Applying for a 2022 NCR-SARE Graduate Student Grant

NCR-SARE's Graduate
Student Grant Program is a
competitive grant program to
fund graduate student
projects that address
sustainable agriculture issues.
Online proposals must be
submitted by
April 7, 2022 4:00 pm CDT

SARE
Sustainable Agriculture
Research & Education

Advancing sustainable agriculture since 1988

April 7, 2022 4:00 pm CDT www.sare.org/ncrsare

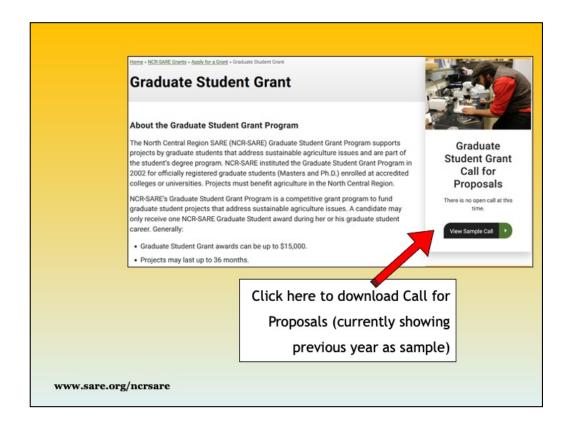
This is a presentation about applying for an NCR SARE graduate student grant. The presentation goes over material that is in the Call for Proposals, so it would be good for you to have that in front of you as we go through this. You can download it from the north central sare website, www.northcentralsare.org

This presentation:

provides a quick overview of SARE and North Central SARE and emphasizes some of the SARE philosophy that will aid you in developing your proposals; goes through some of the sections of the proposal with further clarification about what reviewers are looking for;

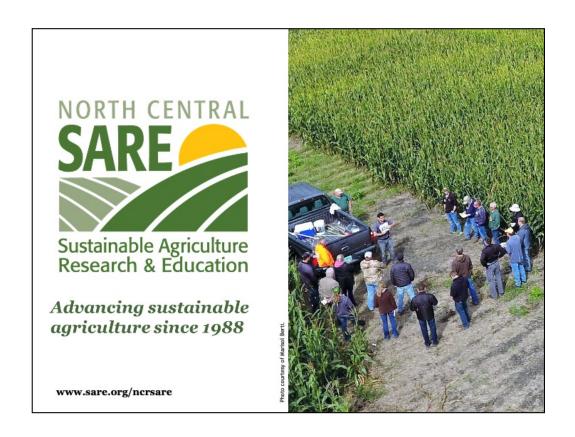
Ends with screen shots of the online system and instructions.

Contact information for NCR-SARE is on the last slide, so call or email if you have questions.



Download the 2022 Call for Proposals. It will be posted under the Apply for a Grant section on the home page of the North Central SARE website. (Not yet posted in this screen shot.)

Make sure it is the 2022 Call, because there are changes made each year to the application. If you have any problems downloading the Call for proposals, please contact the NCR SARE office and we can email you a copy, or send a hard copy.



The USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program, commonly referred to by our acronym, SARE, is a part of the USDA, funded through the National Institute of Food and Agriculture or NIFA program.



We provide grants and outreach to advance sustainable innovations to the whole of American agriculture.



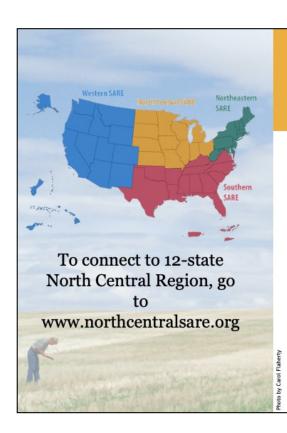
This slide highlights some of the main characteristics of the SARE program--We are decentralized, in that each of the four regions make their own funding decisions, including which grant programs to offer.

We are science-based, and a grassroots grant program. Our proposal review teams and our administrative council include farmers and ranchers, extension educators, researchers and personnel from state and federal agencies. That's an important point to remember when you're writing your grant proposal—don't assume that everyone reviewing your proposal is an expert in your field—try to avoid using jargon.

Also, we only fund projects with strong farmer/rancher or end-user involvement.



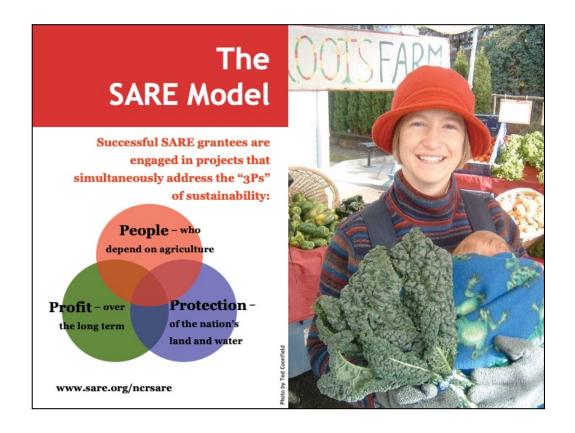
We also have materials available for free as pdfs online, or for small fees, based largely on SARE grant results.



NCR-SARE Grant Types

- · Farmer/Rancher
- · Research & Education
- Partnership
- Professional Development
- Graduate Student
- Youth Educator

We are decentralized. The North Central region includes 12 upper midwestern states, and we have our own 16 member Administrative Council, composed of farmers/ranchers, researchers, educators and federal and state agency personnel. They set priorities and make grant funding decisions. In our region, we offer the six grant programs listed above. Information on all grant programs can be found on our website.



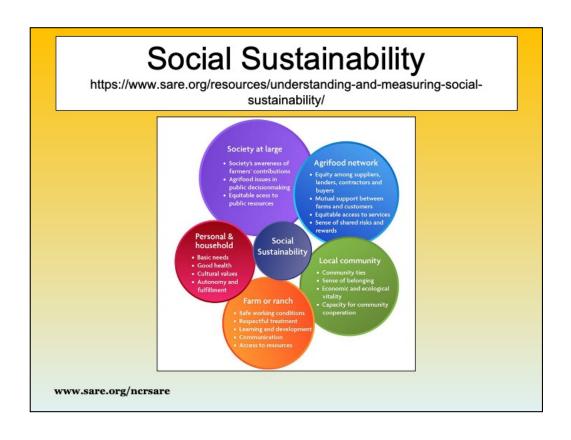
Successful SARE grantees have projects that simultaneously address the 3Ps of sustainability—people, profit over the long term and protection of our resources.

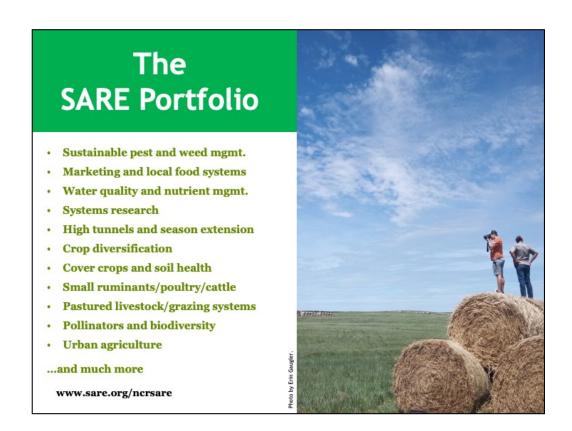
The North Central SARE uses slightly different wording, but also highlights the "3Ps" of sustainability, in the NCR-SARE broad based outcomes, listed at the top of p. 3 in the Call for Proposals.

In your proposal, you must address how your project addresses each of these outcomes, even if it emphasizes one over the others. The outcomes are: Improving the profitability of farmers and associated agricultural businesses.

Sustaining and improving the environmental quality and natural resource base on which agriculture depends.

Enhancing the quality of life for farmers/ranchers, communities, and society as a whole.





Those are broad outcomes, so as you can see we fund a wide range of topics that we've funded here's a partial list of the SARE portfolio

Graduate Student Grant Program

\$15,000 total, 10% Indirect Costs allowed

Max 36 months, typically 12-24 months

Research, OR education/demonstration projects

Does not have to be part of thesis, but should be part of graduate program.

Proposals due April 7, 4:00 p.m. CDT

Fund about 20 grants per year

Funds will be available September 1st.

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Now we'll focus on the Graduate Student Grant Program--these are the basics. Graduate student grants are for up to \$15,000, and 10% of that can be taken by your institution as Indirect Costs.

Duration of these projects vary widely. We allow up to 36 months, but since the grant limit is \$15,000, most projects are shorter, typically 12 to 24 months. Grants can be for research or education, or demonstration projects. Funding won't usually cover your whole thesis project, but more likely covers a specific aspect of your project. It does not have to be a part of your thesis, but should be part of your study program. For example, some students have done farmer surveys as an offshoot of their research.

Proposals are due April 7, 4:00 p.m. CDT. They are due at that time because we use an online grant submission system, and technical support is not available after 4:00 p.m.

Your institution has to sign off on your grant project, and in order to do that, you will have to complete your application—print off the draft and cover page and the institutional authorization page and run it through your grants office for signature. Upload a pdf of the signature page to your application as the final step. This all needs to be completed by the deadline—so allow time for your grants office to process. Some offices require as much as a week.

Last year we received 58 grant proposals and funded 22.

A grant review committee will meet in July and make funding recommendations to the Administrative Council who will approve funding in late July. You'll be notified in August and funding will be available Sept. 1st. Don't list your start date before September 1.

Who Can Apply?

Must be enrolled in a graduate student degree program or vet med residence program at accredited college or university when funds disbursed (after Sept. 1, 2022)

Proposal must be written by graduate student, with input from major advisor.

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To apply, you must be enrolled in a qualifying graduate degree program at the time the funds are disbursed, and the proposal must be written by you, the graduate student, although we encourage input from your advisor.

A common question is whether you can apply for this grant program if you are not yet in a degree program. Technically, we say that you must be enrolled at the time the funds are disbursed, so you can apply prior to being enrolled in a degree program. But--because we ask that the graduate student write the proposal with input from their major advisor, we do expect that you are likely already accepted into a degree program, or on your way to being accepted into a specific degree program.

In addition, some institutions do not allow a graduate student to serve as the Principal Investigator, so your advisor will serve as the official P.I. for the funds, but NCR-SARE considers you the project coordinator. Part of our purpose in having this grant program is to develop future researchers in sustainable agriculture, so although it is not a large grant, we have the same requirements and treat it the same as our larger Research and Education grants.

In the North Central Region, we say that you can be outside the 12-state

region if your research or education project is being conducted primarily in the North Central Region. We've had a few questions from graduate students who are enrolled in one institution, but are doing an online graduate program in collaboration with another university, so their faculty advisor is located elsewhere. If you're in that situation, call Beth Nelson, because while you're eligible, the contract is actually between your institution and the University of Minnesota which hosts the NCR-SARE program, so we'd have to make special arrangements.

NCR-SARE Graduate Student Grant Projects

In recent funding cycles we funded projects in Natural resources, Livestock systems, Pest management, Cropping systems, and Marketing

To view graduate student projects funded, look up project reports on the national SARE website.

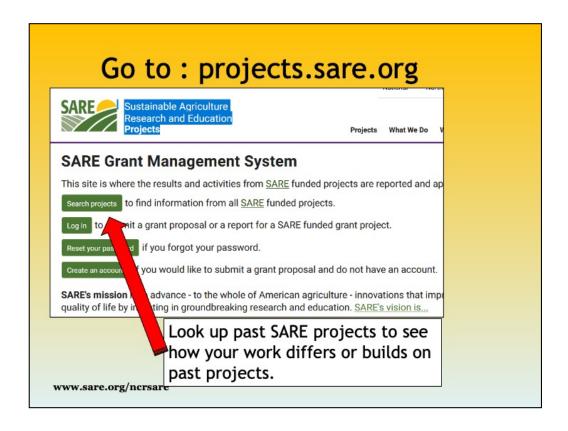
www.sare.org/ncrsare



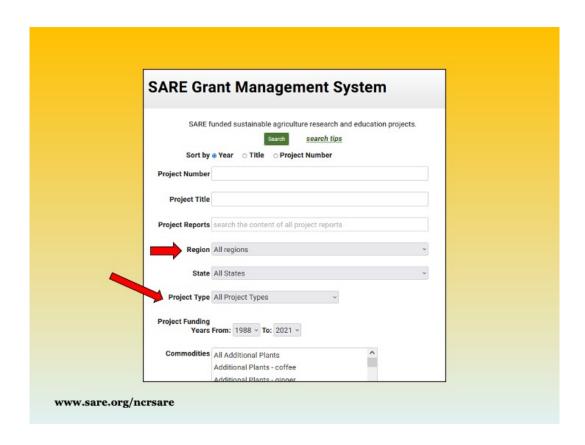
In recent funding cycles we have funded projects in Natural Resources, Livestock systems, Pest management, Cropping systems, and Marketing.

To see the full list of graduate student projects funded in recent years, look up project reports on the national SARE website.

The next slide demonstrates that.



To look up the projects funded in the past, go to projects.sare.org, and click on search projects.



To search for relevant projects:

You can also search by project type (Research and Education, Graduate Student, etc.), region, or state. You can also search for key words in the Project Reports (cover crops, managed grazing, etc.). There is a link to search tips at the top of the page.

Successful Proposals

- Demonstrate relevance
 to sustainable agriculture in
 the North Central region
- broad-based outcomes
 Involve
 farmers/ranchers in

www.sare.org/ncrsare



Successful projects clearly present the relevance of the proposed work to the north central region, and clearly define objectives and outcomes.

Address NCR-SARE's three broad-based outcomes. How will your project affect the whole system, economically, environmentally and socially?

ALL successful graduate student proposals demonstrate farmer/rancher involvement in the proposal, beyond just identifying farmers/ranchers as the targeted recipients of the information. Sometimes farmers have expressed the need for the research, or served as advisors in planning the project, or will be involved in implementing the project or disseminating the findings, but it's important to convey how they are or will be involved.

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Successful Proposals (cont)

- Have clear outcomes
- Have clear evaluation and outreach plan
- Have budget appropriate to the work

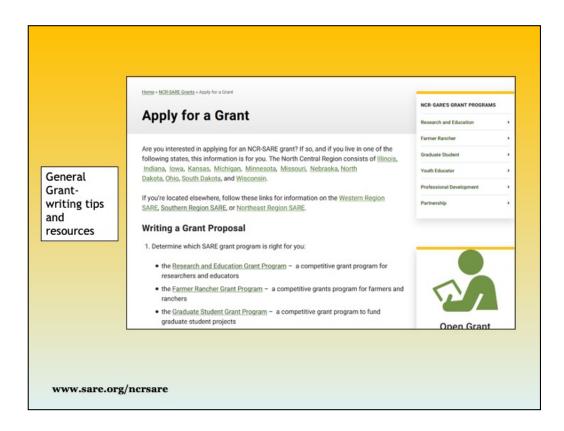
Photo courtery of Allison Butterfield.

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Successful proposals have clearly defined outcomes for their project. These are the impacts of your project—somewhat different from the results. The outcomes are what will happen as a result of the project being completed.

Evaluation will monitor your progress toward achieving those outcomes, which will be based on your outreach efforts, not your research results. Note that you are not monitoring your progress on your research objectives, but on the project outcomes. How will you know if your target audience increased their knowledge or skill level, or if they intend to make changes based on what they learned?

The budget should be appropriate to the work.



Go to the "Apply for a Grant" for general resources and tips. Scroll to bottom.

Contact your SARE state coordinator **Grant Writing Resources** NCR-SARE State Coordinators <u>SARE state coordinators</u> in every state and island protectorate are charged with training agriculture professionals in sustainable practices and sharing SARE project results with them. State coordinator responsibilities include professional development-promotion, networking, and coordination, especially of SARE-related activities-and communication and evaluation. Put Your Ideas to the Test: How to Conduct Research on Your Farm or Ranch . This 12-page bulletin outlines how to conduct research on a farm or ranch. It describes real-life examples and gives practical tips for both crop and livestock producers. A comprehensive list of more in-depth resources describes on-farm research bulletins and reports, farmer or researcher networks, and resources for market research. Grant Writing Assistance from the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute Michael Fields Agricultural Institute (MFAI) provides free Grants Advising services in the Midwest. MFAI's Grants Advisors can help you apply to grant, loan, and cost-share programs of state or federal sources that could help you with specific projects to develop your agricultural, forestry, or related business. These can be programs of any federal or state agency, not just the USDA, as well as private sources. They assist individual producers, associations of farmers, and agricultural, fishery, www.sare.org/ncrsare

Scroll down that page to grant writing resource, and you'll see NCR-SARE Sustainable Agriculture Coordinators. You should contact your state coordinator for NCR SARE. Click on the link indicated in this slide to obtain the name and contact information of your state coordinator. They can discuss your idea with you, offer suggestions, and may be able to link you to collaborators. They can be especially helpful in connecting you to farmers who might be interested in your work and willing to collaborate.



I'm going through the main parts of the proposal, skipping over a few sections, so make sure you follow the call, which lists all questions.

Word limits are meant to be generous.

Be concise.

The Summary has a 400 word limit. The summary is used both in our review process to convey the basic information about your project to our Administrative Council, which makes the funding decisions, and to publicize your project.

Brief Project Description

75 word limit—this is your one- floor elevator speech about your proposed project!

It will be used to announce funded projects, and will be shown with your project title in the reporting system.



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You will also write a very short project description. This will be used in press releases if your project is funded. This is separate from the 160 character description you will write when you enter your title in the online system. That is used for search engines, so be sure to include key words in that description.

Outcomes

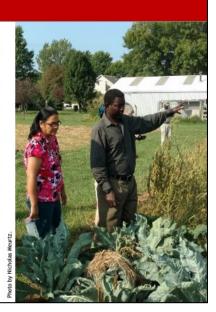
Education Project: Post-harvest

handling workshops

Learning Outcome: Farmers will learn post harvest handling and packing techniques for sales to institutions.

Action: Farmers will use post harvest techniques and increase sales to institutions

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Define your Project Outcomes.

Outcomes are what will happen as a result of you doing this project with regard to your target audience. So if you're doing an education project, these apply to the whole project.

We ask you to identify learning and action outcomes and you can also address condition or system outcomes. Learning outcomes, things that happen fairly quickly, are changes in awareness, skills, knowledge or attitude; action outcomes are changes in behavior, practice or decision-making, and those are the outcomes that you might achieve at the end of your project.

So as an example: for an education project on post-harvest handling with farmers as the target audience. Your learning outcomes might be that farmers will learn post harvest handling and packing techniques—so will increase both their awareness of specific requirements from institutional buyers, and increased knowledge about those techniques. The action outcome might be that farmers will use post harvest techniques and increase sales to institutions.

Outcomes

Research Project: Landscape diversity influence on vegetable crop pollinator population

Learning Outcome: Farmers will learn how diverse landscape influences number and type of pollinators.

Action Outcome: Farmers will use biodiverse plantings to increase pollinator population.

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You take a little different approach for a research project, because project outcomes generally refer largely to your outreach program.

It's still the "what will happen" as a result of you having done the research, but the outcomes are a little further down the road. A research project that is generally addressing a research question may be spending the majority of the first two years collecting data, and the data would then be considered an input to your outreach efforts.

For example: For a research project that looks at how landscape diversity affects the pollinator population, a learning outcome might be that farmers will learn how diverse landscapes affects the number of pollinators—that will be the information generated from the research.

An action outcome will be that farmers plant diverse landscape strips in the hopes of increasing pollinator populations, a change in farmer behavior.

Project Proposal

Statement of Problem, Background, Justification

Explain the issue being addressed. Justify the Need. What's been done and what is now needed? What is the potential impact—especially in terms of NCR's Broad Based Outcomes:

- Improving farmer/rancher profitability
- Sustaining and improving the environmental quality
- · Enhancing the quality of life

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One of most important parts of your proposal is to describe the problem you're addressing. This has a 1000 word limit.

Provide background about what's been done, and justify what you think needs to be done.

Explain how is the proposed work is relevant to sustainable agriculture in the North Central Region, and what the impact will be,

especially in terms of:

Improving the profitability of farmers and associated agricultural businesses.

Sustaining and improving the environmental quality and natural resource base on which agriculture depends.

Enhancing the quality of life for farmers/ranchers, rural and urban communities, and society as a whole.

Reviewers give more weight to proposals that at least consider impact on all three, even if the primary outcome might sustain and improve environmental quality.

It's also useful to give reviewers an idea of the extent of the problem, or the

potential impact your project may have by estimating the number of acres affected, or the size or value of the livestock or crop industry affected in the north central region.

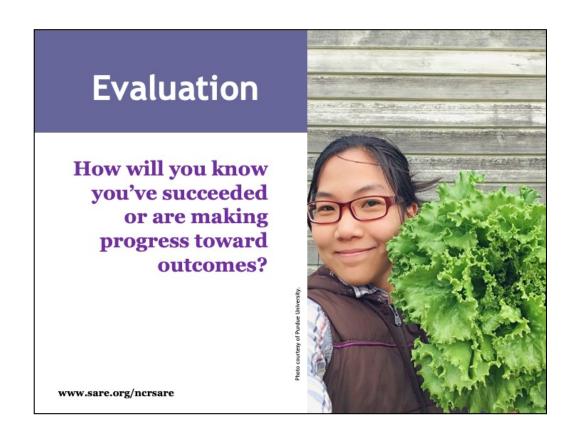
Incorporate in this section a BRIEF review of pertinent literature and of relevant SARE projects. Search the SARE database of project reports for projects that are relevant to your proposal (see http://mysare.sare.org) and explain how your project is different from or complementary to other projects that SARE has funded. List literature cited at end.



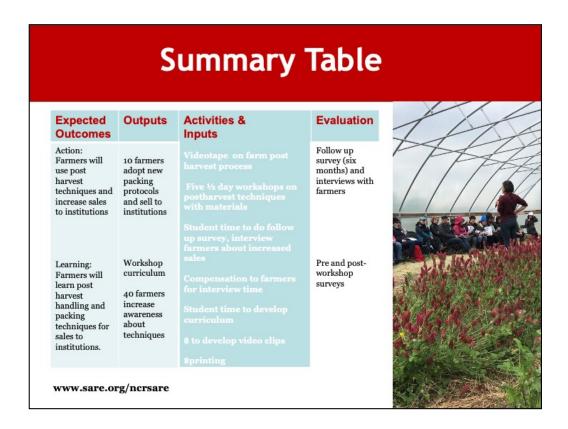
Describe you plan to carry out this work. Emphasize farmer involvement and partnerships, and describe key inputs and activities. Avoid jargon. Reviewers may not have specific expertise in your field. Inputs and activities can go in your Summary table (program logic model). You may list literature cited at the end of the section. This section also has a 1000 word limit.



Describe the products (e.g. expected research results, papers, or educational materials, completed workshops or field days with expected number of participants, etc.) of your project that will help achieve the expected outcomes.



How will you know if you've succeeded in achieving your outcomes, or how will you monitor progress toward the outcomes? Will you do surveys to see if farmer attendees have increased their knowledge level or skill level? Or if they intend to change their practices or look into this more (a change in attitude or awareness).



This summarizes the logical sequence of events that will lead to the outcomes you have identified.

The Outcomes are what you want to happen as a result of the project. The inputs are the resources needed to do the activities. The outputs are the products that result, and under evaluation, describe what you'll measure to show that you achieved your Outcomes, or made progress toward your outcomes.

So here's an example of what might be part of a simple summary table for the Outcomes we identified for the Education project on postharvest handling and packaging techniques.

For the research project, you might have a similar activities posted under learning outcomes, but an input would be the data from the research project, do data showing which landscapes increased numbers of beneficial pollinators—you might have a workshop to share your findings in the third year, but in the course of the three years, you might not be able to include action outcomes, like following up to see whether farmers were actually implementing practices you talked about in the workshop.

You'll be uploading this as a Table to your online application.



How will you inform other about your project—workshops? Extension publications? Articles?

Experience and roles. Briefly describe the roles and expertise of the various participants in your project.

Budget and Justification

align with goals and outcomes of your project.

Justify expenses.

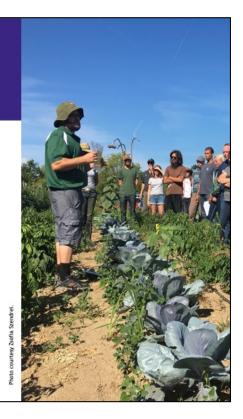
Grants have \$15,000 limit.

10% Indirect costs allowed.

Salary allowed, but not tuition.

Budget for farmer compensation if appropriate.

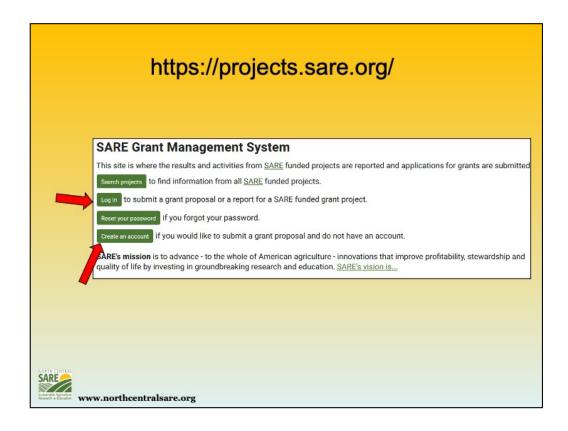
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The expenditures need to match the goals and outcomes of the project.

Up to 10% of direct costs can be taken by your institution for indirect costs. You can include graduate student salary on the budget, but tuition is not allowed.

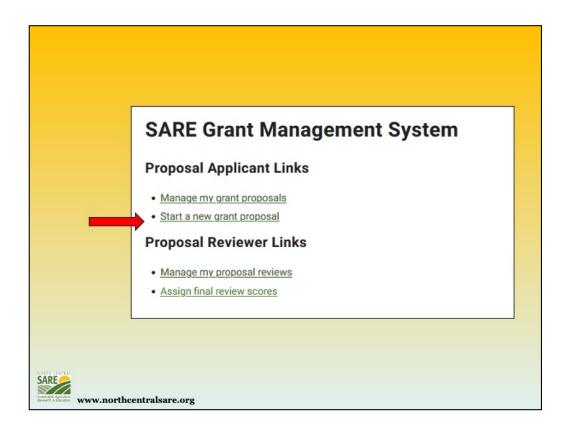
In general, SARE proposal reviewers don't like to see an entire budget devoted to salary. But we recognize that because these are small grants, often what is needed to do the project is student time, just be sure to justify it in your narrative. We've emphasized farmer involvement in your project, and you should plan to compensate farmers for their time in the budget, if they are serving on a planning committee, or hosting a field experiment, or a field day. There is a sample budget in the Call for Proposals.



So those are the basics for preparing your proposal. Now I'm going to switch gears and walk you through the new online application system.

If you've never had a SARE grant before, you'll first need to create an account and complete your user profile. Go to projects.sare.org and click on "create an account"

If you've had a SARE grant previously and filed reports in this system, your profile will already be in the system and you can log in with the information you used for reporting.



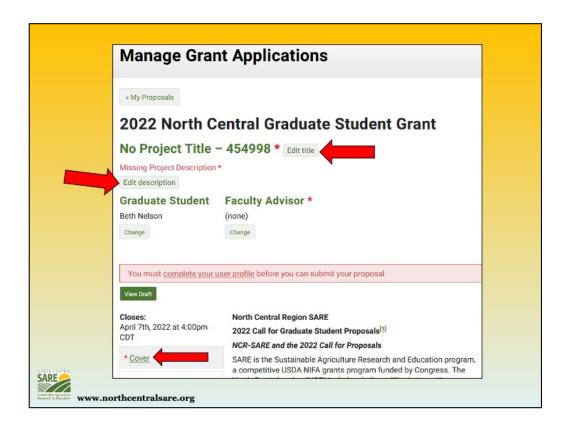
Once you log in, you'll see this screen. Under projects, you'll see a list of all projects you've been associated with. Under proposals, you'll see a link to manage applications. This is for you to edit proposals you've started but not submitted.

Click on "start a new grant" to start a new proposal.

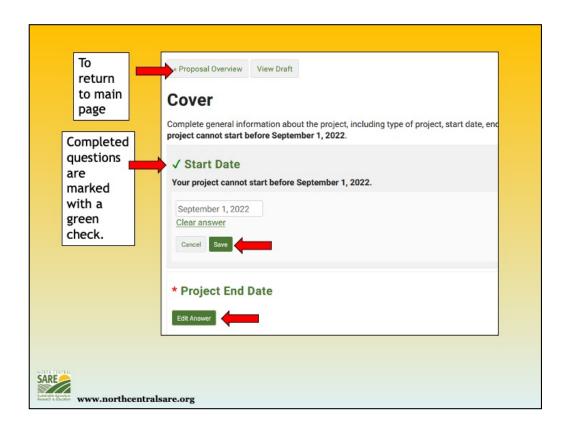


You will see a list of all open grant applications, for all regions.

Make sure you choose the correct grant program and the North Central Region. You will be completing the 2022 North Central Graduate student application (Screen shot is from last year.)



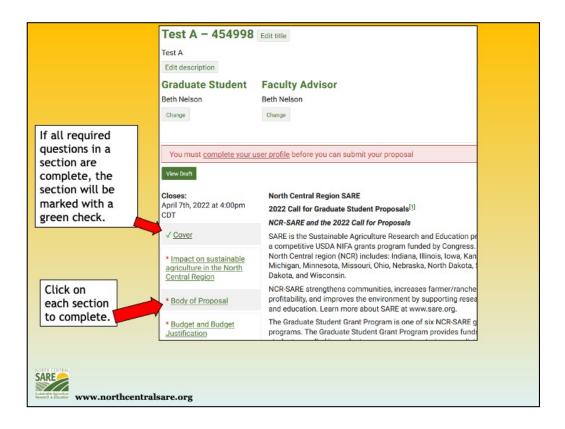
Enter the title and brief project description (less than 160 characters). This is the description that search engines will access, so use key words for your project. The click on "cover"



Answer each question by clicking on "edit answer" and **saving your answer**. Once you've completed the cover page information, or at any time, you can click on "back to proposal" to go back to the main page. SAVE as you go. If you're interrupted, only what has been "saved" will be kept.

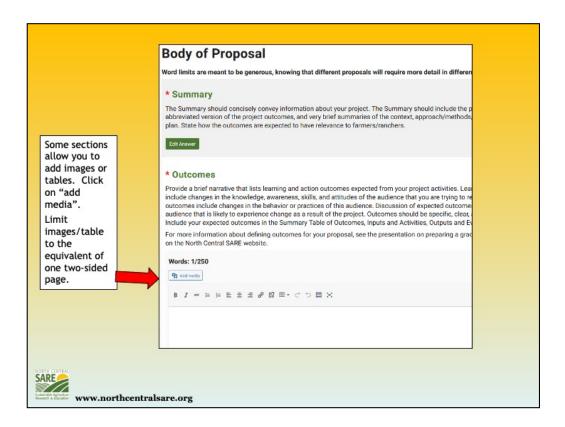


Complete the information for your faculty advisor, and check the box indicating this person is your advisor.

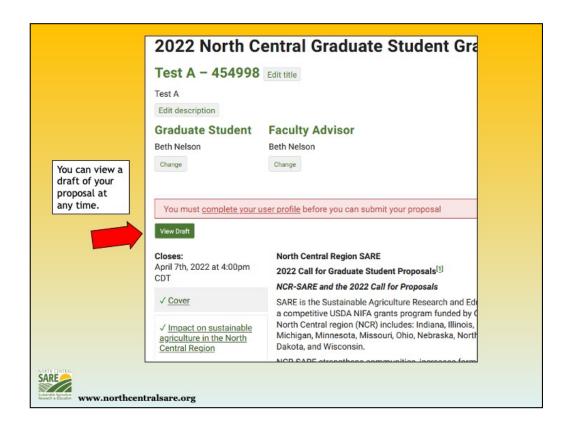


Once all required questions in a section are complete, the section will be marked with a green check.

Click on "Body" to enter information in the next section.



You will enter the body of your proposal here. Note that most sections have word limits. You can add images or tables in sections that have an "add media" button, but please limit your images as indicated in the Call. To go back to your main page, click on "Proposal Overview."



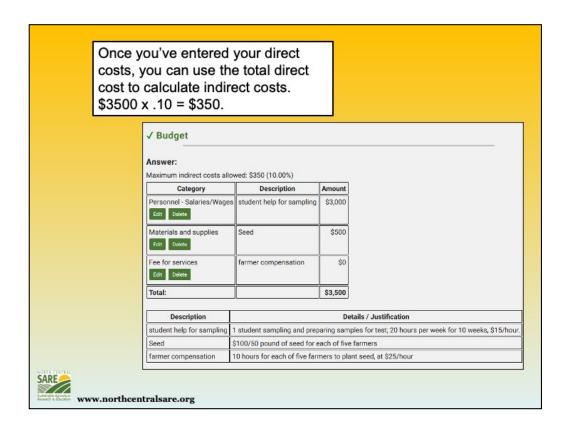
To view or share your draft proposal, click on "View draft"



You will enter each item in the budget.

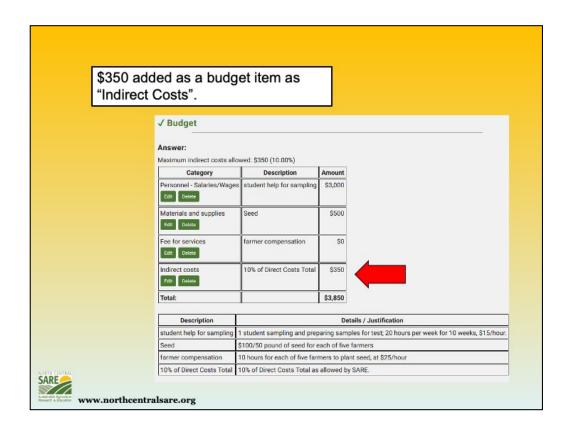
	✓ Budget Answer: Maximum indirect costs allov	wod-\$200 (10 00%)			
	Category	Description	Amount		
	Personnel - Salaries/Wages	student help for sampling	\$3,000		
	Total:		\$3,000		
	Description Details / Justification student help for sampling 1 student sampling and preparing samples for test; 20 hours per week for 10 weeks, \$15/hour.				
	Add a Budget Item				
	Complete information for first item, then click "Add another budget item"				
	Save when complete.				
SARE Schwidder Agentia de Postesarch à Goucation WWW.no	orthcentralsare.org				

Select the major budget category from the drop down list, provide a brief item description, provide a more detailed budget justification for how you arrived at that number, as described in the instructions), and the total amount. Save, then return to the budget and add another item. You don't have to save after each entry, but your work won't be saved until you do, so better to save as you go so you don't lose information.

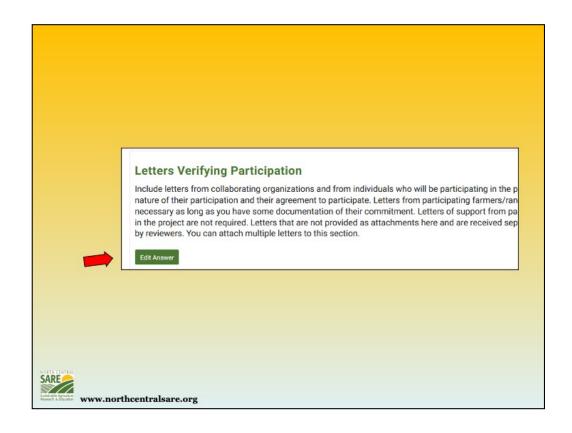


You'll see a table with the simple item description and the amount, and a separate table below that provides the more detailed justification.

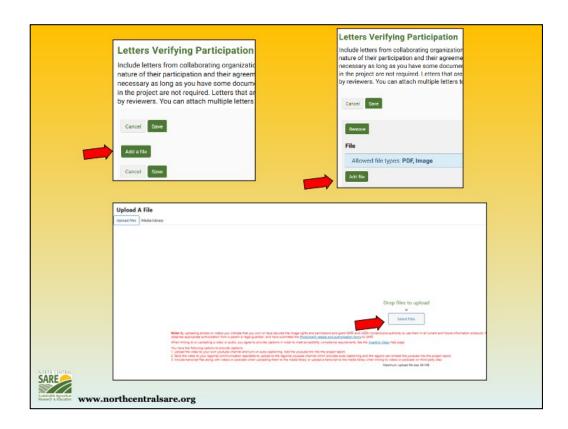
When you've added in all your direct costs, you can "save", and use the total to calculate indirect costs. Multiply the direct cost total by .10 to get indirect costs. In this example, that will be \$350.



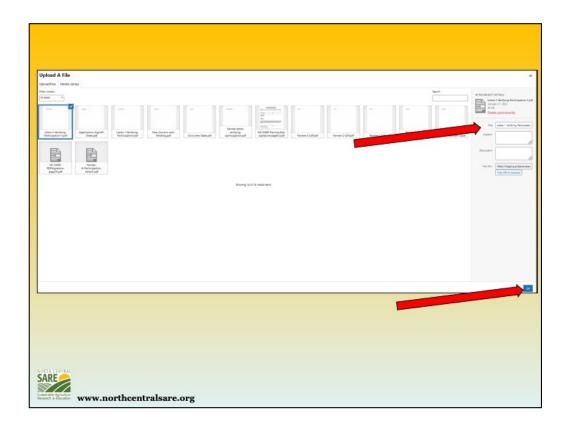
Add \$350 as a budget item, identified as Indirect Costs from the drop down menu.



For an example of how to upload files, go to the section for "letters verifying participation". Click on "edit answer"



Click on "add a file" on the next two screens, then click on "select file" to upload from your computer.



On the far right you should see the title of the uploaded file. You can provide a caption if you'd like, otherwise it will use the file name. You must click the box "ok" in the lower right hand corner to upload your file into the media file



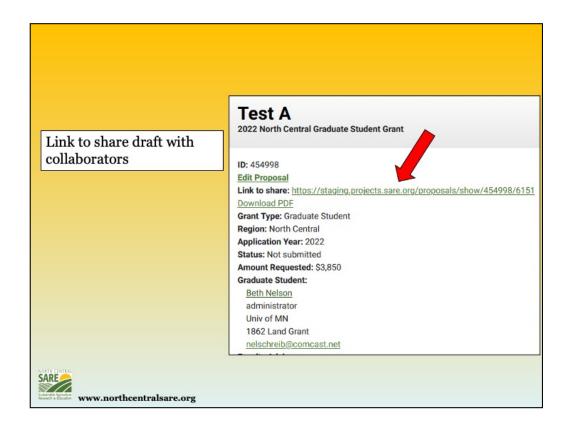
It will have added your file as Current file. Note that you can change the file or remove it. You can click on "add another file" to add a second letter.



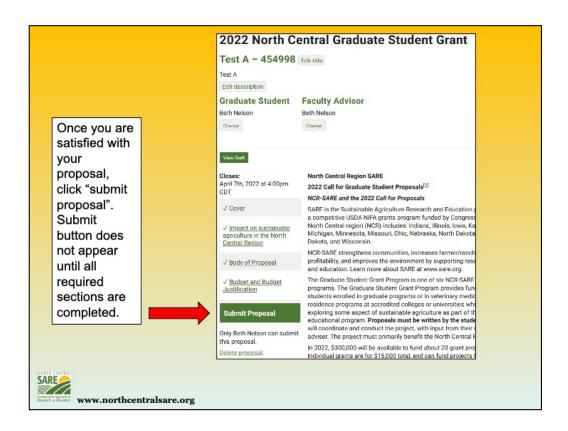
Next you'll print off the application signoff sheet, by clicking on the link.

You and your advisor will sign the sheet, then submit to your institution's grant office to complete and sign. You will then upload the a pdf	APPLICATION SIGNOFF SHEET NCR SARE Graduate Student Grant Signatures are required below from you, the applicant, and your faculty advisor. Your institutional grants office should complete and sign the bottom part of this page APPLICANT'S ASSURANCE: I affirm that I am, or will be, a graduate student at: that I have written the proposal and discussed this proposal with my faculty advisor, listed below. Should I be warded a grant, I will report results through each December while the project is in progress and write a final report when the project is complete. I will keep North Central SARE informed of any contact and e-mail changes for at least two years after the final report is written. Applicant's signature Date FACULTY ADVISOR: I affirm that I have read this proposal and understand that, for the purposes of this proposal, I will be named the principal investigator. I will supervise grant activities and support student compliance with SARE requirements as needed. Faculty Advisor signature Date	
of the signed sheet.	the proposal be funded. We further understand that SARE funds cannot be used except as outlined in the proposal. Signature of authorized official: Name and title of authorized official: Contact Information for Authorized Official: Address: City, State Zip:	
SARE SARE WWW.northcentralsare.org	Email: Telephone: DUNS Number:	

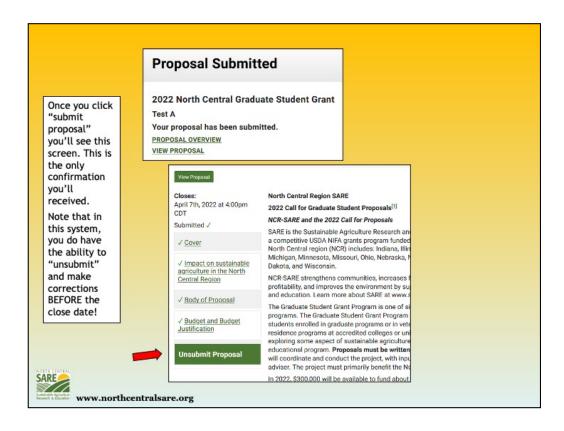
You and your advisor will sign, then submit to your institution's grant office with the draft of your proposal, to have them complete the institution information and sign. Ask them to provide you with a pdf of the signed page, and you will then upload that to your proposal prior to submission. This signed form must be submitted by the closing date, so allow extra time for your organization to review your proposal and sign off. Some grant offices require a week or more to complete this.



You can share the draft with collaborators by sending them the link. Collaborators cannot directly access the proposal, except by using your login information.



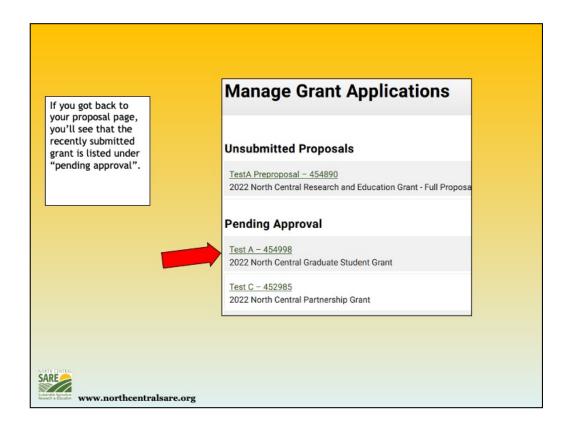
Once you've uploaded the signature page, and all required sections are complete, you can proceed to submit your proposal. Note that the "Submit proposal" button will NOT show up until you have completed all sections, including the title and the brief description on that main proposal page.



You'll see the top screen as confirmation once you've submitted.

You do have the ability to unsubmit and make changes prior to the closing date for the grant program. Just log back into the system, go to "manage my proposals" and click on your 2022 Grad Student proposal.

You MUST resubmit prior to the deadline.



On your manage proposals page, you'll see your submitted grant under "pending approval". Active proposals are ones you've started, but not yet submitted.

Timeline 2022 Graduate Student Grant Cycle

Feb. 7, 2022 Graduate Student Call for Proposals released

April 7, 2022 Grant applications due at 4:00 pm CDT

Late July, 2022 Administrative Council recommends grants

and project coordinators notified

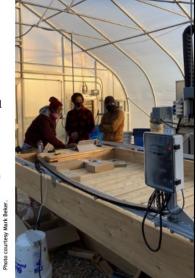
August, 2022 Budgets reviewed and grant contracts finalized

September 1, 2022 Funds available,

March 1, 2024 First annual report due (unless project

ends prior to December 31, 2020)

Project end date Final report due 60 days after project end date



www.sare.org/ncrsare

The proposals are due online (with signed signature page) Thursday, April 7, at 4:00 p.m. CDT. They'll be reviewed in July and a decision will be made by the NCR-SARE Administrative Council in late July. We'll notify applicants in early August, and if you're funded, our contracts person will contact you to verify the budget, and begin writing the contract. Funds will be available Sept. 1. We do require annual reporting and a final report.

Things to Remember

Involve farmers or end-users! Budget appropriate for work follow guidelines.

Submit proposal by the 4:00 p.m. CDT April 7 deadline!

www.sare.org/ncrsare



Things to remember!



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Sustainable Agriculture
Research & Education

Advancing sustainable agriculture since 1988

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Here is contact information for me and for Jean Andreasen. Please feel free to contact us with questions..

We look forward to receiving your proposal.