Western SARE Competitive Grants
Professional Development Program
2020 Call for Proposals
Due at 12:00 p.m. MST NOON, November 13 2019
Results announced mid-March, 2020

If you have questions contact us at:
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Host Institution:
Montana State University
PDP Institution:
University of Wyoming

SARE is a USDA competitive grants program that supports agricultural systems that are economically viable, environmentally sound and socially responsible.

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

The Administrative Council of the Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program announces the call for proposals for Professional Development Program competitive grants for 2020.

Professional Development Program (PDP) Grants are aimed at helping Cooperative Extension Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service and other agricultural professionals in the Western Region increase their understanding and proficiency in sustainable agriculture.

Proposals are evaluated by a Review Panel against the criteria outlined in this call and in comparison with other PDP grant proposals. The Western SARE Administrative Council – a board of agricultural producers, scientists, educators and business leaders – will then make the final selections of projects to fund. The council typically selects proposals diverse in subject matter and geography, and that demonstrate outcomes that farmers and ranchers in the region can successfully adopt.

Important note: Congress mandates that the SARE grant program depart from "business as usual." To that end, the Administrative Council requires that agricultural producers be involved from start to finish in the planning, design, implementation and educational outreach of any SARE-funded project.

PDP projects should:

- Increase ag professionals' sustainable agriculture knowledge, skills and action.
- Have outreach plans that demonstrate how the project will effectively deliver this knowledge.
- Funding limit is $75,000 per project.

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 agriculture economy depends
- Make the most efficient use of nonrenewable resources and on-farm resources and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls
- Sustain the economic viability of farm operations
- Enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole.

Professional Development Program Grant Deadlines

- Deadline for submitting Professional Development Program grant proposals at https://projects.sare.org:
  12:00 NOON MST November 13, 2019

- Technical Review Panel recommends proposals for grant funding in January 2020.

- Western SARE Administrative Council makes final selections in March 2020. Principal investigators of funded grants are informed by April 1, 2020.

- Funds for selected projects are disbursed summer/fall 2020.

Proposal Review

Proposals are evaluated by a panel of educators, scientists, producers and others with expertise in sustainable agriculture. The Western SARE Administrative Council, a board of representatives with strong knowledge and interest in sustainable agriculture, makes the final selection regarding which projects receive funding.

The criteria required in the proposal provide the basis for reviewer evaluation. These criteria should be incorporated into all eight items in the proposal format. The six items below are the content, and content is the most important aspect of your proposal. Proposal form items A-F on pages 4-6 of this call for proposal (CFP) are the structure, and the application system will ensure that you follow the structure. The criteria are:

1) **Professional Development Focus: (35% of the review criteria)** Professional development is the goal of these PDP grants. Does your project focus on training agricultural professionals (such as extension personnel, NRCS, or others) who will, in turn, share the information with farmers and ranchers? This target audience may also include NGO's, crop consultants, state or other federal agency employees as long as the primary goal is using them as trainers to help educate farmers and ranchers.
2) **Sustainable Agriculture Focus: (25% of the review criteria)** All WSARE proposals should focus on issues that relate directly to sustainable agriculture, and priorities and goals listed on page 1 of this CFP.
3) **Appropriate Approach: (10% of the review criteria)** The activities and methods described must be appropriate for meeting project objectives and outcomes. This includes having the proper expertise and organizations involved.
4) **Collaborative Involvement: (10% of the review criteria)** Proposals should illustrate the meaningful involvement of agricultural producers and personnel from land-grant universities, nonprofit organizations, and other entities in the project's development, implementation and outcomes.
5) **Feasibility and Evaluation of Project Outcomes: (10% of the review criteria)** Proposals must address the desired outcomes in each of the following areas, describing how they will be assessed, measured, and documented:
   A. Improving the knowledge base of project participants (ag professionals) in a sustainable agriculture topic or area.
   B. Increasing the likelihood that project participants will use what they learn (intention).
   C. For multi-year projects, demonstrating that project participants used new knowledge and skills in subsequent educational activities in sustainable agriculture.
6) **Budget: (10% of the review criteria)** A reasonable budget with good justification is necessary. Please ensure the narrative explains line items so they may be fully understood.

Key Points to Consider in Project Development

1) **Institutional and collaborative participation:** A goal of the program is to broaden the trainer/educator base of sustainable agriculture expertise. Multi-disciplinary, multi-state and multi- organizational efforts that include other private or public entities are encouraged. Agricultural producers and community leaders are encouraged to be part of the trainer/educator team.
2) **Integrated training and education:** Applications should emphasize an integrated or holistic approach with methods and outputs that support a broad-based educational effort. WSARE encourages applications that integrate multiple aspects of sustainable agricultural production, marketing, families, rural communities and quality of life.
3) **Training and educational methodology:** Projects must demonstrate enhanced knowledge and skills of participants, and trainer/educator teams are encouraged to develop new and innovative ways for learning to take place. Projects that create electronic or written educational products (e.g. manuals, web-based tutorial or databases) should have an accompanying training component for use of that product, such as training sessions or tutorials.

4) **Impacts and outcomes assessment:** It is important to provide evidence that educational objectives have been fulfilled, with desired outcomes clearly defined, evaluated and documented. Grantees should build in a reasonable timeline and approach to properly complete the evaluation of project impacts. **Use the WSARE PDP logic model as a reference point as you develop your proposal.** The Western SARE PDP logic model can be found under "Proposal Preparation Documents" on the Western SARE web site, https://www.westernsare.org/Grants/Proposal-Preparation-Documents

5) **Location:** Proposed projects can be located at any institution in the Western region of United State, including nongovernmental organizations, that has demonstrated fiscal responsibility and expertise in sustainable agriculture, and is able and qualified to receive funds from the U.S. Government.

6) **Letters of support:** Letters of support are not mandatory; however they are encouraged and should be included in the proposal online submission form under "Supporting Documents/Optional-Letters of Support and References" section.

Criteria for 2020 PDP Grants

Professional Development Program Grants are designed to educate agricultural professionals about sustainable agriculture so that they, in turn, can help educate and train farmers and ranchers. Funded PDP grants must help achieve this long-term outcome:

Cooperative Extension, Natural Resource Conservation Service and other agricultural professionals are conversant in sustainable agriculture principles and systems. They have ready access to resources that can help producers make informed decisions about adopting sustainable approaches with greater certainty and less risk.

Projects must improve the ability of agricultural professionals to conduct educational programs and activities in sustainable agriculture principles and systems and to respond to inquiries on the subject from farmers, ranchers and the public.

Approaches can include, among others:
- Workshops
- Conferences
- Development of materials or curricula
- Demonstrations
- Web-based courses
- Tours

Multi-faceted proposals are encouraged. Projects using multiple techniques or methods are preferred, as are efforts whose results can be applied to wide and diverse audiences.

Subject matter can include any sustainable agriculture endeavor, including animal agriculture, agronomic or horticultural crop production, or the effects of sustainable practices on quality of life for producers or rural communities.

Projects with a scope beyond a single state or area are encouraged. Projects may be 1-to-3 years in length. Funding is capped at $75,000 total costs per project. Projects requesting significantly less than the maximum allowable amount generally have a greater likelihood of being funded. This is especially true if the geographic scope of the project includes only a single state.

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<u>Program Goals for Projects Funded by Western SARE</u>

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. Promote crop, livestock, and enterprise diversification.
5. Examine the regional, economic, social, and environmental implications of adopting sustainable agriculture practices and systems.

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Proposal Format

PDP proposals are submitted online at https://projects.sare.org. Project basic information, project cooperators' information, summary, narrative, and budget and budget justification must be entered on-line; while other supporting documents must be attached as PDF documents in the online system.

Text Limitations: Text for the narrative portion of the proposal is limited to a total of 3,400 words. The narrative portion includes the following sections (see below for each section length): Introduction; Objectives and Timetable; Relevance to Western SARE Goals/Sustainable Agriculture; Methods; Products; Outcomes; and Evaluation. Citations and letters of support are optional, and may be included in the "Supporting Documents" section. In addition, a summary of no more than 300 words should be included.

A. Project Basic information
List the starting and close dates of the proposed project, and the project primary state.

B. Project Cooperators
List the names and affiliations of each major cooperator in your project.

C. Summary (Limit 300 words)
Provide a concise summary of the project proposal.

D. Narrative (Limit 3,400 words)

<u>Introduction</u> (Word limit 500). Describe the context and need that justify your project.
- A needs assessment with defined and documented need from the target audience is necessary to effectively justify the proposal. Please use your data or other hard data to explain why your project is needed. Needs strengthen the justification of the proposal.
- Describe the factors that influence the implementation and success of the project, including climate, politics, regulations, socio-economic conditions or market forces.
- At least one in-text citation (e.g., Smith, 2007) should appear in your narrative to indicate where each reference was used.

- Please list any previously funded SARE projects related to your proposal and explain how your project differs from this previous work. Sources to search include:
  - National SARE database (http://www.sare.org/projects)
  - National Agricultural Library (http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic)
  - USDA-NIFA-CRIS Research (https://nifa.usda.gov/tool/cris)

Objectives (Word limit 300). The objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable and realistic. Please do NOT confuse objectives (e.g., to increase knowledge, skills or technical capacity of ag professionals) with activities (e.g., to develop and conduct a workshop.)

Relevance to Western SARE Goals/Sustainable Agriculture (Word limit 1,000). How does your proposal directly address the Western SARE goals found on page 4? All goals do not need to be addressed, but all proposals must address at least one goal. Proposals that address multiple goals are usually scored higher by reviewers.

Methods and Timeline (Word limit 400)
- List and explain the principles, assumptions and beliefs you have about the project, the way you expect the project to operate and what it will achieve.
- Describe the resources, contributions and investments (inputs) that will be used in the project. Resources can be financial (requested funds), human (volunteers, partnerships, contributions of farmers, ranchers and other practitioners), and physical (technology, equipment, etc.).
- Describe your methodology and activities, and provide a timeline of these activities.

Products (Word limit 400). What will the project produce? Products may include educational materials, workshops, conferences, demonstrations, tours, curricula and partnerships.

Outcomes (Word limit 400). These are the results and benefits for individuals, groups, communities and systems. Outcomes should include increased awareness, knowledge and capacity of participants to provide educational programs and evidence of changed intention or behavior of project participants.

Evaluation (Word limit 400). Show how you intend to measure outcomes stated in your proposal. What outcome indicators will be measured, who will conduct the evaluation, how will the evaluation be done, what will it cost and at what time intervals during the project will evaluation take place?

E. **Budget and Budget Justification** (10% 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, budget section. Applicants MUST use this document for budget submission; no other document will be accepted. **NOTE**: you are still required 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 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. Be sure to include brief details and budget amounts for each subaward, by year, on your *Western SARE Budget Worksheet.* As the primary applicant, you must upload both your *Western SARE Budget Worksheet* and those of any subawards to be issued.

Professional Development Program Grant funds must be budgeted in the following categories
- Salaries and Benefits: compensating yourself and/or employees (including students) of your institution for

performing work directly related to the project. Provide base salary, FTEs, fringe benefit rates, and salary/benefits amounts requested.

- Subawards: paying project collaborators who are not at your institution and/or to cover costs associated with the sub recipient's portion of the proposed project.
- Contracted Services: includes paying for professional services (e.g., 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 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 (individual items that cost 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 (***must*** be necessary to maintain the continuity of a project activity/meeting) is also considered a supply cost.
- Communication: includes postage and mailing expenses (including shipping samples for analysis), printed materials (flyers, brochures, posters). This category also includes expenses for publishing articles in scientific journals or other types of field/program publications, or for commercial photocopying (Note: in-house photocopying falls under supplies)
- Travel: includes estimated mileage reimbursement, airfare, lodging, meal per diem; car rentals, 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 U.S. General Services Administration website. **NOTE**: foreign travel is typically NOT allowed under the SARE program except in cases where sufficient justification has been provided and requires Western SARE approval. All foreign travel must be directly related to the project, must be essential for project completion and well justified (e.g., explain why this activity cannot be done in the USA, relevance to Western agriculture sustainability, provide foreign institution and colleagues qualifications, etc.).
- Rent: includes fees associated with renting equipment, land, facilities (e.g., meeting rooms, lab space) and user fees.
- Participant / Trainee Support: Participant Support costs are associated with conference, workshop, or symposium attendees who are not employees of the applicant or a subaward recipient institution(s). 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. If participant/trainee travel expenses will be itemized (not a lump sum payment), include those expenses in the Travel budget category.
- 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. 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*. Please note, however, there are some restrictions for what *Professional Development Program* grant funds may be used. See below.

Professional Development Program Grant funds may NOT be used for the following purposes
- Capital Equipment purchases – Defined as a single, autonomous piece of equipment that costs $5,000 or more and has a useful life of more than one year. Minor equipment under $5,000 is allowed – please include as a supply cost.
- Starting or expanding a farm or farm operation.

- Major renovations/permanent improvements to a farm or ranch, such as constructing or remodeling a building.
- Repair and maintenance of existing equipment/infrastructure.
- 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.
- Student tuition and fees

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

F. Supporting Documents
The following supporting documents should be uploaded into the online grant application.
All supporting documents can be downloaded from the online application site or find them at the end of this Call For Proposal document in "Additional Attachments."

Signature Page: Signatures from the PI and the Authorized Organizational Representative (such as the Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs) are required. You should print the Signature Page, have all relevant parties sign it,   scan the page and save it as a PDF or photograph, and upload it into the Supporting Documents section of the online application.

Vitae: A brief vita (brief resume) is required for each principal investigator and major cooperators. The limit is three pages for each. Attach each vita as a PDF document into the Supporting Documents section of the online application.

Animal Welfare Assurance Statement: This form ***must*** be completed by all applicants to identify whether or not their proposed project includes the use of animals. This form may be downloaded from the online application site and is also included in the following section of this Call for Proposals.

If awarded and the applicant does not have access to an Institutional Animal Care and Use Board, the PI will need to submit compliance documents to the Western SARE host institution, Montana State University (MSU) for review and approval prior to subaward agreement execution. MSU will work with the grant recipients to coordinate the process and will provide the necessary reviews of and animal work.

Letters of support: Letters of support are not mandatory; however, they are encouraged and should be attached as PDF files into Supporting Documents.

If appropriations are similar to last year, approximately $800,000 should be available for Western SARE PDP competitive grants.

For more information about this call for proposals or for hard copies: Contact Jim Freeburn or Jill West, *Phone* – (307) 532-2436 or *e-mail* – freeburn@uwyo.edu or jwest19@uwyo.edu. You may also contact Al Kurki at (406) 494-8655 or *e-mail* – akurki@ncat.org.

About Western SARE: Information can be found at the Western SARE website, https://www.westernsare.org or by emailing wsare@montana.edu

Submission: Go to http://projects.sare.org and apply.

Hard copies of this CFP are available by contacting the Western SARE PDP office.
Proposals must be received by 12:00 pm. NOON MST, November 13, 2019.

All Western SARE calls for proposals (Research & Education, Farmer/Rancher, Ag Professional + Producer and Professional Development Program) are listed on the website, https://www.westernsare.org, as are previously funded proposals.

The Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program (SARE) is funded through the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES) under Chapter 1 of Title XVI of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 and extended by the 1995 Farm Bill reauthorization. The purpose of the subtitle is to encourage research with education and on-farm demonstration projects designed to increase the producer knowledge base and assist in the adoption of sustainable practices on the land. Ideally, projects will integrate research, education and on-farm demonstrations within whole-farm sustainable agricultural systems involving plants and animals, demonstrating tangible outcomes and addressing Western SARE goals.

RESOURCES

Information on sustainable agriculture can be found at the National SARE website, www.sare.org (the database of nationwide SARE projects can be searched under "Project Reports").

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 has a number of resources at http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/ that may be relevant to your proposal; or, contact AFSIC at 301-504-6559 or afsic@nal.usda.gov.

The following are listed under "Proposal Preparation Documents" on the Western SARE website, https://www.westernsare.org/Grants/Proposal-Preparation-Documents
A. **Western SARE and USDA Policies and Requirements**
B. **Western SARE PDP Logic Model**
C. **Required Budget Details**

Professional Development Program Signature Page	WESTERN SARE Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education	Jim Freeburn 4516 HWY 26/85 Torrington, WY 82240 307-532-2436 freeburn@uwyo.edu

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: _____

_____   Date: _____
 Signature: Sponsored Programs Office Director (or equivalent)

**Professional
Development Program**

**Animal Welfare
Assurance Statement**

WESTERN
SARE
Sustainable Agriculture
Research & Education

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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, 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 N OT applicable, check and sign below:

Not Applicable [ ]   _____   Date: _____
Signature: Applicant