

NEIGHBORHOOD PLACEMAKING GRANT PROGRAM (Updated 12.08.2020)

Guidelines

Application Opens: September 15, 2020

Application Deadline: January 4, 2020 by 5:00PM (extended from December)

Grant Range: \$1,500-\$5,000 with a \$1 for \$1 match required of the grantee (Example: \$2,000 award/\$2,000 match by grantee for a \$4,000 total project cost. However new this year, the match for this grant program can be any combination of cash OR in-kind). Please see below for more details regarding the match requirements).

INTRODUCTION

The Baltimore National Heritage Area (BNHA) is a congressionally designated area encompassing 22 square miles within the city of Baltimore. The mission of BNHA is to promote, preserve, and enhance the heritage area's cultural, historic, and natural resources for current and future generations. BNHA encourages activities that spur economic development through heritage tourism and make the heritage area more visitor-ready, visitor-friendly, and more livable for Baltimore residents. This matching grant program, with the match to be provided by the grantee.

BNHA's grant programs are a source of funding designed to provide strategic investments in cultural heritage tourism within the heritage area, particularly emerging neighborhoods, defined as neighborhoods that historically have not been invested in by public and private funders. The overarching goal is to connect residents and visitors to the stories and history that make each neighborhood unique. Specifically, the goal of this **Neighborhood Placemaking Grant Program** is to achieve the following, with the final outcome of neighborhoods becoming more visitor-friendly and visitor-ready:

- Assist neighborhoods with enhancing their quality of life through heritage tourism stewardship;
- Balance community and tourism;
- Increase awareness of the Baltimore National Heritage Area and its resources for neighborhoods.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The Neighborhood Placemaking Grant Program may only be used to fund **non-capital projects** within the below three priority areas. This list is not intended to be exhaustive, but projects must align with one or more priority areas:

Navigate Your Neighborhood

Projects that aid in navigating through neighborhoods such as interpretive signage, pedestrian way finding signage, interpretive brochures, walking tours, educational programs and materials, festivals, performances, community events and other activities that support navigating through the heritage area's neighborhoods to promote heritage tourism and attract visitors to neighborhoods.

* Interpretation signage projects must comply with BNHA's recommended guidelines found on the grants webpage.

Green Your Neighborhood

Projects that promote neighborhood greening activities, environmental stewardship, cleanliness, beautification, citizen community education and stewardship. In addition, projects that promote investments in city parks and open spaces to enhance safe and accessible recreation opportunities for visitors and residents.

*Please note: For all land use projects, written permission by the property owner must be uploaded with the application, to include any necessary permits.

· Department of Natural Resources (DNR) please fill out specific form found on BNHA's website.

· Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks (BCRP) please fill out specific form found on the grant's website.

Revitalize Your Neighborhood: Plan!

Planning and feasibility studies for capital projects, vacant lot development planning, market research, branding and marketing projects, research for content development, and project evaluation surveys.

Eligible activities must address or complete a priority activity identified in and consistent with the goals, objectives, strategies, and actions outlined in the **Baltimore National Heritage Area Comprehensive Management Plan** (available online at <https://www.explorebaltimore.org/page/planning-documents>). Generally, grants will be made as one-time awards and not for ongoing projects or activities that require a multi-year grant commitment.

ELIGIBLE CRITERIA – Who may apply

To be eligible for a Neighborhood Placemaking Grant, applicant organizations must meet each of the following criteria:

- Be located within the **geographic boundary of the heritage area** (or the program/activity will happen within the boundary area). Please be sure to check the BNHA's list of available neighborhoods found on the Neighborhood Placemaking Grants webpage to ensure your project is eligible.

- Be a nonprofit organization, tax-exempt community or neighborhood association in good standing with the State of Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation. You can check your status at <http://www.dat.maryland.gov/> - click "Search Business Database" in the left sidebar;

- If not a nonprofit organization, the **applicant organization** agrees to be the fiscal agent responsible for the grant award deliverables (a signed agreement between the fiscal agent and community partner must be uploaded with the full online application, please see sample agreement on BNHA's website).

- Be qualified to do business in Maryland; AND
- Have the legal capacity and authority to incur obligations involved under the grant program.

Who May NOT Apply?

The following types of organizations are not eligible to apply to the Neighborhood Placemaking Grant Program (this list is not meant to be exhaustive): Units of government; individuals; organizations that are the primary responsibility of a government agency; organizations that are not in good standing with BNHA and/or not in compliance with previous grants.

Funding Restrictions

BNHA project award funds cannot be used to fund staff salaries and/or benefits. Salaries and benefits can be used in the cash-match/in-kind funds. In addition, funds cannot be used for capital expenditures, overhead expenses, alcohol, religious ceremonies or events advancing or inhibiting a particular religious ideology; fundraising or advocacy of specific political causes or candidates; agent's fees for programs contracted through commercial agencies; and travel outside of the United States. **Public art projects or façade improvement grants (FIG) will not be eligible under this grant cycle.** Please contact the following agencies for funding regarding these types of projects: Façade improvement project grants ([Baltimore Development Corp.](#)) and for public murals ([BOPA, Baltimore Mural Program](#)).

GRANT AMOUNTS AND MATCHING REQUIREMENTS

Grant requests can be requested at \$1,500 up to \$5,000, with a one to one match requirement. For this grant program, the match can be any combination of cash match or in-kind support (donated volunteer time, professional services, and goods).

Applicants MUST download and use the BNHA budget template found on the Neighborhood Placemaking Grants webpage for their proposal budget. Upload the completed template in the application budget section of this online submission.

Ineligible Match:

- State Funds
- Expenditures made prior to the award of the grant or after the completion of the grant period
- Expenditures that do not relate to the grant project

Examples of Cash Match:

- Cash expenditures
- Support from a non-state grant or loan fund
- Staff salaries for work specifically on the project (documentation of staff paid and hours worked on project is required)

Examples of In-Kind Match:

- 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 (i.e. architect donating architectural design services))
- Donated materials/supplies

Documentation of Match

It is encouraged, but not necessary, to have matching funds in-hand, or firmly committed at the time of application. Acceptable documentation of match may include:

- Financial or Bank Statement from applicant organization; and/or
- Letter of commitment or award letter from another donor of money, in-kind services, or staff time.

Other Project Costs (“Over Match”)

If the total project/operating budget is expected to cost more than the total grant request and required match combined, those additional costs should be listed on the application budget as Other Project Costs. **Applicants are not required to provide documentation for Other Project Costs that are listed in your budget.**

SELECTION CRITERIA

Grant proposals will be reviewed using the criteria outlined below.

ð **Clarity:** Are the project/organization’s objectives clearly described?

ð **Consistency:** Is the project specifically identified in BNHA’s Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP)? If not, how is the project consistent with the goals and objectives of the CMP?

ð **Urgency:** What is the down side to delaying this project? Why should this funding request receive priority at this time? Does this organization have access to other funding sources?

ð **Project Design:** Are the budget, design, and personnel reasonable to accomplish the project or organization’s objectives?

ð **Readiness:** Is the project or organization ready to proceed and can the objectives be accomplished in a realistic and timely manner? If the applicant currently has another BNHA grant, have the deadlines been met? Can the applicant realistically obtain their required match? (Please see matching requirements below).

ð **Collaboration:** Does the project involve volunteers, and other partners to achieve the project’s deliverables, or demonstrate community buy-in?

• **Heritage Tourism Value:** Does the project significantly increase heritage tourism economic activity?

Specifically, does it meet the Neighborhood Placemaking Grant Program goals to:

• Assist neighborhoods with enhancing their quality of life through heritage tourism stewardship;

• Become more visitor-friendly and visitor-ready;

• Balance community and tourism;

• Increase awareness of the Baltimore National Heritage Area and its resources for neighborhoods;

• Is this an emerging neighborhood that has challenges in accessing other funding? If yes, will this project increase its visitor readiness?

• **Sustainability:** How will this project continue after funds are expended? For greening projects, is there a continued maintenance plan?

• **Permission:** Has the applicant obtained all the necessary permits for this project and property owner consent, if applicable?

• **Priority (+2 points)** will be given to neighborhoods that historically have not been invested in by public or private funders.

GRANT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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

· Grant Term – Project Period is February 1, 2021 - February 2022 (one year only). A final project report will be required to include all financial documentation (receipts and proof of payment) 30 days after the project end period. All final reports are to be done through BNHA's online grants portal.

· Grant Disbursements –Disbursements will be made at 50% of award upon signing of grant agreement and 50% reimbursement at project completion. All documentation for award and match must be satisfactory to BNHA and fulfillment of the other requirements of the grant agreement. **Please note the final disbursement of the grant award (remaining 50% of the award amount) will be released upon the project completion and approval of the final report as reimbursement. Please plan your project timeline accordingly with your cash flow needs.**

· Insurance Requirement –General Liability Insurance will be required for all non-capital projects.

· Nondiscrimination – Each applicant shall comply with all applicable federal, state and city laws and policies and programs regarding drug, alcohol, and smoke-free work places, disabled access and equal opportunity for employment, housing, credit practices and prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender,

sexual orientation, marital status, familial status or physical and/or mental disabilities in any aspect of the grant project.

· Project Sign or Acknowledgment – Grant recipients are required to provide appropriate acknowledgment of BNHA assistance and the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (parent funder).

GRANT SCHEDULE

September 15, 2020: Application opens online on BNHA's website (Must create online account with Submittable or use existing username and password if previously submitted an application to BNHA).

January 4, 2021: Applications due online through BNHA's grants portal by 5:00PM.

January - February 2021: Grant Review Panel reviews, scores, and makes award decisions.

Mid-February, 2021: Awards announced to applicants.

March 1, 2021: Grant agreements signed. First disbursement to grantees at 50% of award.

March 1, 2021 – March 1, 2022: One-year project. **Projects must start March 1 (not before).** Award funds can only be used within this one-year project period and a final report will be due with all financial documentation and receipts of the project's expenditures. The remaining 50% of the award will be a reimbursable disbursement once the final report is approved. Please plan your project's cash flow accordingly and secure your match as soon as possible.

APPLICATION FORMAT

Neighborhood Placemaking Grant Program applications must be completed online through the BNHA grant portal, Submittable. To submit a request for funding, applicants must create an account with BNHA grants platform, Submittable. This account will allow applicants to save draft proposals before the submission deadline. Applicants **MUST** download and use the BNHA budget template found on BNHA's website for their proposal budget. Upload the completed template in the application budget section of this online application. You can save a draft at any time of your application before final submission.

APPLICATION DUE

Applicants must submit completed online application with uploaded documents **by 5:00 PM on January 4, 2020.**

Please direct questions to:

Baltimore National Area Association, Inc. (dba Baltimore National Heritage Area)

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