



## GRANT INFORMATION GUIDE

# Operating Grant to the Living Classrooms Foundation

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**Maryland State Department of Education**

200 West Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

**Deadline**

August 25, 2023

No later than 5:00 p.m. EDT

## MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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State Superintendent of Schools and  
Secretary-Treasurer, Maryland State Board of Education

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## Table of Contents

Program Description.....	3
Use of Funds .....	5
Program Requirements .....	6
Application Requirements .....	7
Budget and Budget Narrative .....	9
Appendices .....	10
Scoring Rubric .....	11
Reporting Requirements .....	13
Non-Discrimination Statement.....	14
The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) .....	15
Customer Service Support Sessions.....	16

## Program Description

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This grant is intended to support the operating costs of the Living Classrooms Foundation, a non-profit organization serving students and teachers from all over Maryland. The Living Classrooms Foundation provides access to more equitable education, workforce, and health and wellness opportunities that enable individuals to achieve their aspirations and build safer, stronger, and healthier communities for all.

The Living Classroom Foundation offers a variety of experiential education programs designed to provide students with hands-on learning opportunities in safe and engaging environments. These programs take place in several settings, including our historic sailing and motor vessels as well as outdoor education campuses. Additionally, Living Classrooms conducts interactive outreach programs in schools. These interdisciplinary programs focus on applied learning in subjects such as science, math, social studies, language arts, and career exploration. Students not only gain knowledge about Chesapeake Bay and Maryland ecology but also delve into maritime history and African-American history. Through these immersive experiences, students can deepen their understanding of various subjects while developing a strong connection with their environment and heritage.

### Authorization

[Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Bill, House Bill 200, Section 19, \(41\) \(see page 289\)](#)

### Name of Grant Program

Operating Grant to the Living Classrooms Foundation

### Purpose

The Fiscal Year 2024 State Budget includes an Operating Grant to the Living Classrooms Foundation for the purposes of funding operating expenses associated with their educational programming for Maryland students and teachers.

### Dissemination

This Grant Information Guide (GIG) will be released on July 20, 2023

### Deadline

Proposals are due no later than 5:00 p.m. August 25, 2023

### Grant Period

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

### Funding Amount Available

\$350,000

### **Estimated Number of Grants**

1

### **Submission Instructions**

The Operating Grant to the Living Classrooms Foundation can be downloaded from the MSDE [Office of Grants Administration and Compliance Special Fiscal Programs webpage](#). A signed electronic copy in PDF format must be emailed to [sai.applications@maryland.gov](mailto:sai.applications@maryland.gov) by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, August 25, 2023.

### **State Responsibilities**

MSDE is responsible for providing required information, data, documentation, and technical assistance to facilitate the grantee's performance of the work and will provide additional assistance when requested.

### **Program Contact**

**Nicole Obregon**  
Special Fiscal Programs Administrator  
410-767-2939  
[nicole.obregon@maryland.gov](mailto:nicole.obregon@maryland.gov)

### **Eligibility**

Eligibility is limited to the Living Classrooms Foundation.

## Use of Funds

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This is a one-time grant for Fiscal Year 2024 for operating expenses. Approved program expenses will be reimbursed upon submission and approval of an invoice with supporting documentation (i.e., receipts, purchase orders, contracts, etc.).

Funds may be used to:

- Support operating expenses related to program delivery;
- Salaries and fringe benefits for program staff;
- Purchase materials and supplies to support student engagement in programming;
- Support transportation costs for students and educators participating in programming;
- Provide services for student support related to participation in educational programming; and
- Operating costs of the organization.

Funds may not be used for:

- Construction of temporary or permanent structures, or
- Food or meals.

## Program Requirements

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The Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Grant to the Living Classrooms Foundation is to support the ongoing operation costs of the Living Classrooms Foundation and ensure continued education services to students and teachers in Maryland. The application for funding must include information about the services to be supported by the funding as well as the outcomes expected.

# Application Requirements

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## COVER PAGE

Applications must include the prescribed Cover Page provided in the application for participation that includes a project statement. The project statement should briefly describe the educational program, how it will be implemented, and the intended outcome(s). Do not exceed the 100-word limit.

## EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

Applicants must describe how the educational plan will lead to the desired impact. Discuss your history of impact on the target population, what has or has not worked, and your track record in success. Provide data to support these claims.

## EXTENT OF NEED

Applications must describe the conditions or needs to be addressed through the Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Grant to the Living Classrooms Foundation. Describe how the operating grant funds will address the problem.

## GOALS

Applicants are required to set overall goals for the educational program. The goal(s) should address the impact your program will have on the students it serves. Goals should be specific, measurable, ambitious yet attainable, realistic, and time bound. At least one educational goal must be set for the program. A sample goal is below:

**Sample goal:** By June 30, 2025, an additional 1,500 students in grades K – 5<sup>th</sup> and 50 educators will be served in the Eco Explorers Program.

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Describe the educational program that will be provided to students and teachers in Maryland as a result of this Operating Grants to the Living Classrooms Foundation.

## EVALUATION

Evaluation is an important part of determining the success of the program. Applicants will be required to describe what success will look like and the criteria that will be used to determine and measure success at the end of the grant period.



### KEY PERSONNEL AND TIMELINE

Grantees are required to include a list of the staff or personnel responsible for the successful implementation and monitoring of the grant requirements. Applicants are required to complete the following management plan chart as part of the proposal.

Name	Title, Partner Organization	Responsibilities	Time Devoted

A project timeline tells the reader when key activities will take place during the grant period. Applicants should consider all of the key tasks or activities that need to be carried out to implement the program successfully, whether each task can realistically begin and end in the proposed time frame, and how long each task will take to complete.

Key Activities	Individual Responsible	Time Frame / Date

## Budget and Budget Narrative

It is required that an itemized budget and budget narrative is submitted to ensure that costs are necessary, reasonable and cost-effective. The itemized budget form (C-1-25) can be accessed through the [MSDE Grants webpage](#). There will be space for applicants to provide the program’s budget and budget narrative including line-item cost justification. All costs described in the program narrative should appear in the C-1-25. See a sample budget below:

Salaries & Wages		
Item/Description	Calculation	Total
Weekly janitorial sanitization and disinfecting of exhibits, approx. 30 weeks of student programming	10 cleaning staff x \$600 weekly x approx. 30 weeks	\$180,000

Supplies & Materials		
Item/Description	Calculation	Total
Office supplies for key personnel and staff for coordination and administration of field trips	Printer cartridges (\$1,000) and paper (\$500)	\$1,500

Other Charges		
Item/Description	Calculation	Total
Wi-Fi for K-12 field trips (estimated 25 school groups per month)	Internet for approx. 30 weeks of student programming and 4 weeks of planning x \$550 per month	\$18,700

## Appendices

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The following Appendices must be included in the proposal for funding, but do not apply to the page limit of the Project Narrative:

Appendix A: [A signed recipient assurances page](#)

Appendix B: [An Itemized Budget Form \(C-1-25\)](#)

## Scoring Rubric

Areas	Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
<b>Evidence of Impact</b>	All requirements listed under the meets criteria are met. In addition, there is a plan to continually evaluate the impact of the program and adapt as necessary.	The applicant discusses prior success implementing an education program for students and how the proposed activities will lead to the desired impact on the population.	There is no evidence that the proposed program will lead to the intended impact. No data was cited to back up claims.
<b>Extent of Need</b>	A needs assessment was conducted that identifies multiple related problems. Both quantitative and qualitative data are presented that aligns with the identified problem.	A needs assessment was conducted that identifies a problem and provides data to demonstrate a need.	No needs assessment was done, or they failed to identify a problem. The applicant provides a problem, but the data presented does not align to the problem.
<b>Goals</b>	All requirements listed under the “meets” criteria are met. In addition, goal(s) are ambitious, and there is an explicit connection to the initiatives in the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future.	The program goals are clear, measurable, and time bound. Goals are aligned to the state’s curricular goals and standards.	Program goals are not clear, measurable, time-bound, or attainable. Goals do not align with the state’s curricular goals and standards.
<b>Educational Program</b>	Proposed activities are innovative, evidence-based, and likely to provide students with a unique learning experience. There is a robust plan to reach new schools and expand access to underrepresented populations.	Proposed activities are evidence-based and meet the educational needs of schools. There is a plan to reach more students and teachers.	Proposed activities are not evidence-based and/or are not based on the needs of schools. There is not an explicit plan to reach more students.

Areas	Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
<b>Evaluation</b>	There is an evaluation plan that includes clear questions, a description of proposed data instruments, collection processes, and analytic methods aligned to the goals. There is a plan to extend evaluation beyond the grant period.	There is a plan for how the applicant will measure the success of the educational program. Evaluation measures align to the extent of need and the stated goals.	The evaluation plan does not measure the success of the program and is disconnected from the goals and plan of operation.
<b>Key Personnel and Timeline</b>	All requirements listed under the “meets” criteria are met. In addition, there is a detailed timeline established for each phase of the program (including planning and evaluation) and lists the key personnel responsible.	The names, titles and responsibilities of personnel are provided, as well as and the percentage of time they will dedicate to this program. There is a timeline for all key activities.	Key personnel information is incomplete. The timeline is either missing or does not include dates for all activities.
<b>Budget</b>	All requirements listed under meets criteria are met. The budget includes sufficient resources for successful execution of the proposed education program.	The budget reflects all program activities. The costs are reasonable, allowable, allocable. All line items contain the calculations used to derive the expected cost. There are no mathematical errors.	The budget does not reflect all program activities. There may be missing calculations and/or mathematical errors.

## Reporting Requirements

Grantees must comply with the following reporting requirements:

Date	Reporting Requirements
Ongoing	Fiscal and program monitoring
January 31, 2024	Midyear progress report due
August 30, 2024	Final Progress Report due

Notes: Any requests for amendments must be submitted at least 45 days before the grant period ends, and must be submitted using the C-125-B form found in the [Grant Budget Forms Workbook](#) on the [MSDE grants webpage](#). Final invoices must be submitted no later than 60 days after the grant period ends.

### Application Timeline

Important dates are provided below:

Date	Milestone
July 20, 2023	The Grant Information Guide and the application for participating are released
July 25, 2023	MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support sessions for interested applicants
August 25, 2023	The grant application period closes
August 26, 2023	MSDE evaluates the application using the rubric
July 1, 2023	The grant period begins
June 30, 2024	The grant period ends

## Non-Discrimination Statement

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The Maryland State Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry/national origin, color, disability, gender identity/expression, marital status, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. For inquiries related to Department policy, please contact:

Equity Assurance and Compliance Office  
Office of the Deputy State Superintendent for Operations

Maryland State Department of Education  
200 W. Baltimore Street - 2nd Floor  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2595

410-767-0123 - voice  
410-767-0431 - fax  
410-333-6442 - TTY/TDD

## **The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)**

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Each application must develop and describe the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the project or activity to be conducted with such assistance, by addressing the special needs of students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers to equitable participation.



## Customer Service Support Sessions

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The MSDE will hold a customer service support session for the Living Classrooms Foundation. During this session, MSDE personnel will provide an overview of the application process, as well as program requirements. The session will be on:

**Monday, July 25, 2023**

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/ota-zrgp-jyk>

Or dial: (US) +1 601-803-2313 PIN: 665 944 003#

More phone numbers: <https://tel.meet/ota-zrgp-jyk?pin=4671811377188>

MSDE staff will also be available to provide technical assistance throughout the grant application process. Contact Nicole Obregon at [sai.applications@maryland.gov](mailto:sai.applications@maryland.gov) with questions related to the Operating Grant to the Living Classrooms Foundation.

This funding opportunity, including all attachments and updates, can be downloaded from the MSDE [Office of Grants Administration and Compliance Special Fiscal Programs webpage](#).

### Attachments

Operating Grant to the Living Classrooms Foundation application