that has a standard per-acre or square foot fee for plot maintenance.

Other

If you have a project expense that truly does not fit into any of the above categories, it should be included in this section. Tuition remission for students with assistantships can be included here. We recommend you contact this grant program's coordinator about expenses you think belong here, as expenses in this category are removed to determine MTDC, when relevant, for indirect calculations. Each item must be clearly identified and justified to be allowed. Unidentified, unjustified, or undefined ("etc.", "miscellaneous" or "contingency expense") items are not allowed.

Subawards

If a portion of the project will be conducted by another organization as a subaward, it should be included in this section. List the institution, organization or business, the subaward leader's name, and the amount of the subaward. Each subrecipient will need to complete a Budget Justification and Narrative Template and Grant Commitment Form–these forms must be completed and uploaded online to the proposal at the time of submission. When using MTDC calculations for indirect, subaward amounts above $25,000 for each subaward organization are removed to determine MTDC.

Indirect Costs

The USDA allows indirect costs. Applicants whose organizations have a negotiated federal indirect cost rate may budget the indirect portion to be up to 10% of the total direct costs. This is the maximum, a cap on indirect costs set by USDA on SARE grants. This amount is automatically calculated by dividing total direct costs by ten. If a fractional dollar amount is calculated, the total is rounded down so the amount of indirect costs remains under 10% of the total direct costs. For this reason, you may see an unexpected rounding behavior in the automatic indirect cost calculations in certain cases, which is normal. If the negotiated organizational rate is less than 10% of total direct costs, then the lower rate limit applies. In this case, you will need to enter your own calculated values for the Indirect Costs.

If your organization does not have a federally-negotiated indirect cost rate, you may request a de minimis rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC). MTDC includes all direct costs except for Trainee Support, Office Rental, Purchase of Equipment or Cost of Fabrication, Equipment Rental of Land-use Charges, Other and Subaward amounts above $25,000 for each subaward organization. This is automatically calculated when you select the de minimis rate at the bottom of the Budget Justification and Narrative Template.

For-profit businesses (including farms) that receive Northeast SARE awards will receive vendor service agreements as contracts (rather than subaward agreements with the flow down of federal regulations) and these service agreements cannot include indirect costs. Any overhead expenses that can be directly attributable to the grant project may be itemized in the direct cost budget and cannot exceed the USDA NIFA indirect cap of 10% of total direct costs.