



## General Guidelines and Instructions for the FY 2014 Maryland Agricultural Education & Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF)

**O**verview: The Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF), administered by the Rural Maryland Council, provides grants to rural-serving nonprofit organizations that promote statewide and regional planning, economic and community development, and agricultural and forestry education. Also eligible are rural community colleges that support small and agricultural businesses through enhanced training and technical assistance. MAERDAF's goal is to increase the overall capacity of rural-serving nonprofit organizations and community colleges to meet a multitude of rural development challenges and to help them establish new public/private partnerships for leveraging non-state sources of funding. For more background, see: [www.rural.state.md.us/News/MAERDAF.html](http://www.rural.state.md.us/News/MAERDAF.html)

**Application Deadline: July 15, 2013.** Awards will be announced in late August.

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### Fact Sheet and Guidelines for FY 2014 MAERDAF Grant Applications

- **Eligible applicants** must be a 501(c)(3) IRS tax designation or similar and serve a regional or statewide rural constituency. Trade associations are not eligible. The applicant does not have to be located in a rural area or in the area it serves.
- **Eligible projects** must serve **more than one** rural county and be completed between August 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014.
- **Rural counties are:** Allegany, Calvert, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Frederick, Garrett, Harford, Kent, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, Washington, Wicomico and Worcester.
- **The historic maximum grant amount** is \$25,000. The average grant over the life of the program is about \$18,000.
- **Priority is given** to applicants that have secured matching funds from non-state sources; however matching funds are not required. Federal funds are considered matching funds.
- **Only very minor changes in scope** are allowed after a grant has been awarded. Some project timelines can also be modified.
- **Unused grant funds must be returned** to the Rural Maryland Council no later than July 15, 2014.
- **Past and current grantees are eligible** for a FY 2014 grant **if** they have met all the requirements of their previous grant agreements, including reporting deadlines.
- **The MAERDAF Grant Review Board** is comprised of representatives appointed by six state agencies. Its decisions are final. Those agencies are: the Rural Maryland Council, the Maryland Dept. of Agriculture, Dept. of Business & Economic Development, Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene, Dept. of Housing & Community Development, and Dept. of Natural Resources.
- **All applicants will be notified** of the status of their application no later than August 19, 2013.

## **How to Submit Your Application Packages**

- **A complete MAERDAF Application includes:**
  - (1) A completed application form (Download it from: [www.rural.state.md.us](http://www.rural.state.md.us))
  - (2) A project narrative no more than 5 pages long; and
  - (3) Appendix Attachments, A-E.
  
- **Applications will only be accepted by email this year.** Include all required items in ONE Word or PDF file and be sure we receive it by midnight on July 15, 2013. Email your application to: [rmc.mda@maryland.gov](mailto:rmc.mda@maryland.gov).
  
- **Don't let your application be declared ineligible on a technicality:**
  - Applications received after the deadline are *not* acceptable and will be deemed ineligible.
  - Incomplete or illegible applications will be deemed ineligible. Double check your materials to ensure all attachments are included, all information is clearly written, all budget numbers add up; and all scans are legible.

If you have any questions, please contact **RMC Executive Director Charlotte Davis** at: [charlotte.davis@maryland.gov](mailto:charlotte.davis@maryland.gov) or 410-841-5774.

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*Thank you for applying.*