ALLIANCE FOR THE CHESAPEAKE BAY

COMMUNITY GREEN ACCESS MINI-GRANT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

JUNE 1, 2024

CGA CONTACT:

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PROGRAM SUMMARY

Through the Community Green Access (CGA) mini-grants program, the [Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay](#) offers financial and technical support to local groups to support efforts in connecting their local community members to nature. *Register for [Office Hours](#) or [apply](#) today!*

PROGRAM THEMES & BENEFITS

Theme 1:
Community Engagement and Outreach

Theme 2:
Project Planning or Implementation

Theme 3:
Organization Technical Assistance

All supported projects will focus on getting people involved in environmental activities and connectivity to green spaces.

By participating in the CGA mini-grant, awardees will further be provided with the resources to help build their long-term capacity for environmental stewardship and project support in the form of online tools, project technical assistance, and more.

ELIGIBILITY

→ 501(c)(3)'s, tribal organizations, or community based organizations with fiscal agents with 501(c)(3) status
→ Organizations led by and/or or based in overburdened or marginalized communities in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, and are directly engaging said community members through the proposed project
→ Organizations with an annual operating budget under $1,00,000
→ Application maximum budget of $20,000
→ GAAP audit (where a GAAP audit is not available, your organization will be asked to complete a Finance and Controls Questionnaire upon conditional award notification)

TIMELINE

Application Period Opens	Application Period Closes	Award Notifications	Grant Period Begins	Grant Period Ends
Jun. 1, 2024	Sep. 1, 2024	Oct. 1, 2024	Oct. 14, 2024	Oct. 31, 2025

The Alliance: The [Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay](#) engages communities, companies, and conservationists to build a more resilient landscape and foster a deeper commitment to improving our communities, lands, and waters in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. These restoration efforts must be inclusive of the needs and perspectives of all members of our diverse communities. In 2023, the Alliance unveiled a Strategic Plan outlining goals to build the capacity of our partner organizations and connect more people to the environment. This mini-grant will directly support these goals. With over 52 years of experience cultivating community partnerships and administering results-oriented grants, we are excited to apply our knowledge to this exciting next step into the funder space.

Furthermore, the Alliance continues to conscientiously embed principles of equity and inclusion into our organization policies, strategies, and program delivery. While we recognize that the Alliance does not have all the answers, we are able to offer our resources, skills, and network of partnerships to community-based organizations through the CGA Mini-Grant, with the intention that these tools be leveraged and impactful at the local level, ultimately leading to sustained environmental stewardship in places of greatest need across the watershed.

Community Green Access Mini-Grant Program: [The Mini-Grant](#) supports organizations that connect their local communities to the environment. The mini-grant program structure provides 90% of funds upfront and streamlined reporting in the form of one-on-one Alliance meetings.

This program aims to increase environmental access for community members in historically underserved areas of the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

GOALS & THEMES

Theme 1: Community Engagement and Outreach
Examples Include:

- **Trash Cleanups:** Community volunteers gather to learn about their local waterways and pick up trash from their streams or public spaces, thereby reducing pollution in their community.
- **Environmental Education Workshops:** Organizing workshops and seminars in schools or community centers to educate residents about local environmental issues, conservation practices, and sustainable living.
- **Youth Environmental Leadership Program:** Creating a leadership program for youth to engage them in environmental advocacy, leadership development, and community service projects.

Theme 2: Project Planning or Implementation
Examples Include:

- **Community Garden, tree planting, or other greening initiatives:** Offering a greening initiative to improve environmental health, promote access to fresh produce, grow community engagement, and/or environmental education.
- **Environmental Justice Mapping Project:** Collaborating with community members to develop a map highlighting environmental hazards, green spaces, and community resources to support informed decision-making.
- **Matching funds:** Project implementation funds to further match or support established funds for ongoing activities that increase environmental access.

Theme 3: Organization Technical Assistance
Examples Include:

- **Enhanced Volunteer Practices:** Conducting a community assessment, program overhaul, or practice implementation that better promotes inclusivity and access to the environment within your volunteer programs
- **Collaborative Community Partnership:** Activities that build community empowerment, decision making, or trust to implement environmental projects locally.
- **Strategic Planning:** Offering stipends to community members to take part in defining a strategy or direction, and making decisions on allocating resources to attain strategic goals.

Just about any other project idea you have that builds further connection between community members and the environment.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- One Application per organization
- If applying with a fiscal sponsor, Letter of Support from sponsor
- Projects must lead to measurable engagement numbers (number of community members engaged in environmental activities)

Funding Maximum of $20,000

CGA Timeline

APPLICATION AND AWARD TIMELINE

Milestone	Deadline	Access Links
Application Period	June 1, 2024 - Sept 1, 2024 11:59pm	Apply Online Here
CGA Office Hours	June 10, 2024 - August 23, 2024	Sign up Here
Award Notification	October 1, 2024	Via email
Programming Period	Oct. 14, 2024 - Oct. 31, 2025	

Award Notice: The awarded applicants will be contacted for conditional award approval. At that time, the Alliance may request additional administrative documents and/or additional project information. Once award conditions are met, the Alliance will share the CGA award agreement to be reviewed and signed by the awardee and the Alliance.

Questions?
Have any questions about the CGA Mini-Grant? Sign up for a 30min office hours visit or email your questions to Erin O'Grady, at eogrady@allianceforthebay.org. Submitted questions and corresponding answers will be uploaded to the resources section of our website through August 23rd.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Organization Background Information
- Organization name
- EIN number (Applicant or fiscal agent)
- Contact information
- Organization website (if available)

Project Information
- Project Theme(s)
- Project Name
- Project Location by city, state
- Project Description (150 word max)

Narrative Responses
- **Q1 Organization:** Provide an introduction of your organization. (150 word max)
- **Q2 Community:** Describe the community group or individuals that will directly benefit from this project. (150 word max)
  - 2b: Provide the URL link to the township/address CEJST page: https://shorturl.at/vKLUZ
- **Q3 Project Description:** Describe the project background and context. (150 word max)
- **Q4 Project Goal:** What is your project idea and goal/intended end result? (150 word max)
  - 4b: How many community members do you plan to engage?
- **Q5 Project Budget:** How will the funding dollars be spent? (150 word max)
- **Q6 Other:** (Optional) Provide any additional information for consideration of your CGA application. (150 word max)

Attachments: (If applying via fiscal sponsor) Fiscal Sponsor Letter of Support or MOU

Deliverables: The Alliance will request awarded applicants to report on the number of community members who actively engage or participate in any CGA funded activities. Additional metrics may be requested based on the activities listed in the grant proposal.

Click Here to Learn More and Apply!

CGA Contact: Erin O'Grady at eogrady@allianceforthebay.org

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EVALUATION EXPECTATIONS

Evaluation Process

Applications will be evaluated on their submitted narrative responses and budget requests by a review panel. The review panel is made up of staff with ranging capacity building experience and title level. Review panel members will score each application individually, evaluating based on the considerations below. The review panel will meet to discuss and review the combined scores and top candidates. A minimum of 5 applications will be awarded.

Q1 Organization: The organization is led by and/or based in an overburdened or marginalized community.

Q2 Community: The community group directly benefiting from the project is recognized as overburdened or marginalized. Include CEJST link.

> Overburdened is used to describe the minority, low-income, tribal, and indigenous populations or communities in the United States that potentially experience disproportionate environmental harms and risks due to exposures or cumulative impacts or greater vulnerability to environmental hazards (EPA). Marginalization is often an outcome of exclusion/inclusion of certain groups in developmental activities (Bose, 2017). In addition, the Alliance leans on the CEJST tool, which recognizes communities in census tract that are (1) at or above the threshold for one or more environmental or climate burden and (2) at or above the threshold for an associated socioeconomic burden (CEJST).

Q3 Project Concept:
- The project concept is clearly communicated.
- The project concept directly engages community members in the outdoors.
- The project concept is relevant to community needs.

Q4 Project Goal:
- The goal is achievable
- The goal is inclusive of community needs or interests.
- There is a measurable impact (# of community members engaged).

Q5 Project Budget: There is a strategic or feasible spending plan

Grantee Networking & Support

All awardees will be invited to participate in networking and technical support sessions as a benefit of this funding program. We hope grantees will be able to use this space to leverage their collective resources for mutual skill building or growth in grant writing, project management, partner coalitions, leveraging technical resources, and more!

Check-Ins: Awardees will participate in a kick off meeting, mid-point check in, and close out meeting with the Alliance. Each meeting will be virtual and act as a two-way feedback space for both the Alliance and grantee to reflect on the program progress, technical or support needs, and any other expectations.

Networking & Technical Support (optional): Awardees can participate in two optional, virtual group networking sessions with fellow awardees. Sessions will be facilitated by the Alliance but solely attended by awardees to learn more about each other's projects, share resources, and offer peer-to-peer support and feedback. Awardees may also opt in to virtual one-on-one technical support sessions with the Alliance based on topics of their interest.

Networking & Support Timeline

Qtr	Event	Details
Q1	Kick off Meeting	Review Project Activities & Administer pre survey Discuss technical support needs — Payment 1 (90%) to be received within 30 days
Q1	Networking Session (optional)	Peer to peer discussion
Q2	Technical Support (optional)	Based on topic chosen in kick off meeting
Q3	Mid-point check in	Discuss project activity progress Discuss additional technical support needs
Q3	Networking Session (optional)	Peer to peer discussion
Q4	Technical Support (optional)	Based on topic chosen in kick off or mid-point meeting
Q4	Close out Check in	Review Final Deliverables & Discuss future partnership opportunities Administer post survey & collect testimonial — Payment 2 (10%) to be received within 30 days