**2021 Northeast SARE Professional Development Grant Program Full Proposal Worksheet**

*This Word document is provided as a courtesy to help you develop your proposal content offline, ensuring it is accurate and complies with the word limits before copying and pasting into the online grant management system.* ***It is NOT intended as a substitute for the application itself*** *as you are required to provide more information in the proposal than what is provided here. Be sure to refer to the Call for Proposals—posted at* [*www.northeastsare.org/PDP*](http://www.northeastsare.org/PDP)*—for complete descriptions of proposal sections and review criteria.*

**Project Summary (450-word limit).** This is a standalone summary of the project; the summary should not refer to subsequent parts of the proposal by using language like, “This will be described later.” The summary should have two elements, as follows. Include the subheadings in the text you enter to identify each element.

Problem and Justification: A brief description of the problem or opportunity for the farmers supported by the service providers in this project, and justify the need from the perspective of both.

Solution and Approach: The proposed solution to the problem or opportunity that will benefit service providers to serve this farmer audience, and the approach for reaching or carrying out the solution.

**Performance Target Narrative (100-word limit).** Write a narrative statement that combines all sections of the performance target as one sentence.

**Statement of Need:**

**Description of Problem or Opportunity (400-word limit).** Explain the problem or opportunity for farmers in the Northeast that the service providers project will address and why it is important to sustainable agriculture in the Northeast and will contribute to Northeast SARE’s outcome statement. Provide the number, type, size and location of Northeast farms potentially affected. Provide evidence (data) to justify claims made in the description of the problem or opportunity. Data may come from the literature, the unpublished work of others, farmer surveys, extension surveys, census data, etc.

**Solution and Benefits (400-word limit).** State how the project will benefit service providers with new knowledge, skills, attitudes or awareness in a way that improves their ability to serve farmers.

Provide evidence that supports how and why the solution is expected to be effective such as data from previous work, or quantified observations of farmer or service provider experience. Claims made about the proposed solution must be justified; the same sources listed in the Description of Problem or Opportunity section above may be used.

**Service Provider Interest (300-word limit).** Specify the number and type of service providers you will engage in this project as participants, and the total pool, including geographic range, from which you will recruit. Explain their interest in helping farmers address the problem or opportunity through participation in the project. These should be service providers who are concerned about the problem and are in a position to teach, advise, or assist farmers. Describe evidence you have that service providers need or want the work proposed by your project. Justify statements of interest with numerical data (not expressed as percentages of unknown numbers) from surveys or other quantified inquiries conducted by the applicant (or others) that demonstrate service provider interest in participating in the project**.**

**Achieving the Performance Target:**

**Education Plan (650-word limit).** Describe the education plan you will conduct to teach service providers. Describe the knowledge, awareness, skills, and attitudes that service providers will acquire, and the support you will provide to them in their efforts to help farmers address the problem or opportunity. The plan must be realistic, describe content and methods appropriate to engaging service providers, and likely lead to achievement of the performance target. The education plan must include:

* Realistic number of service providers who will participate.
* Methods for recruiting and engaging those service providers.
* The types of project interactions and educational experiences in which service providers participate (in sequence) to facilitate learning (e.g., workshops, demonstrations, webinars, consultations, etc.). Concepts and curriculum topics in which service providers will gain new knowledge, skills, attitudes or awareness.
* Methods for supporting service providers as they learn, plan, and take actions throughout the project (e.g., interviews, software, record keeping tools, fact sheets, videos or other instructive materials).

**Milestones (Limit of 12 milestones – 75 words each).** Milestones list logically connected learning, skills acquisition, knowledge gain, increased awareness, or changes in attitude that service providers will accomplish, in sequence, as they participate in activities outlined in the education plan. The milestones will also include verification steps. The Performance Target is not a milestone—rather, milestones are the changes or actions that will lead to the performance target. Milestones describe what quantified service providers (and farmers if included) will experience as they interact with the project team– from recruitment and pre-training engagement, through educational experiences, and support for implementation of new practices, to documentation of those practices and resulting benefits, to providing that information to the project team during verification. Milestones are written in terms of what the service providers will do and learn; they are not a plan of work or list of activities that the project team will perform. If funded, the project’s milestones will become the benchmarks for required progress reports; as such, they must be verifiable (measurable). Each milestone is written as a statement with three required elements and one optional element. These are entered online into separate fields:

* The interim action and/or learning step in which service providers participate (include recruitment, educational, or verification steps AND specific knowledge, skill, attitude or awareness changes as relevant);
* Proposed realistic number of service providers who participate;
* (Optional) Proposed Number of farmers who participate; and
* Proposed completion date. Recurring milestones may be combined; list the completion date for these as its final occurrence.

**Verification Plan (300-word limit)**. Describe how and when data will be collected to measure the extent to which each milestone was achieved and, ultimately, how the performance target was achieved. The verification plan should include:

* Data collection methods and tools project leaders will use to collect milestone and performance target data from service provider participants and farmers if you include a farmer performance target in your project.
* Timing of when data will be collected and/or reported to you by service providers.
* Supportive guidance and tools you will provide to service providers to inform them of the performance target, help them record data about actions and results, if appropriate, and be prepared to respond to your requests for data about their follow-up actions.
* Examples of supportive guidance and tools for beneficiaries include the following:
* Project introduction or enrollment forms that explain the project focus, scope, and performance target, and that are used to obtain written commitment to participate.
* Data sheets, templates or checklists where participants can record data and information about their project activities on paper or online.

**Project Team:**

**Key Individuals (400-word limit)**. Briefly describe yourself as the project leader (principal investigator) and other key individuals (cooperators) who will devote significant time to the project. Descriptions include name, title, business or organization, skills, relevant experience, and primary responsibilities on the project. You should demonstrate your team’s ability to manage the project and conduct its activities. If some key individuals have not yet been identified, provide a description of the type/qualifications of the persons who would be recruited to fill those positions. Also name any other individuals and their organizations, outside of your own, that will be receiving funds requested from SARE to carry out the project, as well as those organizations who will be contributing significant money, personnel time, facilities or equipment to the project.

**Project Advisory Committee (350-word limit)**. An advisory committee consisting of at least two farmers and one agricultural service provider (eg., Extension, NRCS or other federal or state agency, private or non-profit organizations, veterinarian, or other farm advisor) is required to provide input on project design and implementation. Additional people representing other affiliations, such as researchers, may also be included on the committee. The committee does not include Key Individuals, but may include others involved in the project. Provide the names and affiliations of those who will serve on the advisory committee.

Describe the extent to which advisory committee members have provided input during proposal development, and how they will be engaged during the project, for example in assessment of farmer interest, providing feedback on preliminary findings, and sharing project activities and findings. Describe how and when advisory committee meetings will occur.

**Previous Work:**

**Literature Review (1,200-word limit).** Outline the scientific foundation and merits of your project and identify and explain the references used to understand the problems, challenges, and opportunities your project will address, as well as current knowledge associated with the proposed solution and educational methods used. Include only those sources most relevant to your project. This section is the place to convince reviewers that there is a body of knowledge that provides a compelling rationale for the project and its educational approach. Clearly describe what others have done and how your project will complement or build upon the results of previous efforts. Show that you are informed about previous relevant research or initiatives including grants from SARE if they are relevant to your project. The national SARE database of projects (projects.sare.org/search-projects) contains projects from all four SARE regions and is searchable by state, type of grant, author and keyword.

**Citation List**. Provide a list of full citations referenced in the literature review and elsewhere in your proposal. Include only those citations directly related to the proposed project.