



Northeast SARE Requests Applications to Lead Professional Development Program

About this Opportunity

The Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program is currently seeking applications to lead its Professional Development Program (PDP). The Coordinator of the program serves as part of Northeast SARE's leadership team and manages the region's PDP competitive grant program as well as state SARE programs offered at every Land Grant institution. Applications are welcome from individuals located within the Northeast region who have interest in facilitating adult education efforts and have commitment from their institution or organization to house the PDP.

As a USDA grant-making program hosted at the University of Vermont (UVM), Northeast SARE coordinates six competitive grant programs offered to educators, farmers, graduate students and scientists in 12 states and Washington DC. The program also funds State Programs where educators (State Coordinators) appointed at every Land Grant institution across the region conduct professional development projects and program outreach. See www.northeastsare.org for more information. Congress has provided funding for the SARE program for over 30 years. Northeast SARE's current annual budget is \$7.8 million.

Northeast SARE PDP coordination necessitates a 12-month commitment at 0.75 to 1.0 full time equivalent, depending on the coordinator's availability. The Professional Development Program is managed under annual contracts (covering salary, staff support and operating budget) between the University of Vermont (Northeast SARE's fiscal host) and the PDP Coordinator's institution or organization, which must be located within the Northeast region.

The PDP Coordinator reports to Northeast SARE's Regional Coordinator and to the Administrative Council (AC), SARE's governing body with representatives from across the region. The Coordinator is currently assisted by, and is responsible for supervising, a 40% full time equivalent PDP Associate, presently located at the University of Maryland Extension. Additional program support is possible in the future.

Applications are due by May 31, 2019; the PDP contract is available in late summer 2019.

Responsibilities of the PDP Coordinator

The PDP Coordinator manages both the region's PDP competitive grant program as well as the State Program PDP plans developed by Northeast SARE State Coordinators. These PDP activities fund and implement outcome-focused 'train the trainer' professional development opportunities on sustainable agriculture topics. The audience for SARE PDP programs includes Cooperative Extension, state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, and other agricultural service providers such as conservation districts, crop consultants, veterinarians, etc.

Specific duties and responsibilities of the position include the following:

- Develop the PDP plan of work and submit reports to the Administrative Council, attending the twice-yearly AC meetings.
- Develop an annual budget proposal and annual budget report for the PDP program.
- Organize and provide leadership to the regional network of State Coordinators, who meet several times yearly, in person and via webinar.
- Facilitate the development of educational programming for State Coordinators to strengthen and improve their understanding of sustainable agriculture and topics related to their success, such adult education, communication and evaluation.
- Direct the PDP competitive grant program, including:
 - Design and maintain grant program application materials;
 - Promote the PDP grant program to potential applicants and provide grant applicant support;
 - Manage the proposal process (organize proposal reviews, summarize results of review panel findings to recommend funding of projects to the AC, and collate and communicate reviewer feedback for applicants);
 - Work closely with the UVM SARE staff to coordinate final approval of PDP grants and State Program awards (plans of work and budgets,) getting them into the form required for UVM to issue contracts;
 - Provide grantee orientation and project support;
 - Manage progress and final reporting of funded projects; and
 - Compile program data; aggregate project results.
- Participate in the review of pre-proposals for all of Northeast SARE's large grant programs (PDP, Research and Education, and Research for Novel Approaches) and assist with proposal review panel meetings for these grants.
- Supervise the PDP Associate, directing and monitoring their work.
- Design requests for State Program plans of work, coordinate and take part in the review of these plans, and provide feedback to the applicants (State Coordinators) to help them develop the strongest possible plans of work.
- Working with the Regional Coordinator and Program Manager, make PDP policy and procedure recommendations to the AC.
- Work with state Extension Directors to approve appointments of State Coordinators.
- Communicate about the activities and results of the PDP program with farmers, Extension and agency personnel, NGO representatives and other stakeholders.
- Represent the region by attending twice-yearly SARE national operations committee meetings; share information on Northeast PDP activities and results with the national SARE office and other SARE regions.
- Coordinate other Northeast SARE PDP efforts, such training programs and conferences, as requested by the AC or Regional Coordinator.

Minimum Qualifications:

- A Master's degree in sustainable agriculture, adult education or other relevant field.
- Experience in program leadership in adult education and/or sustainable agriculture.
- Demonstrated success using participatory approaches to engage clientele.
- Evidence of ability to develop and deliver adult education programs.
- Facilitation skills.
- Administrative skills including planning, reporting, budget management, supervisory skills, and program evaluation.
- Ability to work with diverse stakeholders, such as ag service providers, farmers, nonprofit staff, and personnel at land grant universities.
- Exemplary written communications and public speaking skills.

Finalists will be asked to provide a letter of commitment from their institution or organization to allow them to take this position and to provide appropriate office space, basic office equipment, and related operating support.

To Apply:

Application deadline: May 31, 2019.

Submit an electronic copy of the following as a single pdf file to:

Dr. Vern Grubinger, Northeast SARE Regional Coordinator,
vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu

- Cover letter.** 2-page maximum. Include your name and title, address, phone number and e-mail address. Describe your interest in the position, relevant qualifications and experience. Provide your perspective on agricultural sustainability and Northeast SARE. Indicate your preferred percentage of time allocated to the position.
- Statement of educational approach for agricultural professionals.** 1-page maximum. Describe your understanding of effective adult education and how you would approach the management of the PDP program with the intention of facilitating the success of Extension, agency personnel, non-profits and other agricultural service providers working on sustainable agriculture projects with farmers.
- Description of your organization/institution.** 1-page maximum. Mission of the organization, work it does to promote agricultural sustainability, facilities available to you in this position, previous involvement with SARE, other pertinent information.

If you are not employed by a Land-Grant university, please explain how you expect to provide leadership to a program that is largely, though not exclusively, aimed at Extension educators.
- Resume.** 3-page maximum.
- Letters of support for your application.** Up to three letters may be submitted. One should be from a person with Extension leadership experience. Due to conflicts of interest, letters are not permitted from Northeast SARE staff, state coordinators and Administrative Council members.

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