Community Engagement
Mini Grant Program

AT A GLANCE

Program:
This Grant Program is designed to engage a diverse array of organizations in activities that both benefit your communities and raise public awareness of and engagement in natural resources issues.

Funding:
Grant Requests up to $5,000

Deadline:
Proposals are accepted on a rolling 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 provide reimbursement funding for already completed projects.

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

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

For assistance with project ideas and development contact:
Bre'Anna Brooks at (410) 974-2941 ext. 112 or bbrooks@cbtrust.org.

I. Program Goals and Importance of Inclusion

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

One of the Trust's core values is *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 through this Grant Opportunity primarily to new (for example: communities of color) applicants who have yet to frequently engage with the Trust. Our goals are:

1. To 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 local parks, rural or urban forests, streams, rivers, and other natural spaces)

2. To engage residents in community-based restoration and protection

3. To provide to applicants who may not be experienced in applying for grants an introduction to the grant lifecycle
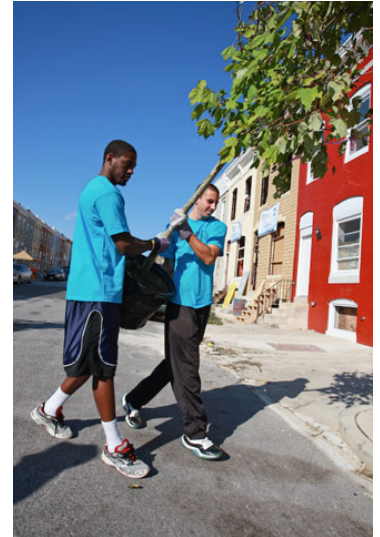
Sample Eligible Projects

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 are willing to fund elements of projects that may not have a primarily environmental purpose but that have an ultimate connection or potential to improve natural resources.

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.

Example project goals include but are not limited to:

1. Educating residents about the connection between their communities and natural resources;

2. Involving new or under-engaged groups, connecting their goals with the goal to improve or protect natural resources

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.

Eligible projects types include but are not limited to:
▪ Community gardens that encourage use of the outdoors and education about natural resources
▪ Community clean-ups that benefit both communities and local waterways
▪ Projects that combine art with an increased awareness of stormwater issues, such as storm drain stenciling or rain barrel installations
▪ Community greening projects, which have been shown to beautify communities, improve health via air quality, and lead to reduced crime, as well as improve stormwater, such as tree plantings
▪ Projects that beautify communities, capture rain water and improve wildlife habitat such as pollinator habitat plantings and rain gardens
▪ Projects that educate and get residents outdoors, which has been shown to improve human health

This is not an exhaustive list. If you have a project idea that is not listed above, but meets the program goals, please contact Bre'Anna Brooks at (410) 974-2941 ext. 112, bbrooks@cbtrust.org to discuss your idea before applying.

*This grant program does *not* support applications for school-related projects or requests for sponsorships for conferences or events. 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. Requests for sponsorships for conferences and events should be submitted through the Chesapeake Bay Trust's sponsorship RFP, also found at www.cbtrust.org/grants.

Eligible Applicants

Only applicants who have received three grants or fewer from the Trust in the past are eligible to apply. Applicants are particularly encouraged from organizations who have never received a grant from the Trust.

Organizations must be one of the following types:
▪ 501(c)3 Private Nonprofit Organizations;
▪ Faith-based organizations;
▪ Community Associations;
▪ Service and Civic Groups;
▪ Municipal, County, Regional, State, Federal Public Agencies;

New this year, the Trust will offer a mentorship opportunity to new applicants. If you are in need of a mentor to assist you in applying to this grant program, please see a description of the program and a list of interested Mentors on the Mini Grant webpage. Visit www.cbtrust.org, click the grants tab and then Outreach and then Community Engagement and choose the Chesapeake Bay Mini Grant Mentorship document.

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. In this case, the primary contact (executive officer) must be formally associated or employed by the fiscal agent organization. The fiscal agent will 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. Applicants experienced in community engagement or restoration activities (i.e., have successfully received four or more grants) 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;
- 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.

Deadlines, Awards, and Notifications

Deadline: Requests for this Program are accepted on an on-going basis until funds are fully expended for the 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.

Contact

For general questions about the application, or questions relating to Community Engagement Mini Grants
Contact Bre'Anna Brooks at (410) 974-2941 ext. 112 or bbrooks@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.

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.

Project Description (answer each question in no less than three sentences): 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?

2. List the major actions or steps to be undertaken (bullet form is acceptable).

3. Who is the target audience?

4. Identify the audience on which you will focus for this project, and describe how you will reach them and why you've chosen that method.

5. 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.

6. Describe your organization's experience in completing similar projects.

7. What does success look like for your project?

8. If you are a new applicant, did you participate in the Mentorship program? Who was your Mentor organization? What role did they play (project development assistance, narrative creation, application submission assistance, etc.) and how much time did they spend assisting you?

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**." Please contact the Trust for help with completing the budget form.

▪ 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.**

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.

Greening/Garden Projects

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

▪ List plants that will be used in the planting/restoration project in the proposal. For non-edible projects, only native plants may be used. 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.

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

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, in particular 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

<u>new</u> 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.

- 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.

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

Workshops and Trainings

- Applicants must describe how the workshop 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.

- The Trust encourages applicants holding workshops or trainings to evaluate audience knowledge and self-efficacy with a combination of survey or other similar tools. Grantee must share results of the evaluation with the Trust and outline next steps resulting from the workshop or training in the final report.