



Fiscal Year 2022: Grant Information Session



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OUR MISSION is to bring together citizens, community-based organizations, federal, state, county and municipal government officials as well as representatives of the for-profit and nonprofit sectors to collectively address the needs of rural Maryland.

OUR VISION is a future where all of Rural Maryland is prosperous with thriving resources, vibrant economies, and healthy connected communities

OUR GOALS

- Encourage healthy, connected communities throughout Rural Maryland through convening of stakeholders, education, public relations and advocacy
- Support the development and growth of vibrant economies in Rural Maryland
- Foster stewardship of Maryland's natural resources
- Maximize RMC outreach, resources and mission through financial and organizational development.



Background

- In 1994, the Rural Maryland Council was initiated by the Governor as the Maryland Rural Development Council (Executive Order 01.01.1994.14) and codified by statute in 1995 (Economic Development Article, Sec. 13-401)
 - Independent State Agency housed under the Maryland Department of Agriculture.
 - Funded under the State's Operating Budget
 - Council (Operating) funded at \$500,000
 - Grant programs funded at approximately \$6,000,000
 - Operates under the direction of a 40-member Executive Board in a nonpartisan and nondiscriminatory manner.
 - The Council serves as the State's federally designated rural development council and functions as the voice of rural Maryland.
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Why We Work

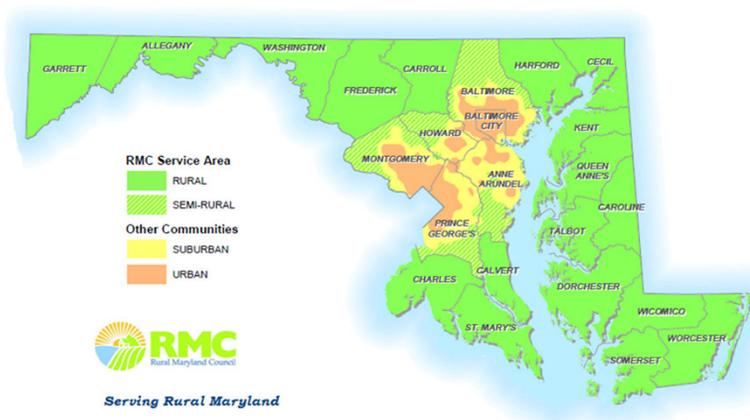
Challenges in Rural Maryland:

- Highest unemployment rates in the State
- Highest rates of poverty in the State
- Lack of access to transportation
- service

Where We Work

Service Territory

State statute designates the following 18 counties as rural, Allegany, Calvert, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Frederick, Garrett, Harford, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, St. Mary's, Talbot, Washington, Wicomico, and Worcester.



How We Work

Education

- Neutral Convener-Issue Focused (Rural Summit, Roundtables, Forums)
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Legislation

- Advocate & Educate-policy development, community engagement-connecting people to their government.
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Grant Programs

- Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF)
- Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF)

Legislative Highlights

EVENTS HELD

Virtual Legislative Lunch, 1/29
Virtual Rural Maryland Day 2/11
In-person *Grab and Go* lunch for Maryland Day, 3/25

RURAL CAUCUS MEETINGS

The Rural Caucus met on February 11th and March 11th to discuss issues facing Maryland's Rural Communities and Residents

LEGISLATIVE MEETINGS

The Legislative Committee met this session to discuss bills, testimonies and other legislative matters throughout the session

POSITION STATEMENTS

Position statements submitted to the legislators in support of bills

BILLS MONITORED

Total bills monitored throughout the legislative session

MAERDAF Grant Program: Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund



- Created in 2000 to provide financial assistance to rural-serving nonprofit organizations that promote statewide and regional planning, economic and community development and agricultural and forestry education efforts.

- Between 2000 and 2020, MAERDAF awarded over \$10 million in grants rural-serving nonprofit organizations.

- For Fiscal Year 2021, the RMC received 108 MAERDAF applications requesting a total of \$3,937,065 in funding. A total of \$859,543 was awarded to 39 organizations.

- MAERDAF Priority Areas-we will accept any application and we will consider. In

Agriculture & Forestry	Energy	Rural Broadband	Youth Engagement	Community & Economic Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Education • Regional Food System Development • Forest Industry Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined Heat Power • Energy Efficiency • Biomass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including Rural Municipal Broadband Expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Development • Workforce Development

MAERDAF Grant Program: Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund

Eligible Applicants: 501(c)3 Nonprofit Organizations, Regional Councils and Community Colleges

Purpose: 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

- **Must serve 2 or more rural counties or statewide**
- **When:** Projects must be completed between August 1st– June 30th
- **Preference:** Projects that have an equal or greater match.
- **Project must be completed in 1 year.**
- **Maximum Grant Amount:** \$40,000.
- **FY2022 Allotted Funds:** \$618,145

MAERDAF Grant Program: Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund

Eligible Expenditures:

- MAERDAF does not generally fund ongoing staff positions due to sustainability. Grant funds may be used to fund staff time associated with completion of the proposed project only.
- Construction and renovation of buildings are eligible expenses. Acquisition of land is not. Please include quotes of expenditures and be shovel-ready.
- The purchase or rental of vehicles are eligible expenses.
- Meals are allowable if the costs are reasonable, and a justification is provided that such activity maintains the continuity of the meeting and to do otherwise will impose arduous conditions on the meeting participants.
- Indirect administrative costs are capped at 10%

Ineligible Expenditures:

- MAERDAF does not generally fund staff salary or wages for employee positions.
- Contributions, donations or subsequent subawards to third parties are ineligible expenses. Gift cards are also ineligible.
- Organized fundraising including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts or bequests, or similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions regardless of the purpose for which the funds will be used are ineligible. Advocacy and lobbying activities are also ineligible.

MAERDAF Grant Projects



RMPIF Grant Program-Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund



- Authorized by the Maryland General Assembly in 2006.
- Thanks to Governor Hogan, the RMPIF grant program received funding for the first time in FY2017 for \$2 million.
- **Primary goal** is to provide targeted investments to various regional, nonprofit and educational entities to bring Rural Maryland's standards of living up to statewide averages.
- Priority Areas: Regional Councils, Entrepreneurship Development, Infrastructure and Health Care.
- For Fiscal Year 2021, the RMC received 70 RMPIF applications requesting a total of \$9,986,620 in funding. A total of \$4,526,705 was awarded to 33 organizations.
- **FY2022 Allotted Funds: \$6,000,000**



RMPIF Guidelines – Entrepreneurship Development



- **Eligible Applicants:** Applicants must be local government, institute of higher education, regional council, 501(c)(3) IRS tax designation or similar and serve a regional or statewide rural constituency. Community Colleges, Career Technology Centers, Regional Councils and Libraries are eligible applicants.
- **Eligible Projects:** Proposals should be regional (two or more counties) or intergovernmental (meaning two units of government).
- **Purpose:** to promote entrepreneurship and assist efforts that provide training and technical assistance to the entrepreneurs who can help build prosperous and sustainable rural communities by creating jobs, raising incomes, creating wealth and improving quality of life.
- **Match Required:**
 - Must secure a minimum 1:3 or 25% cash match funds from non-state sources.
 - Federal funds are considered matching cash funds.
- **When:** Projects must be completed between August 1, 2021– June 30, 2022
- **Grant Amounts:** No maximum grant amount; \$1,000,000 allotted funds, Grant Review Board will optimally fund 6 entrepreneurial projects.

RMPIF Guideline- Infrastructure



- **Eligible Applicants:** Applicants must be local government, of higher education, regional council, 501(c)(3) IRS tax designation or similar and serve a regional or rural Community Colleges, Career Technology Centers, Regional Councils and Libraries are eligible applicants.
- **Eligible Projects:** Proposals must be intergovernmental (meaning two units of government).
- **Purpose:** to support projects that involve two or more units of government and are related to broadband, water, wastewater, transportation, workforce housing, and commercial/industrial facilities **up to 25% of the total project costs**. Workforce housing is defined as housing targeted to 80 to 120% of median income of the community in which employees work.
- **When:** Projects must be completed between August 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022
- **Match Required:**
 - **Must have secured over 75% matching funds from non-state sources.**
 - **A match is required for infrastructure projects.**
 - Federal funds are considered matching cash funds.
- **Grant Amounts:** No maximum grant amount; \$1,000,000 allotted funds, Grant Review Board will optimally fund 4 infrastructure projects.

RMPIF Guidelines – Health Care

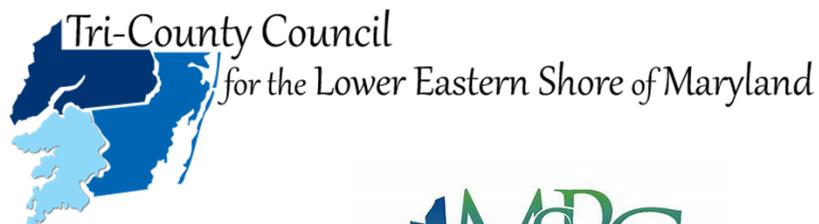


- **Eligible Applicants:** Applicants must be local government, institute of higher education, regional council, 501(c)(3) IRS tax designation or similar and serve a regional or statewide rural constituency. Eligible applicants include federally qualified health centers, area health education centers, local health clinics and other rural-serving health organizations.
- **Eligible Projects:** Proposals should be regional (two or more counties) or intergovernmental (meaning two units of government).
- **When:** Projects must be completed between August 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022
- **Grant Amounts:** No maximum grant amount; \$1,000,000 allotted funds, Grant Review Board will optimally fund up to 6 to 10 health care projects.
- **Match Required:**
 - Applicants must secure a minimum 1:1 or 50% cash match funds from non-state sources.
 - Federal funds are considered matching cash funds.

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RMPIF Guidelines – Rural Regional Planning & Development Councils

- **Eligible Applicants:** Tri-County Council of Western Maryland, Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland, Upper Shore Regional Council, Mid-Shore Regional Council, Tri-County Council of the Lower Eastern Shore, and multicounty efforts serving rural communities in areas not served by the regional councils.
- **Purpose:** to provide grants specifically for projects and activities of the five regional planning and development councils and for other multi-county rural improvement efforts.
- **When:** Projects must be completed between August 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022
- **Grant Amounts:** Each regional council is eligible to receive up to \$400,000 in FY2022 for rural regional planning and development assistance, as well as applications received from a multi-county effort (Frederick, Carroll, Harford) in areas not served by an existing regional council.



RMPIF Grant Program-Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund

Eligible Expenditures:

- Salaries and Wages are allowable expenses. It is strongly encouraged to include a statement on sustainability for future years.
- Construction and renovation of buildings are eligible expenses. Acquisition of land is not. Permitting costs are eligible expenses. Please include quotes of expenditures.
- The purchase or rental of vehicles is an eligible expense. The purchase of equipment is an eligible expense.
- Indirect administrative costs are capped at 10%.

Ineligible Expenditures:

- Contributions, donations or subsequent subawards to third parties are ineligible expenses. Gift cards are also ineligible.
- Organized fundraising including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts or bequests, or similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions regardless of the purpose for which the funds will be used are ineligible. Advocacy and lobbying activities are also ineligible.
- RMPIF funds are not to supplant existing funding from other sources.

RMPIF Grant Projects



College of Southern Maryland,
Velocity Center \$274,000



**Asian American
Center of Frederick**
Enhance. Empower. Enrich



Sudlersville
Volunteer Fire
Company - \$48,655
for construction of
public laundromat
facility.



Howard County Economic Development Authority - \$35,137
for their *National Automated Food Traceability and Safety*
project.

Grant Decisions

- Grant award determinations for both programs are made by the independent MAERDAF Grant Review Board set by law and consisting of the Secretaries (or their designee) of:
 - Department of Agriculture
 - Department of Commerce
 - Department of Health
 - Department of Housing and Community Development
 - Department of Natural Resources
 - Rural Maryland Council Chair (or a designee)
- *Decisions by the MAERDAF Grant Review Board are final and binding*

Eligible Entities

- Applicants must be in “Good Standing” with the State of Maryland. Go to <https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch> to find if your organization is in good standing with the State of Maryland.
- We do not require a copy of the certificate; it is sufficient to provide a screen shot and attach it with your application **AS LONG AS IT SHOWS WHETHER THE ENTITY IS CURRENTLY IN GOOD STANDING.**
- An explanation for an entity not in good standing must be included with the application otherwise, the application will be rejected.
- Include a recent Form 990 (where applicable)

Ranking Criteria

- Basic Criteria: Applicant meets all basic eligibility requirements – it serves a regional (multi-county) or statewide rural constituency (or is a community college) and holds an appropriate IRS tax designation or is inter-governmental (meaning two units of government).
- Applicant has clearly identified a well substantiated need and developed a **Scope of Work** that clearly describes specific project activities and how the grant will be used. Specific goals and measurable objectives were clearly stated and appear to be achievable.
- Proposal will significantly impact the quality of living in rural Maryland. Proposal demonstrates substantial value and lasting impact by providing information which includes relevant background research, opportunities for replication, and a statement of impact. **(RMPIF Only)**
- Goals are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound.
- Mission Statement must be included and lend itself to the activities and goals addressed in the proposal.

Ranking Criteria (Continued)

- The applicant has equal matching funds from non-state sources. If there are no matching funds, applicant seems likely to leverage additional financial resources to match the grant. Priority is given to applicants with in-kind and funding matches.
- Other organizations, businesses, agencies and/or other community-based entities have expressed strong support for the organization's work and planned grant activities. Letters of support and other supportive materials (newspapers articles, etc.) were included.
- Project/proposal falls under one or more of the following priorities:
(MAERDAF Only)

Agriculture & Forestry	Energy	Rural Broadband	Youth Engagement	Community & Economic Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Education • Regional Food System Development • Forest Industry Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined Heat Power • Energy Efficiency • Biomass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including Rural Municipal Broadband Expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Development • Workforce Development

Grantee Award Requirements

- Execute grant agreements
- Recordkeeping
 - Interim Report - Due January 28, 2022
 - Final Report - Due July 15, 2022
 - Evidence of Expenditures
 - Acknowledgement of Award and RMC
 - Site Visits
 - Share project photographs
- Managing For Results: RMC is required to submit outcomes to show the direct connection between the grants funded by RMC and the improvement in quality of life within rural communities.
 - Matching Funds Secured
 - # of Jobs Created or Retained
 - # of Loans Made
 - # of Individuals Trained, Served or Reached
 - # of Instructional Hours Delivered
 - # of Services Delivered
 - # of Research Tools Created
 - Amount of Funds Invested in Capital Items

Sample grant agreements and reporting guidelines can be found at rural.maryland.gov

Changes and Unused Funds

- Decisions by the Grant Review Board are *final and binding**.
- *Exception: Minor changes in the scope of work and project timeline may be modified and are dependent on review and approval by RMC staff.
- Unused grant funds must be returned to the Rural Maryland Council no later than July 15, 2022.

Outputs/Outcomes/Impact

Healthcare

- Patient engagement – number of services, outreach calls, intakes, assessments
- Transportation provided to #
- # new positions – how many people did they serve?
- Tech – new equipment purchased, number of people trained to use it, number of patients engaged with it
- Non-tech equipment – hoists, vehicles,
- # of investments in capacity – accreditation, electronic health records, telemedicine equipment
- Education – issues, number of people trained/train the trainers/total numbers educated
- Community Clinics – how many, in how many locations, # and type of services offered there, track hospital readmissions?

Economic Development

- Number of new jobs created
 - Number of new businesses created
 - Number of new products created
 - Number of new incubators created
 - Innovation (F-3 Accelerator programs)
 - Supporting new industries (aquaculture)
 - Dollar amount of investments in capital and equipment
 - Entrepreneurship – introduce people to it, train people to do it - #s
 - Number and types of outreach and recruitment – job fairs, etc.
 - Number and amounts of loans made
 - Workforce training - # sessions, participants
 - Leadership development - #s participated
 - New engagement strategies that increase tourism (geocache trail)
-

Education

- Number of education events, new courses created
 - Number of people trained
 - Investments in capital items such as vehicles to improve access and equipment such as museum equipment and buildings, tractor with front-end loader, off-road utility vehicle and trailer, multi-purpose building, wet lab, high tunnel, mobile career center, video equipment, job centers
 - Create new positions for volunteer coordinator, fellowship
 - Range of participants – adults, professions, youth, incarcerated people, ag education projects, veterans, non-native speakers, entrepreneurs, warehouse employees.
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Infrastructure

- Pounds of nutrients reduced that enter regional waterways (connect to WIP and TMDL goals)
- # of households connected to the internet, and # of communities who have created system engineering and timeline to connect rural communities to broadband
- \$ Capital investment in public facilities (mental health centers, laundromats, WW treatment, mapping of utilities, museums)
- \$ Capital investment in transportation technology as well as vehicles for populations needing access and/or emergency vehicles

Important Grant Dates

- Grant Process Opened: Monday, April 26th
 - Phase 1: Letter of Intent (LOI) Deadline: Monday, May 21st
 - Phase 2: Full Application Due: Friday, July 16th
 - Awards Announced the week of August 23rd
-

Awards

- Grant agreements completed in September
- Grant award is forward funded
- 30 day turn around for check disbursement
- Award Checks mailed September/October 2021

What's New in RMC's FY22 Grant Cycle

- *Collaborator Tool* in Grant Portal
 - Lowered MAERDAF grant award amount to \$40,000
 - New MAERDAF planning priorities
 - Encouraging health care related applicants to apply to RMPIF
 - Grant Writing Workshop, April 30th from 11 to 12pm
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Grant Tips to Remember

Two Phase Grant Process

Phase 1: Letter of Intent, a simple 500-word or less narrative (due May 21st)

Phase 2: Full Application, 1500-word narrative (Invite Only, due July 16th)

- Provide a clear and concise scope of work- i.e. what is the goal of my project and what do I hope to achieve.
- **Actions – Strategies – Outcomes Timelines**
- Write to someone who doesn't understand your industry nuanced language.
- A good mix of supportive materials.
- Write the Letter of Intent and full application narrative in Microsoft word-this program will count your characters and words for you and then copy/paste it into the grant portal.
- Register to attend RMC's Grant Writing workshop on Friday, April 30th at 11AM
- More grant writing tips and resources can be found on the Governor's Grants Office website: [_____](#)

Letter of Intent Questions

Two Parts

1. Organization Information

- Provide organization's mission statement
- Is your organization a 5019(c)3
- Has your organization received grant funding from RMC in the past 5 years?
- What is the legislative district of your organization (list of districts provided)

2. Project Information

- Project Name
- Project Point Contact Name, Title, Email
- Fiscal Point Contact Name, Title, Email & Address
- Amount Requested
- Total Match
- Total Project Budget
- Project Start Date
- Project End Date
- Focus Area
- Project Narrative-Provide a clear & concise description of the proposed project.
- Project Goals & Anticipated Outcomes
- Partnerships
- Rural Geographic Area Served
- Region Served
- Population Served

How to Apply



- **Access the guidelines, criteria, and the online grantee portal at:**

<https://rural.maryland.gov/grant-opportunities/>

- To Start, you will need to ensure you have an account in the Grantee Portal. Please have the following information on hand to create your organization's account:
 - An email address that will act as your username
 - Your contact information
 - Your organizations or fiscal sponsor's information, including the EIN/Tax ID number
 - Your organization's website URL
 - Your organization's Executive Officer's contact information
- Please retain a record of your login information as you will need it in the future to access your in-progress applications and your online application history. Applications can be accessed only via the account in which they were started.



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