



Chesapeake Bay Trust



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO SUPPORT CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM GOALS AND OUTCOMES - STEWARDSHIP**

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**SECTION I – INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF WORK**

**1.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this Request for Proposals ("RFP") is to **invite non-profit organizations** experienced in various aspects of watershed stewardship, outreach and training, and environmental education to submit proposals to the Chesapeake Bay Trust ("the Trust"). The Trust has been designated to receive federal funds from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as part of the Chesapeake Bay Program ("CBP") Goal Implementation Team Project Initiative. The work to be supported will advance specific outcomes from the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement that have been identified as top priorities to address, and these stretch across all Goal Implementation Teams ("GITs") and workgroups.

This RFP includes one Scope of Work as listed below and titled: "Equity and Environmental Education in the Time of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) to Support Environmental Education Providers." The scope details and qualifications of Offerors are described in more detail in the text that follows.

**Eligible organizations that can apply to this RFP include non-profit organizations only.** A maximum request amount is listed for the Scope of Work. Cost will be a factor in evaluation of applicants, as described in Section IV.

The Trust has been designated to receive federal funds from the United States Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") as part of the CBP GIT Project Initiative to advance specific outcomes from the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement. Awards under this RFP for will be issued as sub-awards (grants). The Trust will establish and manage the sub-awards in compliance with Title 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 200 and the terms of the federal funding by the US EPA (CFDA# 66.466) through the Cooperative Agreement 96341401 dated 5/18/19.

The source of the CBP GIT Project Initiative is federal funding. Therefore, funded projects must adhere to federal requirements regarding contracting, including contracts with consultants and the purchase of supplies and equipment. For example, awardees shall obtain multiple estimates/bids for subcontracted services over \$3,000 and use good-faith efforts to engage Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs),

including Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs), Women Business Enterprises (WBEs), and Small Business Enterprises (SBEs).

**1.2 Scope of Work and Minimum Qualifications**

This section provides a description of the Scope of Work, maximum request amount, project outcomes, project steps and timeline, expected deliverables, and minimum qualifications. A general description of each Scope of Work item is included in Appendix A.

Scope #	FFY20 Scope Title	Maximum Request Amount	Award Details
Scope of Work: #1EE	Equity and Environmental Education in the Time of COVID-19 to Support Environmental Education Providers	\$20,000	Multiple sub-awards will be awarded as grants, referred to as awards

**SCOPE OF WORK #1EE: EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN THE TIME OF COVID-19 TO SUPPORT ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS (MAXIMUM REQUEST: \$20,000)**

**Goal Implementation Team (GIT): Fostering Chesapeake Stewardship GIT 5**

**Purpose and Outcomes:** Due to the significant operational and economic impacts of the COVID-19 global pandemic, the Chesapeake Bay Program’s Education Workgroup has identified an urgent need to provide financial assistance to environmental education providers. This financial assistance will provide organizations with critical support to retain staffing as their operations pivot from place-based environmental education to virtual platforms and physically distanced schoolyard programs. We recognize that without an infusion of funding, some of these organizations may have to furlough staff, and in some cases, cease operations. The funding provided through this assistance will not only help with economic recovery but is intended to help organizations innovate and connect with schools in new ways that will advance the Environmental Literacy Goal of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement moving forward. Funding is available to any non-profit organization working with school(s)/school district(s) in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

The primary purpose of this financial assistance is to support staff salaries, however, the funding can also be used for organizational costs, including equipment, and other systems to shift operations online, content design/creation, and other costs necessary to address the needs.

Examples of projects that will meaningfully contribute to community-based environmental education during this time include: providing academic support for students to mitigate learning loss, offering “pop-up education” in public spaces close to low-income communities, supporting the development of safe outdoor learning spaces, and/or developing district-level environmental literacy plans. Special consideration will be given to programs that are addressing inequities and/or serving communities that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

## **Project Steps and Timeline:**

### **Step 1: 12/1/2020 to 12/18/2020**

#### **Deliverables:**

- Submit signed award agreement
- Present at 2-hour Kickoff Meeting

### **Step 2: 12/19/2020 to 8/31/2021**

#### **Deliverables:**

- Present at 2-hour Close-Out Meeting
- Submit Final Report that includes lessons learned
- Submit all documentation, products, and materials that were created. In your application, outline what will be created/provided and detail the final format the product(s) will be provided (e.g., website, video, word, excel, etc.).

## **Stakeholder Participants:**

- Chesapeake Bay Program Education Workgroup
- Sarah Bodor, North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE)
- Bronwen Rice, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) B-WET

**Deliverables:** The successful awardees will develop work plans to address an operational challenge caused by COVID-19 as described above. Any products or tools developed with funding from these awards shall be submitted at project end and made available to the Education Workgroup for distribution to the Chesapeake Bay education community.

**Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) Requirement:** A QAPP will not be required.

**Qualifications of Applicant:** Applicants should be experienced providers of environmental education in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

## **SECTION II – BUDGET AND ADDITIONAL SERVICES**

**Amount Available:** It is anticipated that as a result of this procurement action, multiple sub-awards (grants) will be awarded for the Scope of Work. Each successful applicant for this Scope may be engaged in one additional phase of work through this procurement action

**Additional Services.** The Contract Officer may request ancillary or additional services within the capacity of the Awardee as may be useful or necessary in the interests of the Trust and the Project for the above Scope of Work.

**ADD/DEDUCT:** The Trust reserves the right to add or remove items from the base proposal during the award and modify or adjust scope of work and payment as needed.

## SECTION III - PROPOSAL FORMAT AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

### 3.1 **Principal Solicitation Officer and Issuing Office:**

Contract Officer: Sarah T. Koser  
Telephone Number: 410-974-2941, ext. 106  
E-Mail: skoser@cbtrust.org  
Address: Chesapeake Bay Trust  
108 Severn Avenue  
Annapolis, MD 21403

The sole point of contact for the purpose of this RFP is the Contract Officer.

3.2 **Prospective Offerors:** An "Offeror" is a person/entity submitting a proposal in response to this RFP.

3.3 **Cancellation; Discretion of Contract Officer:** This RFP may be canceled in whole or in part and any proposal may be rejected in whole or in part at the discretion of the Contract Officer. In addition, the Contract Officer has the right to negotiate separately with any Offeror in any manner which will best serve the interests of the Trust. The Contract Officer may waive any mandatory condition or minimum qualification if the Contract Officer determines that such action is in the best interest of the Trust.

3.4 **Submission Instructions/Proposal Closing Date:** Offerors must submit proposals using our Online Application System, located at: [https://www.grantrequest.com/SID\\_1520?SA=SNA&FID=35071](https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_1520?SA=SNA&FID=35071) no later than **4:00 p.m. on Monday, October 19, 2020** (the "**Closing Date**"). Requests for extensions will not be granted, late applications will not be accepted, and the online funding opportunity will close promptly at 4:00 pm. **Offerors are strongly encouraged to submit at least a few days prior to the deadline** given potential for high website traffic on the due date. The Trust cannot guarantee availability of Online Application System technical assistance on the deadline date. If email confirmation of submission is not received within two business days, please contact the Principal Solicitation Officer listed in Section 3.1. Proposals are irrevocable for 90 days following the Closing Date.

3.5 **Proposal Format:** A project narrative and a project budget are required, as described below.

- a. **Project Narrative.** You will be asked to submit a narrative *to address the scope of work elements described above in Section 1.2*. Each proposal (i.e., a submission must include responses to items 1 through 7 in a concise ( $\leq 3$  page) description. The Letter(s) of Commitment described in #7 may be included outside of the 3-page limit as an attachment or may be submitted after your organization is awarded funding. All material must be submitted as one electronic file. Organize your proposal as follows:
  1. Describe your organization and the history/experience of your organization in providing environmental education activities consistent with your proposal. Describe your organizations capacity to do the proposed work and any the experience of any staff assigned to complete the activities outlined in your proposal.
  2. Describe how COVID-19 has impacted the operations of your environmental education work, including staffing and programming.

3. Provide a summary of the project you are proposing. Clearly define the activities that will be conducted and audience reached, including how you are serving communities that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 (if applicable). This is the logistical “Work Plan” for your project.
4. Describe how your project will address the impacts described in #2 above.
5. List which of the elements below that your proposal addresses and how your proposal addresses each element:
  - i. Organizational Health
  - ii. Adaptation and/or Innovation in our “New Normal”
  - iii. Inequities Created or Exacerbated by COVID-19
  - iv. Transferable Model to other Organizations
6. What will success look like if you are awarded the requested funding? What documentation of project success will be produced? What products and/or materials will be produced? In what format will these materials be provided for the end-user and for the final project deliverable(s), if awarded?
7. If applicable, provide the name, address, phone number, and email address of the school(s)/school district(s) included in your project. Letters of Commitment from the school(s)/school district(s) are encouraged but not required with your proposal. Note: if not submitted with your proposal, Letters of Commitment will be requested if your project is awarded.

Note that the deliverables in Table 1 below will be required for your project and for payment.

<b>Table 1. Project deliverables and timeline.</b>		
<b>Deliverable #</b>	<b>Project Deliverables</b>	<b>Due Date of Deliverable</b>
Deliverable #1	The deliverables include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submittal of signed award agreement.</li> <li>• Attendance and presentation at a virtual kickoff meeting (2 hrs).</li> </ul>	12/18/2020
Deliverable #2	The deliverables include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance and presentation at a virtual Close-Out Meeting (2 hrs).</li> <li>• Submittal of Final Report using Trust Template, including documentation of Results including Lessons Learned.</li> <li>• Submittal of any products and materials that were created (if applicable)</li> </ul>	8/31/2021

- b. Project Budget. You will be asked to upload your budget using the “Application Budget” worksheet of the Chesapeake Bay Trust’s Financial Management Spreadsheet (FMS), an excel file template. The template is available in the online application and can be found by visiting [www.cbtrust.org/forms](http://www.cbtrust.org/forms) where you can also watch a video with instructions on how to complete the FMS. The budget is a spreadsheet that is uploaded separately into the online application. For your budget request:

1. The body of work described in your proposal should be able to be accomplished with the resources requested in your budget; be as detailed as possible.
2. The Offeror shall submit a budget including total number of hours and hourly rate of compensation for the services to be performed during the term of the award broken down by direct rate, benefit rate, indirect rate, profit, and direct expenses; any additional costs required to complete the project; and total compensation. Under this program, food and beverage costs will not be supported.
3. **If your proposed indirect rate is higher than 10% of the direct costs and your proposal is selected for funding, you will be required to provide the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) documentation.**
4. Matching/leveraged resources are encouraged but not required. Indicate whether each match entry is applied for, pledged, or in-hand. Indicate in the narrative whether your organization has requested financial support from any other sources for the project not listed as match in the budget submitted.
5. Use the “Additional Budget Justification” section in the online application to justify and explain costs. Budgets that are detailed, justified, and itemized are ideal.
6. The proposed rates of compensation will be irrevocable for a period of 90 days from the Closing Date, or if modified during negotiations, for a period of 90 days from the date such modified rates are proposed by the Offeror.

**3.6 Professional Liability Insurance:** The Offeror shall agree to maintain in full force and effect during the term of the award usual and customary amounts of liability insurance coverage in connection with the performance or failure to perform services under the award.

**3.7 Eligible Organizations:** Eligible organizations include non-profit organizations only. **For-profit organizations are NOT eligible to apply under this RFP.** No entity may enter into an award with the Trust under this funding opportunity if the entity is listed in [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov) as debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded and unless the entity has provided its DUNS (Dun & Bradstreet) number to the Trust. You will be asked to submit your DUNS number in the online application form.

**3.8 Subcontracting Opportunities and Procurement:** This solicitation will result in a sub-award. The Offeror should specify the intent to procure subcontracting services and demonstrate compliance with federal procurement guidelines for all subcontracting services between \$3,000 and \$150,000, including:

- a. Obtain three estimates for subcontracted work or
- b. Obtain subcontracted services through a competitive bid process.

For all subcontracted work, the Offeror shall be able to demonstrate that Good Faith Efforts were used to engage minority/disadvantaged/women/small business enterprises (MBE/DBE/WBE/SBE) by reaching out to MBE/DBE/WBE/SBE firms to obtain estimates or bids. The following websites can help identify MBE/DBE/WBE/SBE firms in states/districts within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed:

DC	<a href="https://dslbd.secure.force.com/public/">https://dslbd.secure.force.com/public/</a>
DE	<a href="https://deldotcivilrights.dbesystem.com/FrontEnd/searchcertifieddirectory.asp">https://deldotcivilrights.dbesystem.com/FrontEnd/searchcertifieddirectory.asp</a>
MD	<a href="https://mbe.mdot.maryland.gov/directory/">https://mbe.mdot.maryland.gov/directory/</a>
NY	<a href="https://ny.newnycontracts.com/frontend/searchcertifieddirectory.asp?">https://ny.newnycontracts.com/frontend/searchcertifieddirectory.asp?</a>

PA	<a href="http://www.dgs.internet.state.pa.us/suppliersearch">http://www.dgs.internet.state.pa.us/suppliersearch</a>
VA	<a href="https://www.sbsd.virginia.gov/directory/">https://www.sbsd.virginia.gov/directory/</a>
WV	<a href="http://apps.sos.wv.gov/business/corporations/searchadvanced.aspx">http://apps.sos.wv.gov/business/corporations/searchadvanced.aspx</a>

All subcontractors must be verified by checking at [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov) to ensure that they have not been suspended, debarred, excluded, or disqualified to do work with federal government resources.

## **SECTION IV - EVALUATION PROCEDURE**

**4.1 Qualifying Proposals:** The Contract Officer will review each proposal for compliance with the minimum qualifications set forth in "Offeror's Minimum Qualifications."

**4.2 Deviations and Negotiation:** The Contract Officer shall have the sole right to determine whether any deviation from the requirements of this RFP is substantial in nature, and the Contract Officer may reject non-conforming proposals. In addition, the Contract Officer may waive minor irregularities in proposals, allow an Offeror to correct minor irregularities, and negotiate with responsible Offerors in any manner deemed necessary or desirable to serve the best interests of the Project.

**4.3 Evaluation:** Proposals shall be evaluated by a review committee composed of technical experts and facilitated by the Contract Officer. Evaluation will be made on the basis of the evaluation criteria discussed below and may include any oral presentation that may be required by the Contract Officer, through a recommendation by the technical review committee, at his or her discretion. The Contract Officer reserves the right to recommend an Offeror for award based upon the Offeror's proposal without oral presentations or further discussion. However, the Contract Officer may engage in further discussion if he or she determines that it might be beneficial. In such case, the Contract Officer will notify those responsible Offerors with whom further discussion is desired. In addition, the Contract Officer may permit qualified Offerors to revise their proposals by submitting "best and final" offers.

**4.4 Evaluation Considerations:** Proposals by Offerors who meet the minimum qualifications set forth in Section 1.2 will be evaluated by the technical review committee on the basis of the following factors:

- a. Proposed Need. Clear demonstration of operational impacts caused by changes to environmental education programming due to COVID-19. Extent to which the "Work Plan" addresses inequities and/or serving communities that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.
- b. Proposed Project. Evaluation of the work to be performed to accomplish the goals outlined in the Scope of Work.
- c. Experience of Organization. Evaluation of the Organization's experience in providing environmental education activities consistent with their proposal.
- d. Capacity. Evaluation of the Organization's ability and commitment to meet the timeline.
- e. Price and Hours. Hourly rate, indirect rate, and number of hours to be devoted to the project. Budget line items and associated costs per line item must: a) support the scope of work and b) be appropriate and cost-effective.

## **SECTION V: OTHER INFORMATION**

**5.1 Disclosure:** Proposals submitted in response to this RFP may be provided to government agencies and be subject to disclosure pursuant to the provisions of the Access to Public Records Act of the State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland (the "Public Information Act") or equivalent for your area. Offerors must specifically identify those portions of their proposals, if any, which they deem to contain confidential or proprietary information and must provide justification why such materials should not, upon request, be disclosed by the State under the Public Information Act.

**5.2 Quality Assurance Project Plan:** This scope of work will **NOT** require a Quality Assurance Project Plan ("QAPP"). General guidance on QAPP's can be found on the EPA QAPP website: <https://www.epa.gov/osa/elements-quality-assurance-project-plan-qapp-collecting-identifying-and-evaluating-existing>. If data originates from sources other than federal reports and peer reviewed journals, a statement on data quality suitability will be required in the final report. When submitting a proposal for a scope of work that requires a QAPP, the Offeror should understand and account for any costs associated with completing this component of the work.

**5.3 Expenses:** The Trust and the Contract Officer are not responsible for any direct or indirect expenses that an Offeror may incur in preparing and submitting a proposal, participating in the evaluation process, or in consequence of this solicitation process for any reason.

**5.4 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions:** By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP:

- a. the Offeror accepts all of the terms and conditions set forth in this RFP;
- b. the Offeror, if selected for award, agrees that it will comply with all federal, State, and local laws applicable to its activities and obligations under the award;
- c. the Offeror shall be deemed to represent that it is not in arrears in the payment of any obligation due and owing the United States Government or the State or any department or unit thereof, including, without limitation, the payment of taxes and employee benefits, and, if selected for award, that it shall not become so in arrears during the term of the award; and
- d. the Offeror, acknowledges that they are compliant with federal employment and non-discrimination laws and have not been debarred, convicted, charged or had civil judgment rendered against them for fraud or related offense by any government agency (federal/State/local) or been terminated for cause or default by any government agency (federal/State/local).

**5.5 Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Program, the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program, Women Business Enterprise (WBE), and Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program Participation:** This RFP encourages the participation of MBE/DBE/WBE/SBE firms (members of a group as defined in the State Finance and Procurement Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland (the "Procurement Article"), Section 14-301(f)(i)(ii)). The Trust encourages MBE/DBE/WBE/SBE firms who meet the qualifications to respond to this RFP.

**5.6 Parties to the Award:** The award to be entered into as a result of this RFP (the "Award") shall be between the successful Offeror (the "Awardee") and the Trust and may be subject to EPA approval prior to the award.

**5.7 Award Documents.** The award shall include the following documents: this RFP, the Proposal (to the extent not inconsistent with the RFP or the award), and the award. In the event of an inconsistency, the award shall have priority over the other documents and specific conditions of the award shall have priority over General Conditions.

**5.8 Award Term.** The award term shall commence as of a date to be specified in the award and, unless sooner terminated in accordance with the award, shall end when all work authorized under the award has been successfully completed by the project end date, unless the award is renewed or extended at the sole option of the Contract Officer.

**5.9 Billing Procedures and Compensation.**

- a. Method: The award to be entered into as a result of this RFP will not exceed the small procurement threshold fixed at 41 U.S.C. 403 (11) (currently \$150,000). The Awardee(s) must comply with billing procedures as may be required by the Contract Officer and EPA. These will be based upon satisfactory completion of benchmark tasks.
- b. Records: The Grantee(s) shall submit invoices in a form acceptable to the Contract Officer and maintain records relating to the costs/expenses incurred by the Awardee(s) in the performance of the award for a period of three years from the date of final Project payment under the award.

**5.10 Certification.** The Offeror shall certify that, to the best of its knowledge, the price information submitted is accurate, complete, and correct as of the Closing Date, and if negotiations are conducted as of the date of "best and final offer."

**5.11 Branding.** All products (outreach materials, events) will be branded with the US EPA and Chesapeake Bay Trust logos.

**APPENDIX A: DESCRIPTION OF THE SCOPE OF WORK SECTIONS**

<b><u>Goal Implementation Team (GIT)</u></b>	This section indicates the Goal Implementation Team (GIT) that is presenting the scope of work for the RFP.
<b><u>Purpose and Outcomes</u></b>	This section provides the purpose of the work and the expected outcomes of the work. This section provides background information and context for applicants.
<b><u>Maximum Request</u></b>	This section identifies the maximum request amount allowed for the scope of work.
<b><u>Project Steps and Timeline</u></b>	This section outlines the specific steps and proposed timeline of work that should be accounted for by the applicant. The applicant should also account for and provide detail regarding any additional steps or work that may be undertaken to deliver the final products as listed in the “Deliverables” section of the table for that scope of work. Additional project steps and extended timelines may be added throughout the project as agreed upon by the chosen Contractor, the GIT team, the Chesapeake Bay Program (CPB), and the Chesapeake Bay Trust (Trust).
<b><u>Stakeholder Participants</u></b>	This section lists the project participants that the Applicant will need to engage throughout the project to meet the deliverables of that scope of work.
<b><u>Deliverables</u></b>	This section outlines the specific final products that will need to be submitted and approved by the GIT and Trust teams in order to successfully meet the terms of the contract. Additional deliverables may be added throughout the project as agreed upon by the Awardee, the GIT team, the CPB, and the Trust.
<b><u>QAPP (Quality Assurance Project Plan) Requirement</u></b>	<p>This section identifies if there is a need for a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). General guidance on QAPP’s can be found on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) QAPP website: <a href="https://www.epa.gov/osa/elements-quality-assurance-project-plan-qapp-collecting-identifying-and-evaluating-existing">https://www.epa.gov/osa/elements-quality-assurance-project-plan-qapp-collecting-identifying-and-evaluating-existing</a>. If data originates from sources other than federal reports and peer reviewed journals, a statement on data quality suitability will be required in the final report. When submitting a proposal for a scope of work that requires a QAPP, the applicant should understand and account for any costs associated with completing this component of the work. Additional information about QAPP’s can be found in the following documents:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>EPA Requirements for Quality Assurance Project Plans</i>, QA/R-5, March 2001</li> <li>2. <i>Guidance for Quality Assurance Project Plans</i>, QA/G-5, December 2002 (<a href="http://www.epa.gov/quality/qs-docs/g5-final.pdf">http://www.epa.gov/quality/qs-docs/g5-final.pdf</a>)</li> </ol> <p>In some cases when secondary data is used, a QAPP is required. Guidance for developing a QAPP for secondary data can be found at <a href="https://www.epa.gov/quality/quality-assurance-project-plan-requirements-secondary-data-research-projects">https://www.epa.gov/quality/quality-assurance-project-plan-requirements-secondary-data-research-projects</a>. If data originates from sources other than federal reports and peer reviewed journals, a statement on data quality suitability will be required in the final report.</p>
<b><u>Qualifications of Applicant</u></b>	This section outlines the experience required by the Applicant’s personnel assigned to perform under the Award.