Sample Application Questionnaire
&
Technical Reviewer Scoring Criteria

These are sample documents to provide additional details and guidance for the application process. The application questionnaire contains conditional options for organization type, partner organizations, and technical assistance - all options are presented in the sample document. The sample questionnaire and scoring criteria may have some differences with the posted live application and criteria.

Project Description

Healthy Soils Block Grant Pilot Program - 2023

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General Instructions for Navigating the Application

- Click the "Save" or "Save & Continue" button on the top right corner or the bottom left corner once a while in the middle of your application and before you leave the webpage or your computer so that your work is saved. Navigating away from the application form without saving will result in lost work.
- Please do NOT click "Mark as Complete" button at the bottom left corner if you believe you need to make changes before your submission.
- After a final check, when you are ready to submit the application, you are now good to click the "Mark as Complete" button for each section.
- An asterix, *, next to a field indicates this field is required. All required fields must be filled out prior to selecting, "Mark as Complete".

Part 01: Applicant Information

Lead Organization Name - Block Grant Recipient (BGR)

Will the Lead Organization be providing technical assistance (TA) for the grant?

○ Yes
○ No

Eligible entity types for Block Grant Recipient (BGR) who will provide technical assistance (TA) are Resource Conservation District, University of California Cooperative Extension, and Nonprofit Organizations

[Select an item...   ▼]

Nonprofit Type

Evidence of Non-profit Status

Organization Type

[Select an item...   ▼]

Agency Type

Nonprofit Type

Evidence of Non-profit Status

Lead Organization Address Line 1

Lead Organization Address Line 2

Lead Organization City

Lead Organization State

[Select an item... ▼]

Lead Organization Postal Code

Will the Primary Contact be signing the grant contract?

○ Yes
○ No

I acknowledge that the Secondary Contact will be signing the contract?

○ Yes

Applicant must indicate a Secondary Contact and they must be the grant signer

Primary Contact First Name

Primary Contact Last Name

Primary Contact Phone (000-000-0000)

Primary Contact Phone Extension

Primary Contact Email

Secondary Contact First Name

Secondary Contact Last Name

Secondary Contact Phone (000-000-0000)

Secondary Contact Phone Extension

Secondary Contact Email

Secondary Contact First Name

Secondary Contact Last Name

Secondary Contact Phone (000-000-0000)

Secondary Contact Phone Extension

Secondary Contact Email

Fiscal Contact First Name

Fiscal Contact Last Name

Fiscal Contact Phone (000-000-0000)

Fiscal Contact Phone Extension

Fiscal Contact Email

California Senate and Assembly District

Applicants must enter the California Senate District and California Assembly District numbers for the Lead Organization in the two-digit format XX.

Applicants can find the Lead Organization's Senate and Assembly District information using the link below. Please enter the Lead Organization's business address.

https://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov/

California Senate District

California Assembly District

Tax Indentification

Please enter either the Taxpayer Identification Number or your Federal Employer Identification Number for the Lead Organization

Taxpayer Identification Number (xx-xxxxxxx) or Federal Employer Identification Number:

Previous Funding from the Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation (OEFI)

Has the Lead Organization ever received grant funding from the Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation (OEFI) at the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)?

○ Yes
○ No

Please select all OEFI programs that the Lead Organization has received awards from:

☐ Healthy Soils Program
☐ State Water Efficiency Enhancement Program
☐ Technical Assistance Program
☐ Alternative Manure Management Program
☐ Dairy Digester Research and Development Program
☐ Pollinator Habitat Program
☐ Conservation Agriculture Planning Grants Program

Please enter the grant agreement numbers for the Lead Organization's awards. If multiple awards, please separate the grant agreement numbers by a semicolon. Example: 19-XXXX-000-SO; 20-XXXX-000-SG

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Part 02: Partner Information

If awarded, the Lead Organization (Block Grant Recipient) will be the responsible party for receiving funds from CDFA and distributing funding to any Partner Organizations. Partner Organizations may be treated as a sub-contractor for the purpose of the budget. If the Lead Organization is not an eligible organization to provide Technical Assistance (TA) or will not be providing TA, then the Lead Organization **must** have a Partner Organization which will provide TA.

Does the Lead Organization have a Partner Organization?
○ Yes
○ No

Will the Partner Organization provide Technical Assistance?
○ Yes
○ No

Partner Organization Name

Please identify the Partner Organization Type
○ Resource Conservation District
○ University of California Cooperative Extension
○ Nonprofit Organizations

Nonprofit Type

Evidence of Nonprofit Status

Partner Organization Address Line 1

Partner Organization Address Line 2

Partner Organization City

Partner Organization State
[Select an item... ▼]

Partner Organization Postal Code

Partner Organization Contact First Name

Partner Organization Contact Last Name

Partner Organization Contact Phone Extension

Partner Organization Contact Phone (000-000-0000)

Partner Organization Contact Email

Partner Organization Name

Please identify the Partner Organization Type
○ Resource Conservation District
○ University of California Cooperative Extension
○ Non-profit Organizations

Non-profit Type

Evidence of Nonprofit Status

Please identify the Partner Organization Type
○ Resource Conservation District
○ University of California (UC)
○ California State University (CSU)
○ California Community College
○ Federally- and California-Recognized Native American Indian Tribe
○ California Commodities
○ Local or regional government agencies such as air pollution control districts. Please specify type of local or regional gov. agency
○ Nonprofit organization, including but not limited to Groundwater Sustainability Agencies, Irrigation Districts, Land Trusts, etc. Please specify type of nonprofit.
○ Other

Agency Type

Nonprofit Type

Evidence of Nonprofit Status

If you selected "Other", Please specify what type of organization

Partner Organization Address Line 1

Partner Organization Address Line 2

Partner Organization City

Partner Organization State

Select an item... ▼

Partner Organization Postal Code

Partner Organization Contact First Name

Partner Organization Contact Last Name

Partner Organization Contact Phone (000-000-0000)

Partner Organization Contact Phone Extension

Partner Organization Contact Email

Do you have a second Partner Organization?
○ Yes
○ No

Second Partner Organization Name

Will the second Partner Organization provide Technical Assistance?
○ Yes
○ No

Please identify the Second Partner Organization Type
○ Resource Conservation District
○ University of California Cooperative Extension
○ Non profit Organizations

Second Partner Nonprofit Type

Evidence of Second Partner Nonprofit Status

Please identify the second Partner Organization Type
○ Resource Conservation District
○ University of California (UC)
○ California State University (CSU)
○ California Community College
○ Federally- and California-Recognized Native American Indian Tribe
○ California Commodities
○ Local or regional government agencies such as air pollution control districts. Please specify type of local or regional gov. agency
○ Nonprofit organization, including but not limited to Groundwater Sustainability Agencies, Irrigation Districts, Land Trusts, etc. Please specify type of nonprofit.
○ Other

Agency Type

Nonprofit Type

Evidence of Nonprofit Status

If you selected "Other", Please specify what type of organization

Second Partner Organization Address Line 1

Second Partner Organization Address Line 2

Second Partner Organization City

Second Partner Organization State

Select an item... ▼

Second Partner Organization Postal Code

Second Partner Organization Contact First Name

Second Partner Organization Contact Last Name

Second Partner Organization Contact Phone (000-000-0000)

Second Partner Organization Contact Email

Part 03: Qualification of Applicants

Applicants provide a statement of qualification describing their expertise in conservation management practices; grant administration; technical assistance and outreach; and relationships with farming communities including Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (SDFRs) and farms of small size. If the lead organization will partner with other organization(s), the qualifications of the applicant's section must also include a description of the partners expertise in same criteria listed above. CDFA encourages strategic partnerships among various regional organizations to leverage diverse expertise. Applicants must also provide resumes of key personnel.

Please upload CV's of all relevant persons for the application (lead org and partnership org)

1) In no more than 3 paragraphs (900 words), please describe the lead persons', lead organization, and partner organization's (if applicable) (i) experience with the implementation of conservation management practices in agricultural settings within California; (ii) the lead persons', lead organization, and partner organization's experience with technical assistance for practice implementation. Lead persons are those listed on the application contact section and any additional persons who had CV's or resumes uploaded in this section.

2) In no more than 3 paragraphs (900 words), please describe the lead persons', lead organization, and partner organization's (if applicable) experience and expertise in relationship building and outreach to farming communities relevant to the scope of this project. In the response, please include any outreach or relationship building experience or plans that targets Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (SDFR), small farms (500 or less acres), and for projects which benefit Priority Populations. As part of your answer, you must include a description of the lead persons', lead organization, and partner organization's experience with technical assistance (TA) for outreach and relationship-building. Lead persons are those listed on the application contact section and any additional persons who had CV's or resumes uploaded in this section.

3) In no more than 2 paragraphs (600 words), please describe the lead persons', lead organization expertise in grant administration and project management. Please include in the response a description of the grant administration personnel structure and any tools that will be used for tracking grant progress and reportable data.

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Part 04: Statement of Need

The applicant must provide a statement describing the need for funding, and how HSP funding can address the needs of the community and prepare farming operations for climate resiliency. Applicants will provide a list of counties they are intending to cover. Application must discuss the community demographics in their service area and describe the target communities and related language needs. The program's goal will be to achieve at least 25% targeted funding to Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (SDFRs). The proposal must either make a commitment to 25% target or provide an estimate of the percent of grant funding they will commit to serve SDFRs if unable to commit to the 25% goal. If estimating a percentage less than 25%, applicant must provide justification of why 25% is not achievable. The proposal must also outline ways to achieve the target. Applicants will be scored on their ability to set and justify an ambitious SDFR target based on their service area's SDFR demographics. The proposal must clearly explain their outreach strategy to address technical assistance needs, equity, and transparency. The statement of need must be consistent with the project Work Plan.

1) Please indicate the counties included in your main service area. You can hold the Shift key to select multiple counties in a row, or hold the Ctrl key to select multiple counties from the list not in a row.

Please also provide a brief (300 words or less) written description of service area

Attachment submission for service area map (optional, .pdf only))

2) Are you considering applications outside of your service area? Please note, offering coverage beyond your service area will not impact the scoring of your application.
- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Please select the counties outside of your main service area that could be covered. You can hold the Shift key to select multiple counties in a row, or hold the Ctrl key to select multiple counties from the list not in a row.

Please also describe in one paragraph (300 words) what the extended service area coverage would entail.

3) In no more than 3 paragraphs (900 words), please describe the target communities in your coverage area, making sure to highlight any underserved communities that would benefit from HSP funding.

4) In no more than 5 paragraphs (1500 words), please describe the outreach strategy for your service area. In your explanation, please include an explanation of how equity will be assessed and achieved in your service area. CDFA makes it a priority to achieve at least 25% of funding spent to benefit Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (SDFRs). As part of your response, please provide an ambitious, but realistic estimate of the percent funds that can be committed to SDFRs (via grant beneficiaries) and explain your estimate in the context of your service area's target communities and outreach capabilities. If your organization is unable to commit to at least 25% of the funding to support SDFRs, applicants must provide a justification of why they are unable to commit to meeting the 25% funding requirement. If applicable, you can reference your project Workplan. The proposal must also outline ways to achieve the target. Applicants will be scored on their ability to set and justify an ambitious SDFR target based on their service area's SDFR demographics.

Please provide the estimated percent of funds the Block Grant Recipient will commit to spending on Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (example: 25%)

5) In no more than 3 paragraphs (900 words), please explain how HSP funding will address the needs of the identified target communities and prepare farming operations for climate resiliency. As part of your answer, please make sure to identify the technical or language assistance needed for the target communities in your service area.

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Part 05: Workplan Merit and Feasibility

The applicant will provide a detailed Work Plan describing the plan for addressing program deliverables, including listing each task associated with the program deliverables, start and end dates for the tasks, and title(s) of the personnel responsible for each task. As part of the program deliverables to be included in the Work Plan, the applicant will be asked to outline a proposal for how on-farm projects will be selected (e.g., competitive, first-come first-served, others). The applicant must propose a method of review and transparency in this process. For example, an applicant may subcontract a third party to participate in the selection process or form a review panel or board. Applicants must provide detailed descriptions of how equity will be incorporated into their funding decisions, and whether multilingual services will be provided, and if so, to what extent (e.g., grant administration, outreach, and technical assistance, etc.).

Please download the template below and use it to fill out information regarding the tasks associated with accomplishing each program deliverable. When ready to upload, please save the file in a .xls or .xlsx file format and use the naming convention, "ApplicationID_WorkPlan.fileformat", and then upload the completed workplan below.

Downloadable Template
   Work Plan Template for CDFA Block Grant.xlsx

Information on finding your application ID for the Work Plan

The Work Plan Template requires you to enter your application ID in the first entry row (will auto-populate for the rest of the rows). You can locate your application ID in the URL of your application browser. The ID is the 5 digit number at the end of the URL. Please see the attached example below of an application URL with the application ID highlighted.

example for locating App ID
   Where to Find Your Application ID.PNG

Please Upload the Completed Work Plan Template Here (.xls or .xlsx format)

1) Outreach – In no more than 3 paragraphs (900 words), please describe the outreach plan associated with identifying potential grant beneficiaries in the project service area. The outreach plan must include specifics on how the applicant will ensure transparency and equity, including prioritization to Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (SDFRs) within the service area. Where relevant, please reference responses in the "Statement of Need" section.

2) On-farm project (grant beneficiary) development and approval – In no more than 3 paragraphs (900 words), please describe how grant beneficiaries will be developed and selected for award. Please address how proposed selection process will address and maintain transparency. Please also provide an estimated number of grant beneficiaries that will be selected. Where relevant, please reference responses in the "Statement of Need" section. In your description, please include (i) the methods to be used for review and transparency in the award selection process, (ii) the role of TA in the process, including any translation of application materials, etc., (iii) How practice and field-location (e.g., APNs) will be collected and reported to CDFA for review.

3) On-farm project implementation – In no more than 2 paragraphs (600 words), please describe how implementation of conservation management practices, including soil sampling, will be facilitated for the grant beneficiaries. In your description, please include in what ways technical assistance (TA) will be available to the grant beneficiaries. Additionally, please include how consistency and quality will be assured across all on-farm projects and how any changes to an on-farm project that are necessary to meet quality and consistency standards will be recorded. Where relevant, please reference responses in the "Statement of Need" section.

4) On-farm project verification – In a brief paragraph (300 words or less), please describe how verification for implemented on-farm projects for grant beneficiaries will be performed with an emphasis on transparency. In your description, please make sure to reference your Workplan timeline to ensure adherence to HSP implementation timelines.

5) CDFA will require quarterly reporting. Please acknowledge that your organization will be able to provide data to CDFA in a timely and consistent manner.
   ○ Yes - I acknowledge our organization will be able to provide data to CDFA in a timely and consistent manner.

6) Reporting - Frequent and quality reporting is required as part of this grant. Organizations that fail to report in a timely manner will be subjected to a critical project review. Recipients are required to collect information for potential and selected on-farm projects and provide it to CDFA on an ongoing basis. In no more than 2 paragraphs (600 words), please describe your organization's ability to collect program and on-farm project level data and provide that in a standard report. As part of your answer, please also make sure to include a description of the methods used to record, track, and report progress on the on-farm project implementations during the life of the project and maintain the associated documents for 3 years after the grant term ends. Please refer to the HSP Block Grant On-Farm Project Reporting Template for details on information to be collected.

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Part 06: Budget

Applicants will submit an itemized budget outlining tasks and costs associated with each task. Through the application narrative, applicants will indicate projected/estimated expenses related to administration, technical assistance, and on-farm projects. The proposal will also discuss how block grant funding will be tracked over the grant terms including monitoring and disbursement of funds to partner organization and Grant

Beneficiaries, and how technical assistance (TA)will be tracked including expenses related to Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (SDFR).

1) With no more than 3 paragraphs (900 words), please describe the projected/estimated expenses related to 1) administration, 2) technical assistance, and 3) on-farm project. In your response please reference the project Work Plan, Budget, and the sections "Workplan Merit and Feasibility" and "Statement of Need" as relevant.

2) In no more than 2 paragraphs (600 words), please describe how block grant funding will be tracked over the required period, including monitoring and disbursal of funds to partner organizations and grant beneficiaries. In this response, please make sure to include how the block grant will monitor and track grant funds to grant beneficiaries (e.g., farm/ranch owner or farm lessee for on-farm projects) identified as SDFRs.

3) (Optional) If BGR will be purchasing shared equipment, please provide a description (300 words or less) of the item and demonstrate a need for the equipment including the target beneficiaries. In this description, please include a plan for the maintenance (including component repair and support), storage, and equitable sharing for the usable life of the equipment.

Budget

Proposed Budget Summary

Expense Budget

	Grant Funded	Total Budgeted
A. On-Farm Grants		
Subtotal	$0.00	$0.00
B1. Personnel Salary and Wages, and Fringe Benefits - Administration		
Subtotal	$0.00	$0.00
B2. Personnel Salary and Wages, and Fringe Benefits - Technical Assistance		
Subtotal	$0.00	$0.00
C1: Travel - Administration		
Subtotal	$0.00	$0.00
C2: Travel - Technical Assistance		
Subtotal	$0.00	$0.00
D1. Supplies and Equipment - Administration		
Subtotal	$0.00	$0.00
D2. Supplies and Equipment - Technical Assistance		
Subtotal	$0.00	$0.00
E1. Contractual - Administration		
Subtotal	$0.00	$0.00
E2. Contractual - Technical Assistance		
Subtotal	$0.00	$0.00
F1. Other - Administration		
Subtotal	$0.00	$0.00
F2. Other - Technical Assistance		
Subtotal	$0.00	$0.00
G1. Indirect Cost - Administration		
Subtotal	$0.00	$0.00
G2. Indirect Cost - Technical Assistance		
Subtotal	$0.00	$0.00
H. Shared Use Equipment		
Subtotal	$0.00	$0.00
Total Proposed Cost	$0.00	$0.00

Revenue Budget

	Grant Funded	Total Budgeted
Grant Funding		
Award Requested	$0.00	$0.00
Subtotal	$0.00	$0.00
Total Proposed Revenue	$0.00	$0.00

Proposed Budget Detail

Proposed Budget Narrative

A. On-Farm Grants

Estimate the total amount of funds that the organization can disburse based on the number of on-farm grants that the BGR can assist implementing during the grant period.

B1. Personnel Salary and Wages, and Fringe Benefits - Administration

Administrative - Estimate the hourly cost of salary, wages associated with each task and the total numbers of hours required. Also, estimate the fringe benefits associated with compensation.

B2. Personnel Salary and Wages, and Fringe Benefits - Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance - Estimate the hourly cost of salary, wages associated with each task and the total numbers of hours required. Also, estimate the fringe benefits associated with compensation.

C1: Travel - Administration

Administrative - Estimate the cost of project-related travel necessary for successful implementation of the grant.

C2: Travel - Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance - Estimate the cost of project-related travel necessary for successful implementation of the grant.

D1. Supplies and Equipment - Administration

Administrative - Estimate the cost of supplies associated with each activity. Supplies are items with an acquisition cost less than $5,000 per unit that are used exclusively for the objectives of the project. Categorize the types of supplies to be purchased. General use office supplies (e.g., paper, printer ink, pens, etc.), facilities costs (telephone, internet, etc.), and administrative costs are considered indirect and should not be included under "Supplies". Also, estimate the cost of equipment associated with each activity. Equipment is nonexpendable, tangible personal property with a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost which equals or exceeds $5,000. Applicants must provide detailed justification including why such purchase(s) are necessary over renting such equipment.

D2. Supplies and Equipment - Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance - Estimate the cost of supplies associated with each activity. Supplies are items with an acquisition cost less than $5,000 per unit that are used exclusively for the objectives of the project. Categorize the types of supplies to be purchased. General use office supplies (e.g., paper, printer ink, pens, etc.), facilities costs (telephone, internet, etc.), and administrative costs are considered indirect and should not be included under "Supplies". Also, estimate the cost of equipment associated with each activity. Equipment is nonexpendable, tangible personal property with a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost which equals or exceeds $5,000. Applicants must provide detailed justification including why such purchase(s) are necessary over renting such equipment.

E1. Contractual - Administration

Administrative - Estimate the cost of work on the project that will be performed by individuals/organizations other than the applicant (e.g., consultants, contractors, partner organizations other than TAPs, etc.) for administrative purposes. This amount should include all associated salary and wages, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, other, and indirect costs. List the services to be provided and the contractors that will work on the project and be paid with grant funds.

E2. Contractual - Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance - Estimate the cost of work on the project that will be performed by individuals/organizations other than the applicant (e.g., consultants, contractors, partner organizations other than TAPs, etc.) for administrative purposes. This amount should include all associated salary and wages, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, other, and indirect costs. List the services to be provided and the contractors that will work on the project and be paid with grant funds.

F1. Other - Administration

Administrative - All other costs that are necessary for technical assistance but not covered under the categories above.

F2. Other - Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance - All other costs that are necessary for technical assistance but not covered under the categories above.

G1. Indirect Cost - Administration

Administrative - Indirect costs are facilities and administrative costs that cannot easily be tied directly to the activities of the grant. Examples of common indirect costs include administrative/clerical services, rent, utilities, internet and telephone service, maintenance, and general office supplies. The University of California or California State University may claim their agreed upon indirect cost rate with CDFA, all other entities are eligible for 20% of total direct costs as indirect cost (not including on-farm grant funds).

G2. Indirect Cost - Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance - Indirect costs are facilities and administrative costs that cannot easily be tied directly to the activities of the grant. Examples of common indirect costs include administrative/clerical services, rent, utilities, internet and telephone service, maintenance, and general office supplies. The University of California or California State University may claim their agreed upon indirect cost rate with CDFA, all other entities are eligible for 20% of total direct costs as indirect cost (not including on-farm grant funds).

H. Shared Use Equipment

The purchase of equipment for the purpose of shared use and to assist in implementing healthy soils practices is allowable. The purpose of this allowance is to assist and encourage healthy soil practices on farms where access to such equipment prohibits adoption. BGRs may request up to a total of $30,000 for general purpose equipment. These funds can be used as cost share up to 50% of the total cost of each equipment. Applicants must clearly demonstrate the need of equipment including target beneficiaries. Applicants must also provide a detailed plan covering maintenance, equitable sharing, and storage during the grant agreement term and up to the useable life of the equipment. Please refer to California Code of Regulations- Title 3, Division 1, Chapter 5 Grants Administration including procurement, property records and disposition of equipment. These regulations are applicable to shared use equipment (H) and any equipment identified under the other budget categories.

Technical Reviewer Scoring Criteria

Qualifications of Applicants

Refer to the answers under "Qualifications of Applicant" and the attached CV'(s) and/or resume(s) when using this rubric to score this section.

To Score this section, please use the scoring breakdown provided below to allocate points. Please total the points from the scoring breakdown and enter these totals into the scoring response below. You will also be asked to provide short written summaries in support of your scoring decisions

o   Does the lead persons, lead organization, and partner organizations (if applicable) have education, training, work experience in conservation management in agricultural settings in California or related fields? Reference the resumes or CVs that uploaded by the applicant for all relevant lead persons and the response for question 1.

- o   8 points – Lead person, lead organization, and partner organizations (if applicable) have staff with excellent education, training, or work experience in conservation management or related fields. The organization(s) have many (5+) years of facilitating successful conservation management projects.
- o   5-7 points - Lead organization and partner organizations have staff with education, training, or work experience in conservation management or related fields. The organizations have several (3-4) years of facilitating successful conservation management projects.

- o   2-4 points - Lead organization and partner organizations have staff with limited education, training, or work experience in conservation management or related fields. The organizations have only one or two years of facilitating successful conservation management projects.

- o   0-1 points - Lead organization and partner organizations have staff do not have education, training, or work experience in conservation management or related fields. The organizations have no prior history of facilitating successful conservation management projects.

o   Does the lead persons, lead organization, and partner organizations (if applicable) describe their expertise and experience with technical assistance (TA) for

conservation management practice implementation? Please use the responses to questions 1 for reference.

- o 5 points – Lead organization and/or partner organizations have many (5+) years of technical assistance (TA) experience with conservation management practice implementation and outreach to farming/ranching communities.

- o 3-4 points - Lead organization and/or partner organizations have several (3-4) years of technical assistance (TA) experience with conservation management practice implementation and outreach to farming/ranching communities.

- o 1-2 points - Lead organization and/or partner organizations have only one or two years of technical assistance (TA) experience with conservation management practice implementation and outreach to farming/ranching communities.

- o 0 points – No mention of technical assistance is included in the responses, or no organization involved in the grant has technical assistance (TA) experience.

o Does the lead persons, lead organization, and partner organizations (if applicable) staff have expertise and experience with outreach and relationship building to farming communities relevant to the scope of this project, including any technical assistance related tasks? Please refer to the response for question 2.

- o 7 points – Lead organization and/or partner organizations have many (5+) years of experience with outreach and relationship building to farming communities, including SDFR, small farms, and/or priority populations, relevant to the scope of this project, including TA tasks.

- o 4-6 points – Lead organization and/or partner organizations have a several (3-4) years of experience with outreach and relationship building to farming communities, including SDFR, small farms, and/or priority populations, relevant to the scope of this project, including TA tasks.

- o 2-3 points – Lead organization and/or partner organizations have a one or two years of experience with outreach and relationship building to farming communities, including TA tasks. And/or the response does not include
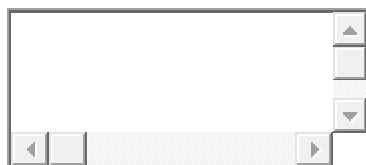
reference to Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers (SDFR), small farms, and/or priority populations. Or, there is a partner organization that will provide TA for the grant, but their experience is only vaguely described.

- o 0-1 point – Lead organization and/or partner organizations have no experience with outreach and relationship building to farming communities, including TA tasks. And/or the response does not include reference to Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers (SDFR), small farms, and/or priority populations. Or, there is a partner organization that will provide TA for the grant, but their experience is not described.

Enter Score Here - Does the project team have expertise in conservation management and implementation to be able to support agricultural operations? (20 points)

4

Please provide comments to support your scoring decision for this section

500

- o Does the lead organization and its staff have education, training, or work experience in grant administration and project management? Reference the resumes or CVs uploaded by the applicant for all relevant lead persons and the response for question 3.
  - o 6 points – Lead organization and lead persons have excellent education, training, or work experience in grant administration. The organizations have a long (5+ years) history of grant administration and project management.
  - o 4-5 points - Lead organization and lead persons have education, training, or work experience in grant administration. The organizations have some (3-4 years) history of grant administration and project management.
  - o 2-3 points - Lead organization and lead persons have limited education, training, or work experience in grant administration. The organizations have little (1-2 years) history of grant administration and project management.

- o   0-1 point - Lead organization and lead persons do not have education, training, or work experience in grant administration. The organizations have no prior history of grant administration and project management.
- o   Does the applicant clearly describe the lead organization's administrative personnel structure and tools used for block grant administration, including tracking grant progress and reportable data? Please refer to the response for question 3.
  - o   4 points – The administrative personnel structure and tools for grant management are identified and clearly explained
  - o   2-3 points – The administrative personnel structure and tools for grant management are described but details and clarity are missing
  - o   0-1 point – No administrative personnel structure or tools are mentioned, or the explanations are not clear enough to determine their use/effectiveness.

Enter Score Here - Does the organization provide evidence of capacity to administer the program? (10 points)

4

Please provide comments to support your scoring decision for this section

500

Statement of Need

Refer to the answers under "Statement of Need" when using this rubric to score this section.

To Score this section, please use the scoring breakdown provided below to allocate points. Please total the points from the scoring breakdown and enter these totals into the scoring response below. You will also be asked to provide short written summaries in support of your scoring decisions.

- o   Did the applicant provide a list of counties for their service area? Please use responses to questions 1 and 2 (if applicable).

  - o   2 points – Service area is indicated via list of counties.

- o 0 points – No main service area indicated.

- o Does the applicant identify the community demographics within their service area? Please use the responses to questions 1, 2 (if applicable), and 3 for reference.

  - o 2 points – Yes, communities are clearly identified and defined

  - o 1 points – Communities are identified but not well defined

  - o 0 points – No community demographics are identified

- o Does the applicant clearly explain their outreach strategy for their service area? Please use the responses to questions 3 and 4, in addition to the information in the section "Workplan Merit and Feasibility" for reference.

  - o 5 points – Explanation of outreach strategy is clearly explained, and the approach will provide excellent outreach coverage to the service area.

  - o 3-4 points – Explanation of outreach strategy may be vague on some details, but the approach should be sufficient for service area coverage.

  - o 1-2 points – Explanation of outreach strategy is such that the approach may not be sufficient for the service area.

  - o 0 points – No explanation is given, or the given explanation is too vague to assess if the outreach strategy will be sufficient for the service area.

- o Does the applicant include an explanation for how *equity will be assessed* for their service area in their outreach plan? Please use the responses to questions 3 and 4 for reference.

  - o 3 points – Explanation of equity assessment in outreach strategy is clearly explained, and the approach is excellent for the service area and target communities.

  - o 1-2 points –Explanation of equity assessment in outreach strategy may be vague on some details, but approach should be sufficient for the service area and target communities.

  - o 0 points – No explanation is given, or the given explanation is too vague to assess equity in the outreach strategy.
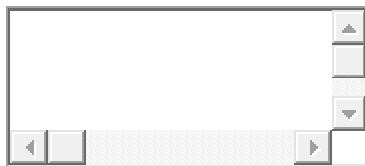
o Does the applicant include an explanation for how *equity will be achieved* for their service area in their outreach plan? Please use the responses to questions 3 and 4 for reference.

   o 4 points – Explanation of how equity will be achieved in outreach strategy is clearly explained, and the approach is excellent for the estimated Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (SDFR) funding percent, the described service area, and target communities.

   o 2-3 points –Explanation of equity will be achieved in outreach strategy may be vague on some details, but approach should be sufficient for the estimated SDFR funding percent, the described service area, and target communities.

   o 0-1 point – No explanation is given, or the given explanation is too vague to assess how equity will be achieved in the outreach strategy. AND/OR, the explanation for estimated SDFR funding target is not sufficient for the percent of funds provided.

Enter Score Here - Does the proposal outline the community demographics that would be served? (16 points)

4

Please provide comments to support your scoring decision for this section

o Does the applicant clearly explain the needs of the target communities within their service area, including a discussion of the preparation needed for climate resiliency within the community? Please use the response to question 5 for reference.

   o 5 points – The applicant clearly describes and explains the needs of the communities in their service area, including a discussion on climate resiliency preparation.
   o 3-4 points – The applicant describes and explains the needs of the communities but may not mention climate resiliency in their explanation or climate resiliency is not well discussed.

- o 1-2 points – The applicant provides some explanation of the needs of the communities in their service area however details may be lacking or description is not service area specific (generic), no climate resiliency is mentioned.

- o 0 points – The applicant does not explain the needs of the community within their service area and climate resiliency preparation for the service area is not mentioned.

o Does the applicant clearly identify the technical or language assistance needed for their target communities? Please use the response to question 5 for reference.

- o 4 points – Yes, technical assistance and/or language assistance needs are explained clearly and in detail.

- o 2-3 points – Technical assistance and/or language assistance needs are explained but may be vague on some details.

- o 0-1 points – Technical assistance and/or language assistance needs are not explained or vague on too many details to assess.

Enter Score Here - Does the proposal identify the needs of the agricultural operations in the service area, including the target communities' language or technical assistance needs? (9 points)

[   ]

4

Please provide comments to support your scoring decision for this section

[text box]

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Workplan Merit and Feasibility

Refer to the answers under "Workplan Merit and Feasibility", the sections "Budget" and "Statement of Needs", and the Work Plan excel document uploaded in Amplifund when using this rubric to score this section.

To Score this section, please use the scoring breakdown provided below to allocate points. Please total the points from the scoring breakdown and enter these totals into

the scoring response below. You will also be asked to provide short written summaries in support of your scoring decisions.

o   Does the outreach plan use an equitable and transparent approach to ensure excellent connection forging with target communities in the service area, including prioritization to SDFRs within the service area? Use the response to question 1 for assessment.

   o   5 points – Outreach plan is clearly explained and adequate to create excellent connections with target communities. There is an emphasis on equity and transparency in the described outreach approach.

   o   3-4 points – Outreach plan is somewhat vague but seems adequate to create connections with target communities. There is an emphasis on equity and transparency in the described outreach approach.

   o   1-2 points – Outreach plan is somewhat vague but seems adequate to create connections with target communities. There is not an emphasis on equity and transparency in the described outreach approach.

   o   0 point – Outreach plan is not clearly explained and/or will not create adequate connections with target communities. There is not an emphasis on equity and transparency in the described outreach approach.

o   Is the award selection process clearly described and includes 1) an emphasis on equity and transparency, 2) an estimated number of on-farm projects to be awarded, 3) the role of TA in the application process, and 4) how on-farm project information such as practice and field location (e.g., Access Parcel Numbers (APNs)) will be collected and reported to CDFA for review? Use the response to question 2 for assessment.

   o   6 points – The award selection process is clearly described covering all topics listed above, there is an emphasis on equity and transparency, especially in describing the role of technical assistance. The applicant provides an expected number of awarded grant beneficiaries.

   o   4-5 points – The award selection process is somewhat vague but there is an emphasis on equity and transparency and the applicant provides an expected number of awarded grant beneficiaries. OR the award selection

process is clearly defined but the applicant does not provide an expected number of awarded grant beneficiaries.

- o 2-3 points – The award selection process is somewhat vague but there is an emphasis on equity and transparency and the applicant provides an expected number of awarded grant beneficiaries. OR the award selection process is clearly defined and the applicant provides an expected number of awarded grant beneficiaries, but there is not a mention of equity and transparency.

- o 0-1 point –The award selection process is very vague AND there is little or no emphasis on equity and transparency, AND the applicant does not provide an expected number of awarded grant beneficiaries.

- o Does the applicant provide a clear strategy, including practice implementation timelines, QA/QC between on-farm projects, and available technical assistance, for facilitating on-farm implementation of conservation management practices for their grant beneficiaries? Use the responses to questions 2 and 3 for assessment.

  - o 5 points – The applicant provides a clear strategy for on-farm implementation that includes thorough discussion of TA role and availability and how quality control / consistency will be assessed and maintained for all of their projects.

  - o 3-4 points – The applicant provides a strategy for on-farm implementation that may be vague on a subtopic.

  - o 1-2 points – The applicant provides a strategy for on-farm implementation that is vague on more than one topic but still able to be assessed.

  - o 0 points – The applicant does not provide a strategy for on-farm implementation, or the described strategy is too vague to assess.

- o Is the verification process for on-farm clearly described, and align with the program timelines, and implementation and verification requirements? Does the process place an emphasis on transparency? Use the responses to questions 4 and 6 for assessment.

  - o 2 points – The applicant provides a clear strategy for verification that shows adequate knowledge of block grant timelines and program requirements and will emphasize transparency with grant beneficiaries

- o 1 point – The applicant provides a not well-defined strategy for verification, OR the applicant does not show adequate knowledge of block grant timelines and program requirements, OR a discussion of how transparency will be achieved is not included

- o 0 points – The applicant does not provide a strategy for verification process AND the applicant does not show adequate knowledge of block grant timelines and program requirements

- o Does the applicant describe clear and thorough record keeping and reporting strategies for tracking grant beneficiary applicants and awarded on-farm projects? Use the responses to question 4 and 6 for assessment.

  - o 4 points – The applicant clearly describes the methods and processes for record keeping and reporting for the application, award, implementation, and post-project

  - o 2-3 point – The applicant is vague on some details regarding the methods and processes for record keeping and reporting.

  - o 0-1 points –The applicant is vague on all details regarding the methods and processes for record keeping and reporting AND/OR does not discuss methods and processes.

Enter Score Here - Does the proposal clearly identify activities to address each of the program deliverables? (22 points)

> [ ]

4

Please provide comments to support your scoring decision for this section

> [text box]

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- o Does the Workplan include sufficient time / type of activities to achieve equitable and full coverage to the target communities in the project's service area? Please refer to the attached Work Plan excel document for assessment.

o 4 points – The project work plan clearly outlines the different outreach activities, and the applicant has allotted sufficient time for the activities to ensure excellent outreach to target communities.

o 2-3 points – The project work plan is vague about some of the different outreach activities OR the applicant has not allotted sufficient time for the activities to ensure adequate outreach to target communities.

o 0-1 point – The timing and type of activities outlined in the work plan are not sufficient to provide outreach to target communities. OR all outreach activities are only vaguely defined in the Workplan with little to know description of type or indication of timing.

o Does the Workplan include sufficient time / activities to achieve project implementation, verification, and reporting for on-farm projects such that the needs of the target communities are met / better climate resiliency can be achieved? Please refer to the attached Work Plan excel document for assessment.

o 4 points – The project work plan clearly outlines the activities for project implementation, verification, and reporting for grant beneficiaries and the applicant has allotted sufficient time for the activities to ensure needs of the target communities are met / better climate resiliency can be achieved.

o 2-3 points – The project work plan is vague about some of the activities for project implementation, verification, and reporting for grant beneficiaries OR the applicant has not allotted sufficient time for the activities to ensure needs of the target communities are met / better climate resiliency can be achieved.

o 0-1 point – The timing and type of activities outlined in the work plan for project implementation, verification, and reporting are not sufficient to ensure needs of the target communities are met / better climate resiliency can be achieved. OR all implementation, verification, and reporting activities are only vaguely defined in the Workplan with little to know description of type or indication of timing.

Enter Points Here - Does the workplan address the needs that were identified in Statement of Needs? (8 points)

4

Please provide comments to support your scoring decision for this section

[text box]

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Budget

To Score this section, please use the scoring breakdown provided below to allocate points. Please total the points from the scoring breakdown and enter these totals into the scoring response below. You will also be asked to provide short written summaries in support of your scoring decisions.

o   Do the explanations for allocated funds in each expense category clearly outline the purpose/use of the funds? Please reference the budgeted completed with the application for assessment and the responses to questions 1 and 3 to guide your assessment.

  o   7 points – The explanations for the allocated funds are clearly outlined and the purpose/use of the funds is reasonable to achieve program goals.
  o   4-6 points – The explanations for the allocated funds are vague in 1 or 2 categories

  o   1-3 points – The explanations for the allocated funds are vague in more than 2 categories OR the purpose/use of some of the funds may not be reasonable to achieve program goals.

  o   0 points – The explanations for the allocated funds are vague in more than 2 categories AND the purpose/use of *most* of the funds is not reasonable to achieve program goals.

Are the costs outlined in the budget reasonable? (7 points)

[text box]

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Please provide comments to support your scoring decision for this section

[text box]

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- o Is the budget completed (no missing expense categories)? Please reference the budgeted completed with the application for assessment.
    - o 1 point - Yes
    - o 0 points - No
- o Does the budget align with the project Workplan? Please reference the budgeted completed with the application for assessment and also the project Workplan and application narrative responses for the Workplan.
    - o 4 points – The apportioned expense categories appear to match with the magnitude and costs of the listed Workplan Items.
    - o 3 points – The apportioned expense categories may have some minor discrepancies with the magnitude and costs of the listed Workplan Items.
    - o 1-2 points – The apportioned expense categories has 1 major discrepancy or many minor discrepancies with the magnitude and costs of the listed Workplan Items.
    - o 0 - points – The apportioned expense categories do not match with most or all listed Workplan Items.
- o Does the applicant provide a plan for tracking grant funds? Please use the response to question 2 for assessment.
    - o 3 points – Applicant provides a well explained and thorough plan, that includes specifics for monitoring and tracking SDFR grant beneficiary funding
    - o 1-2 points – The plan provided by the applicant is vague on some details
    - o 0 points – The plan provided by the applicant is too vague to discern effectiveness OR no mention of tracking for SDFR grant beneficiaries

Is the budget completed correctly and include costs associated with all required deliverables? (8 points)

4

Please provide comments to support your scoring decision for this section

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