

Western SARE Competitive Grants Graduate Student 2021 Call for Proposals

Submission Deadline: February 9th, 2021, 12:00 pm MST (noon)

The Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program announces a Call for Proposals for Graduate Student Grants in Sustainable Agriculture for 2021. Funded projects must contain both **research** and **outreach** components on a sustainable agriculture topic. Outreach activities may include on-farm/ranch demonstrations, farmer-to-farmer educational activities, and other approaches to assist producer adoption of sustainable agricultural practices. The goal of this program is to achieve results that can be communicated to producers and professionals; sustain and improve the environmental quality and natural resource base on which agriculture depends; improve the profitability of farmers/ranchers and associated agricultural businesses; and enhance the quality of life for farmers/ranchers in local communities.

The SARE grant program mission is to advance innovations that improve profitability, stewardship and quality of life in American agriculture by investing in groundbreaking research and education. To achieve that, Western SARE believes that our programs must include the involvement of agricultural producers from inception to finish, and therefore we require producer involvement in the planning, design, implementation, and educational outreach of any funded projects.

Table of Contents:

Western SARE Goals	2
About the Proposal	2
Writing the Proposal	3
Proposal Application	4
The Review Process	15
Reporting Requirements	15
Selected Proposals	16
How to Apply	17
Resources	17

Submit proposals online at:

<https://projects.sare.org>

Look for proposals under “Western” [region]

Graduate Student Program

- February 9th, 2021– Proposals are due by 12:00 pm (noon) MST.
- April 2021– A Technical Review Panel reviews and recommends proposals for funding.
- July 2021– Western SARE Administrative Council makes final selections.
- September 2021 – Contracts for selected projects will be initiated.

Western SARE Host Institution



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Alaska, American Samoa, Arizona, California, Colorado, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Northern Mariana Islands, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming



Sustainable Agriculture

Congress has defined sustainable agriculture as an integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site-specific application that will over the long- term:

- Satisfy human food and fiber needs;
- Enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agricultural economy depends;
- Make the most efficient use of non-renewable resources and on-farm resources and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls;
- Sustain the economic viability of farm operations; and
- Enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole.

– U.S. Code Title 7, Section 3103

Western SARE Goals

- Promote **good stewardship** of the nation's natural resources by providing site-specific, regional and profitable sustainable farming and ranching methods that strengthen agricultural competitiveness; satisfy human food and fiber needs; maintain and enhance the quality and productivity of soil; conserve soil, water, energy, natural resources and fish and wildlife habitat; and maintain and improve the quality of surface and ground water.
- Enhance the **quality of life** of farmers and ranchers and ensure the viability of rural communities, for example, by increasing income and employment, especially profitable self-employment and innovative marketing opportunities in agricultural and rural communities.
- Protect the **health and safety** of those involved in food and farm systems by reducing, where feasible and practical, the use of toxic materials in agricultural production, and by optimizing on-farm resources and integrating, where appropriate, biological cycles and controls.
- Promote crop, livestock, and enterprise **diversification**.
- Examine the regional, economic, social and **environmental implications** of adopting sustainable agriculture practices and systems.

Western SARE Graduate Student Proposal Application

Overview: The Western SARE Administrative Council funds proposals that present creative and innovative research and Extension/educational outreach based on approaches and technologies that advance Western SARE goals (see above). All Western SARE projects **must contain both research and education components**.

Only graduate students (Master or Ph.D.) enrolled at accredited colleges or universities in the Western region are eligible to apply. At the time of proposal submission, the student **must** be considered full-time according to their institution's requirements. The research must be conducted in the Western region. The student is the recipient of the grant, and they may receive only one Western SARE Graduate Student Grant award during their graduate studies. Proposals must be written by the student who will coordinate and conduct the project with the guidance of their major professor/advisor and agricultural producers.

Funding: Western SARE Graduate Student Grants provide a maximum of \$30,000 (including Indirect Cost) for up to two years. Because universities typically do not allow students to manage institutional grant awards, the student's major professor/advisor will be the

Principal Investigator (PI) and the graduate student the applicant. Funds are awarded to the applicant's university, with the funds to be dedicated to the student's graduate research project.

Multiple submissions are accepted. Only one application (from any one individual applicant) can be awarded funding in any of the Western SARE competitive programs in one grant budget cycle. An exception to this rule, are proposals submitted to the Graduate Student program, where more than one project can be awarded to a PI who acts as main advisor of the graduate student(s). Additionally, obtaining Graduate Student awards does not exclude the PI to be awarded in other WSARE Research and Education or Professional Development grant programs for the same budget cycle.

Eligible Projects: WSARE requires that agricultural producers be involved from inception to finish in the planning, design, implementation, and educational outreach of any WSARE-funded project. Each of the WSARE-funded grant programs, has slightly different requirements for the composition of the project team and eligible applicant. Assemble your project team accordingly, keeping in mind the inherent interdisciplinary nature of sustainable agriculture.

1. **Farmer/Rancher Grants:** The project team must be a minimum of two (2) people and must include: A Producer (Principal Investigator & Applicant) and an Agricultural Professional. The Agricultural Professional must be independent of the Producer and should not submit the application on behalf of the Producer.
2. **Professional + Producer Grants:** The project team must be a minimum of six (6) people and must include: An Agricultural Professional (Principal Investigator & Applicant) and at least five (5) Producers. One of the producers must be identified as the Advisor Representative.
3. **Research and Education Grants:** The project team must be a minimum of five (5) people and must include: A Researcher (PI or Co-PI), an Outreach Representative (PI or Co-PI), and at least three (3) Producers. One of the producers must be identified as the Advisor Representative.
4. **Graduate Student Grants:** The project team must be a minimum of three (3) people and must include: A Graduate Student (Applicant), a Researcher (Principal Investigator and typically the applicant's major professor) and at least one (1) Producer (Advisor Representative).

Public Domain: While proposals and reviews will remain confidential, the Western SARE program considers all funded proposals, subsequent reports, and related information to be in the public domain. See details of this stipulation in the Public Access of Research Data section in [USDA Grant Policies](#).

Western SARE will disqualify proposals before review if applicants do not follow the instructions of the Call for Proposals or submit incomplete Supporting Documents. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure all sections of the proposal are submitted before the due date.

Writing the Proposal

Proposals are submitted online at <https://projects.sare.org>. The submission includes six sections: 1) acknowledgement of reading the Call for Proposal, 2) project's basic information, 3) project summary, 4) project narrative, 5) budget and budget justification, and 6) supporting documents.

You can write each portion of the proposal in a word processor (e.g., Microsoft Word) and copy and paste it into the fields of the online application (be aware that some formatting features might be lost when you transfer the text in the online form). In addition to text, you can insert tables and graphs in all Narrative sections. Tables and graphs do not count against the word limits, but figures' captions do. It is best to insert tables as a table using the online platform editor (see: "[Inserting Tables](#)") and not as an image. Following these instructions makes your text searchable and the text will wrap and display properly when viewed on different devices. More importantly, it makes your submission Americans with Disability Act (ADA) compliant. Attachments are preferred in pdf format but images in jpg or png formats are accepted.

Please check the documents located in [Proposal Preparation Documents](#) section of Western SARE [website](#) to strengthen your proposal.

Proposal Application

A. Project Basic Information

This section prompts for general information about the project including:

- The *main* subject matter of the project
- Proposed starting and ending dates
- The state(s) where the work will be conducted
- The commodities and practices of the proposed project

Please choose a start date that corresponds with the first-of-the-month. Start dates must be no earlier than August 1, 2021 and no later than February 1, 2022.

B. Summary (Limit 250 words)

A clear and concise summary is important for the review process. The summary must include a brief description of the problem or need and a creative approach to solving it. In the summary, include the following:

- Identify a problem and research question(s)
- Describe the research and outreach components and explain how your project will creatively address the identified problem
- Explain how your project will be disseminated among agricultural stakeholders
- Enumerate and describe the expected project outcomes.

C. Project Narrative

The project narrative includes the following sections: 1) Relevance to Sustainable Agriculture and Project Value and Benefits, 2) Stakeholder Needs and Support, 3) Project

Team, 4) Research Plan, 5) Educational Plan, 6) Timeline, and 7) Evaluation and Producer Adoption.

Relevance to Sustainable Agriculture, Project Value and Benefits: (15% of review criteria, maximum 1000 words)

Explain why this project is necessary and how it addresses a critical need in sustainable agriculture. Identify any limitations in the current system and how your project will address them. Cite evidence of need, including results and recommendations from related SARE projects (www.sare.org/Project-Reports) and other studies or reports.

The proposal must address how it will:

- Sustain and improve the environmental quality and natural resource base on which agriculture depends;
- Improve the profitability of farmers/ranchers and associated agricultural businesses; **and**
- Enhance the quality of life for farmers/ranchers in local communities.

Describe the potential benefits for producers (local, state, or regional) and sustainable agriculture in general. For example, provide an economic analysis and-explain how your project would affect overall farm/ranch productivity levels, operational profits, soil or water quality or quantity, and rural communities. Where possible, use specific estimates of impacts –such as dollars saved per acre, tons of soil protected from erosion, pounds of chemical reduced, number of acres or people affected, markets expanded, jobs created, etc.

Stakeholder Needs and Support (5% of review criteria, maximum 500 words)

Western SARE is committed to addressing the needs of agricultural stakeholders -both on-farm/ranch and off-farm/ranch. Proposals must include evidence that stakeholders' identified needs are being addressed, as well as support for the project beyond the collaborators. Describing and documenting stakeholders' needs and support demonstrates that the proposed project is relevant and timely. Evidence of stakeholder identified needs and support may include, but are not limited to:

- Recommendations from stakeholder groups such as grower organizations or commodity commissions. Please identify stakeholder group(s) or organization(s).
- References and citations to other studies/reports that encourage future research.
- Community support letters from neighboring farmers or a local co-op.
- Needs assessments that relate to the project topic (s), if they are available.

Project Team (5% of the review criteria)

The project team must be a minimum of three (3) people and must include: A Graduate Student (Applicant), a Researcher (Principal Investigator and typically the applicant's major professor) and at least one (1) Producer. Describe the producer's involvement at all stages of the project. For each project objective and activity, indicate who will be responsible and which team members will be involved.

- Graduate Student: Is a student enrolled in a post-graduate degree program.
- Principal Investigator: The Principal Investigator (PI) is responsible for coordinating the project and carrying out its contractual provisions. The PI is responsible for all expenditures and for achieving the stated research and education objectives.
- Producer: Nonprofit farm operations may participate in the project, but do not count as one of the required producers. A person qualifies as a producer (farmer/rancher) if they have a for-profit operation and:
 - Their primary occupation is farming or ranching and have a farm/ranch taxpayer identification number (TIN); or
 - They are a part-time producer with at least \$1,000 documented annual income from farming or ranching activities

The team may also include the following additional collaborators.

- Extension/Outreach Representative: The outreach representative may be an Extension agent, specialist, educator, or equivalent. This person could be involved in implementing the education plan and outreach activities.
- Agricultural Professionals: An agricultural professional is any professional assisting producers at the local level such as a Cooperative Extension educators/agents or specialists, University faculty or researchers, USDA-NRCS field staff, agricultural consultants, nonprofit organization staff members, etc.
- Researchers, educators, and other collaborators with appropriate expertise for the project scope.
- Producers: If more than one producer is included, each producer must be an independent and separate operator.

Research Plan (30% of review criteria, maximum 2000 words)

The mission of SARE is to advance “innovations that improve profitability, stewardship and quality of life by investing in groundbreaking **research** and education.”

Clearly state and define the **research objectives**. Each objective should be a clear statement describing an intended achievement. Objectives must be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound. For more details see [Successful Objectives](#).

For each objective, describe what will be done including **methods** and **materials**. What treatments or new technique(s) will be tested? What materials will be used? Describe the project site, research design, data collection and analysis methods. Include sufficient detail so that reviewers can determine if the approaches are suitable to achieve your objectives. Avoid the use of jargon that may be unfamiliar outside your industry or specialty area and define all acronyms.

Education Plan (30% of review criteria, maximum 2000 words)

Clearly state and define the **educational objectives**. Each objective should be a clear statement describing an intended achievement. Objectives must be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound. For more details see [Successful Objectives](#).

For each objective, describe the **outreach activities** including **methods** and **materials**. Describe how, when, and where you will conduct outreach activities (e.g., field days, demonstrations, workshops, presentations, websites, etc.). Describe who will you target (e.g., producers, stakeholders, other agricultural professionals, students, etc.). Explain how you will communicate your project's findings to producers (specifically) and the general public. If the producers or ag professionals you intend to reach through this project are from underserved communities, please describe how you intend to reach and engage them. (Underserved communities are those that have difficulties accessing opportunities due to language, cultural, location, or resource barriers.) Provide a list of educational resources (e.g., factsheets, PowerPoint presentations, handouts, brochures, 4-H publications, surveys, etc.) you plan to produce. Describe plans for any scholarly outputs (e.g., academic journals and conferences, departmental seminars, capstone projects, classroom presentations). Digital outcomes (e.g., podcasts, videos, blogs, web-based materials, and social media) are encouraged but should not be the sole outreach approach. Multiple communication materials and multiple communication styles are strongly suggested.

Proper citation of Western SARE is required in educational materials and activities. Information pertaining to citing Western SARE will be included in the Subaward Agreement.

Timeline (5% of review criteria, maximum 500 words)

Provide a timeline, such as a [Gantt Chart](#) for accomplishing each objective of the Research Plan and Education Plan. Identify the major milestones and activities that will be completed and when each of those milestones will occur.

Evaluation and Producer Adoption: (5% of review criteria, maximum 500 words)

Explain how the project's research and educational objectives will be evaluated. For example, describe how changes in producers' knowledge, awareness, attitudes, and adoption of practices will be measured (e.g., a pre-post survey). Applicants should describe their survey selection/development process and methods for analysis. An approved [WSARE Survey](#) is expected to be filled out by **participants at each outreach activity in addition to any other evaluation form**. Western SARE requires evaluation results from the aforementioned survey as part of the required reports. If the evaluation will include additional surveys or forms, applicants must include approval from an Institutional Review Board (IRB) or a document indicating that the IRB process has been initiated. This is a USDA-NIFA requirement. For more information on IRB requirements, e-mail wsare@montana.edu; Montana State University can assist you with this requirement.

D. Budget and Justification (5% of review criteria)

Provide a detailed budget and budget justification that are appropriate to the proposed project using the *Western SARE Budget Worksheet* found on the online application site,

Budget section. Applicants ***MUST use this document for budget submission; no other budget document will be accepted.*** ***Please note***, you will be asked to enter the TOTAL funds requested; this amount must match the total funds indicated on the *Western SARE Budget Worksheet* document.

If your institution will be issuing subawards to other institutions/organizations as a part of your proposed project, you are required to provide a detailed budget and justification for each subaward. ***Subaward budgets MUST be submitted on the Western SARE Budget Worksheet for Subawards.*** You may ask the subaward recipient(s) to fill out the Western SARE Budget Worksheet for Subawards or you may fill it out on their behalf using details they have provided to you. The application needs to include both your institution's *Western SARE Budget Worksheet* and those of any subawards to be issued.

Graduate Student Grant funds must be budgeted in the following categories:

- **Salaries and Benefits:** compensating you (student) and other employees (including other students) of your institution for performing work directly related to the project. Provide base salary, FTEs, fringe benefit rates, and salary/benefits amounts requested. Compensation to the PI (major professor/advisor) is discouraged.
- **Subawards:** includes paying project collaborators who are not at your institution and/or to cover costs associated with the subrecipient's portion of the proposed project.
- **Contracted Services:** includes paying for professional services such as testing and analysis services, survey development and administration, computational services, website development or maintenance, professional production services (e.g., videographer to produce educational electronic media), consultants, honoraria, speaker fees, producer labor, etc.
- **Supplies:** includes paying for basic supplies and materials needed to carry out the project. Examples include: agricultural supplies (fencing, seeds, plants, fertilizer), field and lab supplies, minor equipment and tools (less than \$5,000), paper/envelopes, in-house photocopying of materials for workshops/meetings, software, books, shipping materials, etc. Any shipping costs associated with the purchase of supplies/materials should be included as supply costs. The purchase of food/refreshments for meetings/field days are only allowed if it is necessary to maintain the continuity of the project activity and is considered a supply cost.
- **Communication:** includes paying for postage and mailing expenses (including shipping samples for analysis), printed materials (flyers, brochures, posters). This category also includes expenses for publishing articles in a scientific journals or other types of publications, or for commercial photocopying (note: in-house photocopying falls under supplies)
- **Travel:** includes paying for mileage reimbursement, airfare, lodging, meal *per diem*, car rental, taxi, bus, shuttle expenses and parking, conference fees and registrations, etc. ***Please note***, travel *per diems* and mileage need to correlate with your organization's approved rates. If no rate is available, please use the Federal Government rate listed on the [Department of State website](#). **Note:** foreign travel is typically NOT allowed under the SARE program except in cases where sufficient justification has been provided and it was approved Western SARE. All foreign travel must be directly related to the project, must be essential for project completion, and well justified (*i.e.*, explain why

this activity cannot be done in the USA, relevance to Western agriculture sustainability, provide foreign institution and colleagues qualifications, etc.). The Freely Associated States -Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, and Palau- are foreign countries. USDA-NIFA requires that foreign travel s be done in an U.S. flag air carrier.

- **Rent:** includes paying for fees associated with renting equipment, land, facilities (e.g., meeting rooms, lab space) and user fees.
- **Repairs and Maintenance:** includes paying for minor repairs and maintenance of equipment, facilities, etc., including service contracts for repairs and maintenance.
- **Participant / Trainee Support:** includes paying for costs associated with conference, workshop, or symposium for participants who are not employees of the applicant or a subaward recipient institution(s). Participant/Trainee Support costs are associated with educational projects that support trainees. Participants/Trainees can receive a set amount for participation in the above stated functions. Participant/Trainee travel expenses must be itemized (not a lump sum payment) and included in the Travel budget category.
- **Capital Equipment:** Defined as a single, autonomous piece of equipment that costs \$5,000 or more and has a useful life of more than one year. Capital Equipment purchases are generally not allowed under the SARE program and should be **essential** for the completion of the proposed activities. Equipment expenses beyond \$5,000 may be leveraged by non WSARE funds. Purchasing multiple components of single equipment that cost under \$5,000 each in an attempt to circumvent the \$5,000 cap **is not allowed**. Equipment under \$5,000 is allowed.
- **Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Costs, also referred to as Indirect Costs (IDCs):** Under the SARE program, NIFA states IDCs may not exceed 10% of the Total Federal Funds Awarded (TFFA); this calculates to roughly 11.111% of Total Direct Costs (TDC). **Note:** the 10% limit is a cap on the portion of an applicant's budget that may be requested for IDCs; it is not an IDC rate. Additionally, some institutions may not be eligible to request IDCs or may be limited to the 10% de minimis rate. You must indicate the rate you are using on the *Western SARE Budget Worksheet*. Detailed information about [Indirect Costs](#) rates and calculations can be found on the Western SARE [website](#).

More information about each budget category is provided on the *Budget Categories and Guidance* tab found on the *Western SARE Budget Worksheet*.

Graduate Student Grant funds may NOT be used for the following purposes:

- Tuitions and fees
- Preparation of thesis/dissertation copy
- Purchase of classroom books
- Capital Equipment purchases – see above for more information.
- Starting or expanding a farm or farm operation.
- Major renovations/permanent improvements to a farm or ranch, such as constructing or remodeling a building.
- Repairs/Maintenance of equipment or buildings/facilities.
- Providing meals during events that are not necessary to maintain the continuity of a scheduled meeting; breakfasts and dinners typically do not qualify.
- Testing of commercial products.

Additionally, matching funds are not required or requested of Western SARE grant recipients. Please do NOT include matching funds in your budget or justification.

E. Supporting Documents

All supporting documents must be attached into the Supporting Documents section of the online application. PDF documents are preferred but images in jpg and png formats are accepted. ***Failure to provide all the required supporting documents will disqualify the proposal before review.***

Signature Page: This form affirms the PI (graduate student's major professor/advisor) is responsible for all expenditures and for advising the applicant achieve the stated research and educational objectives. This form must be signed by the PI and the PI's Authorized Organizational Representative. For a college or university, this person is usually the Director of the Sponsored Programs Office. Non-profits or other organizations, this is typically the Executive Director, CEO or CFO. This form is available at the online application site and is also included in the following section of this Call for Proposal.

Current Vita: The PI, graduate student, and all other project team members must submit a current vita (maximum 2-pages for each member). A vita is not required for producers.

Letters of Cooperation from Producer(s): ***Each producer who is part of the project team must send a dated and signed letter of cooperation to be included in the submission.*** This letter should verify their willingness to participate, explaining the resources committed to this project, and their role in the project.

Letter of Commitment from Partner Institutions: If your proposal includes issuing subawards to partner institutions, attach a letter of commitment from each institution. The letter of commitment must be dated and signed by the subaward's PI (usually listed as a Co-PI of the project) and include the following information: period of performance, total funds requested, and a Scope of Work outlining activities to be performed, the deliverables created, and the project timeline.

Letters of Support from Stakeholders: Attach letters of support from stakeholder individuals and/or organizations that support the proposed research and education activities.

Current and Pending Support: The PI, graduate student, and other project team members ***must*** submit a Current and Pending Support form. This form is not needed for producers. This form is available at the online application site and is also included in the following section of this Call for Proposals.

Conflict of Interest: The PI, graduate student, and other project team members ***must*** submit an updated Conflict of Interest form. This form is not needed for producers. This

form may be downloaded from the online application site and is also included in the following section of the Call for Full Proposal.

Animal Welfare Assurance Statement: This form ***must*** be completed by all applicants to identify whether or not their proposed project includes the use of warm-blooded, vertebrate animals. This form is available at the online application site and is also included in the following section of this Call for Proposal.

Institutional Review Board Approval: If your project will involve research with humans (e.g. tasting sessions, conducting interviews, focus groups, etc.) or you will use a survey other than the WSARE Survey to evaluate the impact of your project, you will need to provide evidence of acceptance or exemption by an Institutional Review Board (IRB). At the time of submission, ***proof that you initiated the IRB process is acceptable***; however, if awarded, the Subaward Service Agreement will not be executed until IRB approval/exemption documentation is provided. If you do not have access to an Institutional Review committee, contact us by e-mail at wsare@montana.edu.

Citations: Citations must be attached in the Supporting Documents section of the online submission and is not part of the word number limitation. Attach a list of cited sources.

Other Documents (Optional): Here you will be able to attach any other document that you think might strengthen your proposal. These other documents may not be used to lengthen your proposal under the Project Narrative.



Signature Page

Please print this document, obtain **BOTH** required signatures and upload into the Supporting Documents section of your online grant application.

Project Title: _____

Total Funds Requested: _____

Requested Project Period:

Start Date (MM/DD/YYYY): _____ End date (MM/DD/YYYY): _____

Principal Investigator

USDA defines a Principal Investigator as one who has the authority to write and submit a proposal and carry out its contractual provisions.

As the project PI, I affirm I am responsible for all expenditures and achieving the stated research and education objectives of the proposal.

Signature: Principal Investigator *Date*

Printed Name: _____

Authorized Organizational Representative

USDA defines the Authorized Organizational Representative as one who has authority to enter into contractual agreements with the Western SARE Host Institution, Montana State University.

As the AOR for the institution/organization project of the PI submitting this proposal, I affirm that [enter institution/organization name here] has authority to enter into a contractual agreement with Montana State University.

Signature: Authorized Organizational Representative *Date*

Printed Name and Title: _____

CURRENT & PENDING SUPPORT

Team Member Name:

How this template is completed:

- Record information for active and pending projects, including this proposal.
- All current efforts to which PD/PI(s) and other senior personnel have committed a portion of their time must be listed, whether or not salary for the person involved is included in the budgets of the various projects.
- Provide analogous information for all proposed work which is being considered by, or which will be submitted in the near future to, other possible sponsors, including other USDA programs.
- For concurrent projects, the percent of time committed must not exceed 100%.

Note: Concurrent submission of a proposal to other organizations will not prejudice its review by CSREES.

NAME (List/PI first)	SUPPORTING AGENCY AND AWARD/PENDING PROPOSAL NUMBER	TOTAL \$ AMOUNT	EXPIRATION DATES	% OF TIME COMMITTED	TITLE OF PROJECT
	Active:				
	Pending:				

This file MUST be converted to PDF prior to attachment in the electronic application package.



Animal Welfare Assurance Statement

The applicant acknowledges that work may require Institutional Animal Care and Use Oversight and that Montana State University (MSU), and thus Western SARE, is subject to the [Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Research and Teaching](#). This includes, but is not limited to: beef, swine, poultry, fish, etc. If awarded the applicant acknowledges that it is his/her responsibility to ensure that a USDA-acknowledged IACUC reviews, approves, and oversees the animal welfare issues of the project.

_____ Date: _____
Signature: Applicant

NOTE: If animal welfare is NOT applicable, check and sign below:

Not Applicable [] _____ Date: _____
Signature: Applicant

The Review Process

Eligible proposals received by the due date with all supporting documents will be evaluated by a Technical Review Panel, a diverse group of reviewers from the Western SARE region with broad agricultural production, scientific, and educational expertise. The Technical Review Panel evaluates the proposals based on the review criteria stated below and meets to discuss and appraise the merits of each proposal. Their recommendations are forwarded to the Western SARE Administrative Council for additional review and final selection.

Proposals are evaluated based on the following criteria:

Relevance to Sustainable Agriculture, Project Value and Benefits	15%
Stakeholder Needs and Support	5%
Project Team	5%
Research Plan	30%
Educational Plan	30%
Timeline	5%
Evaluation & Producer Adoption	5%
Budget & Justification	5%
Total	100%

Reporting Requirements (for awarded proposals)

An annual report will be required each year of your project. Progress and final reports should describe the progress made on the project, detail the observed results, describe the educational outreach events and material produced by the project, and document impacts. All educational outreach activities should include an evaluation component that measures changes in knowledge or awareness, attitudes and opinions, and/or the adoption of new practices by producers or other agricultural professionals. If your project is a one-year project only a final report should be submitted. Approved project reports will be posted on the national SARE website, and be shared with producers, interested policymakers and community, state, regional and national leaders. All educational materials and products must have an electronic version, and be included in your reports. ***Annual Reports are due on September 1st of each year of the project. You will have up to 60 days from the Period of Performance end date to submit the Final Report.***

Please review the documents located in WSARE [Reporting Documents for Grantees](#) section to understand what will be expected if your project is awarded:

- The Graduate Student Reporting Expectations list shows what results you should report during the project, and what SARE may assess two to four years after the project's completion.
- The [Survey Instrument](#) is a sample tool of how grantees can gather results from a project's outreach activities. This survey is one important way for collecting required data to measure changes in knowledge, attitude, skills and awareness of

participants of the project outreach and educational activities (e.g., producers, students, etc.).

Selected Proposals

If the Western SARE Administrative Council selects your project for funding, you may expect the following:

Notification: The Western SARE Administrative Council will select proposals for funding in July 2021. The Administrative Council reserves the right to restructure or reduce the budget of any grant proposal before final approval. Western SARE staff will notify applicants of the status of their proposals by August 2021.

Award: If your proposal is selected for funding, the Office of Sponsored Programs at Montana State University will initiate a Subaward Service Agreement to you. The Subaward Service Agreement will identify all Terms and Conditions for the award, including reporting requirements. Acceptance of the initial payment is the recipient's acceptance of the terms and conditions of the grant.

Funds: All Subawards are cost reimbursable. Subrecipient will be responsible for invoicing MSU for all expenses to be reimbursed. Invoices are to be submitted according to the guidelines in the Subaward Agreement. 10% of the awarded amount will be withheld pending receipt and approval of the final report.

Photographs and Videos: Grant recipients are **required** to document their project with photographs and/or videos, which can be useful to them and helps Western SARE highlight and promote their work on its website and in publications. High-definition digital photographs and videos are preferred.

Proper Citation: The Western SARE program must be credited as the funding source in any publications or outreach materials generated. Please refer to the [Western SARE website](#) for complete guidelines for acknowledging funds.

Site visits: SARE recognizes there are limits to what can be accomplished, measured and reported during the life of a project. In addition to compiling your reports, Western SARE staff plan to conduct post-project assessments of representative projects to get a fuller measure of your project and WSARE impact in areas such as:

- Who is participating in SARE-funded projects?
- What is being created by the projects (e.g., new knowledge, new approaches)?
- What are people learning from these projects?
- What changes are farmers and ranchers making?
- How WSARE project impact graduate students' career?
- What economic, environmental, social or productivity benefits are farmers and ranchers seeing as a result of having made a change?

Changes: Grantees must report changes regarding the information of the project team

members (e.g., address, phone number, email, etc.) to the Western SARE office. Significant changes to the project as originally proposed, such as a change in PI, Co-PI, institution, stated objectives, timeline, budget, etc., should be sent as a request via email to the Western SARE Regional Coordinator for consideration/approval. Upon approval of the aforementioned changes, grantees will update their SARE profiles at projects.sare.org.

How to Apply

<https://projects.sare.org>

Look for programs under “Western” [region]

We strongly encourage applicants read the entire Graduate Student Grants Program Call for Proposals before beginning to write the proposal.

Proposals are due by 12:00 pm (noon) MST – February 9, 2021

In compliance with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, this material can be made available in other formats upon request.

Resources

Check the resources in the [WSARE Proposal Preparation Documents](#) section. If you have further questions, please contact our office at 406-994-4785 or wsare@msu.edu

Information on past projects including summaries and reports can be found [here](#). We encourage you to visit this website to learn more about sustainable agriculture and the Western SARE program. Tips for writing proposals are available [here](#). If you have further questions after consulting these documents, please contact our office at 406-994-4789 or wsare@montana.edu

The Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (AFSIC) at the National Agricultural Library specializes in locating, collecting, and providing information about sustainable agriculture. Information specialists can answer questions, highlight resources, and share search techniques for literature reviews and background research. AFSIC resources are available at <http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/> or contact AFSIC at 301-504-6559 or by e-mail, afsic@nal.usda.gov.

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