

Leadership Skill Development Mini-Grant
2026-2027 Request for Proposals
Two Rounds

Submission Deadlines:

Round One: **June 30, 2026**

Round Two: **December 31, 2026**

*Submissions are due via Qualtrics by 11:59 pm Mountain Time. Decision announcements will be made within 30 calendar days of the submission deadline.

Submit by Qualtrics: https://uidaho.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3E6hUMLY9O2XfkW

Project Funding Range: Up to \$2,000 reimbursement per year per applicant

Project Duration:

Round One: Activities must be completed by December 31, 2026

Round Two: Activities must be completed by June 30, 2027

Eligibility: Faculty and staff engaged in Extension, research, and/or education that advances rural development and are employed by a Western Land-Grant Institution.

Grant Program Manager: Dr. Nadeeka Weerasekara, Email: nadeeka@uidaho.edu

Overview of Leadership Skill Development Mini-Grants

The goal of this grant opportunity is to enhance leadership capacity among Western Land-Grant Institution staff and faculty who support rural economic and community development. Proposal activities must develop the applicant's leadership skills, emphasizing the applicant's capacity to grow leadership capabilities in fellow faculty and staff, as well as community members and partners in the Western Region. Examples of eligible activities include, but are not limited to, enrolling in leadership training (e.g., workshops, classes, courses, webinars) and purchasing curricula, resources, and materials for use in leadership activities. The Leadership Skill Development Mini-Grant funding cannot be used to fund community members' participation in revenue-generating or expense-recovery programs, nor program activities operated by the applicant in their professional role or within their department. Please contact the grant program manager if you wish to discuss specific situations before applying.

About the WRDC

The Western Rural Development Center (WRDC) is one of four rural development centers established by Congress's Rural Development Act of 1972. It is a collaborative effort between the United States Department of Agriculture and the University of Idaho. The core of its funding comes from the National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The WRDC works with public universities in the Western region to conduct research-based studies and educational outreach programs. It also partners with local communities, decision-makers, entrepreneurs, families, farmers, and ranchers to address various rural development issues. The center's objective is to enhance the research and extension capacity of the region's land-grant universities to help rural communities thrive in today's world. The WRDC works in conjunction with the other three Regional Rural Development Centers in the country to achieve their shared mission.



Western Land-Grant Institutions:

Aaniiih Nakoda College, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Institute of American Indian Arts, American Samoa Community College, University of Arizona, Blackfeet Community College, University of California, Chief Dull Knife College, Colorado State University, Diné College, Fort Peck Community College, University of Guam, University of Hawaii, University of Idaho, Iłisaḡvik College, Little Big Horn College, College of Micronesia, Montana State University, Navajo Technical University, University of Nevada Reno, New Mexico State University, Northern Marianas College, Northwest Indian College, Oregon State University, Salish Kootenai College, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, Stone Child College, Tohono O'odham Community College, Utah State University, Washington State University, and University of Wyoming.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on how the proposed activity will build the applicant's leadership skills, with an emphasis on how that will benefit local Extension rural community development efforts and the rural communities the applicant serves.

Award recipients are required to submit a report detailing learning, accomplishments, and personal and community impact. Mini-grant activities and reporting must be completed and submitted to the WRDC and the recipient's direct supervisor by the date assigned in the funding decision.

Funding

Each applicant may receive up to \$2,000 in funding per year, subject to the availability of funds. The WRDC will reimburse approved expenses, such as training registration fees. In some cases, the WRDC may purchase curriculum materials, periodicals, or books directly and arrange for shipment to the recipient instead of processing a reimbursement. Approved expenses will be reimbursed upon submission of valid invoices.