Community Engagement and Restoration Mini Grant Program

FY24 Request for Proposals

- -

Chesapeake Bay Trust

Empowering people. Restoring nature.

MARYLAND · CB TRUST · Protect the Chesapeake

Chesapeake Bay Trust

108 Severn Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21403

(410) 974 – 2941 ♦ www.cbtrust.org

Community Engagement and Restoration Mini Grant Program

At A Glance

Program Summary:

This grant program is designed to engage diverse organizations in activities in Maryland that both benefit communities and raise public awareness of and engagement in natural resources issues.

Deadline:

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis until funds for this fiscal year are exhausted. **The Trust must receive all applications a minimum of eight weeks prior to the start of the proposed project.** The Trust cannot provide reimbursement funding for already completed projects.

Eligible Project Locations: Maryland

Eligible Applicants:

Only applicants who have received three awards or fewer from the Trust in the past are eligible to apply. Applications are particularly encouraged from organizations who have never received an award from the Trust. Organizations must be either a non-profit organization or public agency (e.g., a municipal, county, regional, state, or federal).

Request Amounts: Up to $5,000

Submit Your Application:

Follow the instructions online at https://cbtrust.org/grants/community-engagement/

Contact:

For more information on the program manager visit the program's webpage Community Engagement - Chesapeake Bay Trust (cbtrust.org).

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Introduction

The Chesapeake Bay Trust (Trust) (https://cbtrust.org/) is a nonprofit, grant-making organization dedicated to improving the bays, streams, rivers, forests, parks, and other natural resources of all our local systems, from the Chesapeake to the Coastal Bays to the Youghiogheny River. The Trust, supported in large part by Maryland's Chesapeake Bay License Plate and partnerships with other regional funders, engages and empowers diverse groups to take actions that enrich natural resources and local communities of the Chesapeake Bay region. Since 1985, the Trust has awarded over $140 million in grants to municipalities, nonprofit organizations, schools, and public agencies throughout Maryland and the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Program Goals and Importance of Diversity and Inclusion

Through this funding opportunity, the Trust seeks to engage new applicants and organizations from diverse communities in small-scale projects that enhance communities, engage residents, and, ultimately, improve natural resources.

Among the Trust's core values are diversity and inclusion: We feel that a broad range of communities can benefit from healthy natural resources, even if their primary focus is on other issues. Human health, the economy, jobs, community livability, education and our children are all connected with a healthy environment. As a result, the Trust is investing in grants primarily to new applicants who have yet to frequently engage with the Trust. Our goals are to:

1. Provide funding to groups that have traditionally been under-engaged with environmental issues, but who have a project idea that benefits both their communities and natural resources, such as native wildlife (birds, pollinators, and other species), greenery in local parks, rural or urban forests, streams, rivers, and other natural spaces;
2. Engage residents in community-based protection and restoration; and
3. Introduce the grant lifecycle to applicants who may not be experienced in applying for grants and managing the awards.

Want a mentor to help you with this application?
The Trust offers a mentorship opportunity to all applicants eligible for this program. If you want a mentor to assist you in this grant application, contact the Trust and we can connect you or contact a mentor directly.

See a description of the mentorship opportunity, a list mentors, and a description of how the mentor can help you with this application at https://cbtrust.org/grants/community-engagement/mentorship-program/.

The Trust is committed to the advancement of diversity and inclusion in its award-making and environmental work. As a result, the Trust strongly encourages applications directly from underrepresented groups, and for projects that increase awareness and participation of communities that are traditionally underrepresented, such as communities of color. See Appendix A for guidance on navigating the grant application process. For a full description of the Trust's efforts to engage under-engaged groups, see our strategic plan at www.cbtrust.org/strategic-plan and our Diversity and Inclusion statement at https://cbtrust.org/diversity-inclusion/.

Sample Eligible Project Types

The Trust encourages projects that seek to accomplish multiple benefits, such as meeting community goals and improving environmental health.

This objective can be met through applications from organizations new to environmental work, groups engaging audiences through on-the-ground-work, and new, creative partnerships we have not thought of yet. The Trust will consider funding elements of projects that may not have a primarily environmental purpose but that have an ultimate connection or potential to improve natural resources.

Example ideal *goals* of a project proposed through this grant program may be, but are not limited to:

- Connecting community residents to their local natural resources such as wildlife, local water bodies, local parks and trails, and trees;
- Increasing awareness and/or knowledge of under-engaged groups in the topic of community enhancement through natural resource protection or improvement;
- Involving new (to environmental work and/or new to the Chesapeake Bay Trust efforts) or under-engaged groups, connecting their goals with the goal to improve or protect natural resources;
- Engaging residents in community-based protection and restoration projects and encouraging behavior changes that benefit environmental health;
- Educating residents about the connection between human health and being outdoors, which could be done during the implementation and maintenance of a restoration project;
- Promoting development of community leaders to build long-lasting environmental stewardship;
- Promoting collaborative community engagement and restoration solutions among multiple partners, particularly those whose primary focus is outside the environmental field; and/or
- Encouraging organizations, when pursuing natural resource projects, to engage the communities in which they work.

Eligible project *types* include (but are not limited to):

- Projects that capture rainwater and improve wildlife habitat such as pollinator habitat plantings and rain gardens;
- Community greening projects, such as tree plantings, which have been shown to beautify communities, improve health via air quality improvement, save money due to the energy reduction value of shade, and can lead to reduced crime all while improving stormwater runoff issues;
- Community clean-ups that benefit both communities and local waterways and include education on litter impacts;
- Community food gardens that combine a water quality practice, lessons about local food, and education about natural resources;
- Community workshops that educate or train residents on individual actions they can do themselves at their home or business, such as rain barrel installations or conservation landscaping;
- Projects that combine art with an increased awareness of stormwater issues, such as storm drain stenciling or rain barrel installations; and/or
- Projects that educate and get residents outdoors, which have been shown to improve human health.

These are not all the project goals and project types possible and we look forward to hearing your ideas.. If you want assistance refining your project idea, see guidance for how to develop a project idea and navigate the grant application process in Appendix A. To learn more information about the project types we listed above, see Appendix B. If you have an idea that is not listed, but potentially meets the program's goals, contact the

program manager at (410) 974-2941 to discuss your idea before applying. For more information on the program manager visit the program's webpage [Community Engagement - Chesapeake Bay Trust (cbtrust.org)](https://cbtrust.org).

The Trust has the following grant programs for school-related projects and sponsorship requests for conferences or events:

- School-related: Applicants interested in Environmental Education projects targeting Pre-K-12 students should refer to the Grant Application Package for Youth Environmental Education requests available at https://cbtrust.org/grants/youth-environmental-education-grant-program/.
- Sponsorship requests: Requests for sponsorships for conferences and events should be submitted through the Chesapeake Bay Trust's Sponsorship RFP, also found at https://cbtrust.org/grants/sponsorship-program/.

Therefore, this grant program does not support school-related or sponsorship requests for conferences or events.

The Trust is unable to fund projects or programs that are required by a separate Federal, state, or locally issued permit, decree, or enforcement action. In some cases, the Trust may elect to fund optional portions of required projects that are in excess of regulatory requirements.

Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will be used by internal expert reviewers to evaluate applications under the Community Engagement and Restoration Mini Grant Program:

Most Important Criteria:
- **Consistency with program goals**:
  - Is the project proposed consistent with the intent and goals of the grant program?
- **Cost Effectiveness/Budget**:
  - Is the budget appropriate (at or below $5,000 requested) and cost effective?
  - Are the budget line items justified in the project narrative? In-kind and cash match is not required but can be included, especially if needed to accomplish project goals.
- **Likelihood of Immediate Project Success**:
  - Are methodologies sound and consistent with best practices?
  - Does the application include required items?
    - For on-the-ground projects, are a site plan, site photos, a native plant list, and a maintenance plan included?
    - For outreach projects, are a list of knowledge objectives, evaluation plan, and workshop agenda (if application proposed a workshop) included?

Important Criteria:
- **Demonstration Value**:
  - Will others be able to take lessons from this project, and perhaps replicate it in their own communities?
  - For on-the-ground projects, how visible and impactful will the installed project and interpretive signage be?
- **Likelihood of Long-term Project Success**:
  - Will the project last for a long time (five to ten years) or otherwise have lasting impact?
  - Will additional resources be needed to maintain the value of the project, and if so, has that issue been addressed in the proposal?
- **Partnerships and Community**:

- o Are the people and groups needed to do this work included in and supportive of the project (e.g., landowner, neighbors, rights of way owners, etc.)?
- o Are any key partnerships required, and if so, are these partnerships included in and supportive of the project?
- o If the lead applicant is not a member of the community served by the project (e.g., an external non-profit doing work on land owned by another entity, such as a health providing facility), is a transfer of "ownership" to the community built into the project and the ability of the community to carry the work forward likely?

Eligible Applicants

In an effort to provide funding to diverse groups that have traditionally been under-engaged with environmental issues or are new to applying for and managing grants, only applicants who have received <u>three awards or fewer from the Trust in the past are eligible to apply</u>.[1] Applications are particularly encouraged from organizations who have never received a grant from the Trust.

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[1] Applicants that have received four or more awards from the Trust but last applied eight or more years ago prior to the application submission date will be eligible to be considered through the Community Engagement and Restoration Mini Grant Program. Sponsorships and Chesapeake Conservation Corps awards are not counted towards the eligibility cap.

The Trust welcomes requests from the following organizations:

- Nonprofits;
- Faith-based;
- Community and Homeowners Associations;
- Service, Youth, and Civic Groups; and/or
- Municipal, County, Regional, State, Federal Public Agencies.

> **Want a mentor to help you with this application?**
> The Trust offers a mentorship opportunity to all applicants eligible for this program. If you want a mentor to assist you in this grant application, contact the Trust and we can connect you or contact a mentor directly.
>
> See a description of the mentorship opportunity, a list mentors, and a description of how the mentor can help you with this application at https://cbtrust.org/grants/community-engagement/mentorship-program/.

Funding Availability and Timeline

Funding Availability: The Trust anticipates funds available in FY24 of up to $180,000.

Project Timeline: Projects must be completed within 12 months upon receipt of the award. Requests to extend project completion period will be reviewed and considered on a case-by-case basis. When a project is complete, grantees are required to submit a final report and include supporting materials/products.

Deadline

Proposals for the Community Engagement and Restoration Mini Grant Program requests are accepted on an on-going basis ("rolling") until funds are fully expended for the given fiscal year. Visit the grant program's website at https://cbtrust.org/community-engagement/ and sign up for our Grantee Newsletter at https://cbtrust.org/newsletters/ for the most up to date information about the status of this rolling program.

The Trust must receive all proposals at least EIGHT weeks prior to the start of the proposed project. For example, if you were to submit it on September 1st, 2023, the earliest that your project may start is November 27th, 2023. The Trust cannot make exceptions to this policy.

Application Review Process

All submitted applications are scored by technical experts in the field supported by this RFP. Reviewers score all applications based on the evaluation criteria listed in the above "Evaluation Criteria" section.

The Trust reserves the right to fund projects and budget items that advance our mission and meet specific funding priorities and criteria.

To allow applicants to set expectations prior to investing time in an application, the Trust provides historical application approval rates for the same or similar programs. The average approval rate from the last three rounds (years) in this grant program is 81%; this includes both fully and partially funded applications.

Awards and Notifications

All applicants will receive a letter stating the Trust's decision. An application may be declined, partially awarded, or fully awarded. If awarded, the Trust will send an award agreement with award conditions and due date of final reports. The Trust will mail the full award payment to the requesting organization following: satisfaction of any award contingencies, including upload of the signed award agreement. In cases where the awardee fails to submit a final report by the due date, the Trust reserves the right to terminate the award agreement and require a refund of funds already transferred to the awardee.

When the project is complete, awardees are required to complete final reports and submit final products and supporting materials for the project. <u>Organizations with outstanding final, progress, or status reports will not be awarded additional grants</u>.

Contact

For technical assistance, project guidance, and/or assistance with drafting a budget, contact the Program Manager at (410) 974-2941. For more information on the program manager visit the program's webpage [Community Engagement - Chesapeake Bay Trust (cbtrust.org)](cbtrust.org).

Narrative Questions

You will upload a MS Word or PDF file not to exceed five (5) pages of text, excluding photos or supporting documents such as Letter(s) of Commitment, that address the following narrative questions. Supporting documents, as outlined in question 9, and additional file attachments can be uploaded separately, not to exceed a total of four file attachments per application. Use the additional "Upload" options in the online system.

To ensure that you address all questions, we recommend that you <u>copy and paste the questions below</u> and use them as an outline in your narrative.

1. **Detailed Project Description**:
   - What are the big-picture goals and the specific objectives of the project?
   - Why is this project needed and how was it identified?
   - How would the success of your project advance the protection or improvement of natural resources (address co-benefits such as human health, leadership development, and/or improvement of community livability)?

2. **Community Context**:
    - Identify the priority audience you will engage in this project and describe how you will reach them and why you chose that method.
    - Describe the communities (neighbors, residents, businesses, etc.) who will benefit from this project.
    - Tell us how this project fits into other activities occurring in the community. For example, are neighboring health providing facilities or homeowner's associations who may already be undertaking environmental activities going to be engaged in this project?

3. **Partnerships**: Do you plan to partner with an organization that can provide technical expertise (for either on-the-ground or outreach projects)? If you are receiving support from another organization, tell us who they are and what support they are providing.

4. **Demographic Information:** In light of the Trust's commitment to the advancement of diversity in its award-making, provide demographic information about the community or population involved in or served by the project.
    - Provide your organization's experience working within the specific communities that you will be prioritizing/engaging. If you have not had significant experience working with or as part of your prioritized audience, the Trust encourages applicants to establish partnerships with local organizations that may have greater cultural competencies within the prioritized demographic(s).
        o Cultural competence involves understanding and appropriately responding to the unique combination of cultural variables which entails the integrated patterns of human behavior such as language, thoughts, actions, customs, beliefs, and institutions of racial, ethnic, social, or religious groups that the community or population bring to interactions.

5. **Sustainability**: The Trust aims to invest in projects that have the longest potential longevity, after the grant period is over. Several threats exist that may result in loss of project value: change in public interest in an effort, changes in rainfall or sea level associated with climate change; change in land use; and more.
    - Discuss the future you see for the work for which you are requesting funds. What factors may affect its long-term value and how will you ensure its long-term value is maximized?
    - If the project or program will need ongoing financial resources in order to maintain its value, provide an abbreviated plan describing how the project will be self-sustained beyond the term of the proposed funding request.
    - If your organization is not a member of the community served by the grant (e.g., an external non-profit doing work on land owned by another entity, such as a faith-based organization), describe how "ownership" will be transferred to the community and how the ability of the community to carry the work forward will be developed and resourced.

6. **Evaluation**:
    - Describe how you will assess the effectiveness of your project.
        - For on-the-ground projects, how will you determine if your project is working well? How will you measure the functionality of the project?

- For outreach projects, how will you measure the number of people who increased their knowledge or will implement changes in their behavior?
- How will you collect information to refine and improve your project?

7. **Contractors**: Has/will a contractor be hired and has a contractor been selected? (Yes/No)
    - If you answered "Yes" that a contractor will be used:
        - Describe your contractor/consultant selection process, including justification and background of the selected contractor/ consultant. If using a bid process, describe the process.
        - The Trust strongly recommends that applicants get at least three cost estimates or quotes from three service providers.
        - If you anticipate using a contractor, indicate in your proposal that at least three cost estimates or quotes will be obtained.

8. **Regulatory Issues:** The Trust is unable to fund projects or programs that are required by a separate Federal, state, or locally issued permit, decree, or enforcement action. In some cases, the Trust may elect to fund optional portions of required projects that are in excess of regulatory requirements. Please answer yes or no to the following question: **Is any part of your project is required under any existing or pending permit, decree, and/or enforcement action?**

9. **Landownership:** Do you own the land that the project is to occur on? (Yes/No)
    - If you answered "No" you must provide the landowner's permission as a letter of commitment to the project.

10. **Mentorship Program**: Did you participate in the Community Engagement and Restoration Mentorship Program? (Yes/No)
    - If you answered "Yes" (i.e., you participated in the Community Engagement and Restoration Mentorship Program):
        - Who was your Mentor organization?
        - What role did your Mentor organization play in this application submission (e.g., project development assistance, narrative creation, application submission assistance, etc.)?
        - How much time did your Mentor organization's staff spend assisting you?

11. **Upload the required documents for project**: Please review the checklist on the following page to ensure that all of the required supporting documents we need for your project are included with your application, as applicable. If any of these items that are required/needed to assess your application are not provided with your application, tell us why you are unable to provide this information now and your plan to provide this information later or with assistance.

Supporting Documents Checklist

Required?	Documentation Required	Resources
Required for All Projects	**Letters of Commitment**: Document support for and of the project from collaborators who have committed to help with this project by adding letters of commitment.	See the Letter of Commitment Guidance and Policy on our Forms and Policies webpage. **Click to Access**
Required for Projects with Restoration Components	**Site photos** **Site plan**: Include the area to be restored and location of the project work to be done/restored **Native plant list:** Funds may be requested for native plant species only. **Detailed maintenance plan**: For short-term (first growing season) and long-term (three years) maintenance. **Permits or other approvals**: If permits or any other type of landowner approvals are required, describe the status (e.g., permits pending review of application, permits secured).	The Trust has the Native Plant Species Selection Guide to help you get started with plant selection. **Click to Access** Montgomery County has a Rainscapes tool which calculates the recommended number of plants, compost, and mulch needed for a successful planting project. **Click to Access** A maintenance template is available from the Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional. **Click to Access**
Required for Projects with Outreach Components	**Outreach strategy**: What methods are you using to engage participants and why did you choose those methods. **List of knowledge objectives**: Tell us what participants will learn from your project. **Evaluation plan**: Pre- and post-surveys can be used to evaluate the change in knowledge in project participants. **Draft agenda**: For workshops and other knowledge-building events, include a draft agenda.	"Strategies for Motivating Watershed Stewardship: A Guide to Research-Based Practices" describes a variety of strategies that environmental outreach programs can use to foster environmentally responsible behaviors (ERB). Chesapeake Bay Watershed organizations can use this document to help inform the design and implementation of outreach programs. **Click to Access**

The resources above can be found on the Trust website at https://cbtrust.org/additional-resources/ and https://cbtrust.org/forms-policies/

Budget Instructions

Financial Management Spreadsheet – Application Budget Upload

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 can be found by visiting https://cbtrust.org/forms-policies/ where you can also watch a video with instructions on how to complete the FMS.

Financial Management Spreadsheet – Application Budget Information

This online application component will ask you to enter budget category and request totals. These totals will be automatically calculated in the FMS Application Budget, so you will only need to copy and paste the values from the FMS to the online application.

Additional Budget Justification

This online application component will ask you to provide a descriptive budget narrative to justify and explain costs. If the success of the work is contingent upon award of other funds, make this clear in your budget justification section.

Online Application Submission Instructions

The Trust uses an online system for the application process, and if awarded, project management. Watch our video on how to apply for and submit an application using our online system at https://cbtrust.org/grants/.

 To apply for an award:

1. Go to https://cbtrust.org/grants/community-engagement/ and click on "Start a New Application"
2. Log in with the email address and password of the Project Leader for the proposed project.
   a. If you have applied in the past, use your existing username and password (if you have forgotten either of these use the 'forgot password' feature).
   b. If you have not used our online system before, click on "New Applicant" and follow the instructions.

By submitting an application to this program, applicants acknowledge that: 1) they are compliant with federal employment and non-discrimination laws and 2) they have not been debarred, convicted, charged or had a civil judgment rendered against them for fraud or related offense by any government agency (federal, state or local) or been terminated for cause or default by any government agency (federal, state, or local). In addition, all final products will be provided to the Trust for use and distribution at the sole discretion of the Trust.

Online Application Form

You will be asked to provide the following information on the online application form. Some items are required in order to submit your application. Refer to the online application for details.

- Eligibility Quiz
  - This three-question quiz is meant to assist you in determining if your project meets the requirements of this award program and that your staff/organizational structure best supports a successful application.
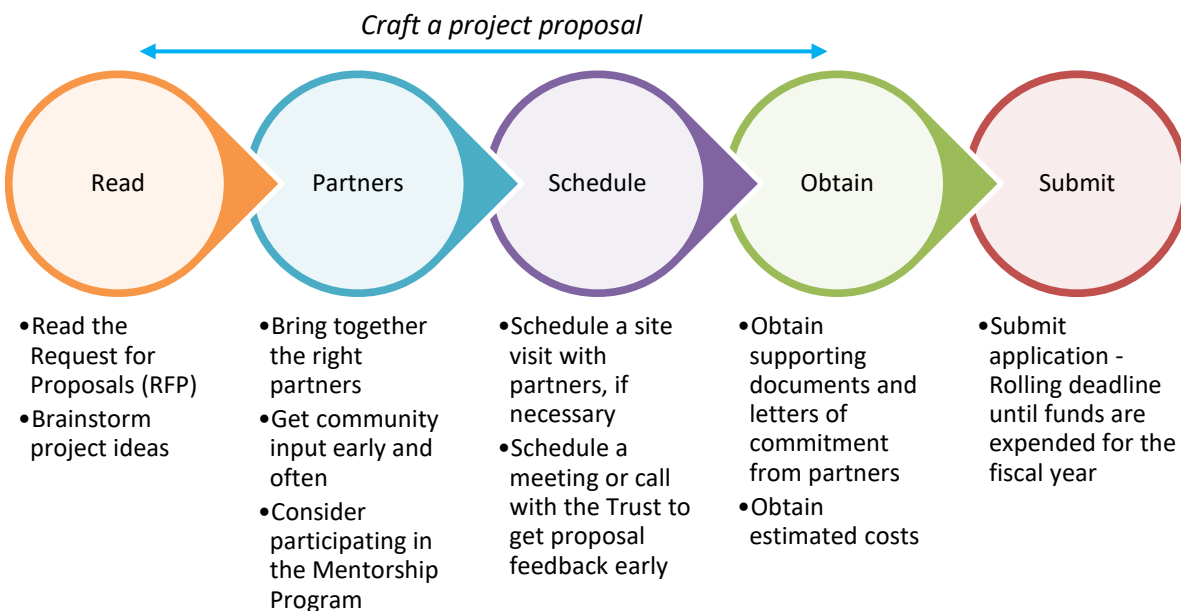
- Applicant Information Tab

- - - Provide how you heard about the Community Engagement and Restoration Mini Grant Program
  - Provide the organization's name, mailing address, phone number, organization type, mission, EIN number, and DUNS number.
  - Provide the Executive Officer and Project Leader's name, title, address, phone, and email address.
    - Both an Executive Officer and a Project Leader, two separate individuals, must be identified for all applications.
    - The Executive Officer and Project Leader must both be able to make decisions on behalf of the organization either as a board member, an employee, or other approved position recognized by the organization but not a contractor of the application.
    - The Executive Officer is the individual that oversees the organization (e.g., Executive Director, Chief Executive Officer, Mayor, President or Vice President, Principal (for schools), etc.) and has the authority to sign/execute award agreements on behalf of the organization. The Executive Officer information is tied directly to all the organization's applications and should not vary from application to application. If the Executive Officer could be listed as the Project Leader in a future proposal, we recommend listing a Board Member or other higher-ranking position of the organization as the Executive Officer in order to reduce the variation in the Executive Officer across applications.
    - The Project Leader will be responsible for all project coordination and correspondence with the Trust for the duration of the project. The email address entered here MUST be the same as the email address you used to log in to the online system. The Project Leader is the primary point of contact for the application, and the email address used to submit the application via the online system must be that of the Project Leader. Applications in which the email address associated with the Project Leader in the applicant information tab of the online opportunity does not match the email address used to submit the application will not be considered for funding. The Trust cannot conduct any official correspondence with contractors or other project partners. If at any time the Project Leader cannot continue in the position, the organization must contact the Trust and assign a new qualified Project Leader.
    - To avoid conflict of interest issues, individuals associated with for-profit entities to be engaged in the project cannot serve in either role.
  -
- Project Information Tab
  - Provide a project title; project abstract; the watershed, county, and legislative district in which the project is located; and the latitude and longitude coordinates of the project location.

- Timeline Tab
  - Add your project start and end date. Provide a project timeline that includes major tasks and their associated start and end dates.

- Deliverables Tab
  - Provide estimated metrics for your proposed project such as project participants and outreach and restoration outcomes. Only complete those deliverables that are appropriate for your project (i.e., some deliverables will not apply).

- Volunteers Tab

- o Provide a description of volunteer activities, the number of volunteers, and total number of volunteer hours.

- Project Partnerships
  - o Provide a list of project partner organizations or contractors, individuals, their areas of expertise, and their role(s) in your project.
  - o Applicants are encouraged to upload a Letter of Commitment for the project from each partner describing in detail the partner's role or contribution to the project. Applications including strong Letter(s) of Commitment often receive higher scores. If not submitted with the application, Letter(s) of Commitment may be required prior to the release of any awarded funding. To better understand the Trust's definition of and policy on Letter(s) of Commitment, visit our Forms and Policies webpage: www.cbtrust.org/forms.

- Narrative & Supporting Documents Tab
  - o Upload a Microsoft Word or PDF file that contains your answers to the narrative questions found in the Narrative Questions section of this RFP. Upload additional supporting documents, if needed/required.

- Budget Tab
  - o Upload your application budget and provide additional budget justification. Use the Trust's Financial Management Spreadsheet and fill out the "Application Budget" worksheet. Refer to the "Budget Instructions" of this RFP for additional guidance.
  - o Provide the total amount of funding requested and amount of funding requested for each budget category and for cash and in-kind match totals. These values should match your "Application Budget" of the Financial Management Spreadsheet.

- Terms and Conditions Tab
  - o Agree to the specified terms and conditions for the program for which you are applying.

Appendix A: Guidance for New Applicants

This guidance outlines the steps needed to develop project ideas and grant applications for those who are new to community engagement and/or restoration projects. Many steps are involved in developing a project. Some involve engaging partners or obtaining expert technical advice. For example, experts can help the applicant to select a proposed project location, project type, and estimated costs to enable an applicant to develop an appropriate budget request.

The following steps are a general framework for project development; please note that applicants are welcome to contact the Trust during any of these steps.

Craft a project proposal

Read	Partners	Schedule	Obtain	Submit
•Read the Request for Proposals (RFP) •Brainstorm project ideas	•Bring together the right partners •Get community input early and often •Consider participating in the Mentorship Program	•Schedule a site visit with partners, if necessary •Schedule a meeting or call with the Trust to get proposal feedback early	•Obtain supporting documents and letters of commitment from partners •Obtain estimated costs	•Submit application - Rolling deadline until funds are expended for the fiscal year

Step 1: Read
   a. The first step is to thoroughly read through the Request for Proposals (RFP). If you have any questions after reading through the RFP, contact the program lead listed on the program website.
   b. Brainstorm on general project ideas. Observe the environmental issues in your community and develop project proposals designed to target those issues.

Step 2: Partners
   a. The most successful projects seek community input early and often (often after each of the steps below), and work with the landowner at the first step.
      i. Community input provides the history of the site and the buy-in needed for a successful project. Build this community input into your project idea.
         a. Community meetings are a venue at which to exchange information and discuss the proposed project with the project stakeholders.
   b. Partnering with technical experts can strengthen your proposal and boost the success of your project. Contact local environmental groups that can assist in carrying out your project idea.
   c. For assistance at the project development stage, participate in the Mentorship Program – your group will be matched up with an experienced Mentor with an array of technical skills.

Step 3: Schedule

    a. For restoration projects, schedule a site visit with individuals or partners who have technical expertise. The Trust program lead can assist in locating appropriate technical partners.

        i. In person site assessments are best but could be done remotely.

        ii. Join the site visit(s) with as many team members as possible.

    b. For outreach projects, schedule a meeting with a community engagement expert (preferably a member of the target community) to help develop outreach and evaluation plans.

    c. Schedule community meetings to obtain community input, as frequently as necessary in order to maximize buy-in and future project success.

    d. New applicants are especially encouraged to contact the program lead prior to applying, to discuss project ideas and get feedback on proposals.

Step 4: Obtain

    a. Determine the work necessary in order to complete the project and determine the associated costs for this work including timelines. Be as specific and detailed as possible; look up costs or get quotes if needed.

        i. The Trust strongly recommends that applicants get at least three cost estimates or quotes from three service providers.

        ii. Conduct a site visit with potential contractors. Based on the site visit, request the firm's scope of work and estimated costs

    b. Obtain Letters of Commitment from project partners. Letters of Commitment should detail the specific role the partner will play in your project. To better understand the Trust's definition of letter of commitment, see the Letter of Commitment Guidance and Policy at https://cbtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/Chesapeake-Bay-Trust-Letter-of-Commitment-Policy_082819.pdf (source: this link is found under the "Other Important Documents and Forms" section on our Forms and Policies webpage: https://cbtrust.org/forms-policies/).

Step 5: Submit

    a. Before submitting your application, review your entire application and supporting documentation once more to ensure you have all the necessary components.

        i. Read through your narrative responses. Are all questions fully addressed and answered in detail? Avoid one sentence responses.

        ii. Review your supporting documentation. Are all required supporting documents included in your application package? Are all Letters of Commitment uploaded?

        iii. Review your application budget. Are all line items justified in the narrative and budget justification section of the application?

    b. Once you have ensured all necessary components have been included in your application package, make sure everything is uploaded to your online application and that all required information is entered in the online system.

    c. Submit! You will know your submission was successful when you receive an automated email confirmation.

For additional information and grant writing tips, contact the program manager at (410) 974-2941, or visit the Trust's website at: https://cbtrust.org/additional-resources/. For more information on the program manager visit the program's webpage Community Engagement - Chesapeake Bay Trust (cbtrust.org).

Appendix B: Guidelines for Project Types

Review the guidelines for specific project types below as you prepare a Community Engagement and Restoration Mini Grant application. Contact the Trust for assistance with any of these guidelines for project types and we will be happy to assist you in project planning and application submission. Additional resources can be found here: https://cbtrust.org/additional-resources/.

Greening/Garden Projects

- All planting projects **must** include a plant list, site plan, project design, photos of the site where planting/restoration is proposed, and a detailed maintenance plan.
- List of native plants that will be used in the planting/restoration project in the application. For non-edible projects, only native plants may be used. Funds may be requested for native plant species only.
- Projects can be completed on public property, property owned by non-profit organizations, community-owned property, and other property with conservation easements or signed long-term protection agreements.
- For projects planned on properties other than that of the applicant and/or private property, attach a letter of commitment stating that permission has been granted by the entity owning the land on which the project will be completed. Applications that demonstrate long-term commitment (> three years) to upkeep, manage, and maintain the project will receive more favorable review. Projects planned on private property must have a high demonstration value for the site to be a fit in the Community Engagement and Restoration Mini Grant Program.
- Requests for invasive vegetation removal as part of site preparation for native planting projects are allowed.

Publication, Printing, and Electronic Media Projects

- Publication projects supporting the full scope of the Trust's activities are welcome. The ultimate project goal must be to help individuals take actions that can benefit the environment, community health, and rivers and streams. The message should be consistent with the mission of the requesting organization.
- Applicants must explain how the project and materials fulfill an unmet need for information that does not duplicate existing materials. Include a review of existing similar types of publications; explain what is new about your materials and associated communications campaign. Applications that do not place a project in the context of existing materials will not be considered.
- The target audience must be clearly defined and how the audience is expected to use the information must be articulated.
- The publication's distribution plan must be completed before the application is submitted and included with the application. This plan should include information such as:
    a. Why the specific medium (web, print, other) was chosen to reach the target audience;
    b. The number of copies to be produced;
    c. How the product will be advertised to the target audience (for example, if a new resource will be posted on your website, explain the plan to drive the target audience to the website); and
    d. Fees that may be involved (applicant is not permitted to charge for project components funded by the Trust, such as charging for a publication that Trust

resources are supporting).
- Applicants proposing print media are strongly encouraged to make an electronic copy of the publication available on a public website.
- For web-distributed footage, applicants must secure all required digital distribution rights.

Workshops and Trainings

- Applicants must describe the knowledge objectives for project participants as it relates to natural resources and/or water quality education.
- A priority audience and number of attendees must be identified in the application, as well as a recruitment strategy based on assessment of the priority audience identified.
- A list of speakers, their qualifications, and a draft agenda should be provided in the application. If unknown at the time of application, submission of these supporting documents will be a contingency of an award.
- The Trust will consider speaker fees on a case-by-case basis. Applicants should clearly identify the speaker(s) for which funds are requested and list a rate per hour for the speaker in the budget.
- The Trust encourages applicants holding workshops or trainings to evaluate audience knowledge and self-efficacy with a combination of survey or other similar tools. The grantee must share results of the evaluation with the Trust and outline next steps resulting from the workshop or training in the final report.

Water Quality Monitoring Projects

The Trust will consider monitoring projects in certain cases: (a) when data will be used to target future restoration projects; (b) when data will be used to increase public awareness of watershed issues, for example, in a "State of the Watershed" report; (c) when monitoring data will be used to help create or refine a watershed management plan; and (d) when data will be used to address land use issues on a large-scale, in a way that will help local governments advance best management practices. In the latter case, Letters of Commitment from local governments are required. For all cases:
- Identify the purpose of the monitoring (i.e., which of the above four cases apply to your project).
- Describe who will use the data and how it will be used.
- Describe the monitoring protocol to be followed, including how sites were or will be selected for monitoring, what parameters will be measured, the methods and equipment for sampling, and the frequency of monitoring.
- Explain how the monitoring project provides new data or information not already understood. Put the project in the context of any existing state or federal monitoring programs.
- Preference will be given to monitoring projects that engage volunteers.
- We strongly recommend that water quality monitoring, Watershed Report Card, and State of the River Report projects follow water quality monitoring methodology recommendations established by the Mid Atlantic Tributary Assessment Coalition (MTAC) led by the University of Maryland. Contact the Trust for more information or to obtain a copy of the monitoring protocol document.