



Request for applications

Deadline: November 17, 2017

The National Wildlife Federation is accepting applications for farmers and conservation professionals, i.e. “champions”, to conduct outreach to promote cover crops and provide region-specific information and farming knowledge to farmers and crop advisors. **Selected applicants will receive financial support for time, travel, and presentation materials, a training on messaging and presentation tools, and access to an elite network of other cover crop champions.** Due to our funder’s priorities in the Mississippi River Basin, applicants are only sought from the following states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio and Wisconsin.

Applicants can apply as individuals or in pairs/groups. Priority will be given to pairs of farmer champions and outreach champions who work together in the same geographic region. Outreach champions may work with more than one farmer champion.

Farmer champion responsibilities and qualifications: Farmers who personally use cover crops and have soil health as a primary mission. The farmer champion’s role includes promoting cover crops and soil health practices around their region. They will be the spokesperson and leader of communicating with farmers that do not currently use cover crops.

Outreach champion responsibilities and qualifications: Agricultural professionals who are full time employees of a farm, conservation, or education-related organization (for example, a non-profit organization or an educational institution). The role of the outreach champion is to support farmer champions by assisting with planning and implementing their proposed outreach plan. The outreach champion can provide information and data that farmer champions may use on the farm or in outreach efforts. The outreach champion can also identify key opportunities for farmer champions to share their expertise and also conduct some outreach.

Selection and support: Selection will be based on the following criteria: innovative outreach plan, existing capacity of the farmer champion(s) and outreach champion to implement the plan, understanding of challenges in guiding farmers to implementing cover crops. NWF will oversee champions’ efforts and offer advice and support on an ongoing basis.

What are the expectations of Cover Crop Champions?

- Champions will conduct various outreach activities. Activities are not limited to traditional outreach methodology (field days, meetings, etc). Innovative and new outreach plans will be highly prioritized. Innovative examples include individualized meeting circles (women's, church, etc.), podcasts or media campaigns. Each Farmer Champion is responsible for directly reaching 150 farmers and 10 crop advisors with messages on cover cropping as a practice.
- Champions will be expected to engage in a listserv and regularly scheduled phone (2-3) calls coordinated by National Wildlife Federation.
- All members of a champion team are required to attend (remotely) or view all training webinars hosted by NWF.
- At least one member of the application champion team must attend a training to be held on **January 24 and 25, 2018 in Madison, WI**. All costs associated with attending this training will be covered by NWF.
- The selection process will prioritize applications that implement innovative outreach and education approaches.
- Champions will be required to complete a mid-term report by July 1st, 2018 and a final report by September 30th, 2018.
- **All activities must be completed by September 30th, 2018.**

What resources will be available to the Cover Crop Champions?

- A stipend will be provided to help champions undertake outreach activities.
- Champions will receive compensation for their time, travel, expenses, and materials.
- Champions will be given messaging and presentation training as well as ongoing guidance on reaching target audiences.
- Champions will have access to NWF staff support for administrative and any other project related needs.
- Champions will have access to information and material useful in presentations to target audiences.
- Champions throughout the Midwest will have an effective network through which they can interact in order to learn from and support each other, and access latest research from academics and government agencies.

How to apply:

- Fill out the attached form and send to Jess Espenshade: espenshadej@nwf.org by **November 17th, 2017**.
- Questions? Contact Jess Espenshade at: espenshadej@nwf.org or 734 887 7114

Cover Crop Champion Application Form

1. Applicant name; indicate outreach or farmer champion by each applicant/s name
2. Applicant/s contact information (address, phone, email):
3. Explain your qualifications and/or experience with cover crops (less than 300 words, in paragraph form or bullet points):
4. Explain your plan for each farmer champion to reach at least 150 farmers and 10 crop advisors each year with messages on cover crops as a practice. Please explain how any of the outreach activities will involve innovative approaches to reaching your target audience, including why you think the approach will be successful.
5. Please identify any challenges to achieving success.
6. Estimate your budget, using the chart on the following page as an example. There is a limit of \$10,000 in total expenditures for each application.

Below is a list of examples of budget items that cover compensation for time spent:

Examples of activities include:

- Hosting a house meeting (Farmer)
- Speaking engagement/in-person interview (Farmer or Outreach Champion) – with Media Outlets or others
- Phone/Radio interviews (Farmer or Outreach Champion)
- Time spent on preparing presentations, writing articles or letters, advising other farmers, etc., attending or assisting with events (Outreach or Farmer Champion)
- Development, recording and release of podcasts, videos, or webinars

Sample budget for farmer applicant – Your numbers and activities will vary

Project Expenditures	Time/Deliverables	Budgeted amount
Compensation to farmer for contributed time	2 days (16 total hours over grant year) of total time spent for communications with outreach champion and preparing presentations and educational materials	\$400
	2 phone interviews	\$100
	4 speaking engagements	\$400
	1 hosted event (half day)	\$500
Travel expenses (estimated)	Travel to 5 speaking engagements	\$1500
Other expenses	Supplies for event	\$100
Total		\$3000

Sample budget for outreach partner - Your numbers and activities will vary

Project Expenditures	Time/Deliverables	Budgeted amount
Compensation to outreach partner for contributed time	4 days (32 total hours over grant year) for communications with advisees/farmer champions and preparing presentations and educational materials	\$800
Travel expenses (estimated)	Travel to 2 speaking engagements	\$600
Other expenses (printing, supply costs, etc.)	Printing materials, supplies for educational materials	\$500
Total		\$2000