

If you are applying for a NCR-SARE Farmer Rancher Grant, **Read These Tips!**

Read the Call for Proposals carefully.

Be sure you have a copy of the current Call for Proposals. There are changes to the application form each year and your proposal can be disqualified if you do not use the current form.

Make sure your goals match SARE goals.

These grants are for farmers and ranchers to conduct on-farm research and education projects that explore and advance sustainable agriculture. They are NOT for funding everyday farming expenses. Grant proposals are evaluated according to how well they match SARE's unique goals and criteria. Proposals that are not a good match will not be funded. See the Call for Proposals for SARE's criteria and visit our website: www.sare.org/ncrsare or call 1-800-529-1342 for an information packet to learn more about SARE's goals.

Follow directions.

Proposals can be disqualified if the applicant does not answer all questions or follow general format directions regarding the number of pages, spacing, signatures, etc. Do include a title that describes your project. Do NOT include photos or appendices. These will not be forwarded to the selection committee. *Re-read the Checklist on page 2 of the Call for Proposals before submitting your proposal.*

Involve other groups and people.

The strongest proposals demonstrate that the project will be planned and carried out by a variety of individuals or organizations. Successful grant projects have involved Extension educators, nonprofit group participants, other farmers or ranchers, and/or other members of the community.

Include a detailed plan for outreach.

It is essential that applicants explain how they will communicate their project results to other farmers, agricultural educators, youth, or other appropriate audiences to help further research, education, and implementation of sustainable agriculture.

Pay close attention to budget guidelines.

Ask for help if you are confused about items that SARE cannot fund or cannot fully fund. Research your expenses and use accurate figures rather than guesses for your budget. Double check your figures. Budget errors, like asking for more than the grant allows, can hurt your chances for funding.

Keep the writing simple and be sure to explain terms and your link to sustainable ag.

Proposals with clear objectives and methods are the most successful. Focus on what you can actually accomplish in a project. Do not promise more than you can deliver. Farmers and ranchers will review your proposal and they know what is and is not practical. Explain in detail how your project contributes to sustainable agriculture: How is it good for the environment? How will it help you be more profitable? How does your project benefit your family and community?

Have someone proof-read your proposal.

A fresh set of eyes can help you identify sections that are unclear, and find typographical errors that you might not otherwise catch. Handwritten proposals are acceptable, but only if they are written very clearly. If reviewers cannot read your writing, you will not get funded.

If you would like a sample Call for Proposals or if you have questions, please contact:

Joan Benjamin, NCR-SARE Associate Regional Coordinator
Phone: 800-529-1342 or 402-472-0809 or e-mail: jbenjamin2@unl.edu