

**Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grants  
Maryland Streams Education Funding Opportunity 2016  
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Applicants**

**How can I find suitable streams for students to study?**

*The Maryland Department of Natural Resources' streams education website <http://dnr2.maryland.gov/Education/Pages/streamed.aspx> has some guidance on finding and choosing a stream site ([http://dnr2.maryland.gov/education/Pages/Find\\_a\\_Stream.aspx](http://dnr2.maryland.gov/education/Pages/Find_a_Stream.aspx)). Before deciding to use the stream, please check conditions in person for safety, access, and suitability.*

**Can students explore their schoolyard instead of a stream?**

*For schools participating through this funding opportunity, an investigative experience in an actual stream is required. Some schools choose to have their students explore watershed-related conditions in their schoolyard as a complementary element of the program (in addition to visiting the stream) and this can be an important part of planning stewardship projects.*

**How can we discuss the stewardship projects in the proposal if students are supposed to plan them as part of the project?**

*Please describe the process that students will undergo to determine an appropriate stewardship project that benefits the stream. We have found that this step requires classroom support from teachers and partners to help students analyze their data to guide their action plan development. The process of turning data into effective action should be broken into pieces to scaffold their learning. So that reviewers can see what you think would be feasible for students to do in the chosen watershed, it is appropriate in the proposal to provide some examples of the kinds of projects they may do.*

**Can we do our teacher training indoors?**

*The focus of this program is engaging students in hands-on, outdoor, investigations of Maryland stream ecosystems. Preparing teachers to conduct these activities with their students is a large part of the program; therefore the training must include considerable time conducting science practices outdoors.*

**Is there a required amount of teacher PD hours?**

*No, however the standard recommended amount of teacher PD is significant in order for educators to absorb new content and feel comfortable conducting these practices on their own with students. More competitive proposals will include a large investment in teacher preparation, but each proposal will be evaluated based on overall programmatic elements.*

**Do we have to have teachers lined up before applying?**

*More competitive proposals will have a firm commitment from science supervisors (and/or other disciplines), administrative support for full teacher involvement, and teachers who are willing and prepared to incorporate stream studies materials into their curricula. In addition, administrative consent for student field experiences should ideally be indicated in letters of support.*

**Can we use our own instructional materials?**

*Yes; however it is required that applicants use the DNR materials (found at [http://dnr2.maryland.gov/Education/Pages/teacher\\_resources.aspx](http://dnr2.maryland.gov/Education/Pages/teacher_resources.aspx)) as the basis for the program content, especially for the stream investigations. Building on these and adding other materials to enhance the program is encouraged.*

**What if we can't get a letter from the school system superintendent in time for the application deadline?**

*Letter(s) of support may be submitted from the school system supervisor(s) for the content area(s) in which this will be taught (science, STEM, social studies, etc.). The letter(s) should state their level of authority and express the school system's strong commitment and readiness to proceed, explaining how the program will be integrated into the curriculum. Further, this should state when a request was submitted for a letter from the Superintendent and when it will be available. The application will not be considered complete until the superintendent's letter is received. With the letter(s) from the content area supervisor(s), the application will be reviewed, but cannot be awarded without the Superintendent's letter.*

**I'm from a school system and really want to participate, but we don't want to manage the funds. Who can we partner with to be the applicant?**

*DNR staff administering the funding opportunity can help to pair school systems and partners, as needed. School systems are encouraged to team up with watershed or other conservation organizations, environmental education providers, colleges, or other entities listed as eligible applicants.*

**My school is not a public school. How can we participate in this opportunity?**

*Independent Schools should work in partnership with others, and are encouraged to apply through a partner entity as the applicant. Programs should be tied to an in-place environmental literacy curriculum, and should demonstrate greater reach in some way, such as involving multiple grade levels within the school, partnering with a number of other Independent schools, and other ideas. As needed, DNR staff administering the funding opportunity can help to identify potential partners that are applying that may consider including your school in their program, along with other schools/ school systems. Schools/ school systems are encouraged to team up with watershed or other conservation organizations, environmental education providers, colleges, or other entities listed as eligible applicants.*

**How can colleges participate?**

*Institutions of higher education (IHEs) are eligible applicants. Some examples of support that IHEs may be able to provide for preK-12 programming include engaging higher ed faculty and students with teacher pre-service preparation in environmental literacy through modeling stream studies and pedagogy in science practices; providing in-service opportunities for educators in science/environmental science content areas such as stream ecology or restoration; serving as mentors or technical experts streamside with K-12 students; and more.*

**Is it better to work with more schools in a single county or with more than one county?**

*Both situations have merit. Expanding to more students is a main goal, yet strong justification can be made for smaller programs depending on local needs. A solid, sustainable program that is truly systemic in a county with fewer schools or students may score better than a weaker proposal to serve a large school system. Proposals will be evaluated individually based on all aspects, and compared to others among the applicant pool. A strong proposal will demonstrate significant yet achievable reach in terms of quantity, without sacrificing quality.*

**Can we plan to conduct a teacher workshop in July?**

*Applicants are free to set a date and recruit teachers in advance, but should make it clear that it is "contingent upon funding." The funding cannot begin before July 1, 2016; and the funded work cannot begin (i.e., you can't be reimbursed out of the award for work that begins) before the contract*

*agreement is approved and executed. The contract process may take several weeks to complete after the awards are announced. Every effort will be made to accommodate start dates as early as possible after July 1, but there are no guarantees. Therefore, it is recommended that you plan for a workshop date that is later in the summer, or know that it may need to be changed if the award is not in place (or should your proposal not be selected for an award). If you start work and incur expenses prior to the signed, executed contract agreement being in place, those expenses cannot be reimbursed, so those would be your costs. Holding teacher workshops during the school year is another option that has been done with success.*

**Will match need to be reported?**

*Yes. While match is not required, it is strongly encouraged for a more competitive application. Match proposed will become part of the agreement and must be met over the life of the grant. It must be documented in detail with each quarterly report and invoice, in the same manner as required for all expenses reimbursed by award funds. Documentation must include, for example, receipts for purchases, invoices and proof of payment for subcontracts, staff time tracking (such as time cards or other payroll verification) and proof of payment, etc. – all of which apply to match as well as to direct award expenses. Reminder: All awards are on a reimbursable basis. Recipients must cover expenses up front and be reimbursed – with proper documentation of direct expenses and match – quarterly. More guidelines on budget requirements are spelled out in the full funding solicitation and accompanying materials.*