

Southern SARE Graduate Student Grant Technical Review Rubric

| Section | Question in Call for Proposals in Grants Management System | From “How this proposal will be reviewed” in the Call for Proposals | What Reviewers are Looking For | Points |
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| Graduate Student Qualifications | Briefly describe the experience of the graduate student relative to the project, and the role of the graduate student in the project. | Does the student (with the major professor's support) have the experience and qualifications to conduct the proposed work and complete the work within the proposed timetable. | The graduate student demonstrates the experience and knowledge to conduct the project and complete the work within the proposed time frame. | 5 |
| Statement of the Problem | Provide a clear description of the production/marketing problem farmers are facing. Indicate how the problem is related to, or affects, sustainable agriculture and discuss why the problem needs to be addressed. Your explanation should address one or more of the three pillars of sustainability: Farmer profit, environmental conservation, and community quality of life. | Does the applicant clearly describe the problem and why the problem needs to be addressed? | The project provides a clear description of a problem facing agriculture in the South, and identifies a need to finding a more sustainable solution. Addresses one or more of the three pillars of sustainability | 15 |
| Objectives | Provide a list of concise project objectives. | The Objectives can be realistically completed within the proposed time frame, and the project goals are feasible to obtain per the methods stated. | Objectives demonstrate clear goals of the project. They can be realistically completed within the proposed time frame. | 10 |
| Approaches and Methods | <p>The Approaches and Methods section is where you will test your expected outcome through a research experiment or observational study. In this section you should outline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site where you will conduct your research; • Your experimental design if your research calls for one; • What you are measuring and the ways you will be measuring it; • The materials and supplies you will be using to conduct your research; • How you will collect your data, how often you will collect it, and what tools you will use; • How you will analyze your data, and what tools you will use; • How you will interpret your data and draw conclusions. <p>The Approaches and Methods should demonstrate how your solution works in addressing the Statement of the Problem. Be</p> | Is the Approaches and Methods clearly thought out and well designed so that useful and applicable results can be obtained? Does the Approaches and Methods align with the budget request? | <p>Approaches and Methods effectively demonstrate how the solution would work in solving the stated problem. Potential results are practical and useful.</p> <p>Approaches and Methods outline what is needed in the budget.</p> | 25 |

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| | specific in describing project activities. | | | |
| Project Relevance to Sustainable Agriculture | Demonstrate how the project is relevant to sustainable agriculture. State how the project and the expected results contribute to agricultural sustainability. Demonstrate how your project is making an element of a farming system more sustainable, making sure that it is not making the whole system or another part of it less sustainable. | How does the project and its expected results contribute to sustainable agriculture? Is the project and its expected results a new and creative innovation? Does the project contribute to the growth of sustainable agriculture by building on and/or adding to existing knowledge? Is it a band-aid to conventional agriculture or does it move the needle in more sustainable farming practices? | The project demonstrates a clear, realistic relevancy to sustainable agriculture, and illustrates an integrated approach to healthy and resilient production and marketing systems. | 20 |
| Timetable | The timetable is an outline of project activities in a chronological timeline that states where, what, when and how long it will take for you to perform your research. Provide a timetable of the work to be completed from project start date to project end date. Be specific in describing project activities, including any recordkeeping throughout the research. Include your outreach plan in your timetable. | Based on the information in the timetable, can the project be effectively completed in the timetable provided? | Effective completion of the project based on the objectives and proposed solution. | 10 |
| Literature Cited | Supports the justification of the research project being proposed. | Does the literature cited demonstrate how well the applicant prepared their proposal based on published literature of the research topic? | Cited literature supports the problem, demonstrates knowledge of the research topic, and contributes to existing published works. | 5 |
| Budget | The budget is a list of allowable expenses required to conduct your project. The items in your budget should align with the your Approaches and Methods. Fill in a budget and provide a justification for each allowable item listed in your budget. Refer to the budget checklist attached to this Call for Proposal, as well as the sample budget and budget justification as a guideline. | Is the budget request reasonable and realistic? Is it clear on what the funds will be spent on? Are the requested funds allowable? Are budget items itemized with clear justifications on how they will be used in the project? | Clear budget with allowable and realistic requests. Items are itemized and justified with clear descriptions of how they will be used in the project. | 10 |