

# Farming Community Reviewer Rubric

## Scoring Scale

Not fundable scores		Fundable Scores		
1 - 3	4 - 5	6 - 7	8 - 9	10
Proposal fails to demonstrate alignment or feasibility. Responses are incomplete, vague, or show fundamental misunderstandings. <b>Major gaps or ineligibility make funding inappropriate.</b>	Proposal offers partial or general responses with significant weaknesses. Elements are present but poorly developed, unclear, or lack detail and feasibility. <b>Significant improvements would be required.</b>	Proposal clearly addresses requirements with solid, realistic, and appropriate responses. <b>Minor gaps or missed opportunities may remain, but overall meets expectations for funding.</b>	Proposal offers highly detailed, convincing, and strongly aligned responses. <b>Demonstrates readiness, feasibility, innovation, and clear benefit for Northeast farmers with few or no weaknesses.</b>	<b>Proposal is exceptional, demonstrating perfect alignment with program goals.</b> Responses are precise, innovative, and compelling, with outstanding feasibility, farmer-centered planning, and potential for significant regional impact.

<b>Comprehensive Review Criteria</b> The following review criteria apply to the proposal as a whole. Reviewers should consider the full application when scoring the following three questions. The scores for these questions make up 15% of the total proposal score.				Weight
<b>Does this project contribute to SARE's legislated priorities?</b> These include: enhancing farm profitability, enhancing farmer quality of life, maintaining or enhancing the quality and/or productivity of natural resources (soil, water, animals, plants, etc.), and/or improving employment opportunities for American farmers and farm workers.				5%
The project does not contribute to SARE's legislated priorities of enhancing farm profitability, enhancing farmer quality of life, and/or improving employment opportunities for American farmers and farm workers?	References priorities but lacks detail of	Somewhat addresses priorities of enhanci	Clearly and directly addresses priorities of enhancing farm profitability, enhancing farmer quality of life, and/or improving employment opportunities for American farmers and farm workers?	Clearly and directly addresses all priorities of enhancing farm profitability, enhancing farmer quality of life, and/or improving employment opportunities for American farmers and farm workers?
<b>Is this project innovative by addressing new practices, improving existing practices, or introducing existing practice to a new farmer audience?</b>				5%
The project does not try new practices	References innovation but lacks detail o	Somewhat innovative on trying new prac	The project is clearly innovative in 1 of the 3 forms of innovation on trying new practices, improve existing practices, or	The project is highly innovative in more than one way on trying new practices, improve existing practices, or introduce
<b>Will the project have substantive impact on sustainable productions/food systems/markets in the Northeast?</b>				5%
The project does not impact sustainab	Minimal expected impact on sustainabl	Somewhat impactful on sustainable prod	The project will have lasting impact that addresses present needs on sustainable production/ food systems/markets in the Northeast.	The project is highly and demonstrably impactful with a lasting impact that addresses present needs and anticipates future ones on sustainable production/ food systems/markets in the Northeast.

<b>Review Criteria by Section</b> The following review criteria apply to a specific section of the proposal. Reviewers should focus on the information in that section to score, but may consider information found elsewhere in the proposal as relevant. The scores for these sections make up 85% of the total proposal score.		Weight
<b>Description of Community Need</b> (includes Farmer Engagment and Needs and Optional: Farmer Letters of Support)		5%

The challenge or opportunity that the project will address is not described. It is not clear how the problem or need was identified and why it is important to the community.	The challenge or opportunity that the project addresses is partially described. There is a degree of clarity regarding how the problem or need was identified, along with some indication of its importance to the community.	The challenge or opportunity that the project addresses is somewhat described. It is somewhat clear how the problem or need was identified and why it is important to the community.	The challenge 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.	The challenge or opportunity that the project will address is very clearly described. It is very clear how the problem or need was identified and why it is important to the community.	
<b>Plan of Work</b>					<b>15%</b>
The project objectives are not clear. The activities are unlikely to achieve the objectives. The anticipated results do not support Northeast SARE's outcome statement. The timeline is not realistic and does not include all the objectives and anticipated results.	The project objectives are partially clear. The activities are partially likely to achieve the objectives. The anticipated results partially support Northeast SARE's outcome statement. Statement. The timeline is partially realistic and does include some all the objectives and anticipated results.	The project objectives are somewhat clear. The activities are somewhat likely to achieve the objectives. The anticipated results somewhat support Northeast SARE's outcome statement. Statement. The timeline is somewhat realistic and does include some all the objectives and anticipated results.	The project objectives are clear. The activities are likely to achieve the objectives. The anticipated results support Northeast SARE's outcome statement. Statement. The timeline is realistic and includes all the objectives and anticipated results.	The project objectives are very clear. The activities are highly likely to achieve the objectives. The anticipated results greatly support Northeast SARE's outcome statement. Statement. The timeline is realistic and includes all the objectives and anticipated results.	
<b>Community Served</b>					<b>15%</b>
The challenge(s) to the community are not clearly described and the experience of the team is not clearly stated.	The challenge(s) to the community is partially described and the experience partially described.	The challenge(s) to the community is somewhat described and the experience somewhat described.	The challenge(s) to the community are clearly described and the experience of the team is described sufficiently.	The challenge(s) to the community is strongly and clearly described and the experience of the team is strong.	
<b>Decision Making Process</b>					<b>10%</b>
The process for setting goals and making decisions is not clearly described. The business or organization does not demonstrate an ability to engage with, listen to, share power with, and act on the wisdom of the community	The process for setting goals and making decisions is partially described. The business or organization partially demonstrates an ability to engage with, listen to, share power with, and act on the wisdom of the community	The process for setting goals and making decisions is somewhat described. The business or organization somewhat demonstrates an ability to engage with, listen to, share power with, and act on the wisdom of the community	The process for setting goals and making decisions is described. The business or organization demonstrates an ability to engage with, listen to, share power with, and act on the wisdom of the community	The process for setting goals and making decisions is clearly described. The business or organization demonstrates clear ability to engage with, listen to, share power with, and act on the wisdom of the community	
<b>Business or Organization Leadership</b>					<b>10%</b>
Leadership does not reflect the values of the community the project seeks to benefit. The experience of the leadership team is not described and is not connected to and representative of the community. Project team members are not named, and their roles are not described.	Leadership partially reflects the values of the community the project seeks to benefit. The experience of the leadership team is partially described and is connected to and representative of the community. Project team members are named, and their roles are partially described.	Leadership somewhat reflects the values of the community the project seeks to benefit. The experience of the leadership team is somewhat described and is connected to and representative of the community. Project team members are named, and their roles are somewhat described.	Leadership reflects the values 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	Leadership is highly reflective of the values of the community the project seeks to benefit. The experience of the leadership team is described and is directly connected to and representative of the community. Project team members are named, and their roles clearly described.	
<b>Existing Relationship</b>					<b>5%</b>

The business or organization may not understand and is not positioned to leverage partnerships with others to maximize the projects effectiveness.	The business or organization partially understands and is positioned to leverage partnerships with others to maximize the projects effectiveness.	The business or organization somewhat understands and is positioned to leverage partnerships with others to maximize the projects effectiveness.	The business or organization understands and is positioned to leverage partnerships with others to maximize the projects effectiveness.	The business or organization highly understands and is positioned to leverage partnerships with others to maximize the projects effectiveness.	
<b>Affirmation of Approach</b>					<b>5%</b>
Expressions of support from the community are not uploaded and do not demonstrate evidence of planning and consultation with the intended beneficiaries of the project.	Partiale expressions of support from the community are uploaded and demonstrate some evidence of planning and consultation with the intended beneficiaries of the project.	Some expressions of support from the community are uploaded and demonstrate some evidence of planning and consultation with the intended beneficiaries of the project.	Expressions of support from the community are uploaded and demonstrate evidence of planning and consultation with the intended beneficiaries of the project.	Expressions of support from the community are uploaded and demonstrate great deal evidence of planning and consultation with the intended beneficiaries of the project.	
<b>Assessment of Results</b>					<b>5%</b>
There is not a clear description of how and when there will be an assessment of what the project has achieved.	There is partiale description of how and when there will be an assessment of what the project has achieved.	There is some description of how and when there will be an assessment of what the project has achieved.	There is a clear description of how and when there will be an assessment of what the project has achieved.	There is a very clear description of how and when there will be an assessment of what the project has achieved.	
<b>Budget</b> (includes the Budget Spreadsheet, Optional: Other Funding Sources, Total Direct Costs, Total Indirect Costs, and Total SARE Request).					<b>20%</b>
Missing or incomplete, unreasonable costs	Basic spreadsheet with unclear alignment to scope	Clear, reasonable costs justified for scope	Detailed, well-reasoned budget with clear alignment	Exceptionally clear, transparent, reasonable budget with strong justification and alignment to scope	