



How it Works: 2017

Southern SARE's handy guide to proposal submission, review
and grant administration

Research & Education Grants	page 3
Large Systems Grants	page 7
Graduate Student Grants	page 10
Professional Development Program Grants	page 12
Producer Grants	page 15
On-Farm Research Grants	page 17
Sustainable Community Innovation Grants	page 19
Conflict of Interest Policy	page 21
Grants Schedule	page 22

**Get Southern SARE Calls for Proposals at
<http://www.southernsare.org>
All proposals must be submitted online.**

This document is current as of May 2017.

Grant funds are a boon to researchers, farmers, educators and communities, but the paperwork can be intimidating.

At Southern SARE we continually look for ways to make our grant programs easier to navigate. This guide will answer questions you may never have thought to ask about how a grant program works.

The mission of Southern SARE is to expand knowledge and adoption of sustainable agriculture practices that are

- economically viable,
- environmentally sound
- good for all members of the community.

Research and Education Grants

Proposal Process

Southern SARE uses an online pre-proposal/proposal submission system for Research and Education grants. Each year input is solicited from the Administrative Council (AC) on changes needed for the next year's call, including changes in priority areas.

Distribution of Call

A Southern SARE calendar showing the release date of all Calls for Proposals is maintained on the Southern SARE website and also appears in the annual Index and How It Works. CFP distribution includes announcements posted to the website as well as announcements sent by e-mail to Southern Region AC members, state sustainable ag coordinators and current and former project investigators. The release of each CFP is also announced on our social media sites (<http://www.twitter.com/southernshare> and <http://www.facebook.com/southsare>) as well as via press releases, SANET-MG (sustainable ag network message group), SAED (sustainable ag education discussion group) and the PDP discussion list. Each one is also sent to ATTRA for inclusion in Weekly Harvest, an e-mail service to more than 300 print and online agriculture publications. For more specialized audiences, some non-public e-mail lists including USDA-ARS and NRCS offices are used when appropriate. The national SARE Outreach Communications Manager has a master distribution list that goes to dozens of lists for specific academic disciplines, RC&Ds, non-profit groups and media outlets. The regional Public Relations Coordinator and the national Outreach Communications Manager coordinate which lists are most appropriate for each CFP. Interested individuals are encouraged to join our e-mailing list for distribution of calls, as well as other Southern SARE news, at our website: <http://www.southernshare.org>.

Contents of Call

The process begins by clicking on the R&E call at the Southern SARE website: <http://www.southernshare.org/Grants/Apply-for-a-Grant>. The CFP provides a description of the USDA SARE program including the definition of sustainable agriculture found in the SARE authorizing legislation, the program objectives and instructions for online submission.

The CFP notes that all projects must meet the following criteria:

- Project outcomes must focus on developing sustainable agriculture systems or moving existing systems toward sustainable agriculture as defined in the 1990 Farm Bill.
- The project's central purpose should be research-based with an educational/outreach component to extend the project findings to the public.
- The project should take a systems research approach.

To encourage systems research in sustainable agriculture, SSARE has three categories in which applicants may submit proposals:

- Projects That Concentrate On PRODUCTION RESEARCH
- Projects That Concentrate On POSTHARVEST/FOOD SYSTEM RESEARCH
- Projects That Encompass both PRODUCTION AND POSTHARVEST/FOOD SYSTEM RESEARCH.

The SSARE uses six priority areas to point applicants to the research topics desired by the AC:

- limited resource farmers;
- organic farming systems;
- environmentally sound practices/agricultural ecosystems;
- marketing/economic development;
- policy, program evaluation and quality of life;
- women in sustainable agriculture

The CFP also notes that reviewers will pay attention to the outcomes of the research project and how they meet the mission of the SARE program.

The CFP provides a discussion of the review process that stresses that projects should be research-based, that farmers and end-user involvement are critical, and an outreach component is required.

The CFP includes "Ten Tips for Writing a Stronger SARE Proposal."

Research and Education Grants

Review Process

In general, the SSARE review process meets the criteria for evaluation of projects as specified in the Operational Guidelines of the SARE program as authorized by legislation. These include:

Priority for funding projects under Chapter 1 will be based on needs and opportunities identified by the regional Administrative Council (AC). In general, selection should be on the basis of:

- Relevance of the project to the goals of the program;
- Appropriateness of the design of the project;
- National or regional adaptability of the findings and outcomes of the project [7 USC 5811(c)(1)].

Priority should be given to projects that:

- Closely coordinate research and Extension activities;
- Indicate how findings will be made readily usable by farmers/ranchers and other intended audiences;
- Maximize the direct and meaningful involvement of farmer/ranchers;
- Involve cooperation between farmers/ranchers, non-profit organizations, colleges and universities, and government agencies [7 USC 5811(c)(2)].

The review process incorporates three entities within SSARE: the Administrative Council (AC), the Project Review Committee of the AC (made up of AC members only), and outside technical reviewers. The Project Review Committee is constituted to reflect the composition of the AC. Specifically, the members are made up of at least three farmers, one NGO representative, one from 1890 and one from 1862 institutions, one from the PDP Leadership Committee, one government agency representative, one Quality of Life or Agribusiness representative, and one reviewer from the national SARE office.

The full Administrative Council is involved in screening pre-proposals. All pre-proposals are reviewed by four AC members who vote “yes” or “no.” Presently, groups of the four random AC members are put together that represent each of the stakeholder groups (producer, agency, 1890/1862, other reps such as agribusiness, quality of life, and NGOs) that then read all of the same proposals. The proposal is to assign the four reviewers in a completely random fashion so the same four people are not reading identical proposals. A box will be added for each proposal that asks AC members, after they have voted “yes” or “no”, to write a brief written explanation for their vote -- limited to 50 words. After the AC votes on the pre-proposals, members of the Project Review Committee meet to decide which of the pre-proposals to invite for full proposals. Ordinarily, only those pre-proposals that received votes of 4 “yes” and 0 “no” or 3 “yes” and 1 “no” are considered for full proposal invitation.

During the preproposal review stage, the Southern SARE Administrative Council (AC) seeks to invite about one-third of the submissions for the full-proposal stage. In FY17, for example we received 65 preproposals and invited 20 to be submitted as full proposals (of which we will fund about one-third). During the first round of yes-no voting, 34 of the preproposals received either 4 yes-0 no votes or 3 yes, 1 no. The Project Review Committee (PRC) then selected 20 for full proposal submission. Therefore, not all 4-0, 3-1 preproposals were invited for further submission.

In deciding which pre-proposals to invite for full proposals, the members of the Project Review Committee first focus primarily on CONCEPTUAL issues:

1. Does the pre-proposal focus on sustainable agricultural systems or making existing systems more sustainable?
2. Is the central purpose research-based with an educational outreach component to extend the project findings to the public?
3. Do the objectives indicate a systems approach to the research?
4. Are farmers integrated into the R&E plan?
5. Are the objectives clear?
6. Are the methods clear and reasonable to meet the objectives?
7. Should the PI be invited to submit a full proposal?

Three members of the PRC will be assigned to each full proposal. They will discuss the proposal at the pre-meeting conference call and at the AC meeting if needed. In addition, PRC reviewers will look at the non-technically reviewed parts of the proposal (i.e. farming system, relevance to sustainable agriculture, outreach and evaluation) and fill in the boxes with comments. How the proposals are presented on screen will be rearranged for both the pre-proposals and full proposals. For pre-proposals it would be abstract, statement of problem, define the system, sustainable agriculture relevance, objectives, methods, budget, and literature cited.

PIs will not be given a full review of their proposal at the pre-proposal stage. The Project Review Committee votes “yes” or “no” on invitations to full proposals. No other information is available for PIs.

Comprehensive reviews are undertaken at the full proposal stage. For those submissions invited to the full proposal stage, instructions for online submissions will be provided. When PIs submit their full proposals, the appropriate indirect cost allocations should be added to the budget.

The invited full proposals are submitted in November. Three outside reviewers, selected for their disciplinary expertise, read and comment on each proposal and enter their recommendations in the on-line system. The outside reviewers are solicited at the summer AC meeting on a yearly basis. Attention is paid to selecting these members from as many different institutions, disciplines and backgrounds as possible. A breadth of reviewers is desired. Outside technical reviewers will only review the technical sections of the proposal and not the relevance to sustainable agriculture, outreach or evaluation sections. The outside reviewers will be asked to rate each proposal as High Quality, Fundable, Revise/Resubmit in subsequent years with specific suggestions or Not Fundable.

After the outside technical reviews are completed, three members of the Project Review committee will be assigned to each full proposal. They will be responsible for presenting each proposal for consideration and will provide PIs with a written review, taking into account both the technical reviews and the Project Review Committee deliberations.

The strengths and weaknesses of each proposal are clearly stated and each receives consideration in the AC review process. These reviews will be sent back to the PIs after the final awards are decided. The reviewers will include any information added as part of the Project Review Committee’s deliberations at the winter AC meeting.

At the winter AC meeting, the Project Review Committee recommends to the full AC those projects to be funded from the list of proposals. How the proposals will be presented on screen will be rearranged for both the pre-proposals and full proposals. For full proposals it would be statement of the problem, farming system, sustainable agriculture relevance, objective, approach and methods, information dissemination and outreach, evaluation, budget, literature cited, and vitas. At this stage, budgets are examined. The AC is responsible for ensuring that the selected projects reflect not only scientific merit, but include projects from as many priority areas as possible, from across states, institutions, stakeholder groups and NGOs. In short, the AC looks to approve a diverse and inclusive set of funded projects each year. The comments given to PIs are constructive and explicit. It is important that the review comments be of adequate substance to assist an author in meaningful revision.

The time from submission of a pre-proposal to announcement of awards is from March to February.

Award Process

Award letters are sent to each new project investigator along with any budget alterations requested by the AC. The project investigator revises the project design and budget to reflect the comments and submits this along with a letter of acceptance. All new grantees are given contact information regarding SARE-sponsored projects within their state, state coordinator contacts and other information to facilitate communication among all grant programs.

The SSARE office checks the approved proposal budgets for any mathematical errors and required budgetary detail. Once reviewed, the awarded proposal is sent to the College of Agriculture Business Office where they are reviewed and forwarded to the University of Georgia Sponsored Programs Office. The Sponsored Programs office verifies the grant recipient has an audit on file at the University. A sub-award agreement and a Federal Form 1048 (USDA Certification regarding Debarment) are sent to the grant recipients to be signed. If the project involves animals, the PI must send verification that the project has been reviewed and approved by their university’s animal care committee (or the University of Georgia animal care committee if the PI’s institution or agency is not affiliated with a university). The verification does not require a site visit by the university animal care committee but is simply a form they complete based on details provided in the proposal. Upon receipt of all necessary completed and signed forms, Sponsored Programs issues the original purchase order to encumber the awarded funds. These forms, along with the sub-award, are forwarded to the UGA Agricultural Business Office.

The Agricultural Business Office verifies the awarded amount and that it was part of the SSARE prime cooperative agreement with USDA and forwards the sub-award to the Contracts and Grants Office. It is here that all sub-award information is entered into the UGA accounting system (i.e., sub-recipient name, address, amount, and period of award). This process may take approximately three months from the time the grant proposal is approved to be funded by SSARE. Grant recipients can begin to expend funds when notified by the S-SARE office. However, invoices for reimbursements cannot be accepted and processed until the finalized award process is complete.

Once the award process is finalized, the sub-recipients must submit invoices for reimbursement. Upon receipt of an invoice, the SSARE accountant will review the invoice for details and allowable charges, update the balance to be paid on the grant, and initiate the process for payment. Grant recipients can expect to receive payment within four weeks. This time period may fluctuate if an invoice is held due to missing information.

Reporting Requirements: New, Progress, Final

A New Project Report must be filed as soon as the contract is signed. The regional administrator will create a spot in the national database for each new project, and the project investigator will receive an e-mail from MySARE granting access to the online project. Project Investigators will be instructed to enter information from their original proposal and set up an online presence in the reporting system.

Annual Progress Reports are due in April each year until project activities are completed, at which time a Final Report is due. The project's final invoice cannot be paid until the report is submitted and approved. A request for reports is e-mailed to project investigators in February. Annual Reports are due the first week of April every year. Final Reports are due 45 days after the project ends.

As soon as the Regional Administrator approves the electronic submission, the report is available worldwide on the Internet. Charts, tables and other supporting data may be submitted electronically.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Upon award, each project is assigned to a member of the Administrative Council for monitoring and evaluation. When the first-year progress report is submitted, the AC member will evaluate the progress of the project using a checklist. The AC member will update the entire AC on the progress of the project. If concerns develop, the Regional Coordinator will contact the project investigator and will work with him/her to address those concerns. The same process will occur each year. At the end of the project, the AC member will update the AC regarding the project.

Large Systems Grants

Proposal Process

Southern SARE uses an online proposal submission system for Large Systems Grants. Each year that Large System Grants are offered, input is solicited from the Administrative Council (AC) on changes needed for the call.

Distribution of Call

A Southern SARE calendar showing the release date of all Calls for Proposals is maintained on the Southern SARE website and also appears in the annual Index and How It Works. CFP distribution includes announcements posted to the website as well as announcements sent by e-mail to Southern Region AC members, state sustainable ag coordinators and current and former project investigators. The release of each CFP is also announced on our social media sites (<http://www.twitter.com/southernsare> and <http://www.facebook.com/southsare>) as well as via press releases, SANET-MG (sustainable ag network message group), SAED (sustainable ag education discussion group) and the PDP discussion list. Each one is also sent to ATTRA for inclusion in Weekly Harvest, an e-mail service to more than 300 print and online agriculture publications. For more specialized audiences, some non-public e-mail lists including USDA-ARS and NRCS offices are used when appropriate. The national SARE Outreach Communications Manager has a master distribution list that goes to dozens of lists for specific academic disciplines, RC&Ds, non-profit groups and media outlets. The regional Public Relations Coordinator and the national Outreach Communications Manager coordinate which lists are most appropriate for each CFP. Interested individuals are encouraged to join our e-mailing list for distribution of calls, as well as other Southern SARE news, at our website: <http://www.southernsare.org>.

Contents of Call

The process begins by clicking on the Large Systems call at the Southern SARE website: <http://www.southernsare.org/Grants/Apply-for-a-Grant>. The CFP provides a description of the USDA SARE program including the definition of sustainable agriculture found in the SARE authorizing legislation, the program objectives and instructions for online submission. The CFP notes that Large Systems Research Grants are strictly intended for systems research teams who have successful ongoing long-term systems research programs but need support to accomplish more long-term research goals. The S-SARE support can be up to 3 years dependent on availability of Southern SARE Program funding. Additional 3-year grants are possible, pending a review by the SSARE Administrative Council, a successful response to future CFP's, as well as the availability of program funding.

The CFP provides a discussion of the review process that stresses Large Systems Grants must incorporate the long-term, research-oriented approach required for systems research. Thus, outcome expectations for this grant program have been adjusted to assure effective, appropriate results. Each proposal should have defined research outcomes that contribute in a specific way to the pool of knowledge about sustainable agriculture and systems design. Specific performance targets that include the adoption of new farm practices are not required for systems research projects. However, achievement-of-knowledge outcomes (such as published research findings) are still required.

Review Process

In general, the SSARE review process meets the criteria for evaluation of projects as specified in the Operational Guidelines of the SARE program as authorized by legislation. These include:

Priority for funding projects under Chapter 1 will be based on needs and opportunities identified by the regional Administrative Council (AC). In general, selection should be on the basis of:

- Relevance of the project to the goals of the program;
- Appropriateness of the design of the project;
- National or regional adaptability of the findings and outcomes of the project [7 USC 5811(c)(1)].

All Large Systems Research Grant proposals will be evaluated by the members of the Administrative Council of Southern SARE who make up the Project Review Committee. The Project Review Committee is constituted to reflect the composition of the AC. Specifically, the members are made up of three farmers, one NGO representative, one from 1890 and one from 1862 institutions, one agency representative, one Quality of Life or Agribusiness representative, and one reviewer from the National SARE office.

The SSARE Project Review Committee will focus on the following:

1. Does the proposal describe an established long-term systems program?
2. Does the described program focus on sustainable approaches to solving agricultural problems for farmers and/or ranchers?
3. Does the described program address issues of importance to Southern agriculture?
4. Does the proposal describe a specific research project to be undertaken?
5. Are farmers involved in the planning, design and implementation of the long-term systems research program?
6. Are there already program results as evidenced by publications, etc.?
7. Is there current funding on this program?
8. Suitability of the methods to be employed (if requested).

The Project Review Committee of the SSARE Administrative Council (AC) evaluates the proposals. All deliberations are confidential. Any feedback provided is restricted to the written comments agreed upon by the AC Project Review committee. Inquiries arising from the written comments should be directed to a staff person. Review feedback will only be provided to the author.

Once the SSARE Project Review Committee has selected one or more proposals it feels meet the review criteria, the selected proposals may be sent out to external technical reviewers if necessary. At this stage, applicants may be required to submit evidence of the suitability of the methods to be employed. The technical reviewers will review the proposals for technical soundness.

At the February AC meeting, the Project Review Committee recommends to the full AC those proposals to be funded from the entire list of Large Systems Research Grant proposals. The AC is responsible for ensuring that the selected proposals reflect not only scientific merit, but also include participants from across states, institutions and stakeholder groups. The time from submission of a Large Systems Research Grant proposal to announcement of awards is from September to February.

Award Process

Award letters are sent to each new project investigator along with the Project Review Committee comments and any budget alterations requested by the AC. The project investigator revises the project design and budget to reflect the comments and submits this along with a letter of acceptance. All new grantees are given contact information regarding SARE-sponsored projects within their state, state coordinator contacts and other information to facilitate communication among all grant programs.

The SSARE office checks the approved proposal budgets for any mathematical errors and required budgetary detail. Once reviewed, the awarded proposal is sent to the College of Agriculture Business Office where they are reviewed and forwarded to the University of Georgia Sponsored Programs Office. The Sponsored Programs Office verifies the grant recipient has an audit on file at the University. A sub-award agreement and a Federal Form 1048 (USDA Certification regarding Debarment) are sent to the grant recipients to be signed. If the project involves animals, the PI must send verification that the project has been reviewed and approved by their university's animal care committee (or the University of Georgia animal care committee if the PI's institution or agency is not affiliated with a university). The verification does not require a site visit by the university animal care committee, but is simply a form they complete based on details provided in the proposal. Upon receipt of all necessary completed and signed forms, Sponsored Programs issues the original purchase order to encumber the awarded funds. These forms, along with the sub-award, are forwarded to the UGA Agricultural Business Office.

The Agricultural Business Office verifies the awarded amount and that it was part of the SSARE prime cooperative agreement with USDA and forwards the sub-award to the Contracts and Grants Office. It is here that all sub-award information is entered into the UGA accounting system (i.e., sub-recipient name, address, amount, and period of award). This process may take approximately three months from the time the grant proposal is approved to be funded by SSARE. Grant recipients can begin to expend funds from the date of the award. However, invoices for reimbursements cannot be accepted and processed until the finalized award process is complete.

Once the award process is finalized, the sub-recipients must submit invoices for reimbursement. Upon receipt of an invoice, the SSARE accountant will review the invoice for details and allowable charges, update the balance to be paid on the grant, and initiate the process for payment. Grant recipients can expect to receive payment within four weeks. This time period may fluctuate if an invoice is held due to missing information.

Large Systems Grants

Reporting Requirements: New, Progress, Final

A New Project Report must be filed as soon as the contract is signed. SSARE staff will create a spot in the national database for each new project and then send new Project Investigators instructions for filing their online report.

Annual Progress Reports are due in April each year until project activities are completed, at which time a Final Report is due. The project's final invoice cannot be paid until the report is submitted and approved.

Continued funding for SSARE Large Systems Research Grant recipients will be based on an Annual Report demonstrating to the SSARE Administrative Council how the previous year's funding was used and what would be accomplished with the next year's funding.

As soon as the Regional Administrator approves the electronic submission, the report is available worldwide on the Internet. Charts, tables and other supporting data may be submitted electronically.

Continued funding of a SSARE Large Systems Research Grant will be dependent on continued funding of the SARE program at levels that allow this type of funding.

Receiving a Large Systems Research Grant will not disqualify the recipients from competing for other Southern SARE grants.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Upon award, the Director of the S-SARE program and the Project Review Committee work with the grant recipients to develop an on-going evaluation process. At the end of each three-year cycle, the grant recipient will re-apply for another three years.

Graduate Student Grants

Proposal Process

Southern SARE uses an online proposal submission system for Graduate Student Grants. Each year that Graduate Student Grants are offered, input is solicited from the Administrative Council (AC) on changes needed for the call.

Distribution of Call

A Southern SARE calendar showing the release date of all Calls for Proposals is maintained on the Southern SARE website and also appears in the annual Index and How It Works. CFP distribution includes announcements posted to the website as well as announcements sent by e-mail to Southern Region AC members, state sustainable ag coordinators and current and former project investigators. The release of each CFP is also announced on our social media sites (<http://www.twitter.com/southernsare> and <http://www.facebook.com/southsare>) as well as via press releases, SANET-MG (sustainable ag network message group), SAED (sustainable ag education discussion group) and the PDP discussion list. Each one is also sent to ATTRA for inclusion in Weekly Harvest, an e-mail service to more than 300 print and online agriculture publications. For more specialized audiences, some non-public e-mail lists including USDA-ARS and NRCS offices are used when appropriate. The national SARE Outreach Communications Manager has a master distribution list that goes to dozens of lists for specific academic disciplines, RC&Ds, non-profit groups and media outlets. The regional Public Relations Coordinator and the national Outreach Communications Manager coordinate which lists are most appropriate for each CFP. Interested individuals are encouraged to join our e-mailing list for distribution of calls, as well as other Southern SARE news, at our website: <http://www.southernsare.org>.

Contents of Call

The Graduate Student Grant CFP is designed to solicit proposals from Master's and PhD students to conduct research projects that promote sustainable agriculture. Because graduate student research projects are, by nature, relatively small and focused research projects, there are no requirements on cooperators other than the student's major professor, who is a co-applicant and the Project Investigator on the proposal.

The CFP provides the USDA definition of sustainable agriculture and a format for proposal submission. It also informs applicants what things are and are not fundable with a Graduate Student Grant. The CFP provides the criteria for proposal review so applicants know how their proposals will be reviewed.

The CFP is released in March and completed proposals are due in June. Awards are made in mid August and announced no later than the end of that month.

The CFP is revised, to some extent, each year based upon the input of the Project Review Committee. Once the committee's input has been incorporated into the new CFP, it is brought before the whole AC for comment, amendment if needed, and approval at the February AC meeting.

Review Process

Proposals received by the deadline are first reviewed by external technical reviewers. Each year, a request is sent to out to SSARE e-mail lists for technical reviewers willing to review proposals.

The technical reviewers review the proposals to which they are assigned on the SSARE Online Proposal System. They assign a rank of either high priority, fundable, marginal or non-fundable. They also write review summaries which are used to inform the reviews of the Project Review Committee of the Administrative Council (AC). The review summaries are also ultimately sent out to all applicants with the award notifications.

After the technical reviewers have completed their reviews, the Project Review Committee of the Administrative Council, informed by the technical review rankings and review comments, meets at the August Administrative Council meeting and selects proposals to be recommended for funding. Later, at the same AC meeting, the AC votes on the slate of proposals put forward by the Project Review Committee and approves the proposals to be funded.

The time from submission of a proposal to announcement of awards is from March to August.

Award Process

Award e-mails and letters are sent to each new project investigator along with the technical reviewer comments. All new grantees are given contact information regarding SARE-sponsored projects within their state, state coordinator contacts and other information to facilitate communication among all grant programs.

The SSARE office checks the approved proposal budgets for any mathematical errors and required budgetary detail. Once reviewed, the awarded proposal is sent to the College of Agriculture Business Office where it is reviewed and forwarded to the University of Georgia Sponsored Programs Office. The Sponsored Programs Office verifies the grant recipient has an audit on file at the University. A sub-award agreement and a Federal Form 1048 (USDA Certification regarding Debarment) are sent to the grant recipients to be signed. If the project involves animals, the PI must send verification that the project has been reviewed and approved by their university's animal care committee (or the University of Georgia animal care committee if the PI's institution or agency is not affiliated with a university). The verification does not require a site visit by the university animal care committee but is simply a form they complete based on details provided in the proposal. Upon receipt of all necessary completed and signed forms, Sponsored Programs issues the original purchase order to encumber the awarded funds. These forms, along with the sub-award, are forwarded to the UGA Agricultural Business Office.

The Agricultural Business Office verifies the awarded amount and that it was part of the SSARE prime cooperative agreement with USDA and forwards the sub-award to the Contracts and Grants Office. It is here that all sub-award information is entered into the UGA accounting system (i.e., sub-recipient name, address, amount, and period of award). This process may take approximately three months from the time the grant proposal is approved to be funded by SSARE. Grant recipients can begin to expend funds from the date of the award. However, invoices for reimbursements cannot be accepted and processed until the finalized award process is complete.

Once the award process is finalized, the sub-recipients must submit invoices for reimbursement. Upon receipt of an invoice, the SSARE accountant will review the invoice for details and allowable charges, update the balance to be paid on the grant, and initiate the process for payment. Grant recipients can expect to receive payment within four weeks. This time period may fluctuate if an invoice is held due to missing information.

Reporting Requirements: New, Progress, Final

A New Project Report must be filed as soon as the contract is signed. The regional administrator will create a spot in the national database for each new project, and the project investigator will receive an e-mail from MySARE granting access to the online project. Project Investigators will be instructed to enter information from their original proposal and set up an online presence in the reporting system.

Annual Progress Reports are due in April each year until project activities are completed, at which time a final report is due. The project's final invoice cannot be paid until the report is submitted and approved.

A request for reports is e-mailed to project investigators in February. Annual reports are due the first week of April every year. Final reports are due 45 days after the project ends.

As soon as the Regional Administrator approves the electronic submission, the report is available worldwide on the Internet. Charts, tables and other supporting data may be submitted electronically.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Management of Graduate Student Grant-funded projects is accomplished through telephone and e-mail communication and, if needed, no-cost extensions, budget evaluations and/or adjustments. These methods are used to help Graduate Student grant recipients, as best as is practicable, successfully carry out the objectives of their projects.

Professional Development Program Grants

Proposal Process

The PDP program uses the pre-proposal/proposal format and adheres to a similar timetable as the R&E program. As of 2005, submission and review at the full proposals stage have been conducted online. Instructions will be mailed to successful pre-proposal applicants.

Distribution of Call

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Contents of Call

The CFP uses a pass/fail criterion for considering projects:

- Project outcomes must address economic, environmental, and social issues in agriculture, focusing on developing sustainable agriculture systems or moving existing systems toward sustainability as defined in the 1990 Farm Bill.
- A project's central purpose must be to provide or enable training to Cooperative Extension Service agents; USDA field personnel from the Natural Resources Conservation Services, the Farm Services Agency, and other agencies; and other educators, including farmers who, will themselves, serve as trainers. Research projects and farmer-outreach or education projects do not qualify for this funding.

The call provides 9 scoring criteria to include:

1. Farmer participation
2. Collaboration of diverse groups
3. Uses behavior-based objectives
4. A coherent evaluation plan
5. Makes a case for relevancy to agriculture and Southern agriculture; project uses systems approaches that consider broad impacts.
6. Leverage other inputs and sustain outcomes in the future.
7. Appropriate educational methodology.
8. Realistic timelines and cost effective budget.
9. Develop linkages to other SARE proposals.

The CFP details the pre-proposal format and outline and provides directions for submission (with cover page and budget page templates).

Review Process

The PDP review process is similar to the R&E process in function. The process incorporates three entities within SSARE: the Administrative Council (AC), the PDP Committee of the AC, and an outside review team.

The PDP Committee and the outside review team review pre-proposals. The outside review team considers the methods and appropriateness of the project design, evaluation and impact design and the ability of the project director and major participants to conduct the training. The review team votes "yes-recommend for full proposal development" or "no-do not recommend for full proposal development." The PDP Review Committee completes a conceptual review that

Professional Development Program

addresses the following criteria:

1. Does the proposal address all components of sustainable agriculture?
2. Is the proposal for training of agricultural professionals?
3. Does the proposal reflect a collaborative model with significant players?
4. Are the objectives clear?
5. Is there linkage to other SARE projects?

At the culmination of the review, the AC selects the pre-proposals to submit full proposals. The full proposals are then reviewed by the outside review team made up of farmers, as well as people who are trained and experienced in developing educational programs for agricultural professionals.

All outside Review Team members review all proposals. The Review Team convenes for a conference call prior to the winter AC meeting. The role of the Review Team is to focus on the theoretical approach of the program design, review the objectives, methods, approaches, design, timeline, and evaluation plan.

The Review Team provides a written review that concentrates on:

- Methods and appropriateness of project design (including objectives and timeline)
- Evaluation and impact design
- Ability of project director and major participants

The Review Team provides the AC a YES (the theoretical approach to planning design, implementation and evaluation of the educational program is sound) or NO (the theoretical approach to planning design, implementation and evaluation of the educational program is not sound) based on how each proposal measures up to the nine criteria. Proposals are rated High Priority, Fundable, Revisions Required or Non-Fundable. The strength and weakness of each proposal is clearly stated.

Feedback is restricted to written comments agreed upon by Review Team and the AC-PDP Committee. Review feedback is provided to authors only. The AC-PDP Committee recommends to the full AC the projects to be funded. The AC makes the final decision on funding.

The time from submission of a pre-proposal to announcement of awards is from March to February.

Award Process

Award letters are sent to each new project investigator along with the Project Review Committee comments and any budget alterations requested by the AC. The project investigator revises the project design and budget to reflect the comments and submits this along with a letter of acceptance. All new grantees are given contact information regarding SARE-sponsored projects within their state, state coordinator contacts and other information to facilitate communication among all grant programs.

The PDP Coordinator reviews the budgets and then the S-SARE office checks the approved proposal budgets for any mathematical errors and required budgetary detail. Once reviewed, the awarded proposal is sent to the College of Agriculture Business Office where it is reviewed and forwarded to the University of Georgia Sponsored Programs Office. The Sponsored Programs Office verifies the grant recipient has an audit on file at the University. A sub-award agreement and a Federal Form 1048 (USDA Certification regarding Debarment) are sent to the grant recipients to be signed. If the project involves animals, the PI must send verification that the project has been reviewed and approved by their university's animal care committee (or the University of Georgia animal care committee if the PI's institution or agency is not affiliated with a university). The verification does not require a site visit by the university animal care committee but is simply a form they complete based on details provided in the proposal. Upon receipt of all necessary completed and signed forms, Sponsored Programs issues the original purchase order to encumber the awarded funds. These forms, along with the sub-award, are forwarded to the UGA Agricultural Business Office.

The Agricultural Business Office verifies the awarded amount and that it was part of the SSARE prime cooperative agreement with USDA and forwards the sub-award to the Contracts and Grants Office. It is here that all sub-award information is entered into the UGA accounting system (i.e., sub-recipient name, address, amount, and period of award).

This process may take approximately three months from the time the grant proposal is approved to be funded by SSARE. Grant recipients can begin to expend funds from the date of the award. However, invoices for reimbursements cannot be accepted and processed until the finalized award process is complete.

Once the award process is finalized, the sub-recipients must submit invoices for reimbursement. Upon receipt of an invoice, the SSARE accountant will review the invoice for details and allowable charges, update the balance to be paid on the grant, and initiate the process for payment. Grant recipients can expect to receive payment within four weeks. This time period may fluctuate if an invoice is held due to missing information.

Reporting Requirements: New, Progress, Final

A New Project Report must be filed as soon as the contract is signed. The regional administrator will create a spot in the national database for each new project, and the project investigator will receive an e-mail from MySARE granting access to the online project. Project Investigators will be instructed to enter information from their original proposal and set up an online presence in the reporting system.

Annual Progress Reports are due in April each year until project activities are completed, at which time a final report is due. The project's final invoice cannot be paid until the report is submitted and approved.

A request for reports is e-mailed to project investigators in February. Annual reports are due the first week of April every year. Final reports are due 45 days after the project ends.

As soon as the Regional Administrator approves the electronic submission, the report is available worldwide on the Internet. Charts, tables and other supporting data may be submitted electronically.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Upon award, each project is assigned to a member of the Administrative Council for monitoring and evaluation. When the first-year report is submitted, the AC member will evaluate the progress of the project using a checklist. At the summer AC meeting an AC member will submit a written report and make an oral report to the entire AC on the progress of the project. If concerns develop, the PDP Coordinator will contact the project investigator and will work with him/her to address those concerns. The same process will occur at the end of each year. At the end of the project, the AC member will provide a final report to the AC regarding the project.

Producer Grant Program

Proposal Process

Southern SARE uses an online proposal submission system for Producer Grants. Each year that Producer Grants are offered, input is solicited from the Administrative Council (AC) on changes needed for the call.

Distribution of Call

A Southern SARE calendar showing the release date of all Calls for Proposals is maintained on the Southern SARE website and also appears in the annual Index and How It Works. CFP distribution includes announcements posted to the website as well as announcements sent by e-mail to Southern Region AC members, state sustainable ag coordinators and current and former project investigators. The release of each CFP is also announced on our social media sites (<http://www.twitter.com/southernshare> and <http://www.facebook.com/southsare>) as well as via press releases, SANET-MG (sustainable ag network message group), SAED (sustainable ag education discussion group) and the PDP discussion list. Each one is also sent to ATTRA for inclusion in Weekly Harvest, an e-mail service to more than 300 print and online agriculture publications. For more specialized audiences, some non-public e-mail lists including USDA-ARS and NRCS offices are used when appropriate. The national SARE Outreach Communications Manager has a master distribution list that goes to dozens of lists for specific academic disciplines, RC&Ds, non-profit groups and media outlets. The regional Public Relations Coordinator and the national Outreach Communications Manager coordinate which lists are most appropriate for each CFP. Interested individuals are encouraged to join our e-mailing list for distribution of calls, as well as other Southern SARE news, at our website: <http://www.southernshare.org>.

Contents of Call

The Producer Grant program is a grant program for farmers and/or ranchers. The Call for Proposals (CFP) poses a series of questions and then informs the farmer/rancher applicant of the allowable amount of space they have in which to answer each question. The Producer Grant CFP includes information about selected successful-funded projects, a proposal check list for applicants, a help sheet to aid in preparing a proposal, a sample budget, the guidelines of allowable expenses and review criteria the reviewers use to evaluate each proposal so that the applicants are aware of the criteria upon which their proposals are being reviewed.

The CFP is revised each year based upon the input of the Administrative Council (AC) Producer Grant Committee. Once the CFP is prepared, it is sent to the committee for comments and ultimately, approval. Once the Producer Grant Committee has approved the call, it is presented to the full Administrative Council for approval at the August AC meeting.

Review Process

Once the proposal submission deadline passes, the Producer Grant Committee of the Administrative Council (AC) conducts a technical review of the proposals on the SSARE Online Proposal System. They assign a rank of either high priority, fundable, marginal or non-fundable. They write review summaries which are sent out to all applicants with the award notifications. They further review the proposals based on whether or not the proposal is from a farmer or farmer organization and if the proposed project is relevant to sustainable agriculture.

A few weeks after the technical review, the Producer Grant Committee of the AC, informed by their technical review rankings and review comments, meets at the February Administrative Council meeting. They then conduct a second review of the ranked proposals and select the proposals to be recommended for funding. Later, at the same AC meeting, the AC votes on the slate of proposals put forward by the Producer Grant Committee and approves the proposals to be funded.

The time from submission of a proposal to announcement of awards is from September to February.

Award Process

Award e-mails and letters are sent to each new project investigator along with the technical review comments. All new grantees are given contact information regarding SARE-sponsored projects within their state, state coordinator contacts and other information to facilitate communication among all grant programs.

The SSARE office checks the approved proposal budgets for any mathematical errors and required budgetary detail. Once reviewed, the awarded proposal is sent to the College of Agriculture Business Office where they are reviewed and forwarded to the University of Georgia Sponsored Programs Office. The Sponsored Programs Office verifies the grant recipient has an audit on file at the University. A sub-award agreement and a Federal Form 1048 (USDA Certification regarding Debarment) are sent to the grant recipients to be signed. If the project involves animals, the PI must send verification that the project has been reviewed and approved by their university's animal care committee (or the Univer-

sity of Georgia animal care committee if the PI's institution or agency is not affiliated with a university). The verification does not require a site visit by the university animal care committee but is simply a form they complete based on details provided in the proposal. Upon receipt of all necessary completed and signed forms, Sponsored Programs issues the original purchase order to encumber the awarded funds. These forms, along with the sub-award, are forwarded to the UGA Agricultural Business Office.

The Agricultural Business Office verifies the awarded amount and that it was part of the SSARE prime cooperative agreement with USDA and forwards the sub-award to the Contracts and Grants Office. It is here that all sub-award information is entered into the UGA accounting system (i.e., sub-recipient name, address, amount, and period of award). This process may take approximately three months from the time the grant proposal is approved to be funded by SSARE. Grant recipients can begin to expend funds from the date of the award. However, invoices for reimbursements cannot be accepted and processed until the finalized award process is complete.

Once the award process is finalized, the sub-recipients must submit invoices for reimbursement. Upon receipt of an invoice, the SSARE accountant will review the invoice for details and allowable charges, update the balance to be paid on the grant, and initiate the process for payment. Grant recipients can expect to receive payment within four weeks. This time period may fluctuate if an invoice is held due to missing information.

Reporting Requirements: New, Progress, Final

A New Project Report must be filed as soon as the contract is signed. The regional administrator will create a spot in the national database for each new project, and the project investigator will receive an e-mail from MySARE granting access to the online project. Project Investigators will be instructed to enter information from their original proposal and set up an online presence in the reporting system.

Annual Progress Reports are due in April each year until project activities are completed, at which time a final report is due. The project's final invoice cannot be paid until the report is submitted and approved.

A request for reports is e-mailed to project investigators in February. Annual reports are due the first week of April every year. Final reports are due 30 days after the project ends.

As soon as the Regional Administrator approves the electronic submission, the report is available worldwide on the Internet. Charts, tables and other supporting data may be submitted electronically.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Management of Producer Grant-funded projects is accomplished through telephone and e-mail communication and, if needed, no-cost extensions, budget evaluations and/or adjustments. These methods are used to help Producer Grant recipients, as best as is practicable, successfully carry out the objectives of their projects.

On-Farm Research Grants

Proposal Process

Southern SARE uses an online proposal submission system for On-Farm Research Grants. Each year that On-Farm Research Grants are offered, input is solicited from the Administrative Council (AC) on changes needed for the call.

Distribution of Call

A Southern SARE calendar showing the release date of all Calls for Proposals is maintained on the Southern SARE website and also appears in the annual Index and How It Works. CFP distribution includes announcements posted to the website as well as announcements sent by e-mail to Southern Region AC members, state sustainable ag coordinators and current and former project investigators. The release of each CFP is also announced on our social media sites (<http://www.twitter.com/southernare> and <http://www.facebook.com/southsare>) as well as via press releases, SANET-MG (sustainable ag network message group), SAED (sustainable ag education discussion group) and the PDP discussion list. Each one is also sent to ATTRA for inclusion in Weekly Harvest, an e-mail service to more than 300 print and online agriculture publications. For more specialized audiences, some non-public e-mail lists including USDA-ARS and NRCS offices are used when appropriate. The national SARE Outreach Communications Manager has a master distribution list that goes to dozens of lists for specific academic disciplines, RC&Ds, non-profit groups and media outlets. The regional Public Relations Coordinator and the national Outreach Communications Manager coordinate which lists are most appropriate for each CFP. Interested individuals are encouraged to join our e-mailing list for distribution of calls, as well as other Southern SARE news, at our website: <http://www.southernare.org>.

Contents of Call

The On-farm Research Grant Call for Proposals (CFP) is similar to the Producer Grant CFP with two major exceptions. On-Farm Research Grant PI's are expected to be Extension, NRCS, University, Governmental or NGO personnel who ordinarily work with producers. Further, they are required to work with at least one producer on their project.

The On-Farm Research Grant program Call for Proposals (CFP) poses a series of questions and then informs the proposal writer of the allowable amount of space they have in which to answer each question. The CFP includes a proposal check list for applicants, a help sheet to aid in preparing a proposal, the guidelines of allowable expenses and review criteria the reviewers use to evaluate each proposal so that the applicants are aware of the criteria upon which their proposals are being reviewed.

The CFP is revised each year based upon the input of the Administrative Council (AC) Producer Grant Committee. Once the CFP is prepared, it is sent to the committee for comments and ultimately, approval. Once the Producer Grant Committee has approved the call, it is presented to the Administrative Council for approval at the August AC meeting.

Review Process

Once the proposal deadline passes, the On-Farm Research Grant proposals are made available using the SSARE Online Proposal System to the external technical reviewers. Each year, a request is sent out to S-SARE e-mail lists for technical reviewers willing to review proposals.

The technical reviewers review the proposals to which they are assigned on the SSARE Online Proposal System. They assign a rank of either high priority, fundable, marginal or non-fundable. They also write review summaries which are used to inform the reviews of the Producer Grant Committee of the Administrative Council (AC). The review summaries are also ultimately sent out to all applicants with the award notifications.

After the technical reviewers have completed their reviews, the Producer Grant Committee of the Administrative Council, informed by the technical review rankings and review comments meets at the February Administrative Council meeting and selects proposals to be recommended for funding. Later, at the same AC meeting, the AC votes on the slate of proposals put forward by the Producer Grant Committee and approves the proposals to be funded.

The time from submission of a proposal to announcement of awards is from September to February.

Award Process

Award e-mails and letters are sent to each new project investigator along with the technical reviewer comments. All new grantees are given contact information regarding SARE-sponsored projects within their state, state coordinator contacts and other information to facilitate communication among all grant programs.

The SSARE office checks the approved proposal budgets for any mathematical errors and required budgetary detail.

Once reviewed, the awarded proposal is sent to the College of Agriculture Business Office where it is reviewed and forwarded to the University of Georgia Sponsored Programs Office. The Sponsored Programs Office verifies the grant recipient has an audit on file at the University. A sub-award agreement and a Federal Form 1048 (USDA Certification regarding Debarment) are sent to the grant recipients to be signed. If the project involves animals, the PI must send verification that the project has been reviewed and approved by their university's animal care committee (or the University of Georgia animal care committee if the PI's institution or agency is not affiliated with a university). The verification does not require a site visit by the university animal care committee but is simply a form they complete based on details provided in the proposal. Upon receipt of all necessary completed and signed forms, Sponsored Programs issues the original purchase order to encumber the awarded funds. These forms, along with the sub-award, are forwarded to the UGA Agricultural Business Office.

The Agricultural Business Office verifies the awarded amount and that it was part of the SSARE prime cooperative agreement with USDA and forwards the sub-award to the Contracts and Grants Office. It is here that all sub-award information is entered into the UGA accounting system (i.e., sub-recipient name, address, amount, and period of award). This process may take approximately three months from the time the grant proposal is approved to be funded by SSARE. Grant recipients can begin to expend funds from the date of the award. However, invoices for reimbursements cannot be accepted and processed until the finalized award process is complete.

Once the award process is finalized, the sub-recipients must submit invoices for reimbursement. Upon receipt of an invoice, the SSARE accountant will review the invoice for details and allowable charges, update the balance to be paid on the grant, and initiate the process for payment. Grant recipients can expect to receive payment within four weeks. This time period may fluctuate if an invoice is held due to missing information.

Reporting Requirements: New, Progress, Final

A New Project Report must be filed as soon as the contract is signed. The regional administrator will create a spot in the national database for each new project, and the project investigator will receive an e-mail from MySARE granting access to the online project. Project Investigators will be instructed to enter information from their original proposal and set up an online presence in the reporting system.

Annual Progress Reports are due in April each year until project activities are completed, at which time a final report is due. The project's final invoice cannot be paid until the report is submitted and approved.

A request for reports is e-mailed to project investigators in February. Annual reports are due the first week of April every year. Final reports are due 45 days after the project ends.

As soon as the Regional Administrator approves the electronic submission, the report is available worldwide on the Internet. Charts, tables and other supporting data may be submitted electronically.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Management of On-Farm Research Grant-funded projects is accomplished through telephone and e-mail communication and, if needed, no cost extensions, budget evaluations and/or adjustments. These methods are used to help grant recipients, as best as is practicable, successfully carry out the objectives of their projects.

Sustainable Community Innovation Grants

Proposal Process

Southern SARE uses an online proposal submission system for Sustainable Community Innovation Grants. Each year that Sustainable Community Innovation Grants are offered, input is solicited from the Administrative Council (AC) on changes needed for the call.

Distribution of Call

A Southern SARE calendar showing the release date of all Calls for Proposals is maintained on the Southern SARE website and also appears in the annual Index and How It Works. CFP distribution includes announcements posted to the website as well as announcements sent by e-mail to Southern Region AC members, state sustainable ag coordinators and current and former project investigators. The release of each CFP is also announced on our social media sites (<http://www.twitter.com/southernsare> and <http://www.facebook.com/southsare>) as well as via press releases, SANET-MG (sustainable ag network message group), SAED (sustainable ag education discussion group) and the PDP discussion list. Each one is also sent to ATTRA for inclusion in Weekly Harvest, an e-mail service to more than 300 print and online agriculture publications. For more specialized audiences, some non-public e-mail lists including USDA-ARS and NRCS offices are used when appropriate. The national SARE Outreach Communications Manager has a master distribution list that goes to dozens of lists for specific academic disciplines, RC&Ds, non-profit groups and media outlets. The regional Public Relations Coordinator and the national Outreach Communications Manager coordinate which lists are most appropriate for each CFP. Interested individuals are encouraged to join our e-mailing list for distribution of calls, as well as other Southern SARE news, at our website: <http://www.southernsare.org>.

Contents of Call

SSARE and the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) support a joint grants program through their Sustainable Community Innovations Grants Call for Proposals (CFP). The CFP is designed to solicit proposals that will invest in projects that strengthen both agriculture and Southern communities through explicit linkages between sustainable agriculture and community development, and improve understanding of the mutual benefits of such linkages.

The Sustainable Community Innovation Grants Program funds projects that pursue local strategies that link sound farm and nonfarm economic development with agricultural and natural resource management. Applications are encouraged that increase knowledge, build capacity and make connections between on-farm and off-farm sustainable agriculture activities, economic and community development, civic engagement, nutrition and health, and local government policy.

Such projects involve partnerships among relevant stakeholders, such as farmers, ranchers, researchers, community organizations, environmentalists, agricultural and community development professionals, entrepreneurs, and governmental and non-governmental organizations, and will bring together those working in different areas toward the common goal of sustaining rural life. The projects should enhance the ability of farmers, ranchers and communities to protect the area's ecosystems, provide avenues for expanding civic dialogue, promote the nutritional well-being and health of individuals and families, and facilitate the development of viable local public policy.

SSARE Sustainable Community Innovation Grants aim to blend sustainable agriculture practices with new community development strategies to increase our ability to build resilient farms, businesses, families and communities in the South. These grants will also support research into ways that link farms, businesses, families and communities in collaborative problem-solving and the application of innovative new tools to aid sustainable community development. They will further fund research into innovative strategies that utilize sustainable agriculture concepts and practices to create and apply new knowledge that supports and promotes community development.

Review Process

The proposals received by the deadline date in the online system are then reviewed by a committee made up of members of the SARE Administrative Council and three members of the SRDC Board of Directors (or their designees). This committee provides both the technical review and conceptual review for this program. The committee selects the projects to be funded with approval given by the Executive Committee of each organization.

The time from submission of a proposal to announcement of awards is from September to November.

Award Process

Award letters are sent to each new project investigator along with the Project Review Committee comments and any budget alterations requested by the AC. The project investigator revises the project design and budget to reflect the comments and submits this along with a letter of acceptance. All new grantees are given contact information regarding SARE-sponsored projects within their state, state coordinator contacts and other information to facilitate communication among all grant programs.

The SSARE office checks the approved proposal budgets for any mathematical errors and required budgetary detail. Once reviewed, the awarded proposal is sent to the College of Agriculture Business Office where it is reviewed and forwarded to the University of Georgia Sponsored Programs Office. The Sponsored Programs Office verifies the grant recipient has an audit on file at the University. A sub-award agreement and a Federal Form 1048 (USDA Certification regarding Debarment) are sent to the grant recipients to be signed. If the project involves animals, the PI must send verification that the project has been reviewed and approved by their university's animal care committee (or the University of Georgia animal care committee if the PI's institution or agency is not affiliated with a university). The verification does not require a site visit by the university animal care committee but is simply a form they complete based on details provided in the proposal. Upon receipt of all necessary completed and signed forms, Sponsored Programs issues the original purchase order to encumber the awarded funds. These forms, along with the sub-award, are forwarded to the UGA Agricultural Business Office.

The Agricultural Business Office verifies the awarded amount and that it was part of the SSARE prime cooperative agreement with USDA and forwards the sub-award to the Contracts and Grants Office. It is here that all sub-award information is entered into the UGA accounting system (i.e., sub-recipient name, address, amount, and period of award). This process may take approximately three months from the time the grant proposal is approved to be funded by SSARE. Grant recipients can begin to expend funds from the date of the award. However, invoices for reimbursements cannot be accepted and processed until the finalized award process is complete.

Once the award process is finalized, the sub-recipients must submit invoices for reimbursement. Upon receipt of an invoice, the SSARE accountant will review the invoice for details and allowable charges, update the balance to be paid on the grant, and initiate the process for payment. Grant recipients can expect to receive payment within four weeks. This time period may fluctuate if an invoice is held due to missing information.

Reporting Requirements: New, Progress, Final

A New Project Report must be filed as soon as the contract is signed. The regional administrator will create a spot in the national database for each new project, and the project investigator will receive an e-mail from MySARE granting access to the online project. Project Investigators will be instructed to enter information from their original proposal and set up an online presence in the reporting system.

Annual Progress Reports are due in April each year until project activities are completed, at which time a final report is due. The project's final invoice cannot be paid until the report is submitted and approved.

A request for reports is e-mailed to project investigators in February. Annual reports are due the first week of April every year. Final reports are due 45 days after the project ends.

As soon as the Regional Administrator approves the electronic submission, the report is available worldwide on the Internet. Charts, tables and other supporting data may be submitted electronically.

Monitoring and Evaluation

All Sustainable Community Innovation Grants are monitored by the directors of SSARE and the SRDC.

Conflict Of Interest Policy

As Adopted November 22, 2002

According to the legislation, a member of an AC or technical committee may not participate in the discussion or recommendation of proposed projects if the member has, or had, a professional or business interest in the organization whose grant application is under review. (7USC 5812(c). This language is interpreted and operationalized as follows.

To avoid any conflict of interest, a member of the Administrative Council (AC), Technical Committee, or any AC-appointed committees or panels, or staff may not review or participate in the discussion or recommendation regarding any competitive grant proposal with any of the following characteristics:

1. From that member's home institution or organization;
2. From institutions or organizations for which he/she acts as a paid consultant, or board member;
3. From applicants for whom he/she has served as a thesis advisor (or advisee) or a postdoctoral advisor (or advisee) within the past five years;
4. From applicants with whom he/she has served as a collaborator on a research proposal or publication within the past five years;
5. From applicants for whom he/she has acted as a paid consultant within the past five years;
6. From applicants for whom he/she will be a project participant during the current grant cycle;
7. That Administrative Council, Technical Committee members, any AC-appointed committees or panels, or staff may not be listed as participants on competitive grant proposals (including producer grants and PDP proposals) under consideration by the committee or panel on which the person serves where they could potentially gain monetary benefits to themselves or other program (benefits do not mean compensation for travel or per diem);
8. The statement applies to current members. Those wanting to submit proposals must resign their memberships.
9. During the discussion or recommendations of proposed projects, any members with a conflict of interest must leave the room. This applies to the regional coordinators and senior staff.
10. Discussion and recommendation should involve individual projects. When a large slate of projects (for example, the Producer Grants) is being voted upon – and individual projects are not being discussed – members with a conflict of interest do not need to leave the room.

2017-2018 Southern SARE Grants Schedule

Research and Education Grants generally are conducted by teams coordinated by a principal investigator from a non-governmental organization, university or governmental agency. These projects include farmers as participants.

2017

March Call for R&E pre-proposals released

June R&E pre-proposals due

August Full R&E proposals requested

November Full R&E proposals due

2018

February Administrative Council announces grant awards.

Large Systems Grants are for systems research teams who have successful ongoing long-term systems research programs, but need support to accomplish additional long-term research goals.

2017

September Call for proposals released

November Proposals due

2018

February Administrative Council announces awards

Graduate Student Grants are intended for full-time graduate students (Masters or PhD) enrolled at accredited colleges and universities in the Southern region. Up to \$16,500 will be awarded to each successful applicant for up to three years of project activities. The funds are paid directly to the university for use on the graduate student's project.

2017

February Call for proposal released

May Proposals due

August Administrative Council announces awards

Professional Development Program Projects train agricultural information providers in sustainable agriculture techniques and concepts.

2017

March Call for pre-proposals released

June Pre-proposals due

August Full proposals requested

November Full proposals due

2018

February Administrative Council announces grant awards

Sustainable Community Innovation Projects link sound farm and nonfarm economic development with agricultural and natural resource management. Applicants may be farmers, ranchers, researchers, community organizations, environmentalists, ag and community development professionals, entrepreneurs, and governmental and non-governmental organizations. Funded for a project maximum of \$10,000 for up to two years of activities.

2017
August Call for proposals released
October Proposals due
December Administrative Council announces awards

Producer Grant Projects are developed, coordinated and conducted by producers or producer organizations. These projects are generally located in one state, often on one farm. There is a \$10,000 limit for funding proposals submitted by an individual producer and a \$15,000 limit on proposals submitted by producer organizations.

2017
September Call for proposals released
November Proposals due
2018
March Administrative Council announces grant awards

On-Farm Research Projects are conducted by agricultural professionals such as Extension agents, NRCS and/or NGO personnel who currently work with farmers and ranchers. Cooperators must include at least one producer at all stages of the project. Funded for a maximum of \$15,000 for up to two years of activities.

2017
September Call for proposals released
November Proposals due
2018
March Administrative Council announces grant awards

For more information about Southern region SARE grants,
free publications, research results or educational opportunities:

Phone: 770-412-4786

E-mail: ssare@uga.edu

<http://www.southernsare.org>

The University of Georgia
Campus at Griffin
Southern Region SARE
1109 Experiment Street
Stuckey Building
Griffin, GA 30223-1797