Maryland Heritage Areas Program

Fiscal Year 2027

PROJECT GRANT GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

(Capital and Non-Capital Projects)

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MARYLAND HERITAGE AREAS AUTHORITY PROJECT GRANTS GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>

The Maryland Heritage Areas Program is a state program that is housed administratively within the Maryland Historical Trust and governed by the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA). Funding for the Maryland Heritage Areas Program, which is currently $6 million dollars annually, comes out of Program Open Space funds. Capital and non-capital grant awards are made from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Financing Fund, a non-lapsing, revolving fund. The grant program is designed to award grants that **highlight Maryland's diverse heritage, enhance local communities, and promote tourism and economic development** within the 13 heritage areas certified by MHAA. The following is general information about the grant program and instructions for completing the project grant application.

<u>DISCLAIMERS</u>

Each applicant shall comply with all applicable federal, State, and local laws, and departmental policies and programs, in carrying out the grant-funded project, including laws about drug-, alcohol-, and smoke-free workplaces; access for people with disabilities; equal opportunity in employment, housing and credit practices; and prohibiting discrimination.

The application process depends on complete and accurate information, and the failure to provide the information requested on the application may jeopardize MHAA's approval of your application. If your application contains personal information—e.g., information that identifies a person's education, financial information, or employment history—you should be aware of the following:

1. Any personal information supplied by the applicant will be used principally for MHAA's evaluation of the application, but it also may be shared with other State, local, or federal government agencies involved with the applied-for project;

2. MHAA will permit the person whose information is included in an application to inspect, amend, and correct that information;

3. Your application and its supporting materials are public records that are generally available for public inspection under the Maryland Public Information Act. There are, however, certain types of information that are protected from disclosure under the Act. If there are portions of your application materials that you believe are exempt from disclosure under the Act, please indicate as much on your application. The Attorney General's website contains helpful information about the Public Information Act and the types of information that it exempts from disclosure: https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/Pages/OpenGov/pia.aspx.

<u>ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS</u>

Nonprofit organizations that meet the following criteria:

- In good standing with the State of Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT). To check if you are in good standing with the SDAT, please navigate to their website here: https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch or contact them directly at 410-767-1330
- Qualified to do business in Maryland
- Have the legal capacity and authority to incur obligations involved under the grant

Local jurisdictions, state, and federal government agencies are also eligible to apply.

All projects must be in a certified heritage area. To check if your project qualifies, please navigate to MEDUSA, Maryland's online Cultural Resource Information System here: https://apps.mht.maryland.gov/medusa/

See Appendix A for instructions on how to check your organization on SDAT and MEDUSA websites.

<u>ELIGIBLE EXPENSES AND ACTIVITIES</u>

All eligible activities must take place within the boundaries of at least one heritage area. Projects that take place in more than one heritage area are also eligible for application and are called Multi-Heritage Area Grants.

In your application, you should be able to describe how your project will support place-based experiences, historic/cultural/natural resources, and/or traditions and the Maryland Heritage Areas Program's desired strategic results:

- Maryland's diverse historic, cultural, and natural assets within heritage areas are enhanced, preserved, and accessible
- Heritage areas support equitable, robust, and sustainable local economies
- Communities and visitors are connected and enriched by experiencing Maryland's heritage and cultural traditions
- Local partnerships and networks across heritage areas are expanded and strong

In addition, you should explain how your project supports the mission of the local heritage area, including boosting local and/or regional heritage tourism.

See Appendix K: Glossary of terms for definitions of place-based experiences, heritage, heritage tourism, visitor, community enhancement, and sustainability.

Applicants are STRONGLY encouraged to contact their local heritage areas to discuss their project with their heritage area director prior to submitting the full application (see Appendix D for contact information). For Multi-Heritage Area Grants, it is important that you discuss your project with ALL the heritage areas in which the proposed project will be taking place prior to submitting your final application.

Generally, grants will be made as one-time awards, not for ongoing projects or activities that require a multi-year grant commitment. However, grants can be awarded to multiple phases of a larger project. Please note that the minimum grant request allowable is $5,000. For smaller non-capital projects, ask your local heritage area director about their mini-grant program.

Eligibility of Churches and Other Religious Facilities

For capital projects, churches and other religious facilities are generally eligible for assistance for exterior and structural repairs if the specific elements do not directly relate to worship or religious instruction and do not feature religious imagery. For example, stained glass windows with just colored glass or geometric shapes, would be eligible. Structural components surrounding windows with religious imagery, such as window sashes, casements, or framing may qualify for funding as well. Interior work is only eligible in spaces that are not used for worship or religious purposes (e.g., bathrooms, a sanctuary that has been converted to a secular use, or a fellowship hall mainly used for non-religious activities). Spaces used primarily for religious purposes are usually not eligible. Requests will be reviewed for eligibility on a case-by-case basis.

For non-capital projects, programming and activities that take place in a religious space are generally eligible

for funding if the activity is seen as a community event that will be open to, and mostly attended by, the general public. Activities directly related to worship or religious instruction are not eligible. Requests will be reviewed for eligibility on a case-by-case basis.

PROJECT TYPES: NON-CAPITAL AND CAPITAL

Non-Capital Projects	Eligible Expenses: Non-capital projects range from $5,000-$50,000. Funds support and create heritage tourism resources and experiences within the 13 heritage areas.
Planning	• Feasibility and Planning Studies • Research • Other planning activities that support the heritage area
Interpretation	• Interpretive Exhibits, Signage and Brochures • Interpretive Websites and Mobile Apps • Wayfinding Signage – Pedestrian only • Educational Programs and Materials
Programming (preference is given to new or pilot programs rather than ongoing activities)	• Seminars • Reenactments • Conferences • Commemorations • Performances • Festivals

Indirect Costs for Nonprofits Applying for Non-Capital Projects
Nonprofit organizations requesting grant funds for non-capital projects have the option to include some indirect costs as a part of their grant-funded expenditures. Indirect costs are those operating costs that are not readily identifiable within the specific grant project, but which are incurred for the joint benefit of the grant project and other organizational activities. Indirect costs are frequently referred to as overhead, operating, or administrative costs, and can include rent, utilities, salaries, personnel costs, and professional service fees. Nonprofit applicants can include a line item in their proposed budget titled "Indirect Costs," and have the option of including 15% of the grant request, or an amount consistent with Section 2-208(b), State Finance and Procurement Article, Code of Maryland. The full policy relating to indirect costs is available here: https://mht.maryland.gov/Documents/grants/MHAA_policy_indirect.pdf.

Please note that capital projects and government entities are NOT eligible for the inclusion of indirect costs.

Capital Projects	Eligible Expenses: Capital projects range from $5,000-$100,000. Funds support and create heritage tourism infrastructure within the 13 heritage areas.
Acquisition (up to 50% of the average of two recent appraisals of the subject property)	• Fee title of real property • Interest other than fee title (i.e. easement) of real property
Development	• Repair or alteration of an existing building, structure, or site* • New Construction for heritage tourism purposes (must have exceptionally significant heritage tourism impact) • Trail Construction
Rehabilitation	• Returning a property to a state of utility*

Restoration of Real Properties	• Accurately depicting a property as it appeared at a particular period of time • Removal of features from another time period • Reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period
Pre-Development	• Plans and specifications • Fees for architectural design and engineering
*Should allow for contemporary use while retaining historical, architectural, and cultural character of building.	

Special Conditions for Capital Grants
- May require conveyance of a term historic preservation easement to MHT on historic properties listed on, or eligible for listing in the Maryland Register that are assisted with Maryland Heritage Areas Program capital grant funds, see https://mht.maryland.gov/Pages/easement/easement.aspx for additional information on historic preservation easements
- All capital project activities affecting historic properties must conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, see https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/secretary-standards-treatment-historic-properties.htm
- All capital project grantees are also subject to review by the Maryland Historical Trust Project Review and Compliance Unit to ensure compliance with Sections 5A-325 and 5A-326 of the State Finance and Procurement Article, see https://mht.maryland.gov/Pages/projectreview/project-review.aspx
- Applicants proposing archaeological work will need to align their project with MHT's archaeological guidelines, see https://mht.maryland.gov/Pages/archaeology/archaeology.aspx
- If the applicant organization is not the property owner you must demonstrate that you have a legal right to carry out the project. This includes notifying the property owner of your project at the time of application and obtaining a letter of consent from them prior to award if your project is selected for funding and it is required by the MHT (see Appendix H for a sample letter)

Supplemental Property Information

In the application, you will be asked to briefly describe the property's historical significance, significance to community groups, if applicable, and how the property is/will be used. Please share any additional information about the property, such as special designations (i.e., listed on the National Register or Maryland Inventory of Historic Places, or located in a historic or arts and entertainment district). To verify if your property is associated with any local or state designations, we recommend using the State of Maryland's online Neighborhood Revitalization Mapper https://portal.dhcd.state.md.us/GIS/revitalize/index.html. See Appendix A for instruction on how to use the Neighborhood Revitalization Mapper.

We also encourage applicants to highlight any local community significance that may be associated with the property that may not necessarily be captured in the Neighborhood Revitalization Mapper.

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES AND ACTIVITIES

Project grant funds may NOT be used to pay for the following:

- **Overhead expenses** of the project **including salaries and/or benefits** of permanent or temporary staff of the applicant organization, unless they are part of the allowed 10% indirect costs for nonprofit, non-capital projects (see page 8)
- **Marketing expenses** (marketing expenses ARE eligible as match)
- **Alcohol**

- **Religious imagery and symbolism**. Eligibility may be determined on a case-by-case basis. Please review the information about the eligibility of churches and other religious facilities on page 7 or contact MHAA program staff to discuss.

PLEASE NOTE: Both staff time (salaries and/or benefits) working on the grant-funded project and marketing expenses related to the project CAN be used as match.

ONLINE APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCESS: INTENT TO APPLY and FULL APPLICATION

The application is submitted in two parts via the grants portal that begins with an **Intent to Apply form, due no later than 11:59 pm on Monday, February 2, 2026**. **All applicants must submit an Intent to Apply form online**.

The submission of an Intent to Apply form does not in any way commit the applicant to completing a full application. It is simply a way to assess the demand, and work with applicants to craft a strong application. The specifics of your application and budget can change between the Intent to Apply form submission and the full application submission. The link to start a new Intent to Apply form can be found on the Maryland Heritage Areas Program's Financial Incentives webpage: https://mht.maryland.gov/Pages/MHAA/heritage-areas-financial.aspx. The link on this page is only to start a new Intent to Apply form.

If you need to save and finish later, you can find your way back to the Intent to Apply Form you started previously by logging in to your account in the grants portal here: https://bbgm-apply.yourcausegrants.com/apply/applications.

You can begin working on your full application ANY TIME after you submit your ITA and receive an email notifying you that the full application is available to you in the grants portal; you do not need approval from MHAA program staff or your heritage area to proceed with the full application. However, we strongly encourage you to speak with your heritage area at time of ITA and to share a draft copy of your application with them before final submittal as they can provide valuable feedback to help improve your application. You are encouraged to follow the recommendations of your local heritage area, as they want to ensure that you submit the strongest application possible.

Draft applications may be shared with other staff members at your organization and with local heritage area directors online via the grants portal:

- Log in to the grants portal here: https://bbgm-apply.yourcausegrants.com/apply/applications
- Locate the application you would like to share
- Click the "Manage" button on the bottom right of the application
- Click the "Manage applicants" button and enter the email address of the person you would like to add. Check the "Edit - Can add/edit and delete applicants" box so that heritage area staff can remove themselves after reviewing your draft application. Click the "Add" button. If the contact is not already in the database, you will be prompted to enter a first and last name
- Once added, the user will now be able to see this application in their portal when they log in, and they will have both editing and viewing capability

All online grant materials are available here: https://mht.maryland.gov/Pages/MHAA/heritage-areas-resources.aspx.

For assistance navigating the grants portal, Frequently Asked Questions and an illustrated guide outlining how

to set up an account are located here: https://mht.maryland.gov/Pages/funding/grants.aspx.

The deadline for submitting the full application for the FY27 grant round is no later than 11:59 pm on March 31, 2026 via the grants portal: https://bbgm-apply.yourcausegrants.com/apply/applications. **Please review your application thoroughly and make sure it is complete. Once you click "Submit," you will not be able to make edits to your submission.**

If you are unable to submit your application online, please contact MHAA program staff using the contact information provided on the cover page of this document to discuss alternative submissions methods.

PROJECT REVIEW AND SELECTION CRITERIA

All applications are first reviewed and ranked by a local heritage area review panel. The local heritage area may decide not to submit your application for review and ranking to the state-level Grants Review Panel if it does not align with the heritage area's goals and objectives. The local ranking of your application impacts your final overall statewide ranking. For all of these reasons, it is important to work with your local heritage area as you develop your application.

Once the local review process is completed, applications are then reviewed and ranked by the state-level Grants Review Panel which consists of roughly 40 volunteers and state employees from across the state with a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds and professional expertise in the areas of grantmaking, tourism, natural resource management, planning, museums, and heritage. Due to the large volume of applications at the state level, four-five panelists will review your application in full and provide an initial ranking. Then, your application will be discussed by the larger panel for a final ranking.

The state-level Grants Review Panel recommendations are forwarded to the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority governing body for review and final decision in July 2026.

See Appendix B for the sample score sheet that will be used by both the local and state Grants Review Panels. Please note that the local heritage area may also use additional local criteria.

Reserve List: Some applications may be recommended for placement on a "Reserve List" and will be considered for funding if and when additional FY27 funds become available. Reserve List projects will be funded in the order in which they are ranked (unless it is determined necessary to skip a project due to funding availability). Projects on the Reserve List have no guarantee of being funded, and the Reserve List expires at the end of FY27 on July 1, 2027.

GRANT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

All successful grantees will be required to enter into a grant agreement with the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority. It is important that you understand the terms and conditions of a grant award prior to applying for grant funds, because you will need to abide by them if a grant is awarded. See Appendix C for full terms and conditions.

To gain an understanding of what to expect if you are indeed awarded a grant from the Maryland Heritage Areas Program, please refer to the Grants Manual, which can be found here: https://mht.maryland.gov/Documents/grants/MHAA%20Grants%20Manual.pdf. The manual is subject to updates, so please make sure you have the most current version.

GRANT AMOUNTS AND MATCHING FUND REQUIREMENTS AND BUDGET FORM

Grants for **non-capital projects may not exceed $50,000**. Grants for **capital projects may not exceed $100,000**. All applications must have a **minimum request of $5,000**.

All grants must be matched by a grantee's contribution to the project in an amount at least equal to the grant (dollar-for-dollar match). **A matching contribution means money (cash), or donated or discounted goods and/or services (in-kind), that the applicant organization also spends on the project**. Applicants will be asked to identify which project expenses will be covered by grant funds and match funds in their application budgets.

Ineligible Match:
- State of Maryland funds, excluding state staff time which can be used as match
- Expenditures made before the award of the grant (July 9, 2026) or after the project completion date
- Expenditures that do not relate to the grant project
- Expenditures that have not been approved either in the grant agreement or an amendment letter

Examples of Match Expenditures:
- Cash expenditures on project-related expenses
- Project-related expenditures supported by a non-state grant or loan fund
- Applicant organization and partner organization staff salaries for work specifically on the project (note, this can include state employee staff time)
- Volunteer time for work on the project, see http://independentsector.org/volunteer_time for current value of volunteer time in Maryland
- Donated and discounted professional services can be valued at their professional rate, but only if working on the project in their professional role (e.g., an architect donating architectural designs)
- Board members' donated professional services or general volunteer time spent on the project (please note that applicant organization board members may not be paid for services, but their donated time may count as match)
- Donated materials/supplies
- Discounted services (the amount that is discounted can be used as match)

Partial Funding: The state-level Grants Review Panel can award partial funding to projects in cases where ineligible expenses are included in the project budget or to fund more projects in especially competitive funding cycles.

Other Project Costs: If the total project is expected to cost more than the total grant request and required match combined, those additional costs should be listed on the application budget as "Other Project Costs." **State funds should not be included**. Do not include other project costs for other phases of the project outside of what is being requested in the application.

Budget Form: In addition to entering your grant request, match amount, and other project costs in the application, you will also be asked to complete and upload a detailed budget using an Excel form that can be found here: https://mht.maryland.gov/Documents/grants/Grants_MHAA_BudgetDetail.xlsx.

When completing the Excel form, single one line-item budgets are discouraged. A breakdown of costs by multiple line items is preferred. If you are working with a contractor(s) and they give you one lump sum, please ask them to break it down.

When you enter the amount of matching funds in both the application and the budget form, they should be EXACTLY the same amount as grant funds requested dollar-for-dollar. All entries should be rounded up to the nearest dollar. If you would like to enter a different amount than the one you listed in your Intent to Apply, you are allowed to revise it at the time of full application and list something different here, but please make sure to let your local heritage area know. **Enter numbers only, no commas or dollar signs**.

GRANT SCHEDULE

Dates	Activity
February 2, 2026 (by 11:59 pm)	**Intent to Apply Form deadline** – must be submitted online
March 31, 2026 (by 11:59 pm)	**Full applications for capital, non-capital and multi-heritage area grants deadline** – must be submitted online
March – April 2026	**Local review and ranking**
April – June 2026	**State review and ranking**
July 9, 2026	**Grant decisions and notifications** • MHAA makes final decisions on grant awards • Applicants are notified by email and a press release is issued • If awarded, the grant period begins July 9, 2026 and project-related work can begin • Work that requires preservation easement, compliance, or archaeology approvals will not be permitted to begin until after those approvals are in place
August – December 2026	**Details verified with grantees and grant agreements drafted, emailed, and signed electronically**
September, 2026-January 2027	The time frame by which you should receive your **first payment** (usually 50% of your grant award)

SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS

Applicants will be required to submit the following supporting documents with their applications:

Budget
• A detailed budget (See Appendix E for sample budget)
• Budget justification documents (estimates, correspondence that includes price quotes, list prices for budget items, or other explanations as to how estimates were determined)

Personnel
• Resumes of key project personnel (staff and consultants, if known). If you have not yet identified your partners or consultants for this project, please provide a description of the qualifications you will be seeking

Proof of Nonprofit Status and Organizational Documents
• Proof of Nonprofit Status, if applicable (see Appendix F)
• Organizational documents to include bylaws, articles of incorporation, constitution, charter – required of all nonprofit applicants

Letters of Support
• For education-related projects – a letter documenting the support of your local school district and/or

the Maryland Department of Education for projects focusing on Pre-K – 12 education projects

- For Projects on DNR Property – approval from the Department of Natural Resources to conduct the project (see Appendix I for procedure)
- For all other projects - letters of support for the grant application are encouraged but are not a required submission. Letters from elected officials, partner organizations and community members help to demonstrate the importance of, need for, and urgency of your project

Capital Projects ONLY

- Photographs of any property/structure in PDF or Word format (see Appendix G). Please note that any images not submitted in a PDF or Word format may not be reviewed as part of the application
- Map showing location and boundaries of project
- Site Plans/Drawings in PDF or Word format
- For real property acquisition ONLY – At least one appraisal (a second will be required if the grant is awarded)

SEE APPENDIX J FOR A CHECKLIST TO MAKE SURE YOU HAVE INCLUDED ALL THE NECESSARY ELEMENTS IN YOUR APPLICATION.

<u>APPENDIX A: INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO CHECK YOUR ORGANIZATION ON SDAT, MEDUSA AND THE NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION MAPPER</u>

Instructions for using **State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT)** website to check your organization's status: https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch

1. In the "Business Name" field located at the bottom center of your screen, please enter the legal name of your organization and click "search."
2. Find and click on your organization on the list of organizations from your search query.
3. Once you have opened your organization, scroll halfway down the page to find the "Good Standing" field. This field will either say "This business is in good standing" or "This business is not in good standing."
4. If you are not in good standing with SDAT, the reason will be listed below the field. If you are not in good standing due to a missing document, such as an annual report, you can upload that document by scrolling up the page and clicking the "Options for this Business" button.
5. If you have any questions about getting back in good standing with SDAT, please contact them directly at 410-767-1330.

Instructions for using **MEDUSA** website to verify if your project is taking place in a heritage area: https://apps.mht.maryland.gov/medusa/

1. On the left-hand side of your screen, select the "Layers" tab.
2. Click the "Other MHT Base Data" box and select the small arrow on the right hand of the tab and click "Maryland Heritage Areas." This will turn on the heritage area layer.
3. Once the heritage area layer has been turned on, enter your project's address into the "Find address or place" search bar at the top of the screen and hit enter. This will drop a pin in your project's location.
4. You can then compare the location of the dropped pin to the "Maryland Heritage Areas" layer. The land contained within the pink highlighted area is part of a heritage area. Click the property pin to learn which heritage area you are in.

Instructions for using the **Neighborhood Revitalization Mapper**: https://portal.dhcd.state.md.us/GIS/revitalize/index.html

1. Once you are in the Neighborhood Revitalization Mapper, you can view designation listings on the left-hand side of your screen, by selecting the "Layer List" button (it looks like three sheets of paper stacked on top of each other).
2. Then click the "Turn all layers on" button that is in the upper right corner of the same Layer List menu (it looks like a small icon comprised of three horizontal lines with a check mark in the lower right). Select "Turn all layers on" and this will enable this search feature.
3. Once the "layer" feature has been turned on, please enter your project's address into the search bar at the top of the screen and hit enter. This will drop a pin in your project's location.
4. Click the dot that represents the pin and it will populate any designations associated with that property.
5. Use the small left and right arrow keys at the top of the pin information box to click through the various designations. You will know if you have more than one designation by looking in the upper left corner of the pin info box for a summary that shows the number of records out of total records (e.g., 1 of 3).

FY27 Maryland Heritage Areas Program Project Grant Application Scoring Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (11-15 points)	Good (6-10 points)	Adequate (0-5 points)	Points Awarded
Project Description	The project summary and overall project description provide a strong and very clear plan for the completion of the project.	The project summary and overall project description provide a good plan for the completion of the project.	The project summary and overall project description adequately explain how the project will be completed.	
Timeline	**NO MORE THAN 5 POINTS WILL BE AWRDED FOR THIS QUESTION**	**NO MORE THAN 5 POINTS WILL BE AWARDED FOR THIS QUESTION**	The timeline includes the activities listed in the project description and budget and appears to be feasible.	
Audience Served and Accessibility of Project	The target audience is articulated clearly and there are excellent plans for making the project accessible to the public.	The target audience is included and some plans for making the project accessible to the public have been included.	A description of the target audience is adequate but lacking detail about how the project will be made accessible to the public.	
Information and Connections for Visitors and Participants	**NO MORE THAN 10 POINTS WILL BE AWARDED FOR THIS QUESTION**	The content developed by or shared from this project will contribute to the public's connection to the surrounding community and/or Maryland heritage.	Lacks an understanding of how the content developed by or shared from this project will provide an adequate connection for the public to the surrounding community and/or Maryland heritage.	
Local Heritage Area Mission and Tourism	The project strongly supports the mission of the local heritage area and will provide an excellent new heritage tourism product/experience/asset or enhance an existing product/experience/asset in the area.	The project somewhat supports the mission of the local heritage area and will provide a good new heritage tourism product/experience/asset or enhance an existing product/experience/asset in the area.	It is unclear how the project will support the mission of the local heritage area and the impact of the proposed heritage tourism product/experience/asset or enhance an existing product/experience/asset in the area appears to be minimal.	
Establish or Strengthen Partnerships	**NO MORE THAN 10 POINTS WILL BE AWARDED FOR THIS QUESTION**	The project includes good collaborative activities with either a new partner and/or existing partners.	The project lacks collaborative activities with either a new partner and/or existing partners.	
Diverse and Inclusive Narratives	**NO MORE THAN 5 POINTS WILL BE AWARDED FOR THIS QUESTION**	**NO MORE THAN 5 POINTS WILL BE AWARDED FOR THIS QUESTION**	The project includes a diverse and/or inclusive historical narrative or audience, and/or will assist the organization with addressing diverse initiatives. For capital projects, the	

		project will support small or minority owned businesses or the space will highlight inclusive programming once it is complete.	
Urgency	The applicant made a very compelling case for why this project needs to happen now and how funding from will play a critical role in bringing the project to fruition.	The applicant made a good case for why this project needs to happen now and how funding will help bring the project to fruition.	Lacks understanding of why this project needs to happen now and/or it is unclear how funding will help bring the project to fruition.	
Budget	**NO MORE THAN 10 POINTS WILL BE AWARDED FOR THIS QUESTION**	The expenditures listed in the budget align with the activities listed in the project description and timeline, they are realistic, and it is clear how they were determined.	The expenditures listed in the budget somewhat align with the activities listed in the project description and timeline and/or it is not clear how they were determined.	
			Total (max 100)	

All grantees will be required to enter into a grant agreement with MHAA. The grant agreement is a binding contract with standard terms and conditions, including the following:

Grant Term – All grant funds generally must be expended within no more than 24 months of the date the grant agreement is signed by all parties, unless MHAA agrees to a longer term or approves in writing an extension of the grant period. Written progress and final reports must be submitted to MHAA during the grant term, generally at the mid-point and end of the project (grant agreements will specify reporting requirements). You may also be required to submit a certification of expenses with progress and final reports identifying project costs incurred.

Grant Payments – Grant funds generally will be paid in no more than three installments, unless otherwise specified in the Grant Agreement. Payment requests must identify all costs incurred to date. You may also be required to submit vendor price quotes, bids, cost estimates, or other supporting documentation. The last installment of grant funds will not be paid until the project is complete and all reports and any required supporting documentation have been submitted to and accepted by MHAA.

Procurement Procedures – All grant recipients are expected to ensure that the costs they pay for goods and services necessary to carry out the project are reasonable and customary for the type of work performed and materials procured. The following conditions also apply:

Government Agencies: Governmental grant recipients should follow their normal procurement procedures and must be able to document that applicable procurement procedures were followed, if requested by MHAA.

Nonprofit Organizations**:** Nonprofit grant recipients must utilize a procurement process that allows them to obtain project goods and services at reasonable and customary prices, and if requested by MHAA, must be able to document that their expenditures are reasonable and customary.

Procurements Greater than $500 and less than $10,0000: Grant recipients are strongly encouraged to obtain two or more written bids for any goods and services that are expected to cost more than $500 but not more than $10,000.

Procurements Greater than $10,000**:** If costs for any goods or services are expected to exceed $10,000, written bids from at least 3 vendors must be obtained. Grant recipients must be able to document their compliance with this condition, if requested by MHAA.

When bids are obtained, grant recipients are not required to select the lowest bid, but they must be able to document why a vendor other than the low bidder was selected and what criteria other than bid price were considered.

Sole-source procurement of goods and services should not be utilized unless the grant recipient can demonstrate that competitive procurement is impractical because only one product or service vendor can meet specific project requirements. As with all procurements, sole source expenditures must be reasonable and customary for the type of goods and services being obtained. If requested by MHAA, grant recipients must be able to justify the use of sole source procurement and document that its expenditures are reasonable and customary for the goods and services obtained.

Workplace Restrictions – Each applicant shall comply with all applicable federal, State, and local laws, and

departmental policies and programs, in carrying out the grant-funded project, including laws about drug-, alcohol-, and smoke-free workplaces; access for people with disabilities; equal opportunity in employment, housing and credit practices; and prohibiting discrimination.

Acknowledgment – Grant recipients are required to acknowledge MHAA assistance in all public messaging about grant-funded projects. Grant recipients are also required to acknowledge the support of the local certified heritage area management entity.

Compliance Review – All work on capital projects (except those on which a preservation easement has been or will be conveyed to MHT) and those non-capital projects that involve outdoor signage installation, archaeology, or other forms of ground disturbance, will be subject to review by the MHT Project Review and Compliance Unit in compliance with Sections 5A-325 and 5A-326 of the State Finance and Procurement Article – see https://mht.maryland.gov/Pages/projectreview/project-review.aspx). Recipients must submit their preliminary concept plan or fifty-percent design plan to MHT for its review and must revise their project plans to avoid any adverse effects on historic and archaeological properties that MHT identifies.

Compliance with Applicable Laws – Recipients of funds are responsible for complying with all federal, State, and local laws applicable to the project. This responsibility includes, but is not limited to, compliance with local zoning, building and public safety codes, review by local historic preservation commissions, and federal and State licensing, permitting and environmental requirements.

Corporate Resolution – If a grant is awarded, nonprofit organizations may be required to submit a corporate resolution establishing that the person signing the grant agreement has the authority to bind the organization. This is not necessary if the person signing the agreement is a member of the grantee's board of directors, an elected officer, or an executive director, president, or equivalent leadership position. If required, this form must be completed before grant funds can be paid.

CAPITAL PROJECT GRANT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

In addition to the grant terms and conditions noted above, applicants seeking funds for capital projects may be required to meet the following additional terms and conditions:

Insurance Requirement – Recipients of funds for certain capital projects may be required to maintain property insurance on the assisted property, including the improvements on the property covered by an easement, to insure against hazards such as loss or damage by fire and other casualties, as may be required from time to time by MHAA, in amounts satisfactory to MHAA but in any event not less than the total of the grant and the outstanding principal balance under all mortgages on the property. Recipients may also be required to maintain comprehensive general liability insurance in amounts satisfactory to MHAA. Recipients of funds must cause each policy to be endorsed to name MHAA as an additional insured and loss payee and to require the insurer to give MHT 30 days' prior written notice of policy cancellation, without obligation on the part of MHAA to make premium payments. Insurance coverage must be in place for the duration of all work funded by or included in the project. If the grant recipient or property owner is a governmental entity, the insurance requirements may be satisfied through evidence of self-insurance acceptable to MHAA.

Preservation Easement – If the grant-funded project involves work on a historic property listed or eligible for listing on the Maryland Register, the grantee may be required to convey to MHT a term preservation easement. An easement is a binding legal document that is recorded in the local land records and appears in the property's chain of title. A preservation easement usually protects the exterior and/or the interior of historic buildings, structures, and associated archaeological resources. It requires that the owner of the

property maintain the land and covered improvements in good condition and gives MHT the authority to review and approve any plans the owner (or any subsequent owner or tenant during the term of the easement) may have to carry out construction on the property or alter its existing structures.

The preservation easement is prepared by MHT. MHT will determine what areas of the structure or property the easement will cover. Any easement required will be for a fixed term with a minimum of 15 years and a maximum of 50 years. Each $5,000 (or portion thereof) of MHAA grant funding requires 1 year of the easement term. For example, a $20,000 grant award would require a 15-year easement term, and a $100,000 grant award would require a term of 20 years. If a property receives additional MHAA or MHT grants in subsequent years, the term of the easement would be extended accordingly.

If a preservation easement is required, MHAA ordinarily will not release grant funds until the easement is executed and recorded and all work under the grant has been approved by MHT under the easement. At its discretion, MHAA may release *a portion* of the grant funds prior to execution of the easement, but in no case will MHAA release *all* grant funds before the recording of a preservation easement and MHT approval.

Title Insurance – If a preservation easement is required, the recipient of grant funds will be required to provide title insurance certifying the owner's title to the real property on which the improvements are located and showing all existing encumbrances against the property. A title policy commitment must be reviewed and approved by MHT before the easement is recorded in the land records. Title commitments may contain only those exceptions and encumbrances approved by MHT.

Property Owner Consent and Site Control – The grant recipient must demonstrate that they have the legal right to carry out the grant-funded project. At the time of application, the applicant will be asked to indicate either that they are the property owner or that they have notified the property owner of the proposed project and obtained the owner's consent. MHT may require a letter from the property owner indicating consent to the project should your project be selected for an award.

Site Plan and Legal Description of Property – If a preservation easement is required, the recipient of grant funds will be required to provide a site plan that locates any structures with metes and bounds identified on the site plan, along with a matching legal description of the property.

Minority Business Enterprise Requirement – Recipients of $90,000 or more in capital grant funds must make a best effort to achieve a Minority Business Enterprise participation goal, prepare a Minority Business Enterprise participation plan, and report on MBE participation efforts as part of the reporting process.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards – All work performed as a part of the grant project must be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/secretary-standards-treatment-historic-properties.htm).

APPENDIX D: HERITAGE AREA MANAGEMENT ENTITY CONTACT INFORMATION

County	Heritage Area	Contact Information
Prince George's	Anacostia Trails Heritage Area	Mx. Meagan Baco Tel.: 301-887-0777 meagan@anacostiatrails.org www.anacostiatrails.org
Anne Arundel	Chesapeake Crossroads Heritage Area	Ms. C. Jane Cox, Executive Director Tel.: 410-222-1805 Heritage_Area@aacounty.org https://chesapeakecrossroads.org
Baltimore City	Baltimore National Heritage Area	Ms. Danielle Walter Davis, Grants Manager Tel.: 410-878-6411 dwalterdavis@baltimoreheritagearea.org www.explorebaltimore.org
Allegany	Passages of the Western Potomac Heritage Area (Canal Place)	Ms. Deidra L. Ritchie, Executive Director Tel.: 301-724-3655 or 800-989-9394 deidra.ritchie@maryland.gov www.canalplace.org
Dorchester	Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area	Ms. Holly Gilpin, Heritage Area Director Tel.: 410-228-1000 hgilpin@docogonet.com www.visitdorchester.org
Carroll, Frederick, Washington	Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area	Ms. Elizabeth Scott Shatto, Director Tel.: 240-285-6727 liz@heartofthecivilwar.org www.heartofthecivilwar.org
Somerset, Wicomico, Worcester	Beach to Bay Heritage Area	Ms. Lisa Challenger, Interim Director Beach to Bay Heritage Area Tel.: 443-783-3035 info@BeachesBaysWaterWays.org www.beachesbayswaterways.org
Harford and Cecil	Lower Susquehanna Heritage Area	Ms. Brigitte Carty, Executive Director Tel.: 410-457-2482 brigitte@upperbaytrails.com https://upperbaytrails.com
Montgomery	Montgomery County Heritage Area	Ms. Sarah Rogers, Executive Director Tel.: 301-515-0753 Fax: 301-515-0193 director@heritagemontgomery.org www.heritagemontgomery.org
Garrett	Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area	Ms. Amber Sanders, Heritage Area Director Tel.: 301-387-5238 amber@garrettchamber.com

		www.garrettheritage.com
Baltimore and Howard	Patapsco Valley Heritage Area	Mr. Aaron Shapiro, Executive Director 410-696-1328 director@patapsco.org www.patapsco.org
Calvert, Charles, St. Mary's	Southern Maryland National Heritage Area	Ms. Lucille Walker, Executive Director Tel.: 301-274-4083 lwalker@tccsmd.org www.DestinationSouthernMaryland.com
Caroline, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot	Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area	Ms. Gail Owings Tel.: 410-778-1460 info@storiesofthechesapeake.org www.storiesofthechesapeake.org

Use the Excel budget detail sheet to prepare a realistic project budget. **The budget MUST address project components mentioned in the Project Summary, Overall Project Description, and Timeline/Schedule**. The following sample budget for a non-capital project is provided to illustrate both the process and format grant project budgets must follow.

Items should be organized by cost category so that similar costs are grouped together, regardless of whether they are grant or match, cash or in-kind contributions. Rates of pay or similar cost breakdowns should be included in each line item. Upload any estimates you have obtained to support your budget and, while it is not required at time of application, you may also list any sources of matching funds. Include information on what the use of funds/activity is and the basis for the cost of the expense/activity.

You are required to download and use the application Excel budget template that can be found here https://mht.maryland.gov/Documents/grants/Grants_MHAA_BudgetDetail.xlsx and in the application. Once it is complete you will need to upload it in the budget section of the application as part of the online application process.

Single one line-item budgets are discouraged. A breakdown of costs by multiple line items is preferred. If you are working with a contractor(s) and they give you one lump sum, please ask them to break it down.

** SEE SAMPLE BUDGET ON NEXT PAGE **

SAMPLE PROJECT BUDGET

Line Item No.	Work Item (Description)	Grant Funds (rounded to nearest dollar)	Match (total should equal same amount as grant funds)	Other Project Costs (non-state funds)	Total Project Cost	Source of Match if Known (not required at time of application)
	MM STAFF					
1	Curator (26 weeks 30% time)		$5,304.00		$5,304.00	City of Smallwood
2	Education Director (26 weeks 10% time)		$3,120.00		$3,120.00	City of Smallwood
3	Executive Director (26 weeks 5% time)		$2,250.00		$2,250.00	City of Smallwood
	CONSULTANTS					
4	Anonymous Associates (see attached estimate from consultant)	$35,000.00	$10,000.00	$25,000.00	$70,000.00	Foundation Grant
5	Exhibit Planning Meeting (based on costs for meetings in the past)		$300.00		$300.00	Foundation Grant
6	Aquaria Specialists (50 hrs. @ $50/hr.)			$2500.00	$2500.00	Foundation Grant
7	Anyfirm Strategies (33 hrs. @ $150/hr.)		$5,000		$5,000	Foundation Grant
8	Prototyping Consultant (based on estimate received from consultant)			$2,000.00	$2,000.00	Foundation Grant
	PROTOTYPING					
9	Prototyping Supplies		$2500.00	$2,000.00	$4,500.00	Donated Goods
	VOLUNTEER SUPPORT					
10	4 exhibit committee members @ approx. 36 hours ea. $34.99 per hour		$5,026	$852.32	$5,878.32	Donated Time
11	**RIGHTS AND REPRODUCTION COSTS**		$1,500.00		$1,500.00	Unknown
	TOTALS	**$35,000.00**	**$35,000.00**	**$32,352.32**	**$102,352.32**	

APPENDIX F: PROOF OF NONPROFIT STATUS and ORGANIZATIONAL DOCUMENTS

Proof of nonprofit status (if applicable):

If the applicant is a nonprofit organization, proof of nonprofit status must be submitted. This should include:
- Articles of Incorporation*
- By-laws*
- Internal Revenue Service approval letter (if applicable)

*Some organizations may have a constitution or charter instead.

Note: All nonprofit applicants are required to submit these documents even if they have provided them in the past under prior MHT/MHAA grant applications.

APPENDIX G: PHOTOGRAPH REQUIREMENTS

Capital projects must submit a variety of **color photographs** which depict assorted overall views of the property/structure. It is also helpful for the reviewers for non-capital projects to submit images as well.

Provide a written description of each photograph including the name of the structure or project and a brief description.

- Existing Structures
    - Important interior elements
    - Important exterior elements
    - Areas of deterioration
    - Images that show the entire structure
    - Images that show the surroundings of the structure
- Land Acquisition/New Construction Projects
    - Images that show the proposed location
    - Images that show the surrounding area

Photographs should be uploaded with the application in the grants portal

*If you are unable to upload all your files, you can email them to andrew.arvizu@maryland.gov and we will add them to your application manually.

<u>APPENDIX H: PROPERTY OWNER CONSENT</u>

If your capital project is selected for award and you are not the owner of the property, you will be required to submit a consent letter from the owner that also acknowledges a commitment to conveying a preservation easement or preservation agreement, should it be required by the Maryland Historical Trust. The letter is not required at time of application. If your funding request is approved, instructions for how to submit the letter will be included in your award notification. **Failure to submit the required letter using the required language will result in your project being ineligible for funding.** Using the sample text provided below, create a letter to be signed by the property owner or the authorized officer of the property owner organization.

If you are applying to any of the following MHT grant programs, you must create an **individual letter** for each that you are requesting capital funds from:

- African American Heritage Preservation Program
- Historic Preservation Capital Grant Program
- Maryland Heritage Areas Program

For more information about easements and preservation agreements, see the MHT Easement website.

- Please print the letter on the owner's letterhead (if applicable)
- Please address the letter to the appropriate program contact as listed on the MHT webpage;
- Please include the date of the letter
- Please include the property's physical address, including street number/name, city, and zip code
- Please indicate the grant program for which the letter is intended
- The letter MUST include ALL of the following text:
  - As the owner(s) of the property located at [insert property's physical address including street number/name, city, and zip code], for which [an African American Heritage Preservation Program/a Historic Preservation Capital Grant Program/a Maryland Heritage Areas Program] grant is being sought, I/we confirm my/our willingness to support the project. I/We understand that [a conveyance of a preservation easement/an amendment of an existing preservation easement/a preservation agreement] on the Property is required as a condition of the grant and that, as the Property owner(s), I/we am/are responsible for the legal obligations to maintain the Property that are set out in the easement, preservation agreement, or modification.
- The letter must identify all less-than-fee simple interests (mortgages, leases, mineral rights, reversionary interests, etc.) in the property. Your letter MUST include ONE of the two paragraphs below:
  - **Option 1:** I/we hereby confirm that there are no less-than-fee simple interests (mortgages, leases, mineral rights, reversionary interests, etc.) in the property.
  - **Option 2:** I/we hereby confirm the following less-than-fee simple interests in the property:
    - ➤ Mortgage/Deed of Trust securing a $_____ loan from [INSERT name of bank or lending institution]
    - ➤ Lease agreement with [INSERT name or organization, company, or agency]
- **The letter must be signed by an authorized officer of the property owner organization.**

** SAMPLE LETTER**

November 19, 2025

Dear Program Administrator,

As the owner(s) of the property located at 123 Main St, Anytown, Annapolis MD 21401, for which an African American Heritage Preservation Program grant is being sought, I confirm my willingness to support the project. I understand that a conveyance of a preservation easement on the Property is required as a condition of the grant and that, as the Property owner(s), I am responsible for the legal obligations to maintain the Property that are set out in the easement, preservation agreement, or modification.

I hereby confirm the following less-than-fee simple interests in the property:

- Mortgage/Deed of Trust securing a $5,000 loan from Anytown Bank

Sincerely,

John Hancock

John Hancock
Site Manager
Revolutionary War Museum of Anytown

<u>APPENDIX I: MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES PROJECT REVIEW</u>

Projects proposed on land managed by the Maryland Department of Natural Resource (DNR) are required to be submitted to DNR for review to ensure consistency with the Department's land management and conservation goals.

Project proponents can include lease holders, private companies, utilities, non-profits, colleges and universities, local governments and other State or Federal agencies. The Project Review process is required by DNR Policy 94:06 and it establishes a legal record of activities proposed on State lands.

Maryland DNR Project Review Process:

All grant proposals in DNR-managed land must have written approval from the DNR land unit manager. Once this approval is obtained, the applicant, or project proponent, is required to submit a Project Information Form (PIF) with the required supporting documentation to **mpsprojectreview.dnr@maryland.gov**. Provided that the submitted information is complete, DNR Project Review staff will log the project into our tracking database and distribute it to other units within DNR and the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) for review and comments. If the submission is incomplete, the applicant will be contacted for the missing information, and the review initiated once it is received. After a review period of approximately 30 to 45 days, comments are compiled, and a response will be provided to the applicant by Project Review staff. Complex projects, or those that require other permits such as Wetlands and Waterways, Critical Area, Erosion and Sediment Control and Stormwater Management, or Environmental Health, may take longer to review or require a secondary review as part of the process.

Please note that the DNR Project Review process does not exempt any project or proposal from any applicable local, State or Federal Laws and regulations or permits. Be advised, some projects on State lands will require a legal agreement between the applicant and DNR to permit access and / or use of State land. The Project Review response will provide direction and guidance of all requirements, where applicable.

PIF forms and other documentation can be found at: https://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/project-review.aspx

APPENDIX J: APPLICANT CHECKLIST

The following is a list of criteria considered during the review process. Use this checklist to ensure you address these components before you submit your application.

- ☐ **BASICS**
  - ☐ **Is your project taking place within the boundaries of your heritage area?** If not, you are not eligible to apply to the Maryland Heritage Areas Program.[1] You can check the heritage areas boundaries by consulting with your local heritage area director or by using a Maryland Historical Trust mapping tool called Medusa[2]: https://apps.mht.maryland.gov/medusa/. A tutorial on the use of Medusa is available here: https://bit.ly/HA-Status
  - ☐ **Are you in "Good Standing" with SDAT?** This can be checked here: http://dat.maryland.gov/Pages/default.aspx; you should also ensure that your resident agent and primary address are up to date.
  - ☐ **Have you been in touch with your local heritage area staff to discuss your project?** This is highly encouraged.

- ☐ **CHECK YOUR BUDGET**
  - ☐ **Did you submit your budget on the required Excel Project Budget spreadsheet form**? If not, please re-do the budget on the program's Excel template. Please be sure to submit this form as an Excel document (not a PDF or Word document).
  - ☐ **Does your budget have sufficient detail?** Single-line budgets are discouraged. The budget should include multiple line items, if possible.
  - ☐ **Are all aspects of the project you describe in your application included in the budget?** If not, please include all aspects of the project in the budget.
  - ☐ **Did you upload supporting documentation for your budget?** Examples include a breakdown of costs for budget items like price quotes for materials and services.

- ☐ **MATCH DOCUMENTATION**
  - ☐ **Have you included the required 1-to-1 match in your project budget?** If not, please add that to the project budget. You are not required to list the source of matching funds, but you should if this information is known.
  - ☐ Make sure you are **not using state funds** (unless it is state employee staff time) as your match. This is prohibited.

- ☐ **CAPITAL PROJECTS** (Skip this section if you are applying for a non-capital grant only.)
  - ☐ **Have you included the required photographs** as detailed in Appendix G?
  - ☐ **If the request is for property acquisition, did you include at least one appraisal dated within the last 6 months?** If not, please obtain one, if not both, required appraisals in order for your application to be considered.
  - ☐ **If the Maryland Historical Trust holds an easement on your property, have you begun the process of obtaining easement approval?** Please do so as soon as possible. Receiving a grant award does not mean that you have received approval from MHT to complete the work described in your grant application. You must still complete and submit a Historic Preservation Easement Program Change/Alteration Request Application, which can be found here:

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[1] The majority of your project activities must take place within the boundaries of a heritage area.
[2] Under the "Layers" tab, be sure to check the box for "Other MHT Base Data" and the sub-layer checkbox for "Maryland Heritage Areas" in order to see the heritage area boundaries appear on the map.

https://mht.maryland.gov/Documents/easement/Easement_Change_Alteration_Application_FILLABLE.pdf.

☐ **NON-CAPITAL PROJECTS** (Skip this section if you are applying for a capital grant only.)
    ☐ **Is you project requesting funding for planning, interpretation, or programming activities?**

☐ **SUPPORT DOCUMENTATION**
    ☐ **If the project takes place on DNR property, did you submit an approval letter from DNR (not just the local park or unit)?** If not, please submit an application for approval, as detailed In Appendix I.
    ☐ **If the project is an education project, did you submit a letter from either their local school district, or the Maryland State Department of Education?** If not, please request such a letter.
    ☐ **Have you included and/or requested letters of support?** Letters of support for the grant application are encouraged but are not a required submission. If you are seeking letters from elected officials, partner organizations and/or community members, please plan ahead and allow sufficient advance request time.

APPENDIX K: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Place-Based Experiences: Educational and recreational activities that take place in, or utilize, a historic, cultural, or natural setting to engage participants in learning about the physical environment, local culture, history, or people in a meaningful way.

Heritage: Features belonging to the culture of a particular society, racial, ethnic, religious, or cultural group - such as traditions, languages, built and natural places, food, art, and music - that were created in the past or present and hold historical importance and/or relevance.

Heritage Tourism: When historic, cultural, and natural resources are used to attract visitors and residents to an experience that provides access to places, stories, activities, and artifacts of the past and present that represent Maryland's unique heritage. In doing so, heritage tourism also contributes to local economic prosperity, conservation of resources, and social connections that support thriving communities.

Visitor: People traveling overnight or same-day to a destination in pursuit of place-based experiences related to recreation or personal interest, while making use of local resources and contributing to local economies.

Community Enhancement: When strategic investments and projects improve the quality of life and long-term health of a community including its people, businesses, local jurisdictions, and natural and built environments. Grants from the Maryland Heritage Areas Program support community enhancement through the lens of heritage to include, but not limited to, education, historic preservation, the environment, recreation, and economic impact.

Sustainability: When a community or project aligns people, the environment (built and natural), and economic results in a manner that benefits the larger society and contributes towards its prosperity.