



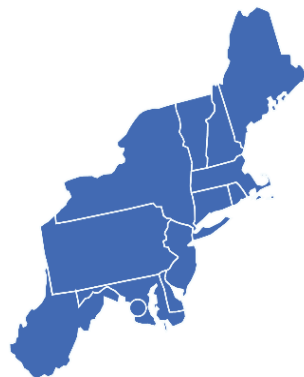
# Historically Underserved Farmer/Farming Communities Grant Program

## 2025 Call for Proposals

### About Northeast SARE

The Northeast Sustainable Research and Education (SARE) Program offers grants to nonprofits, community groups, farmers, educators, service providers, researchers, 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:



*Northeast agricultural communities honor the holistic connection among land, water, air, and all living beings. Agriculture in the Northeast is accessible, sustainable, and just, addressing historic and current inequities so all farmers and farm employees can steward resources to ensure sustainability, resilience, economic viability, and a high quality of life.*

Projects must take place in the Northeast region that includes: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, West Virginia, Vermont, Washington, D.C., and Northeast lands within the jurisdictions of Tribal Nations.

### About this Grant Program

#### Overview

Northeast SARE is committed to a just and equitable distribution of funding. The historically underserved farmer/farming communities<sup>1</sup> grant program is designed to address systemic/structural barriers to access that disproportionately limit the ability of historically underserved farmer/farming communities to fully participate in SARE programs. This grant program funds projects that create farming and food system

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<sup>1</sup> Northeast SARE understands Historically Underserved Farmers to align with the USDA definition of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers as those belonging to groups that have been subject to racial or ethnic prejudice, including but not limited to farmers who are Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Hispanic or Latino, and Asian or Pacific Islander.

opportunities for historically underserved farmers/farming communities and prioritizes work that engages, and is led by, people with experience from those communities. The program seeks projects that will address the needs and serve the interests of groups that have been met with discrimination and other systemic obstacles to full participation in the agricultural system of the Northeast.

A wide variety of topics can be funded by this grant program, including but not limited to:

- The study and/or promotion of culturally appropriate best management practices
- Production of specialty, ethnic, and medicinal crops
- Climate-smart agricultural practices
- Urban and indigenous agriculture systems
- Equitable access to markets for agricultural products
- Equitable acquisition of farming and marketing infrastructure
- Budgeting, financial planning, accounting, tax and insurance management education
- Capacity and relationship building related to sustainable agriculture
- Professional development for producers and/or people that work with them
- Programs supporting mental and physical health for producers
- Improving local and regional food access for underserved communities
- Historically Underserved farming community urban and rural partnerships
- Policy development and community capacity building

### **Eligible Applicants**

This grant program is open to business owners (including farmers), community groups, farm employees, non-profit organizations, and tribal communities committed to building the capacity and resilience of sustainable agriculture in Historically Underserved Farming communities.

Those with direct experience around growing food, community development, education, and/or applied research are eligible to apply.

This grant program supports all types and scales of farming, marketing, education, and research: large or small scale, organic or conventional, urban or rural, full- or part-time, etc. Collaborative efforts and projects that support partnerships and coalitions are encouraged.

### **Funding Available**

Northeast SARE's Administrative Council allocated approximately \$3,000,000 to fund projects for this cycle of historically underserved farmers/farming communities grants. awards can range from \$150,000 to \$250,000 depending upon a project's needs, complexity, and duration. Approximately 15-20 awards will be made.

### **Project Duration**

Project length can range from 1 year up to 2 years, 6 months. Projects may start on or after June 1, 2025. All projects must be completed by November 30, 2027.

## Technical Assistance Available

Northeast SARE will be providing technical assistance to applicants and grantees of the Historically Underserved Farmer and Farming Community Grant Program (HUF). This assistance will be delivered by a team of 30 Technical Assistants, coordinated by a Technical Assistance Coordinator. Our goal is to offer essential support to HUF applicants and grantees, ensuring that they have the resources needed for success.

## Grant Timeline

Question and Answer Sessions. Registration link: <a href="https://northeast.sare.org/HUFGrantQA">https://northeast.sare.org/HUFGrantQA</a>	2pm – 3pm November 13, 19. December 4, 10
Date to submit accommodation request before*	December 17, 2024
Online submission due date	January 7, 2025, 5p.m. EST
Review panel ranks proposals	January-February 2025
Northeast SARE Administrative Council makes final selections	April, 2025
Award decisions announced to applicants	May 1, 2025
Contract start date for awarded projects	June 1, 2025
Earliest reimbursement date	August 1, 2025

### \*Accommodation Requests

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 specifically request disability-related accommodation, please contact Northeast SARE as soon as possible at [ne-huf@sare.org](mailto:ne-huf@sare.org). If possible, please make your accommodation requests at least **two weeks prior to the proposal deadline**. Northeast SARE will do our best to address requests made with less notice but may not have the resources to do so.

## Application Questions and Instructions

The proposal has two sections, each with multiple questions. The second section has review criteria used in evaluating the proposals; these appear next to each question. Answers should follow the instructions and directly address the review criteria.

Please do not include links to external information in your proposal. 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 of June 1, 2025 or later. All project contracts will begin June 1, 2025, but project work may begin after that. Northeast SARE cannot reimburse any expenses incurred before the contract start date.

**Project End Date:** Choose an end date on or before November 30, 2027. All projects must be completed by November 30, 2027. Project extensions are not allowed.

**Project Location:** Name the State where the community the project will serve is located. If the community is in multiple States, select the one where most of the project work is done

**Optional: Project Support Network (200-word limit):** Describe the individuals and networks, beyond the core project team, that will support implementation of this project.

**Optional: Support Not Yet Developed (200-word limit):** Describe any new relationships with individuals or organizations that would significantly benefit your project, and the opportunities and/or obstacles associated with getting that support.

### **Grant Commitment Form (Upload)**

This form is available at: <https://northeast.sare.org/HUFGrantCommitment>

The project leader must sign as the applicant. Either the owner of the farm or business at which you work, an authorized official of your institution's grants office, or the fiscal agent for your organization must also sign the bottom section. Completed Grant Commitment forms are required from all entities that receive SARE funds so if your project has subawards they must also provide this form. Upload a PDF or an image file of the completed form(s) to the online system.

## **Proposal Questions**

### **Proposal Summary (250-word limit)**

This is a standalone summary of the project. It should briefly describe the need, the objective(s), key components of your plan of work, and how results will be assessed. Since the summary is the first thing reviewers will see, take some time to make it clear and compelling. You may want to compose the summary after you have written the rest of your proposal.

### **Description of Community Need (300-word limit)**

Describe the opportunity or problem that your project will address, how you came to understand this need, and why it is important.

#### **Review criteria:**

The problem or opportunity that the project will address is clearly described. It is clear how the problem or need was identified and why it is important to the community.

### **Plan of Work (1,000-word limit)**

Summarize the objectives of your project, the activities or steps you will take to achieve those objectives, and the anticipated results. Include a timeline of the activities and results.

#### **Review criteria:**

The project objectives are clear. The activities are likely to achieve the objectives. The anticipated results support Northeast SARE's Outcome Statement. The timeline is realistic and includes all the objectives and anticipated results.

### **Community Served (500-word limit)**

Describe the community the project's work will benefit. What is the size of the community, where is it located, who lives there? What are some key cultural, economic, and/or social attributes that are relevant to the proposed work, and how have you come to understand them?

#### **Review criteria:**

The community to be served by the project is clearly described. The community attributes related to the proposed work are provided and it is clear how they have been identified.

### **Barriers to Participation (500-word limit)**

Describe barriers to participation in the farming and food system faced by you and/or the community you serve. Explain any previous work that you or your business or organization have done in the community to support participation.

#### **Review criteria:**

Barriers to participation faced by the applicant and/or the community are clearly described. Previous work to address these barriers will support the success of the proposed project.

### **Decision-Making Process (500-word limit)**

Explain how goal setting is done, and decisions are made in your business or organization. How do you center equity and justice in a way that empowers the communities you work with?

#### **Review criteria:**

The process for setting goals and making decisions is clearly described. The business or organization demonstrates an ability to engage with, listen to, share power with, and act on the wisdom of the community

### **Business or Organization Leadership (500-word limit)**

Describe your business or organization's membership or customers, and leadership. Who do you primarily serve? How does your leadership team reflect the community you serve? Describe the experience working in Historically Underserved communities of your leader, leadership team and governing body, such as the board of directors. Name and describe the roles of the individuals who will lead the project.

#### **Review criteria:**

Leadership reflects the identities of the community the project seeks to benefit. The experience of the leadership team is described and is connected to and representative of the community. Project team members are named, and their roles are described.

### **Existing Relationships (500-word limit)**

How does your business or organization's work fit into broader efforts to address the need or opportunity that your project will address? How will your project add value to other organizations working to support your community?

#### **Review criteria:**

The business or organization understands and is positioned to leverage partnerships with others in the community to maximize the project's effectiveness.

### **Affirmation of Approach (file upload)**

Present a few expressions of support from people representing the community that will benefit from the project. These can be quotes, stories, and/or letters from project partners describing what they will bring to the project, and their willingness to participate.

#### **Review criteria:**

Expressions of support from the community are uploaded and demonstrate evidence of planning and consultation with the intended beneficiaries of the project

If you are collaborating/partnering with historically underserved farmers/farming communities, it is required that that collaborator validate their participation in the Grants Management System (GMS). During the application process, you will be asked to provide the email address of the collaborator/partner. Upon submission, the collaborator/partner will receive an email notification with a link to the proposal and budget. The collaborator/partner will have to affirm their participation **within 1 week of the proposal submission**. Only applications where the collaborator/partner confirms collaboration will be considered for review.

### **Assessment of Results (500-word limit)**

Describe your project assessment process. How will you reflect on what was accomplished and/or learned? What are your markers of success for the community being served?

#### **Review criteria:**

There is a clear description of how and when there will be an assessment of what the project has achieved.

### **Project Budget (file upload) and Amount Requested**

A detailed budget is required for the business or organization, and for 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.

#### **Review criteria:**

Budget items reflect the realistic needs of the project, and the total request is appropriate in terms of the magnitude of the project's expected results. Project leaders and collaborators are encouraged to be fully and adequately compensated for their time.

Proposals should include an accurate and comprehensive accounting of the amount of time required to implement a project, and budgets should request appropriate wages and salaries to support these efforts.

Farmers and others who take time out of their normal work to provide a service to the project should be paid for the time they contribute. For reference, Northeast SARE currently compensates farmers who serve on its Administrative Council, review teams, and working groups at a rate of \$50/hour.

### **Total Direct Costs**

Enter the total direct dollar amount requested from the Budget Justification and Narrative Template ("Total Direct Costs").

Direct costs are all the expenses that are specific to the project and would not be needed if the project was not funded.

### **Total Indirect Costs**

Enter the total indirect dollar amount requested from the Budget Justification and Narrative Template ("Total Indirect Costs").

Indirect costs are also known as "overhead" or "facilities and administration" costs. These are costs for utilities, office space, administrative staff, etc. that would exist

whether the project was funded or not (although a specific percentage of these costs might be allocated to a specific project).

### **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.

### **Optional Other Relevant Information (file upload)**

You may upload additional documents that clarify your project such as curriculum, educational tools, focus group or interview plan, research plan, or other information directly related to how the proposed work will be carried out.

### **Authorized Official Contact Information**

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 respond to the question, "Is this organization registered in the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) Expanded Clearinghouse?"

The FDP Clearinghouse is a publicly available website that provides organization profiles with information that is helpful in creating a grant contract. Being registered is NOT required. A list of participating organizations can be found at:

[fdpclearinghouse.org/organizations](http://fdpclearinghouse.org/organizations).

### **Evaluation/Scoring**

#### Proposal Selection Process

Proposals are evaluated by independent review panels made up of farmers, researchers, nonprofit staff and agricultural service providers using the criteria in the call for proposals. Panel scores and comments are provided to the Northeast SARE Administrative Council, which decides which proposals to fund.

Proposals and reviews are kept confidential among Northeast SARE staff, Administrative Council, and grant reviewers. If funded, proposals and funded project reports will be in the public domain.

Northeast SARE is hosted by the University of Vermont. The University prohibits discrimination based on unlawful criteria such as race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, or gender identity or expression, as those terms are defined under applicable law.



Proposal Summary	0%
Description of Community Need	5%
Plan of Work Community Served Barriers to Participation	40%
Decision-Making Process Business or Organization Leadership Existing Relationships	25%
Affirmation of Approach	5%
Assessment of Results	5%
Project Budget	20%
Optional other relevant information	0%

## **Appendices**

You may access appendices A, B, and C using the links below.

### [Appendix A: Preparing and Submitting your Proposal](#)

*Includes information about using the online submission system and the proposal selection process*

### [Appendix B: Expectations for Funded Proposals](#)

*Includes information about contracting and reporting requirements for funded proposals*

### [Appendix C: Budget Guidance--Explanation of Expense Categories and Examples](#)

*Includes information about the budget categories used in the budget justification and narrative template.*

If you have any questions about this opportunity, please contact us @ [ne-huf@sare.org](mailto:ne-huf@sare.org)

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