



Larry Hogan | Governor
Boyd Rutherford | Lt. Governor
R. Michael Gill | Secretary of Commerce
Signe Pringle | Deputy Secretary of Commerce

RURAL MARYLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND OVERVIEW, INSTRUCTIONS & APPLICATION

Program Description and Purpose

- The Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund seeks to fund infrastructure projects that will support economic development activity, stimulate private investment, and grow jobs in the state's rural counties.
- The Maryland Department of Commerce will provide grant funds from the Fund for projects proposed by the state's five tri-county councils which serve the rural regions of Maryland. The regional councils shall coordinate with the local jurisdictions within their regions to identify the priority projects to be included in the application. Counties may identify projects that benefit the entire region as an eligible use of funds
- Eligible uses include developing public infrastructure such as utilities, transportation, and broadband to support the attraction, retention or expansion of businesses, as well as infrastructure projects related to specific industry sectors such as, but not limited to, manufacturing, clean energy, life sciences, cybersecurity and agribusiness. Funding can also be used for workforce development and stimulating entrepreneurship and innovation. Planning and feasibility studies are eligible, as well as capital and operational expenses.
- Ineligible uses include direct private sector incentive, subsidy, grants or loans; construction of facilities to be owned or leased to private-sector entities; and residential/housing projects.

Applicant Eligibility Criteria

- Eligible applicants include the state's five tri-county councils (TCCs):
 - Mid-Shore Regional Council
 - Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland
 - Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland
 - Tri-County Council for Western Maryland
 - Upper Shore Regional Council
- The regional councils shall submit applications on behalf of the local jurisdictions within their respective jurisdictions. Funds are intended to be regranted to local jurisdictions or other eligible institutions within the region to implement priority projects identified by the local jurisdictions.

Not Eligible to Apply

- Local governments may not directly apply for funding. Local governments shall work with their regional council to propose potential projects for inclusion in the application(s).
- For-profit private sector entities are not eligible for funding through this program.

Application Process / Submission Window

- The application form will be made available to the regional councils on or about May 2, 2022.
- Applications will be accepted from May 2, 2022 at 12:00 p.m. EDT through August 5, 2022 at 12:00 p.m. EDT. Submit application to Lori Ratzburg at lori.ratzburg@maryland.gov
- The Department of Commerce may contact applicants with questions at any time after receiving a completed application.
- Regional councils will be notified of the status of their application by August 31, 2022.
- The Department of Commerce intends to enter into grant agreements with the regional councils in September 2022.

Grant Funding Criteria

- Regional projects which foster collaboration between multiple counties are encouraged.
- Multiple projects can be included in one application. Each project should be identified and described separately in the application.
- Awards from the Fund do not require matching funds. However if there are other sources of funds for the project, we encourage those sources to be identified.
- Eligible costs may include planning and feasibility studies in addition to “hard” project costs.
- Regional Councils and subgrantees may include NEW administrative costs associated directly to oversight and implementation of this funding as an eligible cost, up to 3% percent of the total award (maximum \$300,000 in total administrative costs).
- Existing projects (such as a business park) which are known to previously have received investments from the Maryland Department of Commerce should be identified as such, including the amount of funds invested and the date(s) of the investments.

Application Requirements

- Regional councils must formally endorse the projects included in their application with a formal vote/resolution from the Board of Directors.
- Each county should submit a letter of support signed by the chief executive or chief administrative officer for inclusion with the application.

Award Amounts

- The maximum funding request per TCC is \$10,000,000
- There is no limit on the amount of funding for a particular project, aside from the limit of the total request in the application of \$10 million.

Award Term

- All grant funds must be expended within 24 months of the date of the grant award.
- Reports summarizing progress of the project(s) funded by the grant award are required. An interim report is due at the end of the first year, with a final report due at the end of the second year. 2 interim reports will be required at the 6-month and 18-month point of the grant term.
 - Applicants and sub-grantees will need to request demographic/MBE information for all contractors and vendors selected to perform work under this grant.

Contractor/vendor response will be voluntary, and additional information will be provided regarding the demographic survey at the time of grant agreement.

- If additional time is required after 24 months the rationale/justification for additional time must be explained in the report.
- Funds which are not expended within the required time period are subject to clawback.

Agency/Contact

- Maryland Department of Commerce
Lori Ratzburg, Senior Director, Regional Growth and Retention
lori.ratzburg@maryland.gov
410-350-4242

Maryland Rural Investment Fund – Application

Section I: Applicant Information

Regional Council Legal Name: _____

- The legal name needs to be typed as it appears on your Certificate of Good Standing with the Maryland Department of Assessment and Taxation (SDAT).

Trade Name: _____

Federal ID #: _____

- The Federal ID # must be the same as listed on the W-9 submitted with this application.

Attach a signed and dated copy of your IRS W-9 Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification.

Mailing Address

- The mailing address must be the same as listed on the W-9 submitted with this application.

Street Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip Code: _____

County: _____

Website: _____

Contact Information

- Provide the primary contact for this application.

Name: _____

Title: _____

Best Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Section II: Project Funding Requests:

Below is the template to be followed for each project or program included in the application. Please complete all sections of the template for each individual project.

Project/Program Request #1

- Project Name
- Project Summary (250 words or less)
- County or counties where the project is located
- Project Primary Contact
 - Name
 - Title
 - Organization

- Address
 - Phone number
 - Email
- Funding Request Amount
- Budget - include both sources and uses of funds, including any request for administrative expenses
- Project Narrative –
 - Detailed project description
 - Describe the expected outcome of the project.
 - Describe any other funds being leveraged and their source.
 - Describe how this project will have a significant economic development impact for the jurisdiction.
 - Describe any partnerships that will be leveraged for this project.
 - Describe how the success and/or economic impact of the project will be measured.
- Project Timeline/Key Milestones
- Have potential vendors been identified? (Yes/No) If so, please identify.
 - Please attach any proposals from potential vendors.
- Please attach any other supporting materials that would be useful in understanding the project, such as feasibility studies, local economic development strategic plans, etc.

Section III: Attachments

Please use this checklist for all documents to be submitted along with this application

- W-9
- Regional Council Resolution of Support
- 3 Letters of Support/Resolutions of Support from each county
- Letters of Commitment from partners/sub-grantees responsible for implementation of proposed projects
- Any additional letters of support from partner organizations