



**MARYLAND HERITAGE AREAS AUTHORITY
GRANT PROGRAM**

**CERTIFIED HERITAGE AREA MARKETING GRANT
GUIDELINES
Fiscal Year 2025**



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MARKETING GRANT GUIDELINES FY24**

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INTRODUCTION

The Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (“MHAA”) Grant Program is a source of funding designed to assist and encourage the preservation of historical, archaeological, natural, and cultural resources and **support economic development through heritage tourism** within heritage areas certified by the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority. Heritage area grant awards are made from the Maryland Heritage Area Financing Fund, a non-lapsing, revolving fund into which up to \$6 million is deposited annually. The following is general information about the Heritage Areas Grant Program and instructions for completing the Certified Heritage Area Marketing Grant application.

Heritage Tourism is traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes historic, cultural and natural resources.

– National Trust for Historic Preservation

DISCLAIMERS

Each applicant shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and departmental policies and programs regarding drug-, alcohol-, and smoke-free workplaces, disabled access and equal opportunity in employment, housing and credit practices, and prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, marital status, familial status, or physical and/or mental disabilities in any aspect of the grant project.

Please be advised that in accordance with provisions of Executive Order 01.01.1983.18, if your application contains any information that may constitute personal information as defined below, you should be aware of the following:

1. Any personal information (“personal information” means any information about a natural person or his/her immediate family which identifies or describes any characteristics including but not limited to education, financial transactions or worth, medical history, criminal or employment record or things done by or to that natural person or his/her immediate family) requested by the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (“MHAA”) and supplied by the applicant will be used principally for MHAA’s determination of the feasibility of the application;
2. Failure to accurately and adequately supply requested information may seriously jeopardize MHAA’s approval of the application;
3. MHAA will permit the subjects of any personal information in an application to inspect, amend, and correct such personal information;
4. Any document supplied to or obtained by MHAA may be a public record generally available for public inspection under the Maryland Public Information Act and COMAR 05.01.02; however, under the Maryland Public Information Act trade secrets, information privileged by law, confidential commercial data, and records describing an individual person’s finances may not be disclosed; and,
5. Personal information supplied to MHAA in an application may be shared with other state, local, or federal government agencies involved with the proposed financing or project.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants include the following:

- Certified Heritage Area (“Heritage Area”) management entities, in cooperation with their affiliated Destination Marketing Organization(s) (“DMO(s)”) recognized by the Maryland Office of Tourism Development (“Tourism”); or
- DMOs in cooperation with their affiliated Heritage Area management entities.

Applications must be submitted jointly, and both organizations must be in good standing with the State of Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation, be qualified to do business in Maryland, and have the legal capacity and authority to incur obligations involved under the grant program.

Certified Heritage Areas and DMOs must have jointly completed within the last 24 months a **heritage areas marketing plan** applicable to the time period when marketing activities proposed in the application will occur in order to be eligible to apply for funding. See **Appendix E** of these instructions for more information about the required contents of the marketing plan.

Upon completion of a marketing plan, Certified Heritage Areas and their DMO partners may apply for funding for marketing activities as a part of the annual grant round and may choose to either **apply annually for a marketing grant of no more than \$25,000**; or may **apply every other year for a marketing grant of no more than \$50,000**. A CHA and their DMO(s) may only have one marketing grant open at any given time. **All previous marketing grants must be closed before a FY25 marketing grant agreement can be executed regardless of whether the CHA or the DMO is the grantee.**

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Eligible activities must address or complete a priority activity identified in and/or consistent with the goals, objectives, strategies, and actions outlined in the approved Certified Heritage Area Management Plan and/or Five-Year Action Plan and Marketing Plan. Content for all activities will only include marketable products within the Certified Heritage Area. The following types of marketing activities are eligible for funding with MHAA Grants:

- Advertising Placement – defined as the actual time, space, and/or other format of media necessary to reach a selected audience. Allowable expenditures are limited to the purchase of print space, television time, radio time, and internet or other digital media time/space.
- Participation in Consumer and Travel Trade Shows – defined as the selling of heritage area travel products at consumer and travel trade shows in identified target markets, such as the Group Tour market. Both in-state and out-of-state shows are allowed. Allowable expenditures include booth space costs and delegate registration fees. Consideration of Trade/Consumer shows listed in the Maryland Office of Tourism Development Annual Development and Marketing Plan is encouraged (see www.visitmaryland.org/).
- Printed Material/Collateral – defined as the preparation of communication documents, i.e. brochures, guides, maps, consumer/travel trade show exhibits, video/films, and other similar forms of messaging. Such material must be for the specific purpose of

supporting all other marketing activities by design and content. Allowable expenditures include creative, design, production (including layout, etc.), photography, and printing costs.

- Website Development and Online Marketing Presence – defined as the necessary actions/expenses required to establish a Heritage Area on the web. Allowable expenses include website creation and other expenses related to creating and/or significantly enhancing a web presence, including websites, social media and online marketing for the Heritage Area.

Please note that any materials created with marketing grant funding should include MHAA’s logo or link back to a webpage that includes MHAA’s logo.

NOTE: Interpretation (defined as: *the development and presentation of interpretive exhibits, interpretive signage, materials, or other appropriate products to further the educational and recreational objectives of the Heritage Area*) is not considered a marketing activity; therefore, it is not eligible for funding under a marketing grant application.

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES AND RESTRICTIONS

The following types of activities are **not eligible** for funding with a Marketing Grant, but **may serve as match for the grant**:

- Advertisement design/production
- Travel expenses
- Expenses directly related to the fulfillment of advertising inquiries, such as postage, call center fees, etc.
- Website/database routine maintenance (significant enhancement of a Heritage Area website may be eligible). **If considering a website project, contact program staff to discuss.**

PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

See **Appendix A** for the list of criteria that are considered when applications are reviewed.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND DEADLINE

Marketing Grant applications are submitted directly to MHAA. FY25 applications must be submitted to MHAA by no later than 11:59 p.m. on May 17, 2024.

GRANT AMOUNTS AND MATCHING FUND REQUIREMENTS

Marketing grants can be awarded **up to \$25,000 if applying annually** and up to **\$50,000 if applying every other year**. This amount is contingent upon sufficient funding being made available in the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Financing Fund. **Only one marketing grant for a heritage area can be open at a time; if a previous marketing grant (whether the Heritage Area or the DMO is the grantee) is still open at the time of grant award, a new marketing grant will not be awarded.**

All grants must be matched in an amount at least equal to the grant (dollar-for-dollar match).

Ineligible Match:

- State of Maryland Funds, except for staff time from state employees.
- Expenditures made prior to the award of the grant or after the completion of the grant period

Examples of Match:

- Cash expenditures
- Marketing expenditures supported by a non-state grant or loan fund
- Applicant staff salaries for work specifically on the project
- Volunteer time for work on the project (see http://independentsector.org/volunteer_time for current value of volunteer time in Maryland)
- Donated professional services (can be valued at their professional rate, but only if working on the project in their professional role (e.g. architect donating architectural design services))
- Donated project materials/supplies

Other Project Costs (“Over Match”)

If the total project is expected to cost more than the total grant request and required match, those additional costs should be listed on the application budget as Other Project Costs, but should not include state funds. Review criteria used by MHAA take into consideration whether or not a grant project significantly leverages more funds than the required dollar-for-dollar match and what portion of this “over match” is cash versus in-kind match.

GRANT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

All successful grantees will be required to enter into a grant agreement with MHAA. It is important that you understand these terms and conditions prior to applying for grant funds, because you will need to abide by them if a grant is awarded. See **Appendix B** for full terms and conditions.

GRANT SCHEDULE

Full Application –

- Due no later than **11:59 p.m. on May 17, 2024.**

Grants Review –

- Complete applications are forwarded to MHAA for review and final action at their July meeting.

Grant Awards –

- MHAA takes final action on grant awards on **July 11, 2024.**
- Applicants are notified by email.
- If awarded, the grant period begins **July 11, 2024** and all project work can begin that day.

APPLICATION FORMAT

All applications must be submitted online. MHAA staff will forward a link to the online application. All other online grant materials are available here <https://mht.maryland.gov/Pages/MHAA/heritage-areas-resources.aspx>. **See the Quick Start Guide on the MHT grants page for full details on the online submission process.**

Applicants will be required to submit the following supporting documents with their applications:

- A detailed **budget** (See **Appendix C** for sample budget)
- **Resumes of key project personnel** (staff and consultants)
- **Proof of Nonprofit Status and Organizational Documents** (if applicable) (see **Appendix D**)
- **Letters of Support** – Letters of support for the grant application are strongly encouraged but are not a required submission. Letters from elected officials, partner organizations and community members help to demonstrate the importance of, need for, and urgency of your project.

APPENDIX A - PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

The following criteria will be considered by MHAA in reviewing grant proposals:

CONSISTENCY WITH HERITAGE AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN AND/OR FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN

- Are the planned activities of the heritage area consistent with the Management Plan and/or Five-Year Plan or other planning documents?

MARKETING PLAN

- Will the planned grant activities significantly contribute to fulfilling the goals of the Heritage Areas Program as identified in the Marketing Plan?
- Are marketing objectives and the methods to accomplish those objectives clearly stated?

PROJECT DESIGN

- Does the budget contain the necessary expenditures to accomplish the tasks outlined?
- Are the costs outlined in the project budget reasonable and customary given the goals of the project and for the services or products being obtained?
- Are the costs in the budget broken down in detail (e.g. rate X hours, # of items x cost per item)?
- Are all items in the budget clearly related to the products, activities and work described in the Scope of Work?
- Does the project or its products significantly leverage local and/or private non-state investment?

MATCH

- Is there a reasonable plan for how the funds will be matched?

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- Are project personnel (if known) appropriately qualified?
- Does the applicant have other open Heritage Area grants from previous fiscal years? Have previous grants required repeated extensions due to circumstances within the applicant's control?

DELIVERABLES

- Is it clear what the products/results of the project will be?
- What is impact of the proposed marketing activities?

APPENDIX B - GRANT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

All grantees will be required to enter into a grant agreement with MHAA, which generally contains the following standard terms and conditions:

- Grant Term - All grant funds generally must be expended within no more than 24 months of the date the grant agreement is signed by all parties, unless MHAA agrees to a longer term or approves in writing an extension of the grant period. Written progress and final reports must be submitted to MHAA during the grant term, generally at the mid-point and end of the project (grant agreements will specify reporting requirements). You may also be required to submit supporting financial documentation with progress and final reports identifying project costs incurred to date.
- Grant Disbursements – Grant funds shall generally be disbursed in no more than three payments, or as specified in the Grant Agreement. Disbursement requests shall identify all costs incurred to date. You may also be required by MHAA to submit vendor price quotes, bids, cost estimates, or other supporting financial documentation for anticipated future project costs. Final disbursement of grant funds will not be made until the project is completed and all reports and documentation of project expenditures specified in the grant agreement, have been submitted to and accepted by MHAA.
- Procurement Procedures - Grant recipients are expected to ensure that costs for goods and services obtained to carry out the project are reasonable and customary for the type of work performed and materials procured.
 - 1) **Local governments:** Local government grant recipients shall follow their normal procurement procedures and must be able to document that applicable procurement procedures were followed, if requested by MHAA.
 - 2) **Non-profits:** Non-profit grant recipients shall utilize a procurement process that allows them to obtain project goods and services at reasonable and customary prices, and if requested by MHAA, must be able to document that expenditures are reasonable and customary.
 - a) Procurements greater than \$500 and less than \$10,000: Grant recipients are strongly encouraged to obtain written bids from two or more vendors for any goods and services for which costs are expected to be **greater than \$500 but not more than \$10,000**.
 - b) Procurements greater than \$10,000: If costs for any goods or services are expected to **exceed \$10,000** written bids from at least 3 vendors must be obtained. Grant recipients must be able to provide documentation that at least 3 written bids were obtained, if requested by MHAA
 - 3) When bids are obtained, grant recipients are not required to select the lowest bid, but must be able to provide documentation on why a vendor other than the low bidder was selected and what criteria other than the most favorable bid price were considered.
 - 4) Sole-source procurement of goods and services should not be utilized unless there is a demonstrable and justifiable need, and it can be demonstrated that competitive procurement is impractical because only one product or service vendor can meet specific project requirements. As with all procurements, expenditures must be reasonable and customary for the type of goods and services being obtained. If requested by MHAA, grant recipients must be able to document project requirements that justified the sole source procurement and that expenditures are reasonable and customary for the goods and services obtained.

- Nondiscrimination - Each applicant shall comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws and policies and programs regarding drug, alcohol and smoke free workplaces, disabled access and equal opportunity for employment, housing, credit practices and prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, marital status, familial status or physical and/or mental disabilities in any aspect of the grant project.
- Acknowledgment - Grant recipients are required to provide appropriate acknowledgment of MHAA assistance for all projects in accordance with requirements outlined in the grant agreement. Grant recipients may also be required to provide appropriate acknowledgment of the local Heritage Area management entity.
- Compliance with Applicable Laws – Recipients of funds are responsible for complying with all federal, state, and local laws applicable to the project.

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE MARKETING GRANT BUDGET

Use the budget sheet to prepare a realistic project budget. **The budget MUST address project components mentioned in the Summary Scope of Work and Project Timetable.** The following sample budget for a marketing project is provided to illustrate both the process and format grant project budgets must follow.

1. Calculate the total cash needs of the project:

Project Manager – HA (\$20/hr x 125 hrs)	\$2,500
Project Monitor – DMO (\$25/hr x 20 hrs)	\$500
Design of Print Ads	\$2,000
Brochure Design	\$1,000
Photography (5 days @ \$400/day, \$725 editing/printing costs)	\$2,725
Brochure Printing (10,000 copies, .50 each)	\$5,000
Print Ad Purchases	\$5,000
Design & production of promotional exhibit	\$1,500
Trade show registrations	\$400
Postage for mailing brochure	\$1,175
TOTAL CASH NEEDS:	\$21,800

2. Calculate the available in-kind match:

Photographer donated time and travel	\$3,000
TOTAL IN-KIND CONTRIBUTION:	\$3,000

3. Add the total cash needs and available in-kind match together to find the total project cost:

Total Project Cost: \$21,800 + \$3,000 = \$24,800

MHAA Grant Funds To be Requested	\$10,900
Required Match	\$10,900
Total Grant Funds & Require Match -	\$21,800
Other Project Costs (Over Match)	\$3,000
Total Project Cost: \$21,800 + \$3,000 =	\$24,800

4. Once a workable budget structure has been prepared, enter the line items on the budget page provided.

Items should be organized by cost category so that similar costs are grouped together, regardless of whether they are grant or matching expenditures. Rates of pay or similar cost breakdowns **MUST** be included in each line item. Attach any estimates you have obtained to support your budget.

5. Finally, identify the sources of matching funds and in-kind contributions.

See next page for Sample Marketing Budget

SAMPLE MARKETING BUDGET

LINE ITEMS	GRANT FUNDS	REQUIRED GRANTEE MATCH*	OTHER PROJECT COSTS	TOTAL PROJECT COST
Project Manager – Heritage Area (\$20/hr x 125 hrs)		\$2,500		\$2,500
Project Monitor – DMO (\$25/hr x 20 hrs)		\$500		\$500
Design of print ads (Consultant Services-flat fee)		\$2,000		\$2,000
Brochure design (Consultant Services-flat fee)		\$1,000		\$1,000
Photography (5 days @ \$400/day for on-site photo shoots; \$725 for editing & printing photo lab services)		\$2,725		\$2,725
Photographer donated time (72 hrs. x \$35/hr) and travel (\$480)			\$3,000	\$3,000
Brochure Printing (10,0000 copies)	\$4,000	\$1,000		\$5,000
Purchase of print ad space (Civil War History magazine @ \$2,000, the Washington Post @ \$500, the Baltimore Sun @ \$500, Motor Coach Traveler magazine @ \$750, and American Heritage magazine @ \$1,250)	\$5,000			\$5,000
Design & production of heritage area promotional traveling exhibit	\$1,500			
Trade Show Registration Fee (Eastern Sport, Travel & Outdoor Show @ \$150; Motorcoach Assoc. @ \$250)	\$400			\$400
Postage for Brochure Mailing		\$1,175		\$1,175
TOTALS:	\$10,900	10,900	\$3,000	\$24,800

*** Grantee agrees to provide funding in an amount not less than the amount of the Grant.**

APPENDIX D – PROOF OF NON-PROFIT STATUS

Organizational Documents and Proof of Non-profit Status (if applicable):

If the Applicant is a non-profit organization, organizational documents and proof of non-profit status must be submitted. This should include:

- Articles of Incorporation*
- By-laws*
- Internal Revenue Service 501(c)3 approval letter (if applicable)

*Some organizations may have a constitution or charter instead.

This is not required for local jurisdictions and state agencies.

APPENDIX E – HERITAGE AREA MARKETING PLAN OUTLINE

Heritage area marketing activities may be funded by MHAA provided that the heritage area management entity has completed a Marketing Plan in coordination with its affiliated Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO) within the last 24 months. Please submit a copy of the approved Heritage Area Marketing Plan. The Heritage Area Marketing Plan should reflect goals and objectives of the Heritage Area Management Plan and must:

- include a mission statement,
- outline a marketing positioning summary outlining strengths, weaknesses, and market segmentation,
- identify marketing programs with associated objectives and performance measurements; and,
- list strategies for obtaining the plan's objectives associated with the marketing activities that are eligible for funding, which include advertising placement, consumer/travel trade shows, printed material/collateral and website development.
- include a media plan/schedule for all ads paid for wholly or in part with grant funds.

Ideally, the heritage area Marketing Plan should include information about the following types of activities:

- I. Administrative activities
 - A. Budget and Clerical
 - B. Office Management

- II. Sales and Marketing activities
 - A. Advertising
 1. Audience segmentation by demographics, geography, types of travelers (consumer, trade, special interest or niche)
 2. Media outlet selection
 3. Integration of communications tools such as direct mail, cooperative promotions, or advertorials.
 - B. Public Relations
 - C. Specialized Group Markets
 - D. Packaged Travel Market
 - E. Consumer and Travel Agents
 - F. International

- III. Development activities
 - A. Research
 - B. Destination Resource Management
 1. Product Development
 2. Grants and other alternative funding sources
 - C. Special Events/Promotion
 - D. Publications
 - E. Welcome Centers
 - F. Workforce Education and Training Program
 - G. Information Technology
 1. Database Management
 2. Telemarketing and Direct Response
 3. Website Development and Maintenance
 - H. Professional Staff Development