



**Chesapeake
Bay Trust**

Empowering people. Restoring nature.

Grant Writing 101

**Outreach and Restoration
Grant Program**



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Overview

1. Identify Your Idea
2. Add the Details
3. Gather Your Team
4. Think Through Evaluation
5. Piece it Together
6. Develop Your Budget



Identify Your Idea



What are the needs?

What are the water quality, habitat, or other environmental concerns at your site?

What is the community need at your site? This could be flooding, access to green space, shade, or that the community is not yet involved in environmental issues, and we all need to collectively care for our land to make a real impact.



What is Your Solution?

How will your project idea address the environmental and community needs?

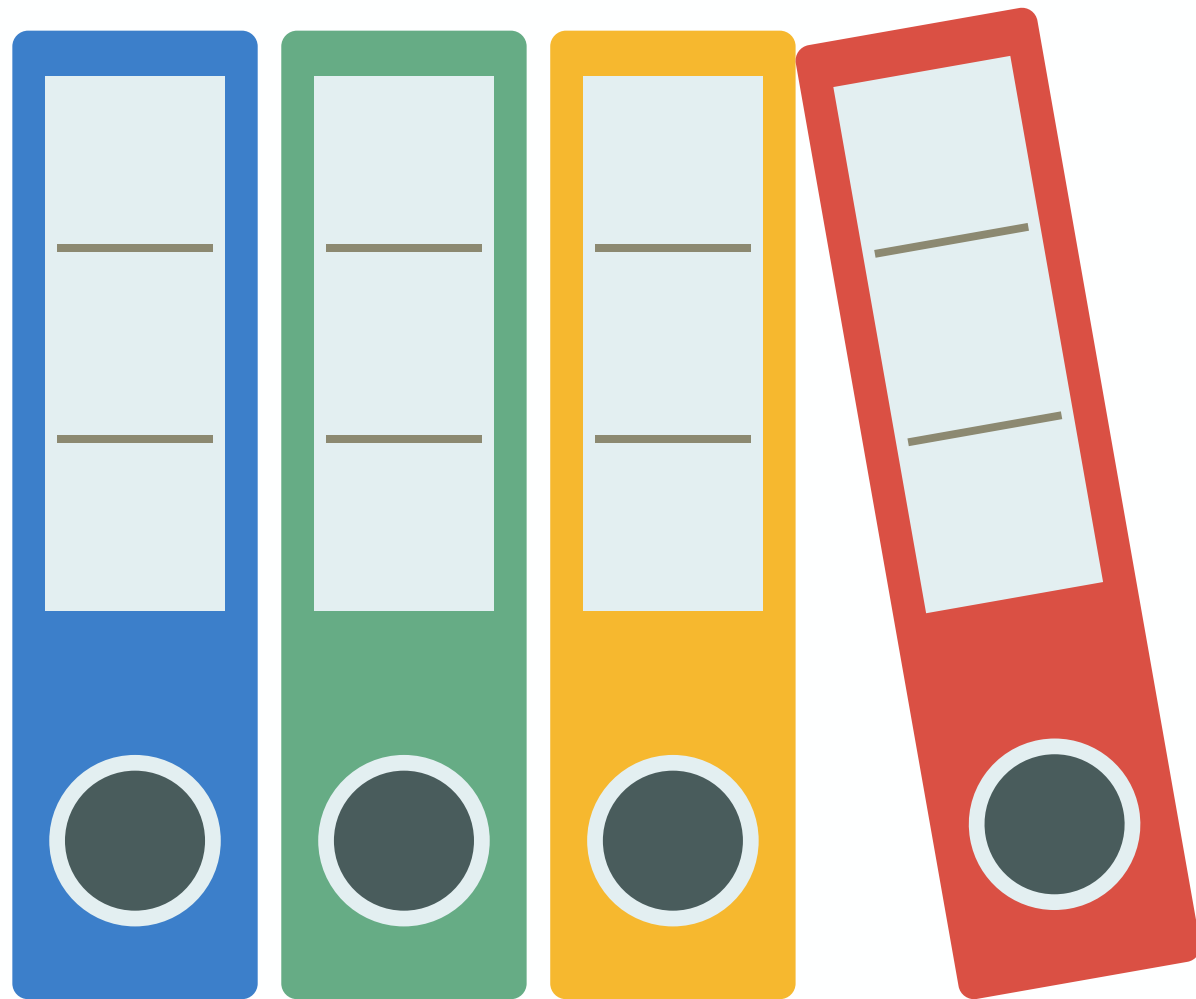
Why is your project the best possible solution to those needs? (What other solutions could there be? Why is yours better?)



List Your Activities

Now that you have a clear “why”, list out the exact activities you will complete to accomplish your goals.

Add the Details



Research the Needs and Background

Backup your environmental and community needs with data. What is the tree canopy coverage in your community compared to others? What are the demographics of the community your working in? Is there a stormwater plan in your area that your project ties into?



Add Detail to Your Activities

Reviewers will be asking all the “whys” and “hows” so you need to make sure to address them so there is no confusion or uncertainty.



Assume No Prior Knowledge

You need to tell the story of your community, your organization, and your project as if the person reading it has no frame of reference at all.

Gather Your Team



How can you collaborate with others?

Who else is doing similar work in the area? Make sure you are not duplicating other work or competing for participants but collaborating and complementing each others work in an additive way.



Are there gaps others can help you fill?

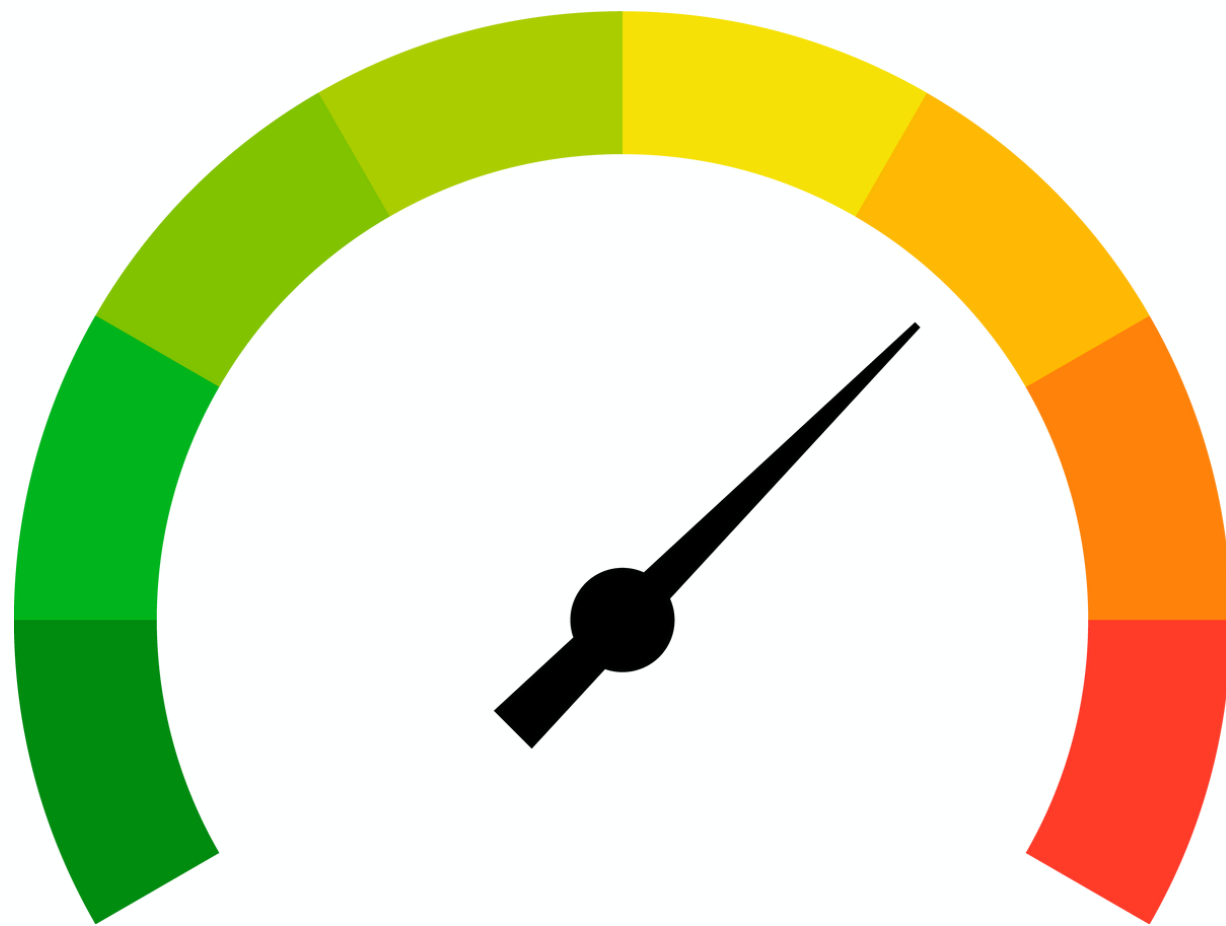
Do you need more close relationships in the community? Do you need stormwater design expertise? Do you need to connect with the right audience for your workshop? How can partner organization come be part of the work to fill these gaps?



Build them in to your application

Partners with a significant role should provide a letter of committment if possible. Also consider providing them with a stipend or subaward for their role.

Evaluation



Were your activities successful?

Did they meet the goals you set? Did the goal number of people come to the workshop? Was the raingarden installed and is functioning properly?



Were your activities impactful?

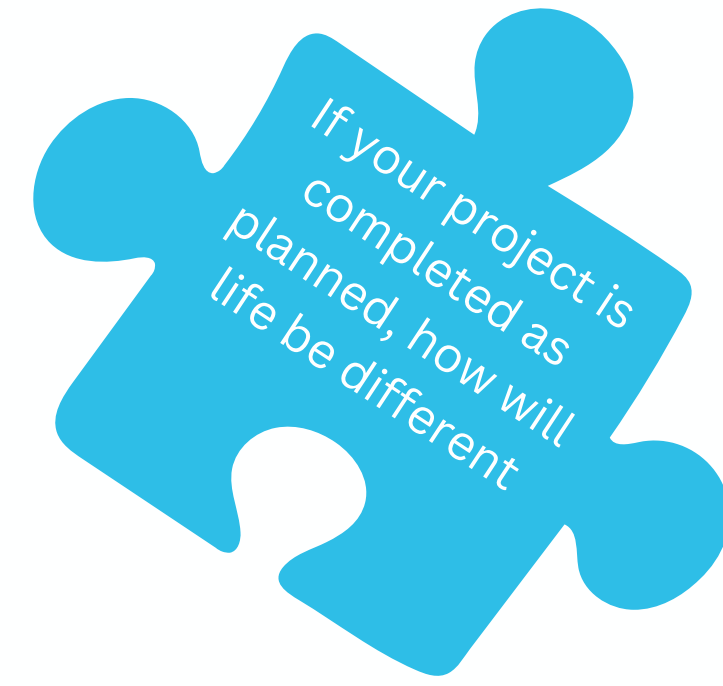
Did people who came to your workshop actually gain knowledge that they will take with them? How much is your raingarden impacting water quality?



How will the impacts last long term?

How is what the community learned going to be sustained? How will the raingarden be maintained over time? How can others see what you've done and be inspired to do it themselves?

Piece it Together



Budget



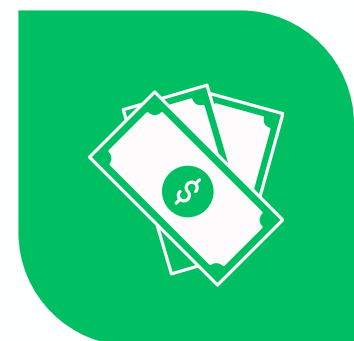
Justify Costs

Explain why each cost is needed to complete your project. For estimated costs and any contractual service, explain how you arrived at that cost estimate.



Matching or other investment

Matching funds are not required but they demonstrate that there is support for and investment in your project beyond this application. Include things like volunteer hours as in-kind support.



Current need and future sustainability

Your budget and narrative should demonstrate that you need the funds to complete the project, but also that you have a plan and ability to secure other funds as well so the impacts of this project and future work is sustainable and not dependent on receiving another grant next year.

Narrative Questions – Track 4

Complete all questions in this narrative template. You will upload this document as a MS Word or PDF file into the online application system. The Narrative should be approximately seven (7) pages of text, excluding photos or materials such as Letter(s) of Commitment or supporting documents.

A. What are the Goals of the Project?

1. Program Goals

What are the ultimate goals of the project? How will your project meet the goals of this RFP? What are your planned project outputs? What are your anticipated project outcomes? How will the outputs listed above lead to these outcomes?

Definitions

A project **output** is defined as the immediate results of the work which is being completed (e.g., How many people do you propose will attend a workshop that will teach them the importance of picking up pet waste? OR How many street trees do you propose to plant and maintain?).
A project **outcome** is defined as the change that is prompted because of the output listed above (e.g., Fecal coliform will be reduced in local waterways because more people are regularly picking up their pet waste OR there will be less stormwater entering the stormwater inlets because you plan to install new, well-maintained street trees that will absorb stormwater and there will be more tree canopy habitat for urban-dwelling birds).

The GOAL of the program is...which is in line with the program's goal to improve water quality and the health of the Bay (etc)

To accomplish the goal, xyz activities will be done, reach x # of people, or planting x # trees/ pollinators
(OUTPUT)

This will result in increased awareness about x among y community, and an increase in tree canopy/number of pollinators in the area/reduction of pollutants entering the Bay
(OUTCOME)

B. Why is this Project Needed?

1. What environmental concerns will the project address?

What is the problem? How will the project provide a solution? How was this problem and solution originally identified?

This is where you can discuss what community need is being met. What are the potential equity issues related to the topic you are addressing? Not every single project needs an environmental justice focus, but this is included to make the applicant think about potential equity issues to make sure these issues are not overlooked

Describe what efforts are already taking place. This is answering the question for reviewers, why do we need to fund your specific project? There are other people planting trees, etc. in that area? Do you know about those efforts? Why do we also need this project?

2. What community, health and/or environmental injustice issues will be addressed?

What are the needs of the audience engaged or served by this project? What are the potential equity issues related to the topic your project is addressing? How will your project respond to those issues?

3. How does this project build on and intersect with similar efforts?

What has been done in the past to address these issues and needs? How does this project learn from, or build on, that work? Have you applied for this project or program in the past? If yes, what has changed about your project or program since the last time that you applied? What other organizations or groups are working on similar issues in the same community, and how will they be informed or engaged in this project?

This is the place to describe your organization's background with this topic and how the grant is a continuation of previous work, or something new.

C. Who will be engaged?

1. Describe the community that will be involved in or served by this project and your experience with that community.

a. Considering 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.

The Trust encourages projects that engage audiences who are identified as historically under-engaged or under-served through indicators such as, but not limited to, communities that were at any point historically redlined or graded as "hazardous" by the Home Owners' Loan Corporation, socioeconomic status (communities in which median household income is equal to or less than 75% of state-wide median household income or have high poverty and unemployment rates (<https://www.census.gov>)), or other relevant characteristics as identified in [the MD EIS Scope Tool](#).

Priority Audience: can be low SES, historically underserved communities, or otherwise unique audiences that are not typically engaged in environmental work. This question is tied to the belief that to truly protect and preserve our natural resources, everyone needs to be involved. So we encourage all applicants to think about how to bring in new audiences

b. What is your organization's experience working within the specific communities that you will be prioritizing? If you have not had significant experience within your prioritized demographic, how do you intend to address this issue?

The Trust encourages applicants to establish partnerships and support local organizations that may have greater cultural competencies within the targeted demographic(s). 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.

Experience in the community: describe previous work with the community and how they are successfully engaged. If you are new to the community, understand that trust and relationship building take time. Plan to partner with orgs that have established relationships, or provide clear strategy on how you plan to initiate those relationships

2. How will the community be engaged and ultimately take ownership of the project?

How are the population and/or the community meaningfully involved in the planning, development, and implementation of the proposed project, and in the development of this application? Will you be partnering with any individuals or organizations from your priority audience?

The Trust encourages applications directly from under-engaged communities; however, 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) how will "ownership" be transferred to the community and how will the ability of the community to carry the work forward be developed and resourced?

Community Engagement and Ownership: relates to the sustainability of the project; how will the impacts live on with the community. Also relates to equity; how will the project benefit and belong to the community where it takes place

3. Will a contractor be hired?

Will a contractor be hired? If yes, indicate if a contractor has been selected and describe your contractor selection process, including justification and qualifications of the selected contractor, and if the budget was based on contractor bids or another source. If using a bid process (e.g., RFP for services), describe the process. Applicants are encouraged to obtain at least three competitive bids, estimates, or quotes using a bid process.

Contractor: no requirements, but describe your orgs process for obtaining bids and selecting a contractor. This helps reviewer know that your cost estimates are sound

D. What will you do? (Detailed Project Plan)

Outreach

1. Message:

What is the intended message of the project? (e.g., We encourage you to plant a native red bud tree; Pick up your pet waste, bag it, and discard it appropriately).

2. Methodology:

What is the methodology chosen to conduct: 1) engagement (i.e., how you will involve and interact with the priority audience) and 2) outreach (i.e., how you will deliver the message to the priority audience)? Why are the tactics an effective way to reach your priority audience?

Restoration

1. Watershed/Community Plan Status:

Does your project fit into the local community plan, watershed study, Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP), or a larger strategy? If yes, describe the plan/study/strategy, including the history of its creation and use, and how the proposed project is identified in and/or consistent with the plan/study/strategy.

2. Permit status:

Will this project require any type of permit to authorize construction? Describe what permits will be required and where the project is in the permitting process/timeline. List the agencies with which you have been in contact with about your project.

3. Experience:

What is your organization's experience in completing similar projects? If you do not have experience with a similar project, explain your organization's qualifications or plans to ensure the project has a high likelihood of success.

4. Mitigation projects and projects required for permits:

Is your project required under any existing or pending permit, decree, or enforcement action? If yes, does your application exceed the regulatory requirements and if so, how does the project go "above and beyond" what is required? 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; however, this grant program will consider funding the "above and beyond" portion of projects that are required.

5. Provide technical information (e.g., photos, designs, maintenance plan, landowner letter commitment, etc.) for your project.

See Appendix D to determine if your project is a category 1, 2, or 3, then submit as much of the information identified for that category as part of your narrative document or as separate additional supporting documents.

E. What will be the Impact?

1. How will you measure if the project achieves its goals and outcomes?

Evaluation of Outreach Components: Projects should include an evaluation of the priority audience. Applicants are encouraged to evaluate participation before and after the project/intervention to show a change in knowledge. Evaluation methods should be designed to be effective for the priority audience; thus, varying methods are welcome with justification.

Evaluation of Restoration Components: Explain how your project will stand the test of time and continue to be effective after the project is complete. Cost-effectiveness and stormwater best management practice effectiveness (e.g., impervious acres treated, nitrogen, phosphorus, and total suspended sediment loads reduced per year) are criteria reviewers use to assess your project; therefore, detail the cost-effectiveness and stormwater best management practice effectiveness of the project. Use the information you have compiled in Appendix D to support your response.

2. How will the impacts be sustained into the future?

What is 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? What will be the lasting/long term impacts of this project? For Track 3 and 4, please describe your maintenance plan. How will you secure the resources for long-term maintenance?

The Trust aims to invest in projects that have the longest potential longevity, after the grant period has ended. We recognize that 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. Applicants are encouraged to think about how to mitigate these threats to the best of their ability.

3. How will the impacts be transferred to others?

How will your project be used as a resource and example for others? How will the project further the understanding of topics supported by this RFP in the community?

How might your project be transferred or scaled, and will there be any lessons learned that will be useful elsewhere? How do you plan to share your lessons with others and perhaps replicate a similar project elsewhere or can the project be used as a model or pilot for future efforts?

For knowledge and engagement, think about how to evaluate the impact on people (typically surveys)

For restoration, highlight metrics such as number of trees planted, square footage of impervious treated, etc.

Sustainability is key. It can be hard to predict the exact future, but you want to plan as much as possible for how the site will be maintained. For engagement/knowledge building, what will be the lasting impact on the participants?

How can the project have impacts beyond your one site, or beyond your direct audience? Think about how the ideas or lessons learned can be shared with others, how participants will change their actions or share what they learned with others.

Review the Evaluation Criteria

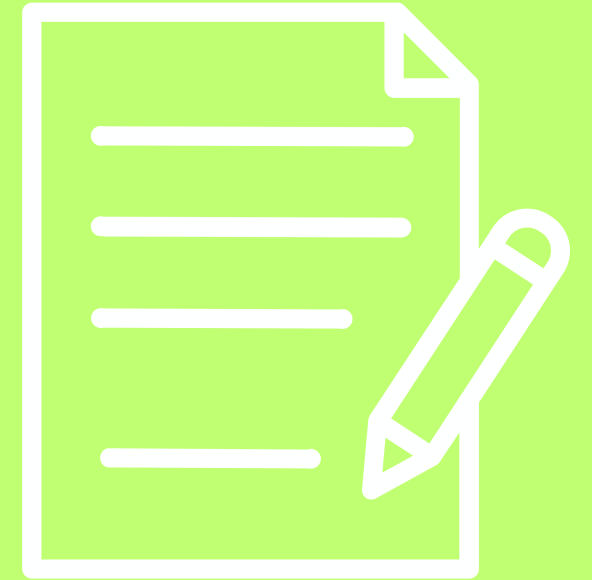
Think like a reviewer. Review your proposal and make sure the following are true:

- I can clearly understand from start to finish what the project will be
- I feel confident the applicant knows how to achieve the goals they are setting, either because they have demonstrated experience, or they have a well thought out plan of how to go about it
- The project will have meaningful impacts that will last beyond the terms of this grant
- This project is meeting a unique need

Review each question in the evaluation table and answer it about your application



Writing Tips



Be Concise

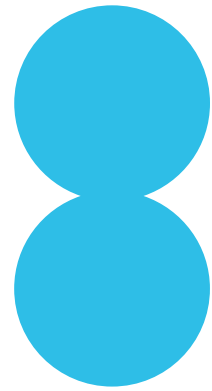
Avoid repetition and overly descriptive language. You want to hold your audience's attention.

Be Clear

Start each section with an overview sentence that gives the answer, then add details.

Be Consistent

Make sure the activities and methods described are the same in each section of the narrative, as well as the budget, timeline, and metrics.



GOT QUESTIONS?

Reach out.



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