2015-2016 Mini Grant Program
Application Package for Community Engagement and Restoration Requests

AT A GLANCE

Program:
The 2015-2016 Mini Grants Program for Community Engagement and Restoration is designed to engage residents in activities that raise public awareness of and engagement in natural resources issues in Maryland.

Funding:
Grant Requests up to $5,000

Is match required?
Match is encouraged but not required.

Deadline:
Proposals are accepted on an on-going basis until funds for this fiscal year are exhausted. Please note that the Trust must receive all proposals a minimum of **six weeks prior** to the start of the proposed project. The Trust cannot make exceptions to this policy nor provide reimbursement funding for already completed projects. If awarded funding, please allow an additional two weeks to receive your check.

Submit Your Application on-line*:*
www.cbtrust.org/communityengagementminigrant

In this Application Package:
1. Program Overview
2. Proposal Instructions
3. Criteria for Specific Project Types

Assistance is available to work through project ideas.
Contact Emily Stransky at (410) 974-2941 ext. 112 or estransky@cbtrust.org.

Section 1. Goals of the Mini Grant Program for Community Engagement and Restoration Requests

Through this funding opportunity, the Trust seeks to engage a diverse array of organizations, both those with community-related missions and those with primarily environmental missions, in small-scale projects that enhance communities, engage residents, and improve natural resources.

Example project goals include:

1. Educating residents about the connection between their communities and natural resources;
2. Involving new or under-engaged groups in environmental resources, including those in local parks, streams, rivers, and other natural spaces;
3. Engaging residents in community-based restoration and protection projects and encouraging behavior changes that benefit environmental health;
4. Promoting collaborative restoration solutions among multiple partners;
5. Encouraging organizations, when pursuing natural resource projects, to engage the communities in which they work.

The Trust specifically 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 their on the ground work, and new creative partnerships.

The Trust is committed to the advancement of diversity in its grant-making and environmental work; the Trust strongly encourages grant applications for projects that increase awareness and participation of communities of color in restoration and environmental health projects.

Sample Eligible Projects

1. Community Engagement Projects
- Community clean-ups that benefit local streams
- Projects that promote awareness of runoff issues, such as storm drain stenciling
- Events and workshops promoting restoration and protection best practices

- Water quality monitoring projects involving volunteers

2. Restoration and Protection Demonstration Projects

- Community greening projects, such as tree plantings, buffers, and conservation landscaping
- Projects that capture rain water, such as rain gardens and rain barrels
- Projects that improve wildlife habitat

This is not an exhaustive list. If you have a project idea that is not listed above, but meets the program goals, please contact Emily Stransky at 410-974-2941 x112, estransky@cbtrust.org to discuss your idea before applying.

*This grant program does *not* support applications for school-related projects. Applicants interested in Environmental Education projects targeting K-12 students should refer to the Mini Grant Application Package for K-12 Environmental Education requests available at www.cbtrust.org/grants.**

Criteria for Specific Project Types

The *Criteria for Specific Project Types* document is available below in Section 3. Please review the criteria if you are submitting a grant application for one of the following project types:

- Restoration Projects
- Water quality monitoring
- Publication, Print, or Electronic Media projects
- Workshops, Conferences, and Events

The Trust encourages you to visit its website for additional information and grant-writing tips that can assist you in preparing a successful application.

Eligible Applicants

The Trust welcomes requests from the following organizations:

- 501(c)3 Private Nonprofit Organizations;
- Faith-based organizations;
- Community Associations;
- Service and Civic Groups;
- Municipal, County, Regional, State, Federal Public Agencies;
- Soil/Water Conservation Districts & Resource Conservation and Development Councils;
- Forestry Boards;
- 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. Applicants that do not possess a bank account or a tax exempt status are welcome to partner with another organization who may apply on their behalf, as their fiscal agent. The fiscal agent would be the primary applicant and as such, responsible for grant management.

This program is an opportunity for the Trust to offer resources to less experienced applicants or groups newly engaging in environmental restoration or community engagement activities. For more experienced organizations, preference will be given to applications focusing on engaging new audiences. Other types of projects will be considered on a competitive basis. Applicants experienced in community engagement or restoration activities are encouraged to consider the Trust's Outreach and Restoration Grant Program.

Funding Restrictions

This grant program does ***not*** fund the following:

- Projects and programs located outside of the state of Maryland;
- Indirect costs;
- Personnel costs;
- Endowments, building campaigns, annual giving, 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;

Projects should be completed within one year upon receipt of the grant award.

The Trust evaluates each proposal and budget line item on a case by case basis. **The need for each budget line should be clearly justified and connected to the goals of the project.** The Trust reserves the right to fund projects and budget items that advance its mission and meet its specific funding priorities and criteria.

This program is meant to support project supplies and materials. Funds for personnel support will not be provided through this grant program and costs for contractual budget line items will be carefully evaluated.

Deadlines, Awards, and Notifications

Deadline: Requests for this Program are accepted on an on-going basis until funds are fully expended for the given fiscal year. Please check our website and sign up for our grantee newsletter for the most up to date information about the status of this rolling grant program. Please note that the Trust must receive all proposals at least **six weeks prior** to the start of the proposed project. The Trust cannot make exceptions to this policy nor provide reimbursement funding for already completed projects.

Award Notification and Final Reports: All applicants will receive an emailed letter stating the Trust's decision. An application may be declined, partially awarded, or fully awarded. If approved, the Trust will email a grant agreement letter with grant conditions and the due date of the final report. Grantees must print, sign, scan, and upload the signed grant agreement letter with original signatures to the online grant management system. Please allow a minimum of two weeks (from the date the Trust receives the signed award letter) for the check to be issued. The Trust will mail the check to the requesting organization following submission of the signed grant agreement and any contingency requirements. When the project is complete, grantees are required to submit a completed final report form with supporting materials.

Submitting Your Application

The Trust uses an online system for the grant application process, and if awarded, grant management. To apply for a grant, click on the appropriate "start a new online application" link located here: www.cbtrust.org/communityengagementminigrant . If you have not previously used the system, you will need to register.

Contact

For general questions about the application, or questions relating to Community Engagement Mini Grants
Contact Emily Stransky at (410) 974-2941 ext. 112 or estransky@cbtrust.org.

Section 2: 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.

Executive Officer of Requesting Organization:
1) Name
2) Title
3) Address
4) Phone
5) E-mail

Project Officer:
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?
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 upload an MSWord or PDF file containing a project narrative not to exceed five pages. We prefer that all documents be merged into one file for ease of reviewing; however, 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 five in total) will not be reviewed. **As a reminder, planting project requests must include a site plant, site photos, a native plant list, and a maintenance plan that assigns specific tasks to specific individuals throughout the year.**

Please address the following questions in your narrative and then upload your narrative document through the project narrative file attachment section in the online system.

<u>**Project Description** (answer each question in no less than three sentences):</u> Please address the following questions. We recommend that you copy and paste these questions into a word processing document and work from this document to ensure that you do not omit an answer.

1. What are the big-picture goals and the specific objectives of the project? (See program criteria above to ensure consistency with the Request for Proposal).
2. Who is the target audience?
3. In light of the Trust's commitment to the advancement of diversity in its grant-making, please provide demographic information regarding the community or population served by the project. Describe how the population and/or the community are involved in the planning, development, and implementation of the proposed project, and in the development of this application.
4. Identify the audience segment(s) on which you will focus for this project, and describe how you will reach them and why you've chosen that method.
5. List the major actions or steps to be undertaken (project methodology; bullet form is acceptable).
6. Is this project an extension of an on-going or recently completed project?
7. Describe your organization's experience in completing similar projects.
8. Have you applied to the Trust before for this project? If so, how has it changed?
9. What does success look like for your project? How will you evaluate project success?

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, clicking on "Grants," then "Grant Forms and Policies", and downloading the file "**Chesapeake Bay Trust Application Budget Form**."

- Be sure to see "Funding Restrictions" section of Application Instructions above.

- Do not evaluate volunteer hours in terms of dollars; instead, list them separately. 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.**

Consultant Request Description & Additional Budget Justification

- If contractual costs are requested, use the 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, detailed justification for consultant cost requests, if requested, including a specific scope of work, specific tasks, and hours associated with those tasks. Contractual costs should not be the majority of your requested budget, as organizations are encouraged to utilize volunteers where possible.

Section 3: Criteria for Specific Project Types

Please review the criteria for specific project types below as you prepare a Chesapeake Bay Trust Mini Grant application. The Trust will continue to expand the criteria available on specific project types.

Restoration Projects

- All planting projects **must** include a native plant list, site plan, project design, photo of the planting/restoration site, and a detailed maintenance plan.

- List native plants that will be used in the planting/restoration project in the proposal. Funds may be requested for native plant species only. 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.

- 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, attach a letter stating that permission has been granted by the entity owning the land on which the project will be completed. Proposals that demonstrate long-term commitment to upkeep, manage, and maintain the project will receive more favorable review.

- If permits are required, describe the status of those permits (i.e., permits pending review of application, permits secured).

- Requests for invasive vegetation removal as part of site preparation for native planting projects are permitted.

- The Trust prefers to fund implementation projects. However, in some cases, funding for design of restoration projects will be considered. The following points apply to design-only requests:

- Design funds may be requested for projects of the following types: bioretetion cells, other LID practices, wetland creation/enhancement, stream restoration, fish passage.
- Applicants are encouraged to provide cash or in-kind match for the design.
- A clear justification for the design phase must be included. (e.g., a complicated site, a complicated BMP, etc.)
- A scope of design work with a detailed budget must be included in the request.
- Qualifications of the group(s) proposed to undertake the design must be described.
- Support for the project by the property owner must be provided.
- A rough conceptual sketch of the intended project must be provided.
- A plan for implementation of the project, including actual or potential sources of funding, must be provided.
- Applicants seeking design funds are strongly encouraged to contact Trust staff prior to application.

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; (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 support 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 how the data will be used and who will use them.
- 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.

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 Bay, its 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, and explain what is new about your materials and associated communications campaign. Proposals that do not place a project in the context of existing materials will not be considered.
- Project leads should coordinate or partner with experts in the field, who should be identified in the proposal. Letters of support from such experts are encouraged.

- The target audience must be clearly defined, and how the audience is expected to use the information must be articulated. Applicants should specify:
  (a) the number of individuals in the target audience, and potential sub-groups of the audience;
  (b) the percentage of target audience (audience penetration) reached; and
  (c) the frequency of the message to the targeted audience.

- The publication's distribution plan must be completed before the proposal is submitted and included with the proposal. 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 (or web hits to be generated);
  (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.

- Applicants are strongly encouraged to conduct a communications campaign within which the product is articulated. Communications campaigns should be able to measure both qualitative and quantitative impacts of the project. Evaluation should be focused on project goals and outcomes as opposed to short term outputs.

- Funding for restoration project signage requests will be contingent upon the Trust's review of materials. Attaching a draft will expedite funding allocation for successful proposals. Signage should include a watershed education message.

- Costs for both print and electronic media should be reasonable and consistent with market rates. Sometimes it can be more costly in time and resources for an amateur to complete a project than to outsource to a professional. For video projects, grantees are encouraged to incorporate public access footage when possible to keep costs low.

- For web-distributed footage, applicants must secure all required digital distribution rights.

Workshops, Conferences, and Events

- Applicants must describe how the event will advance its mission.

- A target audience and number of attendees must be identified in the proposal, as well as a recruitment strategy based on assessment of the target audience identified.

- A list of speakers and their qualifications must be provided in the proposal.

- 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. Applicants are welcomed to contact Trust staff for additional guidance.

- A workshop, conference, or training must be evaluated with a survey. Grantee must share results of the survey with the Trust and outline next steps resulting from the event in the final report. The Trust may post a summary of the workshop, conference, or training on our website.

- The Trust cannot fund food or beverage costs.