



## 2026 Call for Proposals Professional Development Program Grants

Grant Highlights	
Deadline	<b>Thursday, April 2, 2026 Before Noon Central Time</b>
Who's eligible	An agriculture/natural resource education professional (defined broadly) in the North Central Region
Funding amounts	<b>\$120,000 maximum</b> per application up to 36 months. Proposed project start date can be October 1, 2026, or later.
Grant goals	To have agricultural educators (extension, NRCS, NGO, agency staff and other agricultural educators) who are knowledgeable in the general concepts of long-term agriculture, and who work in partnership with farmers, ranchers, and others on developing programs and activities that enhance the viability of communities and the food and agricultural system.
Allowable expenses	Personnel costs, materials and supplies, equipment, travel, 10% indirect institutional costs.
Unallowable expenses	Permanent structures, motorized vehicles, tuition or books for courses, branded attire, promotional items, etc.
Submit	Online at <b>projects.sare.org</b>

## Questions?



<p><a href="#">Professional Development Grant Program details:</a></p> 	<p><b>Dr. Rob Myers</b> myersrob@missouri.edu 573-882-1547</p> <p><b>Andy Larson</b> andrew.larson@business.wisconsin.edu 608-265-0621</p>	<p><a href="http://www.northcentral.sare.org">www.northcentral.sare.org</a> ncrsare@umn.edu 612-626-3113</p>	<p>Past funded <a href="#">SARE grants:</a></p> 
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## **BACKGROUND**

### *About SARE and NCR-SARE*

SARE's Mission is to advance – to the whole of American agriculture – innovations that improve profitability, stewardship, and quality of life by investing in groundbreaking research and education.

The North Central Region-SARE includes the geography shared with the 12 states of: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. The North Central Region-Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCR-SARE) mission is to strengthen communities, increase farmer/rancher economic viability, and improve the environment by supporting research and education.

The NCR-SARE program is hosted by the University of Minnesota and operates under a cooperative agreement between the University of Minnesota (host institution) and the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

### *Timeline*

- February 10, 2026 – Call for Proposals released
- April 2, 2026 – Proposals due
- July 2026 – Funding decisions made (tentative timing contingent on USDA approval)
- October 1, 2026 – Funds available to recipients (contingent on USDA approval)

### *About the Program*

NCR-SARE invites proposals for the Professional Development Program (PDP). Proposals must be targeted to educators within the Cooperative Extension Service (CES), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), other governmental agencies, and/or educators and other relevant personnel in the non-profit and for-profit sectors serving farmers and ranchers. Projects can be for up to 36 months in duration. Involvement of educators from more than one state is appropriate but not required.

The overall desired outcome of NCR-SARE PDP is to have educators (extension, NRCS, NGO, agency staff and other agricultural educators) who are knowledgeable in the general concepts of profitable and resilient agriculture, and who work in partnership with farmers, ranchers, and others on developing programs and activities that enhance the viability of communities and the food and agricultural system.

Projects are capped at \$120,000 in total funding, although applications of a lesser amount are welcomed. We expect to fund approximately 10-11 projects in this cycle of PDP competitive grants. The typical funding success rate for this program has been 30 percent or above in most years, but in the most recent round of the PDP competition, success rate was about 16% due to a higher than normal number of applications.

NCR-SARE is committed to funding PDP projects that utilize participatory and experiential approaches to professional development. As stated above, projects are meant to provide professional development to agricultural educators, but preferably involve diverse groups and

organizations (including non-profits, agribusiness, 1890 and 1994 land grant institutions, and other educational institutions) in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the project. NCR-SARE particularly encourages the use, where appropriate, of farmers and ranchers in developing and delivering training. Examples of appropriate projects include:

- Hosting an educational field day on a farm, during which producers discuss their innovative practices with ag educators.
- Curriculum development to share with educators that they can use in their work

### *Eligibility for Applicants*

NCR-SARE PDP grants are open to all educators working on topics related to farming and ranching. While our primary mission with the PDP programs is train-the-trainer education that leads to improved viability for existing farmers and ranchers, we recognize that reaching young people who will become farmers and ranchers is also important. Therefore, proposals addressing train-the-trainer activities for vocational agriculture teachers or other educators who impact youth, specifically youth with an interest in farming or ranching, will be considered for funding. As with other proposals, youth-connected projects need to show how they are addressing profitability, stewardship, and quality of life.

The project coordinator, through their institution, is fiscally responsible for the project. Professionals can be paid for their travel expenses. They can also be compensated for their services.

### *Collaborators*

NCR-SARE recognizes that farmers and ranchers are skilled workers who should be paid \$25/ hour or more for their labor in grant projects. Please be sure to list or describe the farmer compensation method in the budget part of the proposal. For purposes of this grant program, a farmer or rancher is someone who raises crops or livestock, especially as a business.

### *Budget*

Allowable expense examples

- Cost of field sampling, crop analysis and educational surveys.
- Materials and supplies needed for the project, including seed, fertilizer, portable fencing or other farming/ranching inputs.
- Reimbursement of farmers and ranchers for their time involved with the project.
- Partial or full cost of small tools and equipment, or any piece of equipment costing less than \$5,000. However, applicants are advised that equipment is not normally part of PDP grants and needs a strong justification in relation to the professional development activities to be included.
- Outreach expenses such as holding a field day, tours, making a brochure, creating a website, etc.
- Out-of-town travel needed for the project. State purpose, destination, and number of travelers and estimated cost per trip. Foreign travel is generally not allowed in this grant program.
- Local travel (where personal auto is used and reimbursed) needed for the project. State the purpose and total dollar amount of reimbursement for vehicle use. If any overnight

stays are anticipated, include the number of nights and the amount for meals and lodging. (i.e., local travel for site visits to farmers in neighboring counties - \$500 for mileage and \$500 for meals and lodging (five days @ \$100/day) = \$1,000). Maximum mileage allowance depends on institutional policy; otherwise use the current federal mileage reimbursement rate.

- Refreshments at field days or group meals for events are allowable if they maintain the continuity of the meeting and to do otherwise will impose arduous conditions on the meeting participants.
- Services of Agricultural Professionals can be compensated - provide hourly rate.

#### **Note**

SARE **limits indirect costs to 10 percent** of the total direct costs provided under each award. When preparing budgets, you should limit your request of the recovery of indirect costs to the lesser of your institution's official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 10 percent of total direct costs awarded.

#### Unallowable Expenses

- Starting or expanding a farm or farm operation.
- Any single piece of equipment costing more than \$5,000. This limit cannot be used toward the purchase of a piece of equipment or the modification of **equipment costing more than \$5,000** or to purchase or purchase parts for tractors, irrigation systems, etc.
- Capital expenses for things like land purchases, general farm improvements, and construction of buildings, greenhouses, and laboratories are NOT allowed.
- Costs for things like cameras, computers, video equipment, and other items that could have a wide range of uses beyond the boundaries of the project must be clearly essential to a particular project, in which case applicants must develop a clear justification and make sure that these requests are reasonable, defensible, and not extravagant.
- Permanent improvement to a farm or ranch, such as constructing or remodeling a building, permanent fencing, etc.
- Any meal that does not maintain the continuity of the meeting.
- Testing of specific commercial products.

#### **Review and Selection Process**

##### *Reviewers*

The Professional Development Program Review Committee will evaluate proposals for technical merit and relevancy of the project to agriculture and NCR-SARE criteria. The committee is made up of Administrative Council members (farmers, university faculty, agency, agribusiness and NGO reps) and NCR-SARE state coordinators, national SARE staff and sometimes other ag community representatives. This committee will make recommendations to the NCR-SARE Administrative Council (AC). The AC will identify projects for funding, with final approval by USDA-NIFA.

Applicants will be notified about the status of their proposal by early August 2026. Projects selected for funding will have their budgets reviewed for compliance with federal and host institution guidelines prior to subcontracts being executed.

### *Selection Criteria*

Reviewers and the Administrative Council will consider the following factors in evaluating proposals:

#### Background (20%)

- Does the applicant provide background description that justifies the project and it's fit with the SARE program?

#### Activities (30%)

- Are project activities and deliverables clearly described and designed to achieve appropriate outcomes?
- Is the timeline provided realistic and appropriate to the project?
- Did the applicant clearly describe outputs such as educational materials, curriculum, and partnerships?

#### Outputs (30%)

- Is specific information provided on the numbers and types of individuals anticipated to participate in each activity associated with the project?
- For the outcomes section, do they identify clearly the expected outcomes?

#### Evaluation (10%)

- Does the evaluation plan address both project activities and outcomes?
- Do they have a specific plan for evaluation such as pre- and post-testing of knowledge and/or skills in the relevant topic area?

#### Budget and Team (10%)

- Does the budget seem appropriate and realistic given the activities planned for the project?
- Do the personnel described have relevant expertise and experience for successfully carrying out the project?

### *Funds Distribution*

Grants are awarded to the organization specified on the Cover Page (Primary Grantee), with the funds to be dedicated to the project.

Funds are transferred from the host institution, University of Minnesota, for the NCR-SARE program to the Primary Grantee on a **reimbursement basis**. The Project Coordinator's institution sends invoices to the host institution, up to monthly, after the project has incurred expenses.

Funds will be available for use on the projects are expected to be available approximately October 1, 2026 (exact timing is contingent upon when grants are approved by USDA-NIFA).

If you submit your grant proposal to another funder and are funded for the same work as in your Partnership proposal, you must notify NCR-SARE.

### *Reporting Expectations*

NCR-SARE requires the Project Coordinator to gather and report specific information about all projects at different points in the project. See **Appendix 1** for details. How this will be done should be described in your Evaluation Plan.

The host institution is authorized to withhold payment of invoices for your project until you have submitted all reports and other required documents. Instructions for completing annual and final reports will be sent to the agricultural professional listed on the proposal cover page.

A prime directive from Congress in the SARE enabling legislation ensures that results from all studies be provided to farmers, ranchers, and other interested parties in a timely and effective manner. All reports related to funded projects will be made available to all interested parties in printed, electronic, or other means of communication, without discrimination. Names, addresses and telephone numbers of Project Coordinators (from funded projects) may be provided to interested news entities, farmers, ranchers, or organizations for subsequent inquiries. All funded proposals are in the public domain.

### *Grant Writing Help*

This section is to provide you with information about writing and submitting a successful grant.

A PowerPoint slide presentation with instructions and tips for the submission procedure can be found on the Professional Development Grant Program webpage, <https://northcentral.sare.org/Grants/Apply-for-a-Grant/Professional-Development-Program-Grant/> . It is strongly encouraged that you view before you begin submitting your proposal.

### *Program Coordinator Information*

The first time you register in the SARE projects system you will be required to provide individual and organizational contact information.

### *Institutional Information*

This section asks for information about the organization that will administer the project budget if your proposal is funded. The institution will send invoices to NCR-SARE, receive funds from NCR-SARE, and disburse funds to any cooperating organizations. An authorized representative from this organization will review the budget and must sign the Application Sign-off Sheet. A pdf of the signed signature page will be uploaded as a required attachment to the application in the attachment section.

### *Submission Procedure*

All NCR-SARE grant program proposals must be submitted online at **projects.sare.org**.

**Note:** If you prefer a printed application, call 612.626.3113.

On the following pages are the questions you will be asked on the online submission website at projects.sare.org.

We suggest you complete a draft proposal in a word processing document and edit to meet word limits, then cut and paste into the online system. Tables and images can be embedded in certain sections, but you should limit them to crucial information.

## **PROPOSAL SECTIONS**

### **Cover**

Complete general information about the project, including title, brief summary, type of project, start and end dates, and requested amount of funding.

**Your project efforts cannot start before October 1, 2026.**

### **Summary (250 word maximum)**

The project summary should include the following information:

1. the specific intended target audience for the project
2. brief listing of outcomes for the project, and
3. brief description of the activities that will be conducted to achieve outcomes.

The summary should be written as a clear and concise description of the project and not simply copied from other sections of the proposal.

### **Project Narrative**

Each of the eight narrative sections has a strict word limit. List achievable objectives of your project. See information below and online for word limits to each section. Proposals including any additional materials not requested in these guidelines will be disqualified. Do not include website links in the proposal (this is to make sure that each applicant is providing the same amount of information and not gaining an advantage through additional website information). For any acronyms, please provide a definition.

#### *Background and situation (1,000 word maximum)*

Provide information on the background and need that led to the development of this project, including previous professional development activities related to the proposed project. This section should include a justification for project, detailed description of target audience, and a specific plan for ensuring the participation of target audience in project activities.

#### *Inputs (400 word maximum)*

This section should describe the resources that will be used in the project. For PDP projects, personnel and partnerships are often the key inputs, but inputs can also be financial (in-kind or matching), physical (technology, equipment, etc.), or include curriculum or other educational resources.

#### *Activities (1,000 word maximum)*

This section should specifically describe project activities and deliverables designed to achieve outcomes. Activities can include both formal professional development sessions (workshops, meetings, webinars, etc.) and informal approaches (networking, field days, facilitation, coaching, etc.). This section should explicitly address the logical linkage between outcomes and activities and explain why proposed activities are expected to achieve outcomes. If appropriate, literature supporting the link between activities, educational approaches, and outcomes should be cited.

### *Timeline (300 word maximum)*

Include an estimated timeline of key project activities. Key project activities might include estimated dates for program planning activities, workshops, field tours, and evaluation surveys. This section is intended to provide reviewers information on when you will perform key activities. An outline format is appropriate for the timeline section.

### *Outputs (500 word maximum)*

Describe products to be developed, which may include educational materials, curriculum, and partnerships. This section should also include specific information on the numbers and types of individuals anticipated to participate in each activity associated with your project. Specific target outputs, in terms of numbers of participants, should be included in this section.

### *Outcomes (750 word maximum)*

This section should list all the expected outcomes for your project and should include some specific outcome targets. All outcomes should be measurable (through either quantitative or qualitative methods). The SARE Program is particularly interested in behavioral change (intermediate and long-term outcomes) demonstrated by educators as a result of participating in the proposed project.

### *Program Evaluation (300 word maximum)*

Evaluation is a critical part of all NCR-SARE PDP projects. The evaluation plan for your project should address both project activities and outcomes. Activity indicators provide information on how a project was implemented and might include plans to measure level of participation and institutional affiliation of participants in project activities. Outcome indicators should represent changes in awareness, attitudes, knowledge and skills (short-term outcomes) and behavior and practice (intermediate outcomes). You should identify how short- and intermediate terms outcome will be evaluated for your project (e.g., surveys, case studies, focus groups). At least some evaluation indicators should be specific, measurable, and achievable.

### *Key Personnel (250 word maximum)*

All personnel that have a major role in the project should be listed, along with a brief description of their role within the project. Only list individuals who have agreed to participate in the project. A two-page (maximum) resumé or curriculum vitae should be included for the PI and co-PIs. Resumés are NOT requested for support staff, students, or farmers/ranchers. Each resume/CV should be limited to a maximum of two pages or the proposal may be disqualified. Save the resumés as pdf files and attach to the online proposal.

## **Budget**

The online grant submission system includes space for you to type in your budget. A budget should be provided for each year of your project. Additional information for completing the budget justification is found below.

- Total budget request **cannot exceed \$120,000** for project duration.
- Projects can be up to **36 months in duration**, which includes planning, implementation and evaluation.

- **Show your math** in how each budget item is calculated. All budget items will be reviewed to ensure they are allowable.
- When multiple institutions are involved, the NCR-SARE Host Institution (**University of MN**) will write a **single contract with the lead institution or organization**. The lead institution is then responsible for any subcontracts associated with the project. If you are subcontracting to cooperating organizations, you no longer need to submit a separate budget for that organization. You will enter the subaward amount as a budget line under “other direct costs”, and the justification should include a general description of the work that will be provided under that contract (including personnel FTEs, though amounts not needed.) Under the “Letters” section, you will be required to upload a letter from each subcontracting organization indicating agreement to participate and the dollar amount of the subaward.
- Costs for things like cameras, computers, video equipment, and other **items that could have a wide range of uses beyond the boundaries of the project must be clearly essential to a particular project**, in which case applicants must develop a clear justification and make sure that these requests are reasonable, defensible, and not extravagant.
- Appropriate **compensation for project participants** who are self-employed farmers or ranchers should be included and **specified under “Other Direct Costs”**.
- **Provide a concise budget**, with proper justification, that is appropriate to the proposed project. Your budget line items should be for the total project period, rather than broken down by year.

### **Budget Narrative**

The budget narrative (justification) should include the following information. You will fill out a separate field for the budget narrative for each budget line item in the online system. There is no specified word limit for the budget narrative sections.

#### *Salaries (1,000 word maximum)*

Provide percent time or number of hours/days for each primary participant and corresponding dollar amount for the time stated. Only persons employed by the organization applying for the grant should be included in this category. Those employed elsewhere would be listed as consultants or within a subcontract in the “All Other Direct Cost” category. Please note that **salaries for accounting personnel are not allowed as a direct charge** to the grant. In order to charge salaries to the project, an explanation outlining the employee’s responsibilities in the project must be included in the budget justification. Funds requested for an office **assistant or administrative assistant must be justified in terms of supporting the proposed project activities**.

**Tuition for students is not an allowable cost** for this program. However, pay for graduate or undergraduate students is allowed if relevant to delivery of the proposed professional development programs.

### *Fringe benefits*

Provide the rate of fringe benefits for each salary category.

### *Materials and supplies*

Include office supplies, software, educational or field supplies. The level of detail required would be an itemized list by category and estimated dollar amount (i.e., office supplies such as pens, paper, toner, etc. - \$500). Items such as telephone, postage, fax and express mail directly attributable to project should be listed in “Other Direct Costs” category.

### *Travel*

Provide description of expected travel, purpose of trips, expected number of travelers, and approximate or typical costs for such trips (e.g., airfare, registration, meals, mileage, parking, and/or lodging). If mileage reimbursement will be requested include anticipated mileage reimbursement rate. Foreign travel is generally not allowed in this grant program.

### *All Other Direct Costs*

Anticipated direct project charges not included in other categories should be included here. Description and breakdown of “other direct costs” should be detailed in the budget narrative.

Examples of “other direct costs” include:

- a) mailings, postage, telephone, internet access
- b) sub-contracts to other organizations participating in the project (provide details on subcontractor budgets in the budget narrative)
- c) consultants – provide name of consultant and a letter indicating consulting rate and agreement to be a consultant
- d) service or maintenance contracts
- e) conferences or meetings – direct costs of holding a conference or meeting including rental of facilities, travel for speakers/trainers, travel for participants, etc.
- f) speaker-trainer fees
- g) compensation of farmers or ranchers participating in the project – list service being provided, name of individual(s), and amount
- h) others/miscellaneous.

### **Note**

It is NIFA policy that a **formal group meeting being conducted in a business atmosphere may charge meals or refreshments to the project if such activity maintains the continuity of the meeting** and to do otherwise will impose arduous conditions on the meeting participants.

In contrast, **meals may not be charged as project costs when individuals decide to go to breakfast, lunch, or dinner together when no need exists for continuity of a meeting.** Such activity is considered an entertainment cost. Breakfast meals are generally not allowable because no continuity of the meeting exists.

When paying for the travel of a person to attend a conference or meeting, meals and lodging may be included in the cost without additional justification.

### *Indirect Costs*

**SARE limits indirect costs to 10 percent of the total direct costs** provided under each award. Note that this a change from previous years. When preparing budgets, you should limit your request of the recovery of indirect costs to the lesser of your institution's official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 10 percent of total direct costs awarded.

### **Required Attachments**

#### *Application Signoff Sheet*

You must complete the Application signature page (linked in online submission site). Both the principal investigator and the authorized institutional representative (AOR) should sign this page, either electronically or by hand. **A pdf of the Application signature page will need to be uploaded as a required attachment to the application in the attachment section, and it must be done prior to the grant deadline.**

Once you have completed all required information and uploaded all necessary attachments, print a draft copy of your proposal and print the Application Signoff Sheet (download from the signature page question link). The applicant must sign the Application signoff sheet and submit it to your grants office or fiscal organization (if applicable) for an authorized organization representative's signature. You will need to obtain a pdf of the signed Application signoff sheet to upload with your proposal, prior to submitting your proposal.

**Note:** Consult with your authorized institutional representative (AOR) ahead of time to determine how much time they need for this. It may be a week or more.

Once your submission is complete, you will be directed to a web page confirming your submission. You can "unsubmit", make changes, and resubmit up to the deadline.

#### *Resumé(s) or Curriculum Vitae*

A two-page (maximum) resume/curriculum vitae should be included for the PI and co-PI's. Resumés are NOT requested for support staff, students, or farmers/ranchers. Each resumé/CV should be limited to a maximum of 2-pages or the proposal may be disqualified. Save the resumés as pdf files and attach to the online proposal.

#### *Letters of Commitment*

Letters of commitment from each partner organization receiving funding SHOULD be included with the proposal (upload as pdf files to the appropriate section of the online application). General letter(s) of "support" from other organizations or individuals not receiving funding are **NOT** requested and should not be attached.

#### *Animal Welfare Assurance Statement (If grant is awarded)*

If your project includes vertebrate animals in the study, you must have the statement signed by you and an IACUC (Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee) representative or attending veterinarian. You **may wait until you receive an award notification** to submit the signed statement.

## Who Can Help from NCR-SARE

For assistance with guidelines for this grant program, please contact:

- Dr. Rob Myers (University of Missouri, [myersrob@missouri.edu](mailto:myersrob@missouri.edu), 573-882-1547)
- Andy Larson (University of Wisconsin, [andrew.larson@business.wisconsin.edu](mailto:andrew.larson@business.wisconsin.edu), 608-265-0621)

The **NCR-SARE office** can share information and resources from SARE Outreach, plus contact information for state SARE Coordinators. Contact: North Central Region SARE, 120 BioAgEng, UMN, 1390 Eckles Ave, Saint Paul MN 55108, phone: 612-626-3113, e-mail: [ncrsare@umn.edu](mailto:ncrsare@umn.edu), web: [www.northcentral.sare.org](http://www.northcentral.sare.org) .

## State Coordinators

Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the State SARE Coordinator(s) in the state(s) where activities are being proposed. State coordinators are listed at:

<https://northcentral.sare.org/state-programs/state-coordinators/> State SARE

Coordinators can provide detailed information on training needs, current and past professional development activities, and can help to facilitate participation in the proposed professional development activity.

Applicants are also encouraged to review previously funded SARE PDP projects on the national SARE database at <https://projects.sare.org>

## Publications

- **SARE** has many publications that are available, some at no cost. The full list can be found at <https://www.sare.org/resources/>. Or contact the SARE office for assistance.
- **Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA)** will provide information packets on various agricultural issues. If you are contacting ATTRA via e-mail, please provide your role in agriculture. By mail or fax, please include “ATTRA Information Request” near the top of the correspondence. (Preferred method of contact is telephone.) Contact: ATTRA, P.O. Box 3657, Fayetteville AR 72702, phone: 800-346-9140 (7 am to 7 pm, Central Time), fax: 501-442-9842, web: <http://www.attra.ncat.org>.

## Proposal Submission Process

- Create an account at **[projects.sare.org](http://projects.sare.org)**.
- Copy and paste information from a word processing application.
- Upload all attachments, except Application Signoff Sheet.
  - Obtain required signatures.
  - Upload signed Application Signoff Sheet.
- Submit a proposal **before the deadline**.

**Deadline: Thursday, April 2, before Noon Central Time**

## Checklist

**STOP!** Before you begin submitting your proposal, make sure you have all **required** documents and information.

- PI resumés or CVs
- Letter(s) of collaboration from participating organizations
- Detailed budget
- Application signoff sheet

### **Statement from USDA-NIFA**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), to the extent permitted by law, will no longer make grants or otherwise fund programs or activities that improperly discriminate on the basis of race or sex, including discrimination in the name of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policies. Instead, USDA will prioritize merit and efficiency. USDA recognizes programs and initiatives will have the greatest impact when these programs and initiatives put American farmers, ranchers, and foresters first by:

- solving the most pressing challenges they face;
- protecting America’s food, fuel, and fiber supply to enhance national security;
- supporting production of healthy and safe food for consumers;
- expanding and developing domestic markets;
- training the next generation of agriculturalists; and
- fueling innovation to keep American farmers at the forefront of productivity.

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is committed to advancing these principles and encourages applicants to actively engage farmers, ranchers, and foresters when applying for funding opportunities to ensure relevancy and adherence to them. NIFA also encourages agricultural leaders to engage in the peer review panel process to ensure American producers are better served through research, education, and extension activities.