



FY 2018 Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) Application Instructions

Overview: The Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF), administered by the Rural Maryland Council (RMC), 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 Fiscal Year 2018, the RMC is particularly interested in proposals that address the following: Agriculture, Energy, Rural Broadband, Healthcare, Youth Engagement and Workforce/Economic Development.** Regardless, the Grant Review Board will give full consideration to any application that is submitted.

For more background, see: http://rural.maryland.gov/maerdaf_rmpif/

Important Dates:

- Friday, June 9, 2017 - Call for Proposal abstracts must be submitted electronically by 11:59pm.
- Tuesday, June 20, 2017 - Notification of decision on all submissions sent via e-mail; Accepted applicants notified to submit a full application.
- Monday, July 17, 2017 - Full application due to RMC by 11:59pm.
- Monday August 7, 2017 – MAERDAF Grant Recipients announced.

Fact Sheet and Guidelines for FY 2018 MAERDAF Grant Applicants

- **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, 2017 and June 30, 2018.
- **ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS** must be in “Good Standing” with the State of Maryland. To check your status, go to <http://sdat.resiusa.org/UCC-Charter/Pages/CharterSearch/default.aspx>.
- **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 MAXIMUM GRANT AMOUNT** IS \$30,000. 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 31, 2018.
- **PAST AND CURRENT GRANTEES ARE ELIGIBLE** for a FY 2018 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 Department of Agriculture, the Department of Business & Economic Development, the Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, the Department of Housing & Community Development, and Department of Natural Resources.

Application Process

❖ **Phase 1: Call for Abstract Proposals – Due June 9, 2017, 11:59pm**

- (1) The online form is available here: <https://ruralmaryland.typeform.com/to/qsWLE2>
- (2) The Application cannot be saved and completed later. Please prepare your information prior to starting the form. The following information is requested:
 - a. Organization Name, tax designation status, Federal Tax Identification Number, Mission Statement
 - b. Applicant Point of Contact Information, Project Point of Contact Information, Applicant and Project Organization Federal Tax Identification Number, tax designation status, website link.
 - c. Indication if organization is a past MAERDAF grantee, years if applicable.
 - d. Scope of Work (**Maximum of 750 words**)
 - i. Overall need to be addressed;
 - ii. How MAERDAF funding will be used to meet that need;
 - iii. Number of individuals, businesses, communities, etc., served by MAERDAF grant;
 - iv. Number of new partnerships that will be formed as a result of the grant.
 - e. Project Goals (**Maximum of 750 words**)
 - i. Describe what will be achieved as a result of this grant and how you intend to measure your success. Goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound.

❖ **Submitted Proposals will be notified June 20, 2017 of acceptance status. An invitation to submit a full application and materials will be provided to accepted proposal applicants.**

❖ **Don't let your proposal be declared ineligible on a technicality:**

- Proposals received after the deadline will not be accepted and will be deemed ineligible.
- Proposals must be submitted electronically to be received.
- Email notifications that the form has been received will be submitted to Applicant Point of Contact (POC) email addresses, provided on the form, upon submission.

If you have any questions, please contact **Charlotte Davis, Executive Director of the Rural Maryland Council** at: charlotte.davis@maryland.gov or (410) 841-5774.

Thank you for applying.