



# Graduate Student Grant Program 2023 Call for Proposals

**Submission Deadline, December 6, 2022, 12:00pm (noon) Mountain Time**

Submit online at [projects.sare.org](https://projects.sare.org)

**Project team:** Graduate student, researcher (PI), and at least one producer

**Project funding limit:** \$30,000

**Project time limit:** two (2) years

**Funding decisions announced:** March 2023

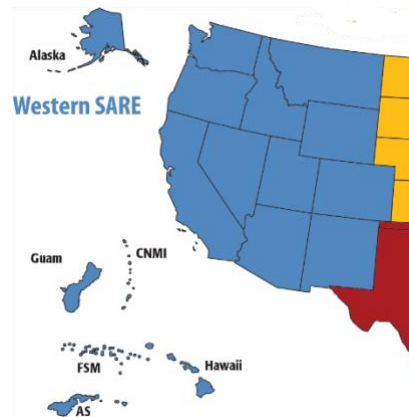
**Grant Program Manager:** Dr. Bruna Irene Grimberg, [grimberg@montana.edu](mailto:grimberg@montana.edu)

## Graduate Student Grant Program

Western SARE funds proposals that present innovative research and educational outreach for advancing sustainable agriculture practices in the Western U.S. Only full-time graduate students enrolled at accredited universities in the Western region are eligible to apply. At the time of proposal submission, the student must be considered full-time or admitted to a graduate program. The goal of this grant program is to obtain results that are applicable to agricultural production, sustain and improve the environmental quality and natural resources upon which agriculture depends, improve the profitability of farmers/ranchers and associated agricultural businesses, and enhance the quality of life of agricultural communities.

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### The Western region includes:

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

Western SARE  
Montana State University  
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Western SARE, one of four regional SARE programs, is hosted by Montana State University and is funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



## About Western SARE

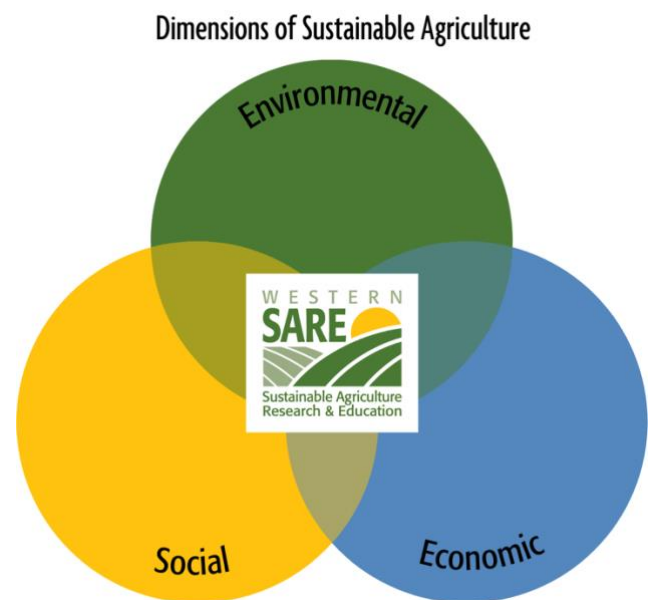
The Western SARE Administrative Council funds grant proposals that include creative and innovative on-farm/ranch research and educational outreach to advance Western SARE goals. All Western SARE projects ***must contain both research and education components.***

### What is 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.

### 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.



## ***Program Overview***

**Project Team:** Western SARE requires that agricultural producers be involved from inception to finish in the planning, design, implementation, and educational outreach of any WSARE-funded project keeping in mind the inherently interdisciplinary nature of sustainable agriculture. Graduate Student projects require a team of at least three (3) people, including a Graduate Student (Applicant), a Researcher (Principal Investigator, typically the applicant's major advisor), and at least one (1) Producer.

- Graduate Student: A student enrolled in a graduate degree program in an accredited university or college in the Western U.S.
- Principal Investigator (PI): A researcher that usually serves as the graduate student major advisor. The PI is responsible for carrying out its contractual provisions, all project's expenditures, and for achieving the stated research and education objectives.
- Producer: 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 or equivalent from farming or ranching activities.

**Project Time Limit:** Projects cannot exceed two (2) years (24 months). Please choose a start date that corresponds with the first of the month. Start dates must be no earlier than April 1, 2023, and no later than October 1, 2023.

**Project Funding Limit:** 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 and its dissemination. Students should be enrolled full-time in a graduate program at the starting time of the project and may receive only one Western SARE Graduate Student Grant award during their graduate studies.

## ***Proposal Instructions***

Proposals are submitted online at <https://projects.sare.org>. To strengthen your submission, check the information located in the [Proposal Preparation Documents](#) section of the Western SARE [website](#). To ensure your submission is complete, please review the submission checklist at the end of this Call of Proposal, on page 14.

***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 online before the due date.***

Multiple submissions are accepted but only one application (from any one individual applicant) can be awarded funding in any of the Western SARE competitive programs in one grant funding cycle. An exception to this rule is proposals submitted to the Graduate Student program, where more than one project can be awarded to a PI who acts as the main advisor of the graduate student(s). Additionally, obtaining Graduate Student awards does not exclude the PI to be awarded in other Western SARE Research and Education or Professional Development grant programs for the same funding cycle. Multiple simultaneous projects corresponding to different grant cycles may be funded, conditional upon fulfillment of all reporting expectations, including yearly objectives and milestones being met (as listed in the approved proposal or a Project Modification).

## **Project Basic Information**

This section prompts general information about the project including:

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

## **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 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 disseminate results among agricultural stakeholders
- Enumerate and describe the expected project outcomes.

## **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; word limit: 1000)**

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](http://www.sare.org/Project-Reports)) and other studies or reports.

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, operational profits, soil or water quality or usage, and

rural communities. Where possible, use specific estimates of impacts –such as dollars saved per acre, tons of soil protected from erosion, pounds of reduced chemical inputs, number of acres affected, markets expanded, jobs created, etc.

The proposal must address the three pillars of sustainable agriculture (social, environmental, and economic) defined on page 2 of this Call for proposals.

**Stakeholder Needs and Support (5% of review criteria; word limit: 500)**

Western SARE is committed to addressing the needs of agricultural stakeholders. Proposals must include evidence that stakeholders identified the needs being addressed, as well as stakeholder support for the project beyond the project 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 growers' organizations or commodity committees. 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 local co-ops.
- Needs assessments that relate to the project topic(s) if they are available.

**Project Team Members and Roles (5% of the review criteria; word limit: 600)**

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 (see definition of Producer in page 3). For each project objective and activity indicate which team members will be involved and their roles. 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. Nonprofit farm operations may participate in the project, but do not count as the required Producer.

**Research Plan (30% of review criteria; word limit: 2000)**

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 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 and define all acronyms.

**Educational Plan (30% of review criteria; word limit: 2000)**

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 in your outreach activities (e.g., producers, other agricultural professionals, students, etc.). Explain how you will communicate your project's findings to producers (specifically) and the general public. If the people 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, culture, location, or resource barriers.)

Provide a list of educational resources (e.g., factsheets, PowerPoint presentations, videoclips, podcasts, 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 encouraged. For more details see [Conducting Successful Outreach](#).

**Timeline (5% of review criteria; word limit: 500)**

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; word limit: 500)**

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.

The approved [Western SARE Survey and Evaluation Tool](#) is expected to be filled out by participants at each outreach activity in addition to any other evaluation form. Western SARE requires evaluation results as part of the required annual progress and final reports. The [Western SARE Survey and Evaluation Tool](#) is considered program evaluation only and does not qualify as Human Subject Research. If proposed activities meet the definition of [Human Subject Research](#) ( may include social science investigations, additional surveys, questionnaires, taste tests, focus groups, etc.) applicants must seek approval from an Institutional Review Board (IRB) or provide a document indicating that the IRB process has been initiated. For more details about the IRB approval requirement, see the Supporting Documents section below.

## **Budget and Budget Justification (5% of review criteria)**

Provide a detailed budget and budget justification that are appropriate to the proposed project. Use the current *Western SARE Budget Worksheet* (Excel file) found in this section of the online application site. Complete the Budget Justification in the space provided on the online site. Applicants **MUST** use the current *Western SARE Budget Worksheet* for budget submission; no other budget document will be accepted. Please note the applicant will need to enter the total funds requested; this amount must match the total funds indicated on the *Western SARE Budget Worksheet* document.

If the applicant's institution will be issuing lower-tier subawards to other institutions or organizations, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and justification for each proposed lower-tier subaward. Lower-tier subaward budgets **MUST** be submitted on the *Western SARE Budget Worksheet for Lower-tier Subawards*. The proposed lower-tier subrecipient(s) may fill out the *Western SARE Budget Worksheet for Lower-tier Subawards* or the applicant may fill it out on their behalf using details they have provided. A budget justification must accompany each proposed lower-tier subaward. Upload a budget justification for each lower-tier subaward separately as a PDF in the section designated for lower-tier subaward budget justification(s). The application needs to include the applicant institution's *Western SARE Budget Worksheet* and justification, and those of any proposed lower-tier subawards to be issued.

***Graduate Student Grant funds must be budgeted in the following categories (please also see the Budget Categories and Guidance tab found on the Western SARE Budget Worksheet):***

Salaries and Benefits: The applicant (student) may request compensation for performing work directly related to the project. Salary support for other employees working on the project, including other students, is also acceptable. Provide base salary, FTEs, fringe benefit rates, and salary/benefits amounts requested. Compensation to the PI (major professor/advisor) is discouraged.

Lower-tier Subawards: The applicant's institution may issue lower-tier subaward(s) to pay project collaborators at a different institution and/or to support costs associated with the lower-tier subrecipient's portion of the proposed project. For each proposed lower-tier subaward, a separate *Western SARE Budget Worksheet for Lower-tier Subawards* and accompanying budget justification must be submitted in addition to the applicant's *Western SARE Budget Worksheet*.

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), 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 that cost less than \$5,000 (see note below regarding Capital Equipment), 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.

Note: Capital Equipment purchases are generally not allowed under the SARE program and should be *essential* for the completion of the proposed activities. Capital Equipment is defined as a single, autonomous piece of equipment that costs \$5,000 or more and has a useful life of more than one year. Equipment expenses beyond \$5,000 may be leveraged by non-Western SARE funds. *Purchasing multiple components of single equipment that cost under \$5,000 in an attempt to circumvent the \$5,000 cap is not allowed.* Purchases of minor equipment under \$5,000 is allowed. Please include minor equipment and/or leveraged capital equipment purchases in the **Supplies** budget category.

Communication: includes paying for postage and mailing expenses (including shipping samples for analysis), and printed materials (flyers, brochures, posters). This category also includes expenses for publishing articles in scientific journals or other types of publications, or for commercial photocopying (Note: in-house photocopying falls under supplies).

Travel: must be directly related to the project and includes mileage reimbursement, airfare, lodging, meal *per diem*, car rental, taxi, bus, shuttle expenses and parking, conference fees and registrations, etc. Please note that travel *per diems* and mileage must comply with your organization's approved rates. If no rate is available, use the Federal Government rate listed on the [U.S General Services Administration \(GSA\) website](#). Additionally, lodging costs/reimbursements must be limited to the Federally approved rate listed on the GSA website for the travel destination. Note: foreign travel is typically NOT allowed under the SARE program except in cases where sufficient justification has been provided and requires pre-approval by the Western SARE Regional Coordinator. 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 U.S., relevance to sustainable agriculture in the Western U.S., foreign institution's/ colleague's qualifications, etc.). The Freely Associated States -Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, and Palau- are foreign countries. USDA-NIFA requires that foreign travel be done in a 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.

Participant / Trainee Support: A participant is defined as a **non-employee** (of the applicant's institution) who is the recipient, not the provider, of a service or training opportunity as part of a workshop, conference, seminar, symposium or other short-term instructional or information sharing activity to be funded by this award. Participant support may be paid to non-employees to help offset the cost of travel/lodging and meeting/training fees and/or as a stipend for participation in a training. Participant/trainee support should NOT be used: to reimburse or pay employees of the applicant's institution; to pay research subjects/participants (unallowable expense under the SARE program); for honoraria/speaker fees (contracted services expense); or, if travel expenses for a non-employee will be directly reimbursed by the institution (travel expense). The applicant's institution must maintain back-up documentation for all participant support costs in accordance with their institution's policy.

Indirect Costs (IDCs) Recovery: IDC recovery may be requested by both the primary applicant and any proposed lower-tier subrecipient(s) according to the following criteria:

- Under the SARE program and for projects funded in Calendar Year 2022 and later, NIFA



stipulates indirect cost recovery is capped at 10% of the Total Direct Costs (TDC) requested.

- The 10% TDC cap should be consistently applied to both the primary applicant and any proposed lower-tier subrecipients.
- Important note: if the applicant's institution has a Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), the IDC base should be Total Direct Costs, including the TOTAL COSTS of any/all proposed lower-tier subrecipient(s). Excluding all or a portion of any proposed lower-tier subaward(s) in the IDC base will result in a re-budget request should the proposal be funded.
- Some institutions may NOT be eligible for IDC recovery or may be limited to the *de minimis* rate of 10% of the Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) requested.
- Applicants should limit their request for recovery of indirect costs to the lesser of their institution's official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 10% of Total Direct Costs.

Applicants must indicate the IDC rate used on the *Western SARE Budget Worksheet*. Detailed information about IDC rates and calculations can be found on the Western SARE [website](#).

***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.
- Incentives: providing cash or cash value items to individuals to incentivize behavior
- The purchase and distribution of gifts, gift cards, etc. for any purpose.
- Promotional items to give away, e.g., swag, mugs, clothes, bags, pens, pencils, etc.

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

## **Supporting Documents**

All supporting documents must be attached to the Supporting Documents section of the online application site. 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 (the student's major professor/advisor/researcher) is responsible for all expenditures. 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. For non-profits or other organizations, this is typically the Executive Director, CEO, or CFO. This form may be downloaded from the online application site and is also included in the Appendix 1 section of this Call for Proposal.

**Current Vita:** The PI, graduate student, and all other project team members who are NOT producers must submit a current vita (maximum 2-pages for each member).

**Letters of Cooperation from Producers:** Each producer who is part of the project team must send a dated and signed letter of cooperation. This letter should verify their willingness to participate, indicate the resources committed to this project, and describe their role in the project.

**Letters of Commitment from Partner Institutions:** If the proposal includes issuing lower-tier subawards to partner institutions, attach a letter of commitment from each institution. The letter of commitment must be dated and signed by the lower-tier subrecipient'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, 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 Form:** The PI, graduate student, and other project team members who are NOT producers must submit a Current and Pending Support form. This form may be downloaded from the online application site and is also included in the Appendix 2 section of this Call for Proposal.

**Institutional Review Board Approval Document for Working with Human Subjects:** For guidance on what meets the requirements for Human Subject Research please see [here](#).

If your project meets the definition of Human Subjects Research, you will need to provide documentation from your Institutional Review Board (IRB) demonstrating you have received approval or exemption for your project, or at a minimum, you have submitted your protocol for review by your IRB. At the time of submission, proof that you initiated the IRB process is acceptable; however, if awarded, the Subaward Agreement will not be executed until IRB approval/exemption documentation is provided.

If your project meets the definition of Human Subjects Research, but you **do not have access to an IRB**, contact us by e-mail at [wsare@montana.edu](mailto:wsare@montana.edu) for a letter to include in your proposal submission in which you acknowledge that if your proposal is selected for funding you will work with Montana State University, Western SARE Host Institution, to complete your project's IRB requirement.

An IRB is not required to be in place before the proposal submission, but if selected for funding, documentation of IRB approval must be complete before recruiting or interacting with human subjects.

**Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Document for Working with Animals:** For guidance on what meets the requirements for the care and use of agricultural animals in research and teaching please see [here](#).

If your proposal involves vertebrate animals, you must provide documentation from your Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) demonstrating you have received approval or exemption for your project or at a minimum you have submitted your protocol for review by your IACUC.

An IACUC is not required to be in place before the proposal submission, but if selected for funding, documentation of IACUC approval must be complete before the Subaward Agreement will be executed.

**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): Attach any other documents that might strengthen the proposal. These other documents may not be used to lengthen the proposal under the Project Narrative.

## 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. Reviewers' and Western SARE Administrative Council recommendations are then shared with the applicants. **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 that all sections of the proposal are submitted before the due date.**

Proposals are evaluated based on the following criteria:

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

## Selected Proposals

*If the PI of a new Western SARE grant proposal has an active Western SARE award, funding decisions will be contingent upon fulfillment of the reporting requirements of the active award as specified in the Subaward Agreement. Applicants whose proposals are selected for funding by the Western SARE Administrative Council may expect the following:*

**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](#).

**Notification:** The Western SARE Administrative Council will select proposals for funding in early March 2023. 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 March 2023.

**Award:** A Subaward Agreement between the applicant's institution and Montana State University will be initiated. . The Subaward Agreement will identify all Terms and Conditions for the award, including reporting requirements. Learn more about the Subaward Process [here](#).  
*Note: All proposals from Micronesia (Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae, Marshall Islands and*

Palau) are required to have the College of Micronesia (at Pohnpei) act as their fiscal agent in the disbursement of funds.

**Funds:** The Subaward Agreement is cost-reimbursable. Subrecipients will be responsible for invoicing Western SARE/MSU for all expenses to be reimbursed. Invoices are to be submitted according to the guidelines in the Subaward Agreement. 10% of the awarded budget will be withheld pending receipt and approval of the final report.

**Photographs and Videos:** Grant recipients are invited 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. It is expected that the outreach/educational material produced by Western SARE-supported projects will be ADA compliant. Thus, including closed captions to visual and audio deliverables is strongly encouraged. For details on producing ADA compliant media see [here](#).

**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. Information pertaining to citing Western SARE is also included in the Subaward Agreement.

**Site visits:** Western SARE recognizes there are limits to what can be accomplished, measured, and reported during the life of a project. As a result, along with project reporting, Western SARE staff may visit ongoing or finalized projects to assess the impact on Western SARE grants.

**Project Modification and Changes:** Request for significant changes to the project as originally proposed, such as a change in PI, subrecipient institution, objectives, timeline, budget, etc. should be submitted to the grant program manager via email using the [Project Modification Form](#) for consideration and approval by the Western SARE Regional Coordinator. Upon approval of the requested changes, Western SARE staff will notify the PI and update the SARE project profile at [projects.sare.org](http://projects.sare.org). Learn more about managing a Western SARE grant [here](#).

## **Reporting Requirements for Awarded Proposals**

An annual report will be required each year of the project. Progress and final reports should describe the progress made on the project, detail the observed results, describe the educational outreach activities and material produced by the project, and document impacts. All 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 the project is one-year in length, only a final report will be required. 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 reports. ***Annual Reports are due on May 1<sup>st</sup> of each year of the project. The graduate student and PI will have up to 60 days from the Period of Performance's end date to submit the Final Report.***

Grantees must maintain up-to-date contact information (e.g., address, phone number, email, etc.) for all project team members in the online submission portal. Please review the documents

located in the Western SARE [Reporting Documents for Grantees](#) section to understand what will be expected if your project is awarded.

## *How to Apply*

<https://projects.sare.org>

Look for programs under “Western” [region]

**Proposals are due by 12:00 pm (noon) MST – December 6, 2023 (NEW DEADLINE)**

<b>Graduate Student Grant Program Schedule</b>
December 6, 2022 – Proposals are due by 12:00 PM (noon) Mountain Time.
January 2023 – A Technical Review Panel reviews and recommends proposals for funding.
March 2023 –Western SARE Administrative Council selects proposals for funding.
March 2023 – Applicants are informed about their proposal status

## **Online Submission Checklist**

### Project Basic Information

- Project Subject Matter
- Project Start Date
- Project End Date
- Primary State
- Project Commodities
- Project Practices
- How did you learn about this CFP?
- Usefulness of Western SARE Resources

### Summary

- Summary
- Project Objectives

### Narrative

- Relevance to Sustainable Agriculture, Project Value and Benefits
- Stakeholders Needs and Support
- Project Team Members and Roles
- Research Plan
- Education Plan
- Timeline
- Evaluation and Producer Adoption

### Budget and Budget Justification

- Total Budget Amount
- Budget Worksheet for Awarded Institution
- Budget Justification for Awarded Institution
- Budget Worksheet for each proposed Lower-tier Subaward

- Budget Justification for each proposed Lower-tier Subaward
- Authorized Organizational Representative Information

#### Supporting Documents

- Signature Page
- Curriculum Vitae for all team members except producers
- Current and Pending for all team members except producers
- Letters of Cooperation from Producer(s)
- Letter of Commitment from Partner Institution(s) (if applicable)
- Letters of Support from Stakeholders (optional)
- IACUC Statement (if applicable)
- IRB Statement (if applicable)
- Citations

## ***Resources***

Check the resources in the [Western SARE Proposal Preparation Documents](#) section.

If you have further questions, please contact the Graduate Student Program Manager, Dr. Bruna Irene Grimberg at [grimberg@montana.edu](mailto:grimberg@montana.edu) or 406-994-4789; or e-mail our office at [wsare@msu.edu](mailto:wsare@msu.edu)

***Information on past projects*** including summaries and reports can be found [here](#) . We encourage you to visit our [website](#); tips for writing proposals are available [here](#).

The Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (AFSIC) at the National Agricultural Library specializes in locating, collecting, and providing information about sustainable agriculture. 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](mailto:afsic@nal.usda.gov).

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

Western SARE is committed to diversity. We encourage proposals that involve producers and other stakeholders of socially disadvantaged, beginning, limited resources, and veteran communities. For more details, please visit this [USDA website](#).

The United States Department of Agriculture and Montana State University are equal opportunity providers and employers.

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



**Appendix 1: 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: \_\_\_\_\_





## Appendix 2: Current & Pending

**Project 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 the salary for the person involved is included in the budgets of the various projects.
- Provide analogous information for all proposed work that 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%.

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

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