



SAND COUNTY FOUNDATION JOB DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Agricultural Program Specialist
Department:	Agricultural Conservation Team
Location:	Madison, Wisconsin or remote within the Midwest
FLSA Status:	Exempt, Salaried
Employment Status:	Regular

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Sand County Foundation (SCF) is a national 501(c)(3) non-profit organization working at the intersection of agriculture and environmental improvement. We research and demonstrate conservation strategies that make economic sense for landowners. Our Leopold Conservation Award program recognizes and promotes the stories of conservation-minded farmers and ranchers to inspire other landowners to consider conservation opportunities on their land. In 1967, SCF was built on the core ideas encouraged by Aldo Leopold, America's foremost conservation thinker. Leopold inspired private landowners to adopt what he called a land ethic—a personal responsibility to treat land, water, and wildlife with respect. Today, as most of the land in the contiguous 48 states is managed by farmers, ranchers and forestland owners, SCF is inspiring a growing number of them to ethically manage the natural resources in their care.

POSITION SUMMARY

The Agricultural Program Specialist will provide programmatic and technical support as a member of SCF's Agricultural Conservation team. The position will focus a majority of time on two roles: supporting our funded partners to deliver and document project activities, and tracking and quantifying environmental and economic outcomes from these projects. The Agricultural Conservation team manages a diverse project portfolio funded by both private and public grants, creating an energizing and dynamic work experience. This role will initially support delivery of SCF's "Farmer-led Fund" and related activities funded by the USDA Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), and will expand into other SCF projects over time. Practices commonly supported in these projects include soil health improvement (cover crops, reduced tillage, crop rotations), rotational grazing, perennial buffers, and nutrient management. An ideal candidate will have experience in water quality and/or biodiversity metrics, geospatial data management, and agricultural economics. This position will report to the Senior Director for Agricultural Conservation, but will have the opportunity to interact with all SCF personnel and board members as well as grantees, outside partners, and project funders.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Communicate with project grantees and partners to ensure that all parties complete proposed activities and reporting, and identify opportunities to improve program design and delivery.
2. Track geospatial project data and apply data management tools through SCF's ArcGIS platform.
3. Collect and process farm management data to assess outcomes from ongoing SCF regenerative agriculture projects, including activities funded by the USDA RCPP.
4. Quantify environmental benefits resulting from alternative farm management by applying mathematical models such as SWAT+, GREET, RuFaS, and other water quality, carbon, or agronomic modeling tools.
5. Develop and deliver methods for SCF to quantify economic benefits of conservation practices (e.g. ROI, partial budget analysis).
6. Coordinate with SCF communication and technical staff in developing reports and stakeholder and public outreach to communicate project results across a diverse audience.
7. Discuss project results with farmers/ranchers, agricultural advisors, private partners, governmental agencies (local, state, and federal), and public stakeholders (rural and urban).
8. In cooperation with SCF staff, provide input and pursue opportunities to develop and fund new research and demonstration projects.
9. Uphold commitment to SCF principles, mission, and objectives.
10. Complete other duties and tasks as assigned.

ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS

1. Bachelor's degree in agricultural economics, environmental science, soil and water resources management, or a closely related field.
2. At least three (3) years of direct experience (an applied Master's Degree may substitute) in resource conservation related to row crop agriculture, rotational grazing, or other agricultural systems appropriate to the Midwestern United States.
3. Proven experience working with agricultural soil and water erosion prediction and nutrient runoff models or tools.
4. Experience applying geospatial tools and software (i.e. ArcGIS).
5. Strong oral and written communication and presentation skills: ability to communicate project goals and outcomes effectively with a variety of stakeholders and audiences.
6. Thorough understanding of agriculture and competence in cultivating and maintaining effective working relationships with farmers/ranchers, landowners, agricultural advisors, and agency and industry representatives.
7. Familiarity with local, state, and federal (i.e. Farm Bill) conservation programs.
8. Leadership skills including high levels of patience and perseverance, and the ability to use diplomacy to resolve difficult situations among project partners and stakeholders.
9. Strong desire and ability to plan and achieve goals, think analytically and solve problems.
10. Experience working in a team environment, collaborating on multiple projects while producing high-quality, timely deliverables.
11. Enthusiasm and passion for the mission, goals, and core values of SCF.

12. Willingness to travel to project sites, with minimal (<15%) overnight travel. Valid driver's license required.
13. Candidates must be authorized to work lawfully in the U.S.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

1. A Master's degree and at least five (5) years of experience in one or more of the fields listed above.
2. Experience working on or managing a commercial farm business.
3. Certification in a conservation and/or agronomic role such as a Technical Service Provider (TSP) or Certified Crop Adviser (CCA).
4. Demonstrated ability to recognize and develop innovations that advance conservation and agronomic outcomes.
5. Strong existing network of conservation and agricultural professionals across the Midwest.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

SCF is an equal opportunity employer committed to being a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace. We are committed to creating a workplace where people from all social identities and backgrounds feel welcome and can thrive. We believe that rich diversity makes us more innovative, competitive, and creative, which helps us better serve our sponsors, collaborators, and communities.

COMPENSATION

SCF offers competitive compensation commensurate with experience and independently verified market comparables, and provides a generous benefits package. Since we expect to receive interest from individuals with varying expertise, the anticipated salary for this position will range between \$65,000 and \$85,000, based on the candidate's qualifications.

APPLICATION DEADLINE AND SUBMISSION

Applications will be reviewed beginning August 31, 2026, but the position will remain open until filled. Submit a cover letter, resume or curriculum vitae, and contact information for three professional references to apply@sandcountyfoundation.org.

With this opportunity is the potential for growth; we encourage candidates to incorporate into their cover letter a statement explaining how their innovative ideas, personal strengths, and unique skillsets complement SCF's mission and program goals.

For specific questions regarding the position, please email Craig Ficenec, Senior Director of Agricultural Conservation at cficenec@sandcountyfoundation.org.