



Local Education and Demonstration 2027 Call for Proposals

Submission Deadline:

October 28, 2026, 12:00pm (noon) Mountain Daylight Time

Submit online at www.projects.sare.org

Funding Limit: \$60,000

Project Time Limit: Up to three years (36 months)

Funding decisions announced: March 2027

Contact: wsare-pdp@sare.org; (307) 575-2416

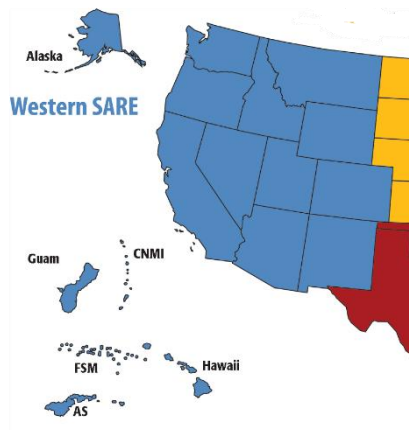
Please note that awards provided under these Calls are contingent upon USDA-NIFA authorizing the funding to our Host Institution, Montana State University.

Local Education and Demonstration

The Local Education and Demonstration grant program is founded on the understanding that adopting sustainable agricultural practice(s) entails change and managing potential economic, environmental, and social risks. The implementation of demonstration and/or education events can address local issues related to the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices by bolstering confidence in adoption and reducing risks. Successful proposals are required to integrate findings from previously-funded SARE research projects, translate those results into practical demonstrations of application, and bring those results into the field through demonstration and/or educational activities for agricultural professionals and producers.

Table of Contents:

About Western SARE ...	2
Program Overview	3
Proposal Instructions	4
Review Process	11
Selected Proposals.....	14
How to Apply	17
Resources	18



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

Professional Development Program
Western SARE
University of Wyoming
2753 State Hwy 157
Lingle, WY 82223
Westernsare.org

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 National Institute of Food and Agriculture
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

About Western SARE

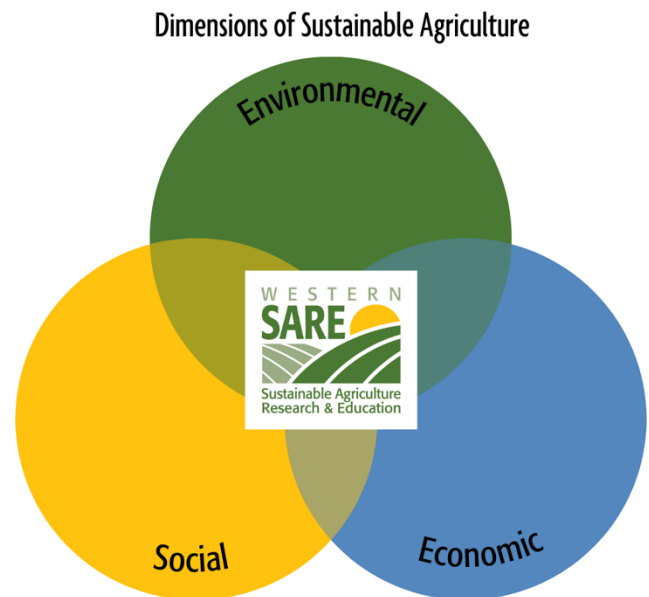
The Western SARE Administrative Council funds grant proposals that include creative and innovative sustainable agriculture practices to advance Western SARE goals. Congress mandates that the SARE grant program depart from “business as usual.” To that end, the Administrative Council requires that agricultural producers be involved from start to finish in the planning, design, implementation and educational outreach of any SARE-funded project.

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

Funding for the Local Education and Demonstration (LED) grants will help increase the application and adoption of the results and recommendations from previous SARE-funded research by identifying and overcoming the environmental, economic, and social hindrances of adopting sustainable agricultural practices locally. Results from previous SARE-funded research must be the basis of the Local Education and Demonstration project and must be documented in the proposal. Links to the research SARE grant programs can be found on page 12.

Strategies to conduct education and/or demonstration for adopting sustainable agricultural practices include, but are not limited to, local demonstrations, trainings, focus groups, providing technical assistance, developing educational materials, and the application of research results by farmers, ranchers, Extension agents, governmental agencies, or non-governmental agencies.

Local Education and Demonstration grants are open to anyone who is in the Western U.S. and works with or is a producer, including personnel at agricultural and community nonprofit organizations, colleges and universities, municipalities, tribal governments, state and federal agencies, and for-profit business entities. The proposal must include a structured plan, describing the nature of the method(s) to educate and/or demonstrate, the anticipated audience scope and project reach, and address the expected successes and challenges of the project. The role of each team member should be well explained in the proposal.

Successful proposals for the Local Education and Demonstration grant program should:

- Bring previously funded SARE research into a demonstration and/or education platform with a specific focus on barriers to the adoption of the results of previous SARE work.
- Have outreach plans that demonstrate how the project will increase the knowledge, skills, and adoption of sustainable agriculture practices.
- Demonstrate the environmental, social, and economic relevance of the proposed project.
- Refer to the [Western SARE Teaching and Learning Best Practices Toolkit](#) for comprehensive information regarding the successful implementation of educational programming.

Project Personnel Roles

- Principal Investigator (PI): has the authority to write and submit a proposal and carry out its contractual provisions. Project work must be conducted in the Western SARE region defined on page one.
- Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI): responsible for duties as outlined by the proposal and for assisting the PI in the project execution. The Co-PI typically brings a background or skill set different from the PI that complements the project.
- Cooperator(s): may represent an educator, researcher, business, corporation, producer, or others that supports and participates in efforts outlined in the project and can provide meaningful insight to the project; roles should be clearly defined in the proposal.

Project Time Limit

Projects may be 1-3 years in length. Project start dates must be no earlier than April 1, 2027 and no later than October 1, 2027 and cannot exceed 36 months.

Project Funding Limit

Applicants may request up to \$60,000 total costs for the Local Education and Demonstration grant program. Proposals selected for funding will be issued cost-reimbursable subaward agreements. Funds cannot be advanced to awardees.

Proposal Instructions

All proposals must be submitted online at <https://projects.sare.org>. Review the submission checklist on page 17.

Western SARE may 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.

The proposal must include the following components:

Project Basic Information

This section prompts general information about the project including:

- Proposed starting and ending dates
- The state(s) where the work will be conducted
- The **main** subject matter of the project
- Practices, Commodities, Benefits and Impacts
- How you learned about this call for proposal and resources utilized
- Indication if proposal is a resubmission
- Western SARE Resources

Project Cooperators (Limit 200 words)

List and designate each team member and describe their role within the project as one of the following: Co-investigator (co-PI), Educator, Extension, Farmer/Rancher, NGO Representative, Researcher, Other. Each listed cooperator will need to confirm participation via e-mail from the Grant Management System. Each team must have producers and ag professionals meaningfully involved to receive funding.

Summary (Limit 300 words)

A clear and concise summary is important for the review process. The summary should include a brief description of the problem or need and the creative approach to solving it. ***This summary will be available to the public should the proposal receive funding.***

Project Narrative

The project narrative includes the following sections: 1) Introduction, 2) Relevance and Impact to Western SARE Goals and Sustainable Agricultures, 3) Evidence of Previous SARE Research, 4) Objectives, 5) Methods, 6) Timeline, 7) Educational Products, 8) Outcomes and Impact, and 9) Evaluation.

Introduction (Limit 400 words)

- Describe the context and need that justify your project. An assessment with defined or documented needs from the target audience is necessary to effectively justify the proposal.
- Describe the factors that could influence the implementation and success of the project, including climate, politics, regulations, socioeconomic conditions, or market forces.
- Any citations should include article title, author, and date of publication.

Relevance and Impact to Western SARE Goals and Sustainable Agriculture (Limit 400 words)

Indicate how the proposal directly addresses each of the Western SARE goals of environmental, social, and economic agricultural sustainability found on page two. Highlight the scope of impact the project will have on both the audience(s) educating others and those implementing sustainable agricultural practices.

Evidence of Previous SARE Research (Limit 300 words)

Indicate how the proposal is based upon previous SARE-funded research and specify the SARE project number(s). Links to SARE research projects can be found on page 12. The proposal can include research results as found in project reports from projects in any SARE region and relevant components from multiple projects. Describe the barriers to the adoption of the previous project(s) practices and how your project will address those challenges.

Objectives (Limit 250 words)

The objectives should include how the project will address barriers to the adoption of previous SARE research results, with a specific emphasis on the environmental, social, and economic aspects. Objectives must be specific, measurable, achievable, and realistic, and should include the target audience. 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). For more details see [Successful Objectives](#).

Methods (Limit 400 words)

List and explain the methodology and activities, the way you expect the project to operate, what will be achieved, and the activities/methods to achieve the objectives. Describe the resources, contributions, and investments (inputs) that will be used in the project.

Timeline (Limit 300 words)

Develop a project timeline that includes major milestones of the project with estimated dates. For each milestone, indicate participants and expected outcomes.

Educational Products/Activities (Limit 200 words)

Indicate what the project activities will be and what will be produced; activities and products may include educational materials, workshops, conferences, demonstrations, tours, curricula, partnerships, etc.

Outcomes and Impact (Limit 300 words)

Outcomes refer to increased awareness, knowledge, and capacity of the project's participants to provide education and/or demonstration programs and evidence of exerting change of intention or behavior concerning the addressed sustainable agricultural practices. Address the project impact(s) in the short-, mid-, and long-term in relation to the benefits for individuals, groups, communities, and systems as well as the scale/geography of that impact.

Evaluation (Limit 200 words)

Describe how the project will be evaluated throughout the course of implementation. Include outcomes to be measured, responsible party for conducting the evaluation, how the evaluation will be done, evaluation cost, evaluation time intervals, and how feedback received from participants will be incorporated during the project. Evaluation for Local Education and Demonstration should also provide reflection and insight regarding the success or failure of implementation of the SARE research results.

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. If the Western SARE Survey is used for program evaluation and reporting only, it does not qualify as Human Subjects Research. Check the [Human Subjects Research](#) site to learn whether your activities meet the definition of human subjects research. If so, 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.

Supporting Documents

All supporting documents ***must*** be attached in the Supporting Documents section of the online application. PDF documents are preferred but images in .jpg and .png formats are accepted.

Failure to provide all the required supporting documents will disqualify the proposal before review.

Signature Page: Signatures from the Principal Investigator and the Authorized Organizational Representative (such as the Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs) are required.

Vitae: A brief vita is required for the principal investigator and co-principal investigators. The limit is three pages for each and attach each vita as separate PDF documents.

Citations: A literature cited document may be included if necessary.

Letters of Support: Listed project cooperators are encouraged to include unique letters of support. General support letters may also be included (further defined in Key Points for Project Development, page 12).

Institutional Review Board Approval Document for Working with Human Subjects: For guidance on what meets the requirements for Human Subjects 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, please complete the [Human Subject Research Determination Worksheet](#) to evaluate whether review and approval or exemption from an Institutional Review Board is needed to complete your project.

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 project 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.

If your project involves vertebrate animals and you do not have access to an IACUC, please complete the [Animal Care Plan Questionnaire](#), which will be used to evaluate whether review and approval or exemption from an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee is needed to complete your project.

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.

Budget and Budget Justification

Provide a detailed budget and budget justification that are appropriate to the proposed project. The budget must be submitted on the [Western SARE Budget Workbook](#) (MS Excel file) provided on the proposal site. **Please note that because Western SARE budget requirements change, applicants must use the current [Western SARE Budget Workbook](#).** Previous versions of the workbook will NOT be accepted. For the “Total Budget” field in the online proposal form, enter the total funds requested; this amount must match the total funds resulting from the calculation in the *Western SARE Budget Workbook*. Enter the Budget Justification in the space provided on the proposal site.

If the applicant’s institution will be issuing lower-tier subawards to other entities, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and justification for each proposed lower-tier subaward. For each lower-tier subaward, use one of the designated “LT Subaward” *worksheets* found within the *Western SARE Budget Workbook* (navigate to the worksheets tabs found at the bottom). A budget justification must accompany each proposed lower-tier subaward. Upload a budget justification for each lower-tier subaward as a separate PDF in the section designated for lower-tier subaward budget justification(s) on the online proposal site. A complete application must include the applicant institution’s *Western SARE Budget Workbook* and budget justification, and those of any proposed lower-tier subawards to be issued.

Additionally, matching funds are not required for Western SARE grant programs. Please do NOT include matching funds in your budget or justification. However, if there are additional project-related expenses that are not requested in the proposal budget, this may be clarified on the online proposal site.

Local Education and Demonstration grant funds must be budgeted in the following categories:

(please also see the *Budget Categories and Guidance* tab found within the *Western SARE Budget Workbook*)

Salaries and Benefits: the applicant may request compensation for performing work directly related to the project. Salary support for other employees of the applicant’s institution working on the project, including students, is acceptable. Provide base salary, FTEs, fringe benefit rates, and salary/benefits amounts requested.

Lower-tier Subawards: for each proposed lower-tier subaward, include brief details, e.g., lower-tier subaward PI, institution and budget amounts, by project year. Additionally, a detailed budget and justification for each proposed lower-tier subaward is required. For each lower-tier subaward, use one of the designated “LT Subaward” *worksheets* found within the *Western SARE Budget Workbook* (navigate to the worksheets tabs found at the bottom). Upload a budget justification for each lower-tier subaward as a separate PDF in the section designated for lower-tier subaward budget justification(s) on the online proposal site.

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. Including commensurate payment to producers involved in the project as a honoraria or stipend payment is encouraged and should be included here.

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. Please also include non-capital rental costs as a supply cost, e.g., rental of facilities, meeting space, land, etc.

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 over \$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 and registration fees, etc. Please note that travel *per diem* and mileage must comply with your institution's approved rates. If no rate is available, use the Federal Government rate listed on the [U.S General Services Administration \(GSA\) website](https://www.gsa.gov). Additionally, lodging costs/reimbursements must be limited to the Federally approved rate listed on the GSA website for the travel destination. Note: international 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. Pre-approval is not given at the submission stage. If international travel is included, it will be considered as part of the entire proposal. If the proposal is selected for funding, the PI will be informed at that time as to whether the international travel is approved. All international 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.). International travel includes any travel outside North America and/or U.S. Possessions. Travel to the Freely Associated States - Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, and Palau- is considered international. USDA-NIFA requires that international travel be done in a U.S. flag air carrier.

Rent: Only includes the rental of capital/major equipment which is capped at \$4,999 for the entire duration of the project. For other rental costs, e.g., facilities, meeting space, land, etc., please budget for those costs under supplies.

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 such as participation in 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 participating 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: The below criteria must be followed by both the primary applicant and any proposed lower-tier subaward recipient(s) for determining IDC recovery.:

- Under the SARE program, 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. Please note: the Federal *de minimis* rate has increased to *up to* 15% of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC). If the applicant (or a proposed lower-tier subrecipient) is requesting the *de minimis*, be aware of the following condition: IDC recovery in excess of 10% Total Direct Costs (TDC) is not allowed. Therefore, if using

up to 15% of the MTDC will exceed 10% of TDC, applicant should use 10% TDC as their IDC recovery base.

- Applicants must 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 Workbook*. Detailed information about [IDC](#) recovery and calculations can be found on the Western SARE [website](#) and on the *Western SARE Budget Workbook*.

Program Income: if an applicant wishes to generate program income through activities proposed in their Western SARE project (e.g., charging a conference/meeting registration fee), this must be included in the proposal. Program income must be reported to MSU per federal reporting requirements. When preparing the budget justification, please address the questions provided in the Budget Justification section of the proposal. To learn more about program income, please visit the Western SARE [website](#).

Local Education and Demonstration grant funds may NOT be used for the following purposes:

Note: this list is not exhaustive; budgets/expenses are reviewed for allowability/allocability in relation to the proposed project activities.

- Tuition 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.

Other Funding Utilization (Optional, limit 150 words)

If other resources (e.g. funding, facilities, land, etc.) are necessary for the success of the project (not requested in SARE budget), how will they be provided? Note: your proposal will not be

scored based on outside funding. This information helps our grant review panel determine the feasibility of proposed project outcomes.

Review Process

Proposals are evaluated by an outside review panel of educators, scientists, producers, and others with expertise and involvement in sustainable agriculture. The Western SARE Administrative Council, a board of representatives with strong knowledge and interest in sustainable agriculture, is responsible for the final selection of proposals for funding based on the review panel recommendations. The proposal evaluation criteria are provided below:

Review Criteria

Sustainable Agriculture Relevance and Inclusion of SARE Research	20%
Collaborative Involvement	10%
Project Objectives and Impact	20%
Methods and Timeline	20%
Feasibility and Evaluation of Project Outcomes	20%
Budget	10%

Sustainable Agriculture Relevance and Inclusion of SARE Research: All SARE proposals should focus on issues that relate directly to Western SARE goals listed on page two of this CFP. Local Education and Demonstration proposals must target critical issues that have a high likelihood of increasing the sustainability of agriculture in the Western region. Topics should be carefully selected to ensure they address current or future needs. Proposals must indicate how the project incorporates previously funded SARE research projects and how the project will influence the future of research on the topic(s).

Collaborative Involvement: Proposals should illustrate the meaningful involvement of agricultural producers, personnel from land grant universities, nonprofit organizations, and/or other entities in the project's development, implementation, and outcomes.

Project Objectives and Impact: 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 and producers.) with activities (e.g., to develop and conduct a workshop). Projects should impact educators, practitioners, agricultural professionals, and others understanding and implementation of sustainable agricultural practices.

Methods and Timeline: The activities and methods described must be appropriate for meeting project objectives and outcomes. This includes having the proper expertise and organizations involved. The timeline for achieving the objectives should be clear and reasonable. For more details on a timeline, see a [Gantt Chart](#).

Feasibility and Evaluation of Project Outcomes: Proposals must address the desired outcomes in each of the following areas, describing how they will be assessed, measured, and documented:

- Improving the knowledge base of project participants and/or others in a sustainable agriculture topic or area.
- Increasing the likelihood that project participants will use what they learn (intention to adopt).
- For multi-year projects, demonstrating the extent to which participants used new knowledge and skills in subsequent educational activities in sustainable agriculture or in farm or ranch operations.

Budget: An appropriate budget with good justification is required. Please ensure the narrative explains specific line items so they may be fully understood.

Key Points for Proposal Development

Project Includes Previously Funded SARE Research: The objective of the Local Education and Demonstration grant proposals is to help address barriers to the adoption of previous SARE-funded projects and educate producers and agricultural professionals on the successes and challenges that may be realized by the practice. Proposals may incorporate relevant components from multiple research-based SARE projects in any SARE region. Search the [SARE Project Database](#) to discover project results via project reports. Research-based projects, by region, include:

- [Western](#) – Farmer/Rancher, Graduate Student, Professional+Producer, Research & Education, Sabbatical
- [North Central](#) – Farmer/Rancher, Graduate Student, Partnership, Research & Education
- [Northeast](#) – Farmer, Graduate Student, Partnership, Research & Education, Research for Novel Approaches in Sustainable Agriculture
- [Southern](#) – Graduate Student, On-Farm Research, Producer, Research & Education

One project per year limit per PI: Multiple submissions are accepted. Only one application (from any one individual principal investigator) can be awarded for any Western SARE competitive program in a single grant budget cycle.

Multidisciplinary and multi-organizational participation: A goal of the program is to foster the development of a broad-based team to address one or more key issues in sustaining agriculture. Multidisciplinary and multi-organizational efforts that include private or public entities are encouraged. A leader/PI of previous SARE-funded research, agricultural producers, NGO reps, state or federal agency people and community leaders as well as land grant University personnel should preferably all be included as part of the planning/trainer/educator team.

Three aspects of sustainable agriculture: SARE encourages projects that integrate environmental, social, and economic aspects of sustainable agriculture. Proposals should

emphasize an integrated or holistic approach with methods and outputs that support a broad-based educational effort.

Training and educational methodology: Proposals must demonstrate adequate skills of project team members to conduct the project activities. Trainer/educator teams are encouraged to develop new and innovative ways to facilitate learning. Projects that create electronic or written educational products (e.g. manuals, web-based information, or databases) should have an accompanying training component for using that product, such as training sessions or tutorials. Please be specific in describing how you intend to reach and engage the targeted audience including addressing difficulties accessing opportunities due to language, culture, location, or resources.

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.

Location: Proposed projects must conduct work within the Western SARE region of the United States, and be awarded to an entity that has demonstrated fiscal responsibility and expertise in sustainable agriculture and is able and qualified to receive funds from the U.S. Government. Projects should address needs within the Western SARE region.

Letters of support: Letters of support are intended to strengthen the rationale and need of the project. For example, letters of support can come from producers, agricultural entities, non-profits working in the discipline, government organizations and others with a level of commitment and involvement in sustainable agriculture.

Selected Proposals

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

Grant Management Overview

Public Domain: While proposals and reviews are confidential, Western SARE considers all funded projects, subsequent reports, and related information to be in the public domain. See details of this stipulation in the Research Results section in [the NIFA Federal Assistance Policy Guide](#).

Notification: The Western SARE Administrative Council will select proposals for funding during March 2027. 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 their proposal's status by March 2027.

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 MSU for all expenses to be reimbursed. Invoices are to be submitted according to the guidelines in the Subaward Agreement. 10% of the awarded amount will be withheld pending receipt and approval of the final report.

Photographs and Videos: Grant recipients are 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 websites 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 be ADA compliant. Thus, including closed captions to visual and audio deliverables is required. For details on producing ADA-compliant media see [here](#).

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

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

Project Modifications and Changes: Changes to the project as originally proposed, such as a change in PI, Co-PI, institution, stated objectives, timeline, budget, etc. should be submitted to the Program Manager via email with a completed [Project Modification Form](#) for consideration and approval by Western SARE. Upon approval of the requested changes, Western SARE staff will notify the PI of approval and update the SARE project profile at projects.sare.org.

Reporting Requirements for Awarded Proposals

An annual report will be required for each year that your project is ongoing. Progress and final reports should describe the progress made on the project, detail the observed results, describe the educational outreach events, include materials produced by the project, and document impacts. All educational outreach activities should include an evaluation component that measures changes in knowledge or awareness, attitudes and opinions, and/or the adoption of new practices by producers or other agricultural professionals. If your project is a one-year project, only a final report should be submitted. Approved project reports will be publicly accessible and may be

viewed and shared with producers, interested policymakers and leaders at community, state, regional and national levels. All educational materials and products must have an electronic version to be included in your reports. ***Annual Reports are due on January 31 of each year of the project. You will have up to 60 days from the Period of Performance end date to submit the Final Report.***

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 [Resources for Managing a Grant](#) and [Helpful Hints for Reporting](#) on the Western SARE website to understand what will be expected if your project is awarded.

How to Apply

We strongly encourage applicants read the entire Call for Proposals before beginning to write the proposal and refer to it regularly in proposal development.

Proposals are due by 12 pm (noon) MDT – October 28, 2026

Go to <https://projects.sare.org>

Grant Program Schedule

October 28, 2026 – Proposals are due by 12:00 PM (noon) *Mountain Daylight Time*

January 2027 – A Technical Review Panel reviews and recommends proposals for funding

February 2027 – Western SARE Administrative Council selects proposals for funding

March 2027 – Proposal status is announced to applicants

Submission Checklist

Project Basic Information

- ☐ Project Start/End Date
- ☐ Primary State/Other State(s)
- ☐ Project Subject Matter(s)
- ☐ Project Practices; Commodities; Benefits and Impact
- ☐ CFP Notification Method
- ☐ Resubmission
- ☐ Western SARE Resources

Project Cooperators

- ☐ Project Cooperator(s)
- ☐ Project Cooperator(s) Roles

Summary

- ☐ Project Summary

Narrative

- ☐ Introduction
- ☐ Relevance and Impact to Western SARE Goals and Sustainable Agriculture
- ☐ Evidence of Previous SARE Research
- ☐ Objectives
- ☐ Methods
- ☐ Timeline

- ☐ Educational Products/Activities
- ☐ Outcomes and Impact
- ☐ Evaluation

Supporting Documents

- ☐ Signature Page
- ☐ Vitae(s)
- ☐ Citations
- ☐ Work with Human Subjects
- ☐ Work with Animals

Budget and Budget Justification

- ☐ Total Project Budget
- ☐ Budget Workbook for Awarded Institution
- ☐ Other Funding Utilization
- ☐ Budget Justification for Awarded Institution
- ☐ Budget Justification for Lower Tier Subaward(s)
- ☐ Program Income
- ☐ Authorized Organizational Representative

Resources

Please review the documents located in the [Resources for Applying](#) section of the Western SARE [website](#) to strengthen your proposal.

Information on past projects can be found at <https://www.projects.sare.org>. We encourage you to visit this website to learn more about sustainable agriculture and the Western SARE program at <https://www.westernsare.org>. 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. 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 e-mail afsic@nal.usda.gov.

Please note that awards provided under these Calls are contingent upon USDA-NIFA authorizing the funding to our Host Institution, Montana State University.

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

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

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.