2023 Call for Proposals
North Central Region SARE
Partnership Grant Program

We use an online submission system.

To submit, go to projects.sare.org

Proposals must be submitted on-line by 4:00 p.m. CDT, October 20, 2022.

You must upload a copy of the application signature page with required institutional signatures (authorized organization representative) with your submitted application. Allow sufficient time to print the draft of your application with the application signoff sheet (downloaded from online system) and submit it to your grants office for review and signatures; then upload the signed page as the final attachment and submit electronically prior to the deadline.

Copies of these instructions can be downloaded from the North Central SARE web site at www.northcentralsare.org as a PDF file. If you prefer a printed application, call 612.626.3113.

Partnership grant program proposals must be submitted on-line at projects.sare.org. The system will open for applications August 10, 2022.

Online Submission Deadline

4:00 p.m. CDT, October 20, 2022

NORTH CENTRAL REGION SARE PARTNERSHIP GRANTS
Application deadline is Thursday, October 20ᵗʰ

The Partnership Grant program funded by the North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCR-SARE) program is intended to foster cooperation between agriculture professionals and small groups of farmers and ranchers to catalyze on-farm research, demonstration, and education activities related to sustainable agriculture. **The "partnership" aspect refers to an ag professional partnering with three independent farming enterprises, working together to solve a problem.** Examples of appropriate projects include on-farm testing of cropping system strategies or grazing systems, cooperative efforts to develop new marketing approaches, investigations into new approaches to processing and/or adding value to sustainably produced farm products, food sovereignty,
and projects that lead to resilient agricultural systems. General guidelines on these grants are below, with more specific details following.

- Partnership Grants are for on-farm research, demonstration and/or educational projects and are funded for up to 24 months.
- Up to $50,000 total funding request per application is allowed. A total of $1,000,000 is available to fund 20 projects this year.
- Last year we received 27 proposals in this grant program and funded 18. The typical funding success rate for program applications prior to last year has been 30 to 50 percent.
- An Agricultural Professional is the grant applicant and the principal investigator.
- Typically, three or more farmers or ranchers are expected to be substantially involved in development and implementation of the project (see further details on role of producers on page 4).
- Each farm/ranch must be an independent and separate/distinct operation.

Any agriculture/natural resource professional in the North Central region may apply. These professionals are:
- university educators including extension agents and specialists
- NRCS field staff
- agricultural consultants (individuals who actively consult with farmers and ranchers as certified crop advisors, soils consultants, ranching consultants, etc.)
- nonprofit or agency staff assisting farmers and ranchers at the local level

We have a strong commitment to diversity. Proposals that involve farmers or ranchers from historically-underserved* populations are encouraged. We also encourage projects that address how the work affects quality of life or other social aspects of sustainability.

USDA defines historically-underserved audiences to include socially-disadvantaged producers, limited-resource producers, beginning farmers/ranchers, and veterans. They further define socially-disadvantaged farmers and ranchers as belonging to the following groups: American Indians or Alaskan Natives, Asians, Blacks or African Americans, Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, and women.

PROPOSAL DETAILS

The following information is required to be provided in the online application system. It is suggested that you prepare the information in a word processor before cutting and pasting each section into the online system. If your information for a given section exceeds the word limit for that section, you will receive an error message from the online application system and be required to shorten that section before successfully completing the application. Word limits are maximums; shorter sections are certainly appropriate.

If you would like additional information about preparing a proposal, you can view a presentation at northcentral.sare.org

Project Coordinator Information

The first time you register in the SARE projects system you will be required to provide individual and organizational contact information. You will also be asked to provide demographic information. The North Central Region SARE program is committed to an ethic of openness, inclusiveness, and diversity in all of its programs, policies, and procedures. To monitor our performance in these areas, **we collect demographic information** from grant applicants the first time they register in the SARE application system. Demographic information is not linked to your proposal and is compiled in a separate database. Submission of the requested information is voluntary.

COVER

Complete general information about the project, including type of project, start date and duration, and requested amount of funding. Your project cannot start before April 1, 2023.

INSTITUTION INFORMATION

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

PROPOSAL

Summary (200 word maximum)

Summarize the research, demonstration, and/or education and outreach components of your proposal and briefly explain these in the context of why this project is important and innovative. What problems or situations are being addressed related to sustainability? How will your project distinctively or creatively address those problems? Identify the agricultural region being targeted and the types of farms or ranches involved in the project.

Project Objectives (100 word maximum)

Provide a list of the achievable objectives of your project. These are major things you plan to accomplish during the project as it relates to research, demonstration, or education activities.

Relevance to Sustainability and Regional Agricultural Concerns (200 word maximum)
Clearly articulate how the project and its possible outcomes are relevant to **all three basic elements of sustainable agriculture, specifically an agricultural system that is economically viable, environmentally sound, and socially responsible**. Proposals that do not explain how the project contributes to sustainability are unlikely to be funded. Also identify how the project addresses a need relevant to local or regional agricultural issues. Where possible, use specific estimates of benefits – for example, potential dollars saved per acre, tons of soil protected from erosion, reduction in inputs or increased biodiversity, number of acres or people affected, markets expanded, etc.

Proposed Activities, including Outreach Plan (500 word maximum)
Provide a detailed plan for the activities you will undertake on the grant, whether it be research, demonstration, education, or outreach activities. Provide a general timeline for activities. For research or demonstration, describe the types of field or livestock treatments to be used and information on the locations involved. Indicate whether the trials are replicated or not and whether economic data will be gathered. For education projects, provide details on who the target audience is for the educational programs, how you will promote the educational program, and what the content will be.

Explain how you will communicate about your project, including through field days, workshops, or other farmer and rancher-oriented events. Provide a list of any educational materials you plan to produce and describe the type of materials – such things as factsheets, PowerPoint presentations, articles, brochures, social media, web-based material, etc.

Roles of Ag Professional(s), Farmers or Ranchers (350 word maximum)
For each ag professional and farmer/rancher involved in the project, state their name, county and state (and organization if relevant) and provide a few sentences on the role of each participant in the project. **Farmers or ranchers should be true partners in the project and fully involved in the project activities.** Describe the roles of the partner farmers in the project and describe how this project is farmer-driven. Note that the ag professional(s) does not count as one of the farmers/ranchers on the project. Normally, at least three farmers or ranchers should be involved in the project. The only exception would be if the project is unique to a set of farmers or ranchers which are small in number in a given area, such as aquaculture producers or certain specialty crop producers; in such cases at least two farmer/ranchers should still be involved in the project locally, and perhaps a third farmer/rancher from another area can be an advisor or collaborator on the project.

Previous Research on this Topic (250 word maximum). What efforts have been made by others to solve the problem? Explain how you are building on past work or research and what makes your project innovative and different from what has already been done. It is recommended that applicants review reports from previous SARE grants on this topic (see projects.sare.org and click on Search Projects).

Outcomes and Impact (200 word maximum)
Identify the outcomes and impacts you expect the project to achieve. Describe how you will measure the impact of your project results on the farming/ranching community. This plan should

also describe changes expected in these farmers or ranchers (new skills or practices, increased knowledge or awareness, changed attitudes or opinions, etc.) and ways to measure these changes such as a before-and-after questionnaire, survey, etc.

Project Evaluation and Reporting Requirements
Please review the documents in the Appendix to strengthen your proposal and to understand what will be expected of you and your project team if you are awarded a grant:
*The *SARE Partnership Logic Model* describes what SARE hopes its project investments will achieve in terms of who is participating, what are the outputs, what outreach is done and what participants learn, do, or improve -- at least in part -- due to the project. Please note that you are not asked to write a logic model, we are just providing information to you as the applicant in the form of a logic model.
*The *Partnership Reporting Expectations List* shows what results you report on during the project and what SARE may assess two to four years after the project's completion.

Budget and Budget Justification (no word limit)
Provide a concise budget, with proper justification, that is appropriate to the proposed project. Your budget line items should be for the total project period, rather than broken down by year.
Special Note: Any single item or piece of equipment over $1000 must be listed separately with proper budget justification.

BUDGET GUIDELINES
Partnership Grant funds may be used for the following purposes:

• Cost of field sampling, crop analysis and educational surveys.

• Materials and supplies needed for the project, including seed, fertilizer, portable fencing or other farming/ranching inputs.

• Reimbursement of farmers and ranchers for their time involved with the project.

• Partial or full cost of small tools and equipment, or any piece of equipment costing less than $5,000. Describe type of equipment (for example, pH meters, balances, scales, etc.), cost and a brief narrative on the intended use of the equipment for project objectives. Any single item or piece of equipment over $1000 must be listed separately with proper budget justification. We also discourage applicants from being focused on equipment purchase. Any equipment that is purchased must be an integral part of the project and needed for project completion.

• Outreach expenses such as holding a field day, tours, making a brochure, creating a webpage, etc.

• Out-of-town travel needed for the project. State purpose, destination, and number of travelers and estimated cost per trip. Foreign travel is generally not allowed in this grant program.

• Local travel (where personal auto is used and reimbursed) needed for project. State purpose and total dollar amount of reimbursement for vehicle use. If any overnight stays are anticipated, include the number of nights and the amount for meals and lodging. (i.e., local travel for site visits to farmers in neighboring counties - $500 for mileage and $500 for meals and lodging (five days @ $100/day) = $1,000). Maximum mileage allowance depends on institutional policy; otherwise use the current federal mileage reimbursement rate.

• Refreshments at field days or group meals for events are allowable if they maintain the continuity of the meeting and to do otherwise will impose arduous conditions on the meeting participants.

• Services of Agricultural Professionals can be compensated - provide hourly rate.

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

Partnership Grant funds may NOT be used for the following purposes:
• Starting or expanding a farm or farm operation.

• Any single piece of equipment costing more than $5,000. This limit **cannot** be used toward the purchase of a piece of equipment or the modification of equipment costing more than $5,000 or

to purchase or purchase parts for tractors, irrigation systems, etc. *Capital expenses for things like land purchases, general farm improvements, and construction of buildings, greenhouses, and laboratories are NOT allowed. Equipment expenditures (defined as single item purchase greater than $5000) are rarely allowed, and you should check with NCR-SARE office before including it in your budget proposal. Costs for things like cameras, computers, video equipment, and other items that could have a wide range of uses beyond the boundaries of the project must be clearly essential to a particular project, in which case applicants must develop a clear justification and make sure that these requests are reasonable, defensible, and not extravagant.*

• Permanent improvement to a farm or ranch, such as constructing or remodeling a building, permanent fencing, etc.

• Any meal that does not maintain the continuity of the meeting.

• Testing of specific commercial products.

OTHER ATTACHMENTS
 (these will be uploaded as files onto the application website)

1. Agricultural Professional's Resume(s): The application must include a resume (two-page maximum) for each agricultural professional involved in the project. Producers are not expected to submit a resume.

2. Farmer/Rancher Letters Verifying Participation: Applications must include letters verifying participation from EACH farmer or rancher listed in the proposal. **Proposals not having a letter from each farmer may be disqualified from consideration.** (Do not submit general letters of support from other individuals or organizations.)

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

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

Schedule of Grant Review and Funding Availability: As noted elsewhere, grants will be due on October 20th, then will be sent out to the appropriate NCR-SARE committee members for competitive review. Funding decisions on this program will be made by late January 2023, with

applicants notified by mid-February. Funds should be available to funded applicants by early April 2023.

Important Items to Remember:
All proposals must have an ag professional identified as the project lead. The definition of who qualifies as an ag professional is on page one of these guidelines. The lead professional, through their institution, is fiscally responsible for the project. You may have more professionals assisting with the project, but only one will be listed as the Principle Investigator. Professionals can be paid for their travel expenses. They can also be compensated for their services.

**All proposals must have farmers or ranchers substantially involved in the project. Reviewers are likely to rate poorly any proposals that do not make it clear how the farmers or ranchers will be actively contributing to the research or education activities. For example, don't just list the farmers and say they will provide land for the research. Describe the process by which they have been and will be involved and any specific ideas the farmers have already contributed to the concept being proposed; project ideas must be based on farmer ideas and concerns. If the farmers or ranchers each have somewhat different roles, be sure to describe their respective roles and contributions.

For purposes of this grant program, a farmer or rancher is someone who raises crops or livestock, especially as a business. Each farmer/rancher identified must be an independent and separate operation.

It is expected that farmers and ranchers will receive compensation for their time involved in a project. North Central Region SARE typically uses a guideline that farmers and ranchers receive an honorarium rate of $200 per day, provided on a prorated basis. Another compensation approach can be used but should be equitable for the farmers or ranchers involved. Please be sure to list or describe the farmer compensation method in the budget part of the proposal.

It is important that you follow directions. SARE staff can disqualify proposals before review if applicants fail to follow directions.

Special Notes
The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs and marital or familial status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audio tape, etc.) should contact NCR-SARE at 612-626-3113 or ncrsare@umn.edu.

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

Grant applicant resources:

A presentation about North Central SARE, this grant program and the application process can be found at northcentral.sare.org.
Information on past projects including summaries, highlights and reports can be found at projects.sare.org. We encourage you to visit this website to learn more about sustainable agriculture and the North Central SARE program.

Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA) will provide information packets on various agricultural issues. If you are contacting ATTRA via e-mail, please provide your role in sustainable agriculture. By mail or fax, please include "ATTRA Information Request" near the top of the correspondence. (Preferred method of contact is telephone.) Contact: ATTRA, P.O. Box 3657, Fayetteville AR 72702, phone: 800-346-9140 (7 a.m. to 7 pm, Central Time), fax: 501-442-9842, web: http://www.attra.ncat.org.

Also, socially disadvantaged and limited resource applicants can seek additional guidance on SARE applications from the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute. **For more information**, please contact:

Grants Adviser: .
See: http://www.michaelfields.org/grant-advising-resources/.

How to Apply:

To apply, please complete your application at the North Central SARE online application system at: projects.sare.org

For assistance with guidelines for this grant program, please contact one of the North Central Region SARE program directors, either Dr. Rob Myers (University of Missouri, email myersrob@missouri.edu, phone 573-882-1547) or Dr. Beth Nelson (University of Minnesota, email bethnelson@umn.edu, phone 612-626-4436).

Checklist for submitting a Partnership Grant proposal:
• Complete all the online required information, including budget.
• Attach the following documents as pdf files to the online application
    - Resume(s) of Ag Professional(s) (2-page maximum for each ag professional)
    - Farmer/Rancher Letters Verifying Participation from each farmer/rancher (Do not submit general letters of support from other individuals or organizations.)
    - Signature Page (instructions for this are part of the online application system)
    - The Animal Welfare Statement (if applicable)

SARE PARTNERSHIP GRANT PROGRAM

Expectations for Grantee Reporting and SARE Post-project Evaluation

Logic Model Category	Performance Indicators	Who Collects/When Reported	
		Grantee Collects/ Reports by End of Project	**SARE Collects/ Post Project** (from Grantee and/or Farmer Partner(s))
Participants	Number of farmers/ranchers participating in research	✓	
	Number of farmers/ranchers reached through outreach	✓	
Outputs: 2 Activities 3 Information 4 Products	Research activities conducted	✓	
	Number and type of Outreach activities conducted to share project results	✓	
	Research results of the project	✓	
	Number of journal articles in press or published *(if produced)*	✓	✓G, F
	Number and types of other, non-refereed outreach publications *(if produced)*	✓	✓G, F
Learning Outcomes	The number of farmers/ranchers directly involved in project who report changes in KASA *(knowledge, attitudes, skills, awareness)*	✓	✓G, F
Action Outcomes	Number of farmers/ranchers directly involved in project who use information learned to adopt a practice, approach, technology *(including what is adopted)*	✓	✓G, F
	New collaborations as a result of project *(by grantee and/or farmers)*	✓	✓G, F
	SARE grant leveraged another grant *(by grantee and/or farmers)*	✓	✓G, F
	Number of citations of project results		✓G, F
Condition Outcomes	Economic, environmental, social benefit(s) for farmers/ranchers from making changes on farm/ranch		✓G, F

SAMPLE

SARE Logic Model – Partnership Grant Programs

Process			Outcomes		
1. Inputs	**2. Participants**	**3. Outputs**	**4. Learning**	**5. Actions**	**6. Conditions**

What SARE provides:	**Who's involved as target audience and partners:**	**What's produced:**	**What's learned:**	**What's done:**	**What's improved:**
Funds for Grants Administration Applicant Guidance Proposal Review **To support competitive grants for:** Integrated research and education projects Extension education about R&E project findings Extension education about other research-based sustainable agriculture practices, strategies, approaches On-farm problem-solving, testing and demonstrations Graduate Student research	**Target audience:** Farmers & Ranchers **Partners:** Scientists, University faculty Extension educators NGOs Technical service providers, NRCS, ARS, EPA and others involved in sustainable agriculture. Grad students Other stakeholders in the food system, including consumers Policy and decision makers, advocates	**Research activities** **Information** from research about: Sustainable ag systems, practices, and principles 3.3 New, innovative practices, methods and technology **Educational activities including:** Farm tours, field days, workshops, webinars **Information products including:** Extension curricula, decision-making tools Extension publications, web media Scientific journal articles Dissertations, theses, presentations Reports, bulletins, white papers	**Farmers and other stakeholders gain or increase:** Knowledge of sustainable ag systems, practices, technologies and approaches Skills in applying new sustainable ag knowledge Understanding of health, safety, economic and environmental impacts of production, management, food choices Knowledge of barriers to, and opportunities for sustainable ag improvements Knowledge and skills for leadership capacity among farmers and ag professionals	**Farmers and Ranchers begin or increase adoption of:** Principles, practices, systems, technologies and approaches suited to long term sustainability **Ag professionals or others begin or increase:** Incorporation of principles and practices from projects into their work New research that builds on SARE-funded R&E projects Incorporation of project findings and related sustainability principles into courses, extension publications, NRCS guides, etc. Support for sustainable ag through purchases, policy change and/or food chain improvements. Collaborations and partnerships for sustainable ag research and education	Market and employment opportunities in agriculture Economic well-being for producers Quality of life for producers and communities Environmental quality and stewardship Efficiency of nonrenewable and on-farm resources use Access to healthy, affordable food Institutional support, policy and professional inquiry into issues of long term agricultural sustainability