



Subject: Request for Proposals: Clean Water Act §319(h) Grant Funding FY2027

Dear Watershed Partner:

The time of the year has come for MDE to release our Clean Water Act §319(h) Grant Funding - Request for Proposals (RFP) for the upcoming FY2027. For all those who have ongoing projects under §319(h) funding, we thank you for your continued participation! We also encourage others to submit their own proposals and existing partners to collaborate with other organizations in your area to solicit §319(h) funding for restoration practices.

Attached is the “Solicitation for Project Proposals,” explaining in greater detail actions you must take to apply for consideration for §319(h) funding. This is a reimbursement style grant which requires funding to be produced by the recipient prior to receiving grant money. The deadline for submission of proposals is **September 30, 2026**. Awarded funds will be made available after October 1, 2027, pending receipt of the grant award from the federal sponsor of this grant, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA).

To maintain transparency, the Maryland §319(h) Grant has not experienced any issues with reimbursement of funds or a pause in programmatic activities to date. Maryland’s FY2027 §319(h) grant is dependent on the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2027 budget, which has not been finalized by Congress as of today, July 1, 2026. At this time we are being instructed by the US EPA to operate business as usual. As such, we are moving forward with releasing this RFP for projects that may be funded with FY2027 funds. We will be sure to notify you of any changes if they occur.

Additional information about eligibility and other prerequisites can be found in the attachment and on [Maryland’s §319\(h\) Grants website](#). Please don’t hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or to request a template for your proposal.

**NOTE: Updates have been made to state and federal guidance regarding the §319(h) Grant in Maryland since the last funding cycle, so make sure to familiarize yourself with the information in the attached document if you are interested in submitting a proposal.**

If you have any questions, you are welcome to reach out via email at [mde.nps319@maryland.gov](mailto:mde.nps319@maryland.gov), and a member of our team will get back to you. Feel free to pass this along to your partners as you see fit. We look forward to working with you!

Thank you,

Jacey Brooks  
Maryland CWA §319(h) Grant  
Watershed Protection, Restoration, and Planning Program  
Water and Science Administration  
Maryland Department of the Environment



# Solicitation for Project Proposals for FY2027 §319(h) Grant Funding

## Summary Guidance for Projects Fundable by the §319(h) Grant

### Submission of Project Proposals

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The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) is accepting project proposals for the FY2027 §319(h) Nonpoint Source (NPS) Grant program. This annual funding opportunity supports initiatives aimed at reducing nonpoint source pollution throughout Maryland.

- **Release Date:** July 1, 2026
- **Submission Deadline:** September 30, 2026, by 11:59PM EST
- **How to Apply:** Submit your proposal via email to [mde.nps319@maryland.gov](mailto:mde.nps319@maryland.gov). Early submissions are highly encouraged.

### Eligibility Criteria

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To qualify for funding, projects must fit the following requirements:

1. The project must address NPS pollution through one or more of the following:
  - a. implementation of best management practices (BMPs; may be design and/or construction)
  - b. planning/outreach activities, such as projects that provide technical assistance (TA), conduct outreach/education efforts, and/or develop watershed-based plans
2. Applicants must be one of the following:
  - a. Local or State government entity, including county and municipal agencies
  - b. Soil Conservation District, State agency, and institution of higher learning
  - c. Private firm
  - d. Nonprofit organization
3. Applicants must also ensure they have capacity in grant management and funding, as §319(h) funding is a reimbursement style grant in Maryland (no up-front funding).
  - a. Justification of capacity must be included in the project proposal, and MDE may request further documentation or have additional oversight to ensure project completion if a project is selected.
  - b. Invoices may be submitted for reimbursement on a quarterly basis.
  - c. Reimbursement occurs only for satisfactory deliverables/invoices.
4. The project must be located within a watershed with a United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-accepted nine element watershed-based plan (WBP) — a list of watersheds with WBPs is provided on [MDE's §319\(h\) Grant Webpage](#).
  - a. Projects located in an area without a watershed-based plan may be eligible for a waiver to the requirement. Please contact MDE for more information.

*[see additional eligibility criteria on the following page]*

5. A description of acceptable BMP implementation is included in each watershed-based plan. Proposals for new watershed plans or addendums to existing watershed plans may also be considered for MDE and EPA review.
6. No §319(h) funding may be used to supplement or cover any staff salary already paid for by §319(h) or any other funding sources. In addition, §319(h) funding cannot be used to fund any operations and maintenance (O&M) activities or activities specifically required by a draft or final National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4), or concentrated animal feeding operation (CAFO) permit.

## Grant Amount

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Negotiable per proposal - typically ranging from \$30,000 to \$400,000. Overall, this grant opportunity is offering up to approximately a million dollars.

## Matching Funds

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**No matching funds are required**, as the State of Maryland covers the required 40% match.

*Optional: Leveraging other funding is encouraged and may improve the likelihood of selection.*

## Project Duration

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Negotiable per proposal - The earliest project start date is 10/01/2027 depending on the timing of MDE's FY27 Grant Application and EPA's award of the grant. Duration typically ranges from less than one year to a maximum of 4 years to complete the project. The project must be completed no later than 03/31/2032.

## Required Elements

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At a minimum, required elements of a project proposal include a work plan entailing a project description, timeline, deliverables table, direct outputs, indirect outcomes, and budget (in whole dollars). Additional documentation may be included such as detailed budget breakdowns, pictures, and maps. **Please contact MDE if you need a template; this is highly recommended.**

## Pollutant Load Reduction

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In-the-ground implementation projects must produce "measurable environmental results," (i.e., estimated pollutant load reduction for nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment, bacteria, and/or pH impairments). Estimated future load reduction(s) must be included in the project proposal. Revised estimated load reduction(s) is required as one final deliverable.

## Deliverables

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Quarterly status reports are required. A comprehensive final report is required to document project status, achievements, and results. Particulars will be negotiated.

## Grant Conditions

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Federal EPA grant conditions apply, including but not limited to compliance with the [EPA General Terms and Conditions](#).

## Procurement Regulations

Project managers must abide by EPA procurement requirements embodied in 2 CFR 200 and the federal grant terms and conditions, and applicable State and County procurement regulations.

Projects must be in compliance with the Build America, Buy America (BABA) Act, and documentation justifying compliance may be required (e.g. submission of a detailed budget showing costs of construction materials). MDE highly encourages project managers to include a requirement to comply with BABA in each project's design and construction request for proposals (RFPs).

Helpful links: [General information about BABA](#); [Information on BABA waivers](#)

## General Information

In Maryland, §319(h) Grant funds are typically offered once each year. Contact MDE to be notified via email for future opportunities.

## Proposal Evaluation Criteria

**Implementation projects** and **planning/outreach projects** will have similar scoring structures but slightly different criteria.

All projects will be evaluated by criteria shown in **BLACK**, **implementation projects will be evaluated by additional criteria shown in BLUE**, and **planning/outreach projects will be evaluated by additional criteria shown in RED**. Definitions are listed below; please reach out if you have questions about which criteria applies to your project.

**Implementation projects** = projects that design and/or construct BMPs which implement an EPA-accepted watershed-based plan

**Planning/outreach projects** = projects that provide technical assistance (TA), conduct outreach/education efforts, and/or develop watershed-based plans

	Proposal Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Score Obtained
1	<p><b>Project Background</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identifies the watershed where the project will occur and outlines any watershed characteristics that may be relevant to the project</li> <li>b. Provides location(s) of where the activities will be implemented/held (i.e. latitude/longitude coordinates, address, city/town, etc.)</li> <li>c. Describes the current water quality conditions or impairments of the site</li> <li>d. Describes the current issue to be addressed in that watershed and why it is needed</li> <li>e. Provides map and images of location (optional)</li> <li>f. All site specific factors and concerns for the project are clearly identified</li> </ul>	10	

<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>Project Objectives and Goals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Explains how the project will implement best management practices</li> <li>a. Explains how the project will provide TA, outreach, education, and/or planning activities</li> <li>b. Outlines all objectives and the activities necessary to meet objectives including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. What practices are being proposed?</li> <li>ii. How long will the project last?</li> <li>iii. Who will implement the activities?</li> <li>iv. What monitoring will be needed to determine success, and who will perform the monitoring?</li> <li>v. What maintenance will be needed, and who will be responsible for that?</li> <li>v. Will the project continue into the future, and who would be responsible for that?</li> </ul> </li> <li>c. Explains how the proposed activity fits within the current watershed plan and addresses a significant NPS pollutant</li> </ul>	<p>30</p>	
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Project Feasibility and Permanence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Project outlines how the scope of the work will be broken down</li> <li>b. A timeline for completing work is provided <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Milestones for completing each task are provided</li> <li>ii. Identifies who will complete each task</li> <li>iii. Timeline is achievable</li> </ul> </li> <li>c. The cost-effectiveness of the project is outlined <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Costs are reasonable for scope of project</li> <li>ii. Budget breakdown is fully explained and in whole dollars</li> </ul> </li> <li>d. Maintenance for the future of the project is outlined <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The project is expected to continue having impacts into the future</li> <li>ii. Lists who is responsible for maintenance and a brief description of how that will occur</li> <li>iii. Describes cost for maintenance (optional)</li> </ul> </li> <li>d. Any future efforts/impacts are outlined <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The project is expected to continue having impacts into the future</li> <li>ii. Lists who is responsible for continuing the project and a brief description of how that will occur</li> <li>iii. Describes cost for continuation of project (optional)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>20</p>	
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Measures of Success</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Measurable, expected <u>outputs</u> (direct products/results) are described</li> <li>b. Quantifiable indicators are provided to show success</li> <li>c. Indirect <u>outcomes</u> expected from the project are provided (e.g. project works to create long term reduction of a NPS pollutant)</li> <li>d. Monitoring efforts are performed before and after the activity, which will theoretically show some quantifiable improvement</li> </ul>	<p>10</p>	

5	<p><b>Monitoring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Monitoring efforts are performed before and after the activity, which will theoretically show some quantifiable improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Activities will observe water quality, biological, and/or ecological/habitat parameters</li> <li>i. TA/outreach provider or watershed-based plan developer will monitor number of participants in trainings, meetings, etc. and, if appropriate, gather results from surveys (or something similar) that monitor participants' understanding/behavior</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	10	
6	<p><b>Partnerships and Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Project has sufficient support from community partners and property owners</li> <li>b. Project identifies the roles of partners (e.g. financial, logistical, etc.) and confirms their agreement to the project.</li> </ul>	10	
7	<p><b>Public Education and Outreach</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Project works to educate and inform the community of the project's objective(s) and implementation</li> <li>b. Outreach strategy is detailed and effective</li> <li>c. Outreach strategy works to recruit community members and property owners</li> </ul>	10	
8	<p><b>Opportunities for Extra Points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Project addresses the impacts of changing weather conditions</li> <li>b. Project is located in an economic investment community and benefits community members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Justification that the community is considered an economic investment community (i.e. metrics, on-the-ground experience, etc.)</li> <li>ii. Specific information on how the project will directly benefit an economic investment community (e.g. community members are actively involved in planning and implementation of project)</li> </ul> </li> <li>c. Additional in-kind or monetary match</li> </ul>	15	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	115/115	___/115

Contact [mde.nps319@maryland.gov](mailto:mde.nps319@maryland.gov) for additional information if needed.