



# 2016-2017 Mini Grant Program Application Package for Pre-K-12 Environmental Education Requests

[www.chesapeakebaytrust.org](http://www.chesapeakebaytrust.org) / 410-974-2941

## AT A GLANCE

The Mini Grant Program for Environmental Education is designed to engage citizens and students in D.C., Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia in activities that raise public awareness and participation in the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake and coastal Bays and their rivers.

### In this Application Package:

Program Overview and Proposal Instructions

**Submit your application on-line:** Click on the green "Start a New Application" box on the [Mini Grant webpage](#).

### Deadline System:

The Trust will have two deadlines for Mini Grant Environmental Education proposals during the next fiscal year: **August 5, 2016** and **January 13, 2017** (Applications must be received by 5 p.m. on all deadline dates).

The Trust cannot make exceptions to the above deadlines nor provide reimbursement funding for already completed projects. Therefore, **project start dates must occur after the date of decision associated with each deadline**, listed below in the Deadlines, Awards and Notifications section.

**Grant Requests up to:**  
\$5,000

### Special Thanks to Our Funding Partner:



For questions, please contact Emily Stransky: [ESTransky@CBTrust.org](mailto:ESTransky@CBTrust.org),

## Introduction

The Chesapeake Bay Trust promotes public awareness and participation in the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay and its local streams and rivers. Since 1985, the Trust has awarded more than \$90 million in grants to schools, nonprofit organizations, and public agencies throughout Maryland, the other Bay states, and the District of Columbia.

The Trust is supported by purchases of the *Treasure the Chesapeake* license plates, the Chesapeake Bay Fund tax check-off option on the Maryland State income tax form, and donations from individuals and corporations. The Trust greatly appreciates your support which makes our programs possible!

The Trust welcomes your interest and encourages you to learn more about how to apply for a grant.

## Goals of the Mini Grant Program for Pre-K-12

### Education Requests

River by river and stream by stream, Pre-K-12 environmental education projects are helping to raise public awareness about the health of streams, rivers, and the Chesapeake and Coastal Bays and about the steps that can be taken to restore and protect them.

Through the Mini Grant Environmental Education Program, the Trust seeks to increase student awareness and involvement in the restoration and protection of the Bay and its local streams and rivers through increasing student access to programs that provide meaningful outdoor learning experiences.

The program was established to provide accessible funds to schools, organizations, and agencies for Pre-K-12 Environmental Education and specifically seeks to:

1. Educate students about the Bay and their local watersheds and about how students can become environmental stewards and make a difference in watershed health;

2. Engage school communities in education and restoration activities that benefit watershed health;
3. Provide meaningful watershed education experiences for students and teachers;
4. Provide environmental education professional development opportunities for teachers; and
5. Support environmental literacy goals within schools, school systems, and other educational institutions.

\*Applicants interested in small requests (<\$5,000) to support general public awareness and involvement projects targeting adult communities should refer to the Mini Grant Application Package for Community Engagement and Restoration Projects available [HERE](#).

The Trust is committed to the advancement of diversity in its grant-making and environmental work. As a result, the Trust strongly encourages grant applications for projects that increase awareness and participation of communities that are traditionally underrepresented.

## Sample Eligible Projects

The Trust funds a wide range of student field experiences and action projects in this program. Applicants are encouraged to review sources for best practices for meaningful outdoor experiences. These can be found at <http://www.cbtrust.org> or by clicking on the grants tab, then the Mini Pre-K-12 EE Grant Program, then the additional resources page. The following is a list of specific project types that are often supported through the Mini Grant Program for Pre-K-12 Environmental Education Requests:

### 1. *Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEE):*

- Issue Definition:
  - Students focus on a locally relevant environmental question, problem, or issue requiring background research and investigation.
  - Students learn more about the issue through classroom instruction, the collection of data, conducting experiments and talking to experts and reviewing credible publications.
  - Students reflect on their personal experiences and values related to the issue.
- Outdoor Field Experiences (1 or more):
  - Students explore the chosen issue investigation through observations, data collection and/or fieldwork.
  - Field Trips led by experienced environmental education field trip provider
  - Fieldwork experiences led by the teacher or environmental professional
- Student-led Action Projects
  - Occur on the school campus or in the community to determine solutions to the chosen issue.
  - Action Project Examples:
    - Rain gardens and rain barrels
    - Schoolyard habitat projects
    - Outdoor Classrooms
    - Riparian buffer plantings
    - Stormdrain stenciling
    - Stream cleanups
    - Community Engagement projects
    - Outreach to local officials in order to address the issue through civic action
- Synthesis & Conclusions:
  - Occur on the school campus or in the community to determine solutions to the chosen issue.

## 2. Professional Development Workshops and Curriculum

- Professional development workshops for teachers, administrators, and other school staff to build understanding of environmental content and competence in inquiry based and investigative instructional techniques.

## General Criteria

The following criteria will be used by the Trust to evaluate proposals under the Mini Grant Program for Pre-K-12 Environmental Education Requests. Preference will be given to those proposals that meet multiple criteria.

- Projects should increase student and teacher awareness about local water quality and should promote actions that individuals can take to improve local streams, rivers and the Bay.
- Contributions of funds or in-kind services from project partners and other sources is encouraged in all cases and required in some cases (e.g., field trip requests). See budget section of the application.
- Projects should include partnerships with community based organizations, government agencies, service providers, and others when relevant to accomplishing your goals.
- Projects should be completed within one year after receipt of the grant award.
- The Trust prefers the school to apply as the grantee instead of the field trip provider. If a field trip provider does apply, the Trust *requires*:
  1. The participating school's name
  2. An explanation of why the field trip provider is applying instead of the school
  3. Letter of support from the participating school(s)
  - *Exception: All District of Columbia Public Schools are encouraged to have the field trip provider or another fiscal entity apply as the grantee.*
- The Trust will not fund afterschool and summer programs unless there is a very strong connection with the specific school(s) Pre-K-12 curriculum. Such requests *must* include:
  1. A plan or draft list of the participating school(s) targeted
  2. Explanation of why they were targeted/selected
    - Programs targeting underserved schools will receive priority over other afterschool and summer program requests.
  3. Letters of support from the participating school(s)

## General Criteria for MWEE Track

- Requests for the MWEE track will be evaluated using the model below which is based off of the Chesapeake Bay Program's definition. For the full definition and further guidance and background click [here](#). The goal of the model is for students to apply the methodology of scientific inquiry to develop knowledge, understanding and appreciation for the Chesapeake Bay watershed through the investigation of locally relevant environmental issue.

### Essential Elements:

- **Issue Definition:** Guides the inquiry for the project through an organizing question followed by student-initiated supporting questions.
  - The *organizing question* is the “big-picture” question that establishes the purpose of the learning and should create student interest, encompasses both natural and social system topics

- (environmental and civic engagement), allows for activities across multiple disciplines and allows for student investigation of a locally relevant environmental issue.
- The *supporting questions* are generated by the students and should uncover students' current knowledge about the issue, create curiosity and direct the students to a specific investigative question that addresses the organizing question in a local context.
  - Please note, the Trust highly encourages as much student choice, as age appropriate, in the selection of the organizing question and thus issue investigation (younger typically needs more guidance than older). Note: The NEW proposal narrative format is intended to serve as a planning tool for the applicant to assist them in providing a high quality environmental education experience for their students.
- **Outdoor Field Experiences:** Provides students with a series of experiences to begin investigating the issue and answer the organizing and supporting questions. This can include both:
    - *Inside Study:* Students participate in guided inquiry activities to build background knowledge and gain a deeper understanding of their issue. Typically conducting research in the classroom, library or on the computer.
    - *Outside Study:* Can include a number of different field experiences that can occur in their schoolyard, on a canoe in the nearby river or on a skipjack in the Bay. Regardless of the means, students are making and recording observations to help them answer their supporting and organizing questions. As fieldwork progresses the students will begin to hypothesize answers to their questions.
  - **Student-led Action Projects:** Students design solutions and conduct a project of their own and/or participate in teacher designed projects (for more structured inquiry and/or when age-appropriate).
    - Investigations lead to student designed solutions to solve programs identified in the investigations.
    - Investigations and projects are (in part or whole) designed to take place in the local environment (outdoors).
    - The Trust encourages students to extend their learning to Civic Action. This opportunity allows students to continue to solve a real-world issue and is an excellent opportunity to involve civics, social studies, government, etc. in the project/unit.
  - **Synthesis & Conclusions:** Students assess their understanding of the issue and have the opportunity to refocus and reflect after a project is completed.
    - Students share data and communicate results to fellow students, teachers, parents, local professionals and politicians.
    - Educators evaluate student progress both in knowledge and skills.
    - Questioning and exploration occur not just in planning, but throughout the entire learning process.

#### Essential Practices:

- **Active Teacher Support:** MWEEs should be connected to what is occurring in the formal classroom; therefore classroom teachers should lead or actively support all phases. MWEEs can be enhanced and supported by partners, such as environmental educators and natural resource professionals, but teachers have the sustained contact with students throughout the school year that positions them to better support and evaluate student learning. Teachers can also serve as environmental role models.
- **Classroom Integration:** MWEEs should be fully integrated into what is occurring concurrently in the classroom, and should occur where and when they fit into the instructional sequence. MWEEs can be rich, multi-disciplinary units that have a unique opportunity to make strong connections among subject areas and reflect an integrated approach to learning.

- **Local Context:** The local community should be viewed as a primary resource for MWEEs. Place-based education promotes learning that is rooted in the unique history, environment, culture, economy, and art of a students' schoolyard, neighborhood or community, and thus offering the opportunity to explore how individual and collective decisions impact one's immediate surroundings. There are a variety of local places that can provide an engaging setting for outdoor learning including the Chesapeake Bay, a stream near a school, a school building and its grounds, local parks or undeveloped areas, and even developed areas such as parking lots, ball fields, and marinas.
- **Age-Appropriate:** This process should be age appropriate with practices growing in complexity and sophistication across the grades, starting with educator guided investigation and progressing to student-led inquiry. As students mature, the level and complexity of inquiry will likewise progress.
- **Sustained Activity:** MWEEs should be a sustained activity that stimulates and motivates the student from beginning to end. Though a field experience may occur on one day the total duration leading up to and following the experience should involve a rich learning experiences such as monitoring, research, and action projects that may spread over weeks or even months. Experiences such as tours, gallery visits, simulations, demonstrations, or "nature walks" may be instructionally useful, but alone do not constitute a meaningful watershed educational experience.

## Specific Criteria for Field Trip Requests

- The Trust funds **up to half** of bay and watershed education field experience costs, such as program fees, substitute costs, and transportation expenses. However, schools are encouraged to exceed the 50% level of match, if possible, by fully exploring match opportunities prior to submitting a request. In an effort to provide resources for as many students as possible to participate in meaningful watershed experiences, we hope our grantees can leverage as many matching funds and resources as possible.
- Title 1 schools running school-wide Title 1 programs are permitted to request full costs for bay and watershed education related field trips.
- The chosen field trip provider should have experience providing Bay-focused programs aligned with division learning standards.
- The Trust requires a student-led action project occur outdoors, separate of the field trip on school grounds or within the students' community.
- If you are not requesting costs for the student-led action project, you must list in the budget the source of cash match for the action project costs.

## Specific Criteria for Schoolyard Habitat and Outdoor Classroom Requests

- Schoolyard habitat and Outdoor Classroom requests are eligible for funding but applicants must demonstrate how the projects, during design and construction as well as in years after completion, will support high quality instruction of students. Plans for how the projects will support instruction should follow the Meaningful Watershed Education Experience Elements (see above) and be described in the Watershed Issue Investigations Narrative Application form linked below.
- Schoolyard restoration and outdoor classroom projects must be carefully planned and technically sound, and involve the assistance of qualified technical experts, agencies, or organizations.

- Applicants are encouraged to include project signage as a cost within the schoolyard habitat request.
- The applicant must provide information about all technical assistance received and project partners involved in the design and implementation of the restoration project.
- Restoration project requests *must* include:
  1. A native plant list
    - a. Funds may be requested for native plant species only.
    - b. The Trust typically funds native plants at \$4-6 each, and trees and shrubs at \$30-40 each. If requests differ from those amounts, please justify.
  2. A site plan/project design;
  3. A photo of the planting/restoration site;
  4. A detailed maintenance plan indicating a commitment to the project's long-term success. For projects on school property, the grounds department and the Principal must sign the maintenance plan; *and*
  5. For projects planned on properties other than that of the applicant, a letter stating that permission has been granted by the entity owning the land on which the project will be completed. Projects can be completed on public property, property owned by nonprofit organizations, community-owned property, or school grounds.

## General Criteria for Professional Development Track

Professional development requests should strive to incorporate the following:

- Trainings and workshops will support issue investigation/project based instruction and the use of local communities, schoolyards and natural areas, watersheds and/or the Chesapeake Bay as a context for learning.
- Trainings should be a minimum of 2 days (over the length of the program or sequentially). If at all possible at least 30 hours of instructional/support time in Environmental Education should be provided.
- Modeling of Environmental Education pedagogy in the delivery of professional development as much as possible, including use of the field and/or communities for instruction.
- Include strategies to increase the environmental literacy of the participating teachers, encouraging them to be environmental role models for their students.
- Existence of a plan or draft list of teachers by subject and grade level that are targeted to attend the trainings with an explanation of why these teachers were selected for the training.
- A draft agenda should be included. The absence of a draft agenda will need to be justified.

## Eligible Applicants

The Trust welcomes requests from the following organizations:

- 501(c)3 Private Nonprofit Organizations;
- Faith-based Organizations;
- Community Associations;
- Service, Youth, and Civic Groups;
- Municipal, County, Regional, State, Federal Public Agencies;
- Soil/Water Conservation Districts & Resource Conservation and Development Councils;

- Forestry Boards;
- Public and Independent Primary, Intermediate, and Secondary Schools;
- Public and Independent Higher Educational Institutions.

The strongest proposals will show committed partnerships that provide funding, technical assistance, or other in-kind services to support the successful implementation of the project.

## Funding Restrictions

The Trust does NOT fund the following:

- Projects that will occur outside of Maryland, Delaware, DC, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia or the Chesapeake Bay Watershed;
- Endowments, deficit financing, individuals, building campaigns, annual giving, research, fund raising or venture capital;
- Mitigation or capital construction activities such as structural erosion control measures;
- Political lobbying;
- Reimbursement for a project that has been completed or materials that have been purchased;
- Budget items that are considered secondary to the project's central objective. These items include, but are not limited to, cash prizes, cameras and video equipment;
- Promotional collateral such as pens, key-chains, t-shirts, etc.;
- Funding is generally restricted to projects on public property, private community-owned land and conservation easements, unless otherwise specified in a grant program.

The Trust evaluates each proposal on a case by case basis. The Trust and its partners reserve the right to fund projects and budget items that advance their mission and meet their specific funding priorities and criteria.

## Deadlines, Awards, and Notifications

Due to high demand for field trips and other school-related requests, the Trust will offer 2 Mini Grant Environmental Education deadlines during the next fiscal year: August 5, 2016 and January 13, 2017. The Trust is unable to provide reimbursement funding; this means that project start dates must occur after the date of decision. Deadlines, decision dates, and acceptable project start dates are listed below. The Trust will not accept applications after 5pm on the day of the deadlines.

### Mini Grant Environmental Education Program Deadlines:

Deadline Date	Decision Date	Project Start Date
August 5, 2016, 5:00pm	September 30, 2016	no earlier than October 1, 2016
January 13, 2017, 5:00pm	March 10, 2017	no earlier than March 11, 2017

Examples of application and project timing:

- If your field trip occurs on October 1, 2016, you must apply by August 5, 2016; if you apply to the January 13, 2017 deadline, your funding would be considered reimbursement, which is not allowed in this program.
- If your field trip occurs on March 1, 2017, you must apply by August 5, 2016, nine months in advance, in order to receive notification before your trip.
- If your field trip occurs on April 1, 2017, you can apply by either of these deadlines. However, if you wait until the January 13, 2017, deadline, you will not find out until March 10, 2017, only about three weeks before your field trip. If you need more lead time for planning purposes, you should apply by the August 5, 2016 deadline.

The Trust's deadline system of reviewing applications is meant to ensure that funding is available for projects that occur during the entire school year. The Trust cannot make exceptions to this policy nor provide reimbursement funding for already completed projects.

\*Please be advised that projects must be completed (funds expended and final reports submitted) by the end of the 2016-2017 school year.

### **Award Notification and Final Reports:**

All applicants will receive an e-mailed letter stating the Trust's decision. An application may be declined, partially awarded, or fully awarded. If approved, the Trust will send an e-mailed grant agreement letter with grant conditions and the due date of the final report. Grantees must sign, scan, and upload the grant agreement letter with original signatures to the online grant management system. If awarded funding, please allow a minimum of two weeks to receive your check (from the date the Trust receives the signed award letter in the online system). The Trust will mail the check to the applicant organization listed on the original online grant application form, following the Trust's receipt of the signed grant agreement and any contingencies that must be met. When the project is complete, grantees are required to complete the final report form and budget expenditures spreadsheet, which is available through the online grant management system. Additional funding will not be awarded to grantees who have outstanding final reports for previously completed projects.

### **Funding Partners:**

Generally, grants awarded in Maryland are funded by the *Treasure the Chesapeake* license plate dollars. Grants awarded in Pennsylvania, Virginia, Delaware, West Virginia, and District of Columbia are supported by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's "Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET)" fund. As such, these grants will be awarded federal dollars. Please check with your finance office that your organization can accept federal awards if you are not a Maryland grantee.

## **Submitting Your Application**

The Trust uses an online grants management system for the application process, and if awarded, grant management. As a result, you will need to register with the online grants management system with a username and password; if you have applied for a grant in the past please use your existing username and password (if you have forgotten either of these please use the 'forgot password' feature). To apply for a grant go to the Trust [website](#) and click on the appropriate start a new online application link.

***Applicants will be required to complete and upload a narrative form depending on their type of request:***

[\*Meaningful Watershed Issue Investigations Narrative Form\*](#)

[\*Professional Development Trainings Narrative Form\*](#)

Applicants must submit proposals using our Online Grants System by **5:00 pm on the date of the deadline**. (See above for deadlines).

Late applications will not be accepted, and the online funding opportunity will close promptly at 5:00 pm.

**Applicants 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 Grant System technical assistance on the deadline date.

## **Contact**



**For general questions about the application, or questions relating to school and youth-related Mini Grants**  
Contact Emily Stransky at (410) 974-2941 ext. 101 or [estransky@cbtrust.org](mailto:estransky@cbtrust.org).

## Online Proposal Instructions

When completing the online application process, you will be asked for the following information:

**Project Title:** List the title of your project

### Organization Information

- 1) Organization Name
- 2) Address
- 3) City, State, Zip
- 4) Phone
- 5) Mission of Organization
- 6) Organization Type
- 7) EIN Number

An Executive Officer and Project Lead must be identified for all proposals and must be different individuals. Both individuals must be staff or board members of the applicant organization. Individuals associated with for-profit entities to be engaged in the project cannot serve in either role. If a school is applying, the Executive Officer should be a Principal, Vice Principal, or Superintendent. If a school is applying, the Project Lead can be the teacher who is leading the project. Executive Officer and Project Lead should not be the same individual.

### Executive Officer/Principal of Requesting Organization

- 1) Name
- 2) Title
- 3) Address
- 4) Phone
- 5) E-mail

### Project Officer/Teacher

- 1) Name
- 2) Title
- 3) Address
- 4) Phone
- 5) E-mail

### Grant Information

- 1) Amount of Trust funding requested
- 2) Grant Period: enter project start and end dates
- 3) In which stream, river or watershed will the project be located? If you need assistance identifying the watershed, you may find that DNR's [Surf your Watershed](#) is a useful reference.
- 4) In which county will the project be located?

### Project Abstract

You will be asked to provide a brief summary of the project, including details such as type of project, location, and main objectives, please limit the abstract to 100 words if possible.

### Project Timeline

You will be asked to fill in a project timeline including major tasks and their associated start and end dates. You are limited to eight entries (though not required to use all eight), and are welcome to combine steps if necessary.

### **Project Deliverables**

You will be asked to fill in a number of project outputs, including number of students, teachers, square feet of rain garden, volunteers engaged, trees planted, etc. Please fill out only the project deliverables that apply to your project, leave the others (that are not applicable) blank.

### **Volunteer Involvement**

You will be asked to complete a form that includes the following: Description of volunteer activities; total # of volunteers engaged in each activity; and an estimated amount of hours contributed by those volunteers.

### **Project Partnerships and Qualifications**

You will be asked to enter into a table: project partner organizations; individuals; their areas of expertise; and their role(s) in your project. While not required, applicants are encouraged to upload a letter of support from each project partner outlining the partner's role in the project; letters of support can be uploaded in the narrative file attachment section.

### **Project Narrative File Attachment**

You will be asked to complete and upload the Narrative (WordDoc) which can be found on the application form under the Narrative tab or below. Up to four additional file attachments may also be uploaded in this section. Only a total of five attachments will be reviewed. Additional attachments (more than 5 total) will not be reviewed. As a reminder, planting project requests must include a site plan, site photos, a native plant list, and a maintenance plan that assigns specific tasks to specific individuals throughout the year.

[Narrative for Meaningful Watershed Issue Investigations](#)

[Narrative for Professional Development Trainings](#)

### **Budget Upload**

You will be asked to upload your budget using the Chesapeake Bay Trust Application Budget Form, an excel file template. Copies of the form can be obtained by visiting [www.cbtrust.org](http://www.cbtrust.org), clicking on "Grants," then "Grant Forms", and downloading the file "**Chesapeake Bay Trust Application Budget Form.**"

- Please be as detailed as possible. For example, elements of schoolyard habitat requests (e.g., native plants, gloves, mulch, and soil) must be listed separately. Do not combine personnel and indirect costs; personnel costs must reflect the actual hourly pay rate of the individual staff person for which the funds are being requested. For more information about the Trust's indirect policy, check [HERE](#).
- For any staff cost requests, please list the percentage of overall time devoted to the project by each staff member in the budget item column.
- Be sure to see "Funding Restrictions" section of Application Instructions above.
- Do not evaluate volunteer hours in terms of dollars; instead, list them separately in the deliverables section of the online application. Matching/leveraged resources are encouraged. Please 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 table.

### **Budget Category Information**

This section will ask applicants to enter budget category totals. These totals will have been automatically calculated in the **Chesapeake Bay Trust Application Budget Form.**

- **Personnel/Consultant Request Description & Additional Budget Justification:** If personnel and/or contractual costs are requested, use the personnel/ consultant request description table to provide detailed information about the scope(s) of work. Err on the side of providing too much detail. You are limited to 5

entries. For additional tasks, use the Additional Budget Justification Box. Use the budget justification section to provide a budget narrative. The narrative should include, in addition to general budget justification information, (a) detailed justification for staff cost requests, if requested, including a specific scope of work, specific tasks, and hours associated with those tasks and (b) the source of any construction cost estimates. Staff cost requests that are not fully justified will not be funded.