NORTHEAST SARE
Sustainable Agriculture
Research & Education

2020 Call for Graduate Student Research Grant Proposals

Important Dates

The online system will open for submissions: **March 5, 2020**

Applications, with authorized signatures, are due: **April 21, 2020, 5:00 p.m. ET**

Applications are submitted online at: projects.sare.org

Questions?

Visit our website at: **www.northeastsare.org/graduatestudentgrant**.

For questions about the 2020 call for proposals, please contact Deb Heleba at **debra.heleba@uvm.edu** or 802/651-8335, x 552.

About Northeast SARE

The Northeast Sustainable Research and Education (SARE) Program offers competitive grants to farmers, educators, service providers, researchers, and graduate students to address key issues affecting the sustainability of agriculture throughout our region. With funding from the USDA, Northeast SARE is one of four regional SARE programs that aims to improve farm profits, stewardship, and quality of life for farmers.

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 its customers; it will be conducted by farmers who manage resources wisely, who are satisfied with their lifestyles, and have a positive influence on their communities and the environment.

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.

About the Northeast SARE Graduate Student Research Grant Program

Overview

Northeast SARE offers grants to graduate students to conduct research on topics specific to sustainable agriculture under the supervision of a faculty advisor. Applications should address issues of current or potential importance to Northeast farmers and the agricultural/food system community. Topics of interest span the full range of sustainable agriculture issues including, but not limited to, cropping systems, pest management, livestock health, social sustainability, soil quality, farm energy production, farmworkers and agricultural labor, urban agriculture, and the marketing of local food. Projects should explore one or more of the sustainable agriculture themes of good stewardship, profitability, and quality of life for farmers and the agricultural community. We specifically seek projects that are both consistent with our outcome statement and address the program's review criteria. Northeast SARE encourages project proposals from Minority Serving Institutions (including 1890s and other historically black colleges and universities, and Hispanic-Serving Institutions) and other organizations in the Northeast region that work with diverse communities.

> **New for the 2020 Cycle**
>
> Deb Heleba will be managing the submission and review process for this cycle of Graduate Student Grant Program. Please **contact her** with your questions.
>
> Northeast SARE is now using the online grant submission platform at **projects.sare.org**. Instructions on how to access and submit proposals in the system are included on page 6.

Eligible Applicants

The grant program is open to any graduate student enrolled at an accredited college, university or veterinary school located in the Northeast region who is proposing to conduct research in the Northeast relevant to the region's farming community. You, as the applicant, may submit one proposal per grant cycle. You may receive only one Northeast SARE Graduate Student Grant during your graduate program.

Proposals should be written by you, the graduate student applicant. It must support your own research efforts and not those of a group project or team of researchers. While collaboration is encouraged, you are the manager and contact for the proposal and we expect you to lead the proposed project. As the graduate student applicant, it is your responsibility to make sure the work proposed is completed and reports are filed in a timely fashion. If the proposed project is part of a larger project or overall thesis, the portion of work proposed for SARE funds must be clearly identified in the application.

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. It is your responsibility to clarify for reviewers that any proposed work is unique, especially if it seems similar to work proposed to another grant program. Your proposed project may build on or complement another project, but it must be clearly differentiated. If your SARE proposal is approved for funding and a proposal for the same work is also approved by an external grant program, then you must only accept funding from one source.

We consider your proposal to be your individual project working with a specific faculty advisor; should you, or your faculty advisor, drop out of the project prior to the award being made, your application will be considered withdrawn. It cannot be transferred to a different student or faculty member.

Funding Available

Graduate Student Grants are capped at $15,000 and projects can run up to two years. In 2019, 58 applications were submitted. Of those, 34 were funded for a total of $495,917.

Faculty Advisor Role

Because universities typically do not allow students to manage institutional grant awards, your faculty advisor will be named the principal investigator of the awarded grant. Your faculty advisor must endorse the application, oversee the research, and act as the official principal investigator; therefore, they must ensure the project and budgeted expenditures proposed are acceptable. Their approval will be confirmed with their signature and completion of the Grant Commitment Form.

Conflict of Interest

Members of the Northeast SARE Administrative Council and state program staff are not permitted to apply for or receive funding from SARE competitive grants. Members of grant review teams are not permitted to discuss or vote on applications that involve institutions for which they work, organizations for which they serve as board members or advisors, former graduate student advisees, or close personal friends and family.

Public Domain

Applications and reviews are kept confidential, shared only among Northeast SARE staff, Administrative Council members, and grant program reviewers. However, Northeast SARE, as a USDA NIFA program, is committed to public access of results of funded projects; therefore, information, exclusive or proprietary processes, procedures or techniques developed with SARE funds, project reports, and related information will be in the public domain.

Acknowledging SARE

All funded projects are required to acknowledge Northeast SARE as the funding source in <u>all</u> project publications and outreach materials.

Use of Funds

SARE funding must comply with USDA NIFA and University of Vermont guidelines and, therefore, there are certain allowable and ineligible expenses for this grant program, listed below. All grant expenses must be incurred during the contract period, defined in the approved contract before the project begins.

Funds may be used for the following expenses specific to the project:

- **Labor**, including wages or salary and benefits for the applicant and other individuals working directly on the project;
- **Supplies**, including research supplies, outreach materials, copies, postage, printing, and software specific to the project;
- **Farm equipment rental** or operating charges;
- **Services**, like soil testing, interview transcription, consulting, etc.;
- **Travel and per diem** necessary for the project;
- **Specialized equipment** rented or purchased essential for the project;
- **Journal publication fees** so long as they are incurred during the contract period; and
- **Indirect costs** up to 10 percent of total grant request.

Funds may NOT be used for the following:

- **Costs associated with preparing a thesis**;

- **Purchase of classroom texts**;

- **Incentive offers and promotional items**, including items of clothing (hats, tee shirts, aprons, etc.), swag, giveaways, subsidies, raffles, gift cards, and branded promotional material;

- **Travel to scholarly meetings** unless essential to the project, such as presentation of project results;

- **International travel** unless integral to the project's success and described in the budget justification (Note: There are certain restrictions on costs and carriers.);

- **Capital costs**, including the purchase of land, buildings, livestock, orchards, greenhouses, and other major farm or laboratory improvements;

- **Cell phone charges**;

- Purchase of **motorized vehicles** and equipment;

- **Food** expenses unless necessary for the continuity of a training event or project meeting (Note: When SARE funds are used for meals, USDA employees should note this on their expense reports and deduct meal costs from any per diem reimbursements.);

- **Normal operating expenses** (do not ask for specific overhead costs in the form of utility bills, general maintenance, general supplies, or any other expenses that would be there in the absence of the project); and

- **Expenses outside the grant period**. SARE cannot pay for expenses incurred before the award start date or after the end date on the grant contract.

It is expected that costs for copiers, cameras, computers, video equipment, and other items that have a wide range of uses beyond the boundaries of the project be provided by the institution and covered as indirect costs. To be considered a direct cost, the item must be clearly essential to the proposed project.

If collaborating individuals or organizations are to receive funds to carry out a portion of the project, their role should be subsidiary to the applicant institution as the primary/largest recipient of funds and any collaborator's funding request should not be more than 50% of the total budget.

Grant Timeline

Online system opens for submissions...March 5, 2020

Proposal submission deadline ....**5:00 p.m. ET on April 21, 2020**

Technical review panel reviews and ranks applications... May to June 2020

Northeast SARE Administrative Council makes final selections .... July 2020

Awards announced.. late July 2020

Earliest start date for projects.. August 1, 2020

Preparing Your Application

Advanced Planning

You will submit your proposal online at: **projects.sare.org**. Please prepare your application well in advance of the deadline. Most sponsored program offices need two to four two weeks to review and approve proposals, so confirm the policies at your institution and plan accordingly.

The Grant Commitment Form, officiated and signed by you, your faculty advisor and your institutional official must be included as an upload when you submit your application. Failure to upload required documents at the time of submission will result in the rejection of your proposal.

We recommend that applicants review previously funded SARE projects to understand the content, duration, and complexity of applications that reviewers expect. Brief descriptions of past Graduate Student projects are available at: **www.northeastsare.org/sample/graduate**.

Recommend Crafting Responses Offline

We highly recommend you prepare your questions offline, completing your responses per the instructions that follow and then copying and pasting your responses into the online system. To that end, a Word document of the proposal questions is available at: **www.northeastsare.org/graduatestudentgrant**.

Text Limits, Formatting, and Writing Suggestions

Keep your writing clear and simple. Avoid jargon and write for a mixed audience that includes farmers, researchers, Extension staff and other agricultural service providers. Grant reviewers have knowledge on a range of agricultural topics but do not assume they have deep expertise in your subject area.

There are word limits for most sections of the application. Again, it is highly advisable to develop the proposal content offline, ensuring it is accurate and complies with the word limits. Depending on the word processor used, your word count may differ than the online submission system and additional editing may be necessary after pasting into the online system.

Note that when word count limits are exceeded in the online submission system, the word count font changes to red and you will not be able to save that answer until the word count is at or below the limit. Also note that copying and pasting from some word processing programs may result in the loss of formatting; make any formatting corrections applied from within the online system. Figures, tables and other supporting graphics are allowed only in specified sections.

Consider asking a friend or colleague to read your proposal. A fresh set of eyes can help you identify sections that may be unclear, correct errors, and strengthen areas that may need help. Reviewers look less favorably on proposals that have careless errors or are confusing because of poor spelling, grammar or sentence structure.

SARE staff (including state SARE coordinators) cannot provide specific edits to written drafts of proposals but can answer general questions as to what is appropriate to include in a SARE proposal and perhaps provide some overall direction as to topic relevancy. Make sure your faculty advisor reads your proposal so they are fully informed when they sign the commitment form.

SARE's Grant Management System

Northeast SARE has recently migrated all of its grant submissions to **projects.sare.org**, SARE's national Grant Management System.

The online system will be open for Graduate Student Grant submissions from March 5, 2020 until the deadline, **5:00 p.m. ET on April 21, 2020**. Staff support to answer questions or deal with technical submission issues will be available until 5:00 p.m. ET on the due date. Applications submitted after 5:00 p.m. ET on April 21 will <u>not</u> be accepted. We strongly suggest you submit your application well in advance of the deadline, in the unlikely event you experience technical issues that take time to resolve.

Getting a User Account

Enter the SARE Grant Management System at **projects.sare.org**. All new users should select "Create an account" and complete the registration information. The system will send you an email with instructions to create your password. If you have previously received SARE grants and submitted reports, you are registered as a user in the system and should use your existing account to submit your application.

Logging In

From the SARE Grant Management System landing page at **projects.sare.org**, select "Log in." Once logged in, select "Start a new grant proposal." Grant opportunities for all four SARE regions will be listed; scroll down until you see "Northeast." Under "2020 Northeast SARE Graduate Student Grants," choose "Begin a New Proposal."

The submission system assumes the person logging in and submitting the proposal is you, the graduate student applicant. The proposal must be submitted in your name as the graduate student. Faculty members or institutional officials cannot log in with their name and submit a proposal on your behalf.

Note that if you are logging in before the submission open date—March 5—you will not be able to see the Graduate Student Grant selection.

Entering Your Proposal

Start your proposal by clicking "Edit Title" and enter a clear, succinct title of under 150 characters (including spaces) that captures the essence of the project's intent. Avoid acronyms, jargon and unnecessary words.

Click on each section and submit responses to the questions. Detailed instructions for each question are provided in this document. Enter responses by clicking on "Edit Answer" for each question. Be sure to click "Save" after each entry; you must save each question individually. Clicking "save" for one question does <u>not</u> save responses entered into other questions.

At any time during the preparation of your proposal, you may preview a draft from the Proposal Overview Page by clicking "View Draft." You may also share the draft of your proposal with your faculty advisor or others by selecting "Link to Share" found at the top of the Draft Page (or by creating and sending a PDF of the application).

When all proposal questions are answered to your satisfaction and you have uploaded all required attachments, 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 the required questions.

Prior to the deadline, you may "unsubmit" your proposal to revise it. If you choose to unsubmit, do not forget to submit it again when you are done editing, otherwise it will not go forward to review. Each time you submit or unsubmit, you will receive an email confirmation.

Application Outline / Checklist

Components of the application and their word limits appear below, listed in the order they appear in the online application system. Use the outline as a checklist to ensure your application is complete before submitting. Remember: Applications with missing or incomplete required documents will not advance to grant review so be sure they are complete and uploaded before you submit.

- ❑ Project Title (150-character limit, including spaces)
- ❑ Project Description (300-character limit, including spaces)

Graduate Student Applicant Information
- ❑ Faculty Advisor
- ❑ Graduate Student degree sought
- ❑ College Program/Department
- ❑ Expected date of graduation

Proposal Information
- ❑ Project Start Date
- ❑ Project End Date
- ❑ Primary Practices
- ❑ Primary Commodities
- ❑ Primary Benefits and Impacts
- ❑ State
- ❑ Project Abstract (250-word limit)

Introduction
- ❑ Description of the Problem and Rationale (500-word limit)
- ❑ Justification of Need (500-word limit)

Plan of Work
- ❑ Objectives (400-word limit)
- ❑ Materials and Methods (2,000-word limit)
- ❑ Outreach (500-word limit)
- ❑ Timetable (500-word limit)

Experience and Roles
- ❑ Experience and Roles (500-word limit)
- ❑ Letters of commitment (file upload) *required document*

Previous Work
- ❑ Literature Review (500-word limit)
- ❑ Citation List (2,000-word limit)

Budget
- ❑ Budget Justification and Narrative Detail (file upload) *required document*
- ❑ Budget Summary

Host Institution Approval
- ❑ Grant Commitment Form (file upload) *required document*
- ❑ Institutional Official
- ❑ FDP Clearinghouse

Step-by-Step Instructions

The online application is divided into sections that contain multiple questions to answer. Instructions for all questions follow. Review criteria appear next to their associated questions throughout the application. All submitted proposals are evaluated using these criteria and must be adequately addressed for a proposal to be funded.

Project Title (150-character limit, including spaces)

Use a clear title that briefly and appropriately describes the primary focus of the project. Avoid acronyms, jargon and unnecessary words.

Project Description (300-character limit, including spaces)

A short description of what the project intends to accomplish. Should your project be funded, this is the description that will show up in the search result in the SARE database.

Graduate Student

This field should list you, the graduate student, as the applicant.

Faculty Advisor

The Faculty Advisor field defaults to "none" so you will click "Change." Click "No" to the question, "Will [your name] will be the project's Faculty Advisor?" Enter your faculty advisor's email address. If they are already in the system, your faculty advisor's information will auto-populate and you can select "Save." If they are not in the system, enter their first and last name, title and institution.

Graduate Student Applicant Information

Graduate Student degree sought. Use the drop-down menu to select type of degree.

College Program/Department. Enter as text.

Expected date of graduation. Enter as text.

Proposal Information

Project Start Date. Choose a start date from the calendar pop-up. Projects should not start before August 1, 2020. Note: SARE cannot pay for expenses incurred before the project start date.

Project End Date. Choose an end date from the calendar pop-up. Projects should run no longer than 2 years. All projects must be completed by no later than November 30, 2023.

Primary Practices. Select only the primary production practices being directly addressed or investigated by the project, not every practice that might potentially be affected.

Primary Commodities. Select only the primary production commodities being directly addressed or investigated by the project, not every commodity that might potentially be affected.

Primary Benefits and Impacts. Select up to two areas of benefit and impact.

State. Choose from the drop down menu the state where the majority of work will be carried out (must be conducted within the Northeast region).

Project Abstract (250-word limit). This is a standalone summary of the project. It should briefly describe the issue, the project objective(s), key components of your study's plan of work, and outreach strategy. Since the abstract is the first thing reviewers will see, take some time to make it clear and compelling. You may want to compose the abstract after you have written the rest of your proposal.

Introduction

Description of the Problem and Rationale (500-word limit).
Explain the issue being addressed, why it is important, and how your project will contribute to agricultural sustainability.

Begin with, "The purpose of this project is to…" Describe how your inquiry will advance current knowledge in a way that will have a positive effect on sustainable agriculture.

Review criteria: The proposed work focuses on building knowledge that farmers can use to become more profitable, be better stewards of the land, and/or improve quality of life. The proposal addresses at least one of the following key themes in sustainable agriculture:

- Reduction of environmental and/or health risks in agriculture;
- Improved productivity, reduction of costs and/or increase of net farm income;
- Conservation of soil, improvement of water quality, and protection of natural resources;
- Enhancement of employment in farm communities; and
- Improvement of quality of life for farmers, their employees, and the farming community.

Justification of Need (500-word limit). Explain how the approach explores new territory and builds on prior work. Provide evidence of a demonstrated need for your project on the part of farmers or the wider agricultural community, and describe how potential results could be used by farmers.

Review criteria: The proposed project will contribute new information and provides clear evidence of a demonstrated need on the part of farmers or the wider agricultural community.

If possible, quantify the economic impacts of the problem and the research potential.

If your research is not directly applicable to farmers, tell us how it will play out and result as benefit on the farm. If your project is part of a larger research program, describe how your proposed work may contribute to the overall goals of that effort.

Plan of Work

Objectives (400-word limit). Please use a numbered list for your project objectives. If your project is part of a larger research program, only list the objectives that this proposal will address. Outreach activities should be listed here *only* if they are part of the research. Generally, recommendations and sharing of project results through outreach efforts are not considered objectives and should be described in the outreach section.

Materials and Methods (2,000-word limit). Number each approach and methods according to each corresponding objective, providing a succinct description of the methods to be used. Describe what you will measure and how, your experimental design, and explain how the methods used will address the problem. Are plot sizes, replications, controls, surveys, or other project elements likely to yield meaningful information? Clearly define your response variables and be sure to consult with a statistician while developing your experimental design.

You may supply supporting documents that add specificity and clarity; these may include plot plans for field experiments, draft surveys or evaluation instruments, an explanation of statistical design, and perhaps diagrams or photographs of project components that are otherwise difficult to explain. Use the "Add Media" button to insert images or PDFs.

Outreach (500-word limit). How others will learn from the project is key to long-term impact. Provide a thoughtful outreach plan for sharing project information and results. List specific outreach events and publications (other than your thesis) you will offer and who will benefit from these activities. The outreach audiences will differ for different projects. For some projects, outreach to other researchers and Extension personnel will be sufficient while, for others, outreach directly to farmers is more appropriate. Also discuss the potential for further outreach to farmers for practical application once the research concepts have been developed.

Timetable (500-word limit). Provide a clear timeline of the research and outreach activities you will accomplish in this proposal. Keep in mind that SARE funds will not cover any work prior to August 1, 2020. To give context of how your project may fit into a larger research program, you may include in the timeline, "PRE" to describe efforts that occurred previous to the application; "DURING" to describe work to be conducted in this proposal; and "POST" to describe planned activities after the end date of this project.

Experience and Roles

Experience and Roles (500-word limit). Briefly describe your experience relative to the project, your role in the project, and how the project relates to your thesis or dissertation. Then describe your faculty advisor's role, background and expertise. Identify and describe any collaborators with whom you will work—you will need to provide letters of commitment from them, see below. Describe any other sources of funding that will support this project or that this project builds upon (do not include them in budget section of the application). Describe your access to the required resources to carry out this work, such as labs, equipment, greenhouses, field plots, etc.

Letters of Commitment (file upload). If your project involves collaborators (including farmers as cooperators in your research), include a letter from each collaborator that describes their role and commitment to the project.

Combine all letters into one PDF and select "Add a file" to upload.

Do **not** upload: A letter from your faculty advisor (unnecessary since they sign the Grant Commitment Form); letters of general support from individuals not directly involved in the project; curricula vitae; and sample promotional materials about your institution. If provided, these documents will not move forward in the review.

Previous Work

Literature Review (500-word limit). Outline the scientific foundation and merits of your project and identify and explain the references used to understand the problems, challenges, opportunities, and current knowledge associated with the project. Include only those sources that are most relevant to your proposed work. This section is the place to convince reviewers that there is a body of knowledge that provides a compelling rationale for the project.

Citation List (2,000-word limit). Provide a list of full citations referenced in the literature review and elsewhere in your proposal. Include only those citations directly related to the proposed project. Use the citation style with which you are familiar (APA, Tri-Societies, Chicago, etc.).

Budget

The funding needed to conduct your project is defined by your budget, an expense plan that provides your best estimate for the expenses you expect to encounter.

Itemize 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. Even the most persuasive proposal will not be funded if the budget is not clear, is too high or too low for the efforts described, or if it includes requests for items not relevant to the proposed work or for items not allowed by SARE.

Both a detailed Budget Justification and Narrative and a Budget Summary are required.

See [Appendix A](#) for an example of the Budget Justification and Narrative and Budget Summary.

Budget Justification and Narrative (file upload). Download and complete the Northeast SARE Budget Justification and Narrative (Excel spreadsheet) provided at: **www.northeastsare.org/graduatestudentgrant**.

List project expenses under specific categories (i.e., personnel, materials and supplies, travel, printing and publications, other direct costs, and indirect costs). Be clear about what you are requesting funding for, show how you calculated each line item, provide a narrative justification as to why the item is needed or what work will be done for the labor payments requested, and make sure you only request funds for allowed expenses (see page 3).

Since the budget submitted is what reviewers will approve and requests for changes after submission may not be approved, take the time to calculate your expenses for this project. Only include funds you are requesting from SARE in this budget justification.

Describe and justify each expense and provide quantities and unit costs. For example, if you are proposing to buy spiral bound notebooks as "materials," your budget line should specify how many and the cost per unit ("Spiral bound notebooks, 150 @$3 each, $450"). For travel, include who is traveling, where they are going, the purpose of the trip, and distance ("Chris [student worker], car travel to farms to monitor progress once per month for three months. 20 10-mile round trips @ 0.575/mile, $115"). For personnel costs, show your time and the time of any collaborators, calculated either as an hourly rate and the anticipated time needed to complete the project, or as a percentage of FTE and the relevant salary. Provide narrative explanations for labor, including who is doing the work and what they are doing.

USDA NIFA allows SARE to cover indirect costs, the overhead charges for facilities and administration. You may include a line item in the budget that requests a maximum of 10 percent of your project's total award amount for indirect cost recovery. Work with your grants administration office to be sure the amount is calculated in compliance with their policies and approved rates, but the overall limit for SARE grants is no more than 10 percent of total funds requested.

Once the Budget Justification and Narrative Excel spreadsheet is complete, select "Add a file" and upload it as an Excel file (.xlsx format) to the proposal.

Budget Summary. Once the Budget Justification and Narrative is complete, enter the summed subtotals for each major budget category from the template—personnel, materials and supplies, travel, printing and publications, other direct costs, and indirect costs—into the budget summary in the online submission system.

Individual line item expenses are **not** needed in the budget summary. Since detailed narrative and justification are provided in the Budget Justification and Narrative, for "Item Description," you may enter "subtotal from budget detail spreadsheet" and you may leave the "Details/Justification" box blank.

You will be provided data entry columns for each year of the project. The number of years provided are defined by the project start and end dates entered in the Proposal Information section at the beginning of the application.

Make sure that the subtotals in the Budget Summary match the subtotals in the Budget Justification and Narrative.

Host Institution Approval

Grant Commitment Form (upload). Please print the Grant Commitment Form available at: **www.northeastsare.org/graduatestudentgrant**. You as the graduate student must sign as applicant, your faculty advisor must sign as principle investigator, and an authorized official of your institution must also sign.

Note: This form is required at the time of application, so be sure to bring this to your institution's grants office well before the submission deadline. You may share your proposal with your institution's authorized official by clicking on the "View Draft" and printing the proposal, or by sharing the proposal by providing the "Link to share" URL.

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

Institutional Official. For the institution that is serving as fiscal agent hosting this project, provide the name and contact information of the institutional official on this grant.

FDP Clearinghouse. As indicated on the Grant Commitment form, is this institution registered in the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) Expanded Clearinghouse? Please check response as "No" if not, or as "Yes, the institution profile can be found at: https://fdpclearinghouse.org/organizations."

Submission Acknowledgment

When all proposal questions are answered to your satisfaction and you have uploaded all required documents, return to the proposal overview and click the "Submit Proposal" button. Prior to the deadline, you may "unsubmit" to revise the proposal. If you choose to unsubmit, don't forget to submit it again when you are done editing, otherwise it will not go forward to review. Each time you submit or unsubmit, you will receive an email confirmation.

Selected Applications

Proposals are evaluated, based on the criteria listed, by independent review teams made up of agricultural stakeholders from across the region. Grants are awarded based on the review team rankings. Northeast SARE's Administrative Council may give additional consideration to states, audiences and topics that are underrepresented in the Northeast SARE portfolio. If the Northeast SARE Administrative Council selects your project for funding, you may expect the following.

Notification

The Northeast SARE Administrative Council will select applications for funding in July 2020. SARE staff will notify applicants about the status of their applications in late July 2020.

Contracting and Disbursement of Funds

Graduate Student Grants are awarded to the graduate student's host institution with the faculty advisor acting as the principal investigator. The Sponsored Programs Office or Authorized Representative of the grant recipient will receive a Subcontract Agreement from the University of Vermont, the host institution for Northeast SARE. Funds are to be used exclusively for the graduate student's research, subject to the restrictions outlined in "Use of Funds." Funds are released on a reimbursement basis to the institution in response to invoices from the institution's financial office. Northeast SARE will hold the last 20 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 livestock, SARE will require certification of protocol review from your organization's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). If your project is funded and involves human research subjects, SARE will need a completed approval document from your institution's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Protection of Human Subjects in Research.

Required Reporting

Northeast SARE requires annual progress reports (due by January 15 each year during the project) and a comprehensive final report (due within 60 days of project completion) for all projects. Your will submit all reports in SARE's Grant Management System. Reports should describe the progress made on the research 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 knowledge or awareness, attitudes and opinions, and/or the adoption of new practices. Products and educational tools should be added to the report as attachments. We encourage you to also include photographs to help document and promote the project. Final reports should include full, detailed results of experiments, research, and outreach activities that were defined in the application, regardless of pending or published journal article submissions.

Northeast SARE asks that graduate students awarded grants provide contact information for at least two years after the project has ended to allow for follow-up and response to inquiries about the project (see Appendix B for types of information SARE collects post-project). For more information about what SARE hopes its project investments will achieve, refer to www.northeastsare.org/About-Northeast-SARE/SARE-logic-models.

Resources

The following resources may help you as plan and write your application.

- To learn about all projects funded by the SARE program, visit the national reporting site at: projects.sare.org/search-projects. You may search the database by region, state, project type, year, commodities and practices addressed, as well as by keywords.

- The Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (AFSIC) at the National Agricultural Library specializes in identifying resources about sustainable food systems and practices: www.nal.usda.gov/afsic. Information specialists can share resources and search techniques that may be relevant to your application.

Appendix A: Sample Budget Justification and Narrative & Budget Summary

The following sample budget is provided so you can see how one fits together. Please note: every budget is different—yours should reflect how your project is designed and what you plan to do. Provide enough detail so that reviewers will understand the need for each requested item.

Sample Budget Justification and Narrative

Budget Detail, Justification and Narrative

Applicant's name and institution: Mary Green, University of Vermont

Item name	*Narrative justification of expense*	Unit	Quantity	$ per unit	Quantity x $ =
PERSONNEL					
Only people employed by the recipient organization or farm should be listed in this category. Those employed elsewhere should be listed under "Other direct costs," or, if individuals are to be paid by another institution via a subaward to that institution, they should be included in a separately detailed subcontract budget and the subcontract total should be listed below under "Subcontracts" in "Other direct costs."					
Salaries and wages.					
Provide narrative detail of each person's role in the project or the services they are providing through their work on the project. Show full-time equivalency as a percentage and salary for each year, or provide hourly wage times number of hours, to equal total $ requested.					
Project leader(s).					
Mary Green, Graduate Investigator	5 hrs/wk for 10 weeks and 20 hrs/wk for 15 weeks to complete field and laboratory work, and 10 hrs/wk for 5 weeks to complete data analysis, reporting and preparing outreach materials	hr	400	$ 15.50	$ 6,200.00
					$ -
Student wages.					
Student worker	10 hours per week for 10 weeks to process samples	hr	100	$ 10.00	$ 1,000.00
					$ -
Support staff.					
					$ -
Other hired labor.					
					$ -
Subtotal: Salaries and wages (rounded to the nearest dollar)					**$ 7,200**
Fringe benefits.					
If applicable, provide the fringe rate that will be applied to wages above and the total for each wage line or category.					
Fringe for graduate investigator	Rate is 8%		.08	$ 6,200.00	$ 496.00
					$ -
Subtotal: Fringe benefits (rounded to the nearest dollar)					**$ 496**
		PERSONNEL TOTAL (salaries, hourly labor, and fringe benefits)				**$7,696**
NON-PERSONNEL		Unit	Quantity	$ per unit	Quantity x $ =
Materials and supplies. Indicate each item with quantity and estimated cost. Include narrative justification on how the item fits the project, its direct need 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.					
Seed	for treatment plots	lbs	120	$ 7.00	$ 840.00
Insect traps	for sample collection	ea	125	$ 4.50	$ 562.50
Zip-lock bags	for field samples	box	7	$ 2.99	$ 20.93
					$ -
Subtotal: Materials and supplies (rounded to the nearest dollar)					**$ 1,423**
Travel. For travel of employees/personnel only; list consultant travel under consultants and list conference attendee travel under trainee support. Provide detail as to the destination, purpose of the travel, who is traveling, number of travelers. If a mileage reimbursement, provide miles x rate (not more than federal rate). If lodging provide rate x number of nights. If travel meals, specify the per diem or allowance to be used.					
Mileage	20 round trips to Experiment Station to process samples, 6 mi/round trip	mi	120	$ 0.575	$ 69.00
Mileage	20 round trips to collaborator's farm for trap setup, monitoring and data collection, 12 mi/round trip	mi	240	$ 0.575	$ 138.00
					$ -
Subtotal: Travel (rounded to the nearest dollar)					**$ 207**
Publications/printing. Publishing of an article in a scientific or technical journal or other type of field/program related publication or for commercial printing of brochures and program materials. Photocopying costs should be included under "Other direct costs."					
Brochures	For field day at research farm and twilight meeting at Dodge Farm	ea	100	$ 0.25	$ 25.00
					$ -
Subtotal: Publications (rounded to the nearest dollar)					**$ 25**

Sample Budget Justification and Narrative, continued

Other Direct Costs		Unit	Quantity	$ per unit	Quantity x $ =
Communications. Mailings, postage, conference calls. Cell phone charges are not allowable.					
					$ -
Photocopying. In-house photocopying.					
Copies	Field Scouting check-off sheets	ea	200	0.09	$ 18.00
					$ -
Speaker / trainer fees. Include name, fee, and description of services they are providing, expenses to be reimbursed, including travel.					
					$ -
Consultants. Name of those receiving stipends or payments for services and their organization or farm, statement of work or description of what will be done to earn the payment, and breakdown of number of days or hours of service and rate of pay. Provide detail of consultant expenses to be reimbursed such as travel. Add attachment if needed to define the scope of work.					
Katherine Dodge, farmer	oversee crop establishment and cultivation	hr	20	25	$ 500.00
					$ -
Services. For services rendered for the project. Provide details (fees or hired payments, purpose and quantities).					
Lab tissue Analysis	conducted at university lab	ea	60	12.5	$ 750.00
					$ -
Conferences/meetings/workshops. Expenses of hosting/conducting meetings and training events. List expenses for project leader or staff attending a conference under **Travel**. List presenter expenses under **Consultants** or **Speaker/Trainer fees**. List trainee-participant expenses under **Trainee support**.					
					$ -
Trainee support (participant support costs). A subsidy payment to or on behalf of **those who receive training**, usually for registration fees, lodging, and associated travel expenses. (N.B. Payments for services rendered should be listed above in speaker / trainer fees or consultant payments. Other Conference/meeting/workshop expenses may be listed in that category above.)					
					$ -
Off-site office rental. Only allowable if necessary for a project specific purpose.					
					$ -
Purchase of equipment (or the **cost of fabrication** of equipment). Only project specific research equipment with clear justification of need and full use in the project is allowable. General use equipment is not allowed.					
					$ -
Rental of equipment or **land-use** charges rental.					
					$ -
Other / miscellaneous. These costs must always be identified in order to be allowed.					
					$ -
Subtotal: Other Direct Costs before subcontracts/subawards (rounded to the nearest dollar)					$ 1,268
Subcontracts/Subawards. List the institution, organization, or farm, the project leader's name, and amount of subaward. For each subaward, attach a proposed plan of work and include a spreadsheet for Budget Detail, Justification and Narrative. It is expected that the prime recipient is taking the lead on the effort with full responsibility for reporting, and each subaward must be less than 50% of the overall project funding request.					
				Total from separate spreadsheet:	
				Sum of all subcontracts	$ -
				Other Direct Costs total (rounded to the nearest dollar)	$ 1,268
				NON-PERSONNEL TOTAL	$ 2,923
				TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	**$10,619**
Indirect costs. Complete the check-off below as to the basis for the amount being requested. Enter total indirect request amount on this line. Farms and other private businesses should leave the indirect cost amount blank or enter $0 (see below).					$ 1,179.00
				TOTAL SARE REQUEST	$ 11,798
Acknowledge that indirect has been offered through the application instructions by checking (X) in the appropriate box on the left below.					
X	**Indirect is requested, based on having a federally negotiated indirect rate** (subject to USDA/NIFA cap of 10% federal funds). We have entered the amount requested on the **Indirect costs** line above.				
	Indirect is requested, based on the de minimis rate (our organization has never had a federally negotiated indirect rate). We have entered the amount requested for indirect on the **Indirect costs** line above.				
	No indirect is requested (check if your organization is ineligible for indirect, is eligible but chooses not to request indirect, or if a farm or other small business eligible for indirect, as specified below).				

Sample Budget Summary

Make sure that your category totals match those on your spreadsheet.

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL
Personnel	Subtotal from budget justification and narrative template	$7,696
Materials and supplies	Subtotal from budget justification and narrative template	$1,423
Travel	Subtotal from budget justification and narrative template	$207
Printing and publications	Subtotal from budget justification and narrative template	$25
Other direct costs	Subtotal from budget justification and narrative template	$1,268
Indirect costs based on 10%	Subtotal from budget justification and narrative template	$1,179
Total:		$ 11,798

Appendix B: SARE Graduate Student Grantee Reporting and SARE Post-Project Evaluation

Logic Model Category	Performance Indicators: *(When you report, you will receive prompts for these indicators, but you are expected to report only where you have information to report)*	Who Collects/When Reported	
		Grantee Collects/ Reports by End of Project	**SARE Collects/ Post Project** *(from Student and/or Advisor)*
Participants	Number of the following types of individuals who participated in research: – Researchers – Agricultural educators or service providers – Farmers – Others (please specify)	✓	
	Number of the following types of individuals reached through outreach: – Researchers – Agricultural educators or service providers – Farmers – Others (please specify)	✓	
Outputs: – Activities – Information – Products	Research activities conducted	✓	
	Number and type of Outreach activities conducted to share project results	✓	
	Research results of the project	✓	
	Number journal articles, in press or published *(if produced)*	✓	✓S, A
	Number and types of other, non-refereed outreach publications *(if produced)*	✓	✓S, A
Action Outcomes	New collaborations as a result of project *(by graduate student and/or advisor)*	✓	✓S, A
	SARE grant leveraged another grant *(by graduate student and/or advisor)*	✓	✓S, A
	Number of citations of project results		✓S, A
	Sustainable agriculture career choices made as a result of the project		✓S