

New Start Grant Program Pre-Proposal Conference

Maryland Department of Labor

Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL)

Thursday, January 23, 2025

10:00am



Agenda

- I. Welcome and Opening Remarks
- II. Housekeeping Items
- III. Overview of The Maryland New Start Act of 2022 & Definitions
- IV. Key Components of the Solicitation
- V. Program Evaluation and Performance Targets
- VI. Proposal Format and Submission
- VII. Awards and Timeline
- VIII. Reporting Requirements
- IX. Questions

Housekeeping Items

- Please keep yourself muted until we are ready to take questions
- If you joined by phone, please include your name and organization in the chat
- Type any questions into the chat- they will be answered at the end of the presentation
- All questions and answers received during this conference will be posted on the New Start website by the end of next week: www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/newstart/
- If your organization decides to move forward with developing a proposal, please submit an Intent to Apply notification to Heather Evans at heather.evans1@maryland.gov - an informal email is fine
- If you choose not to submit a proposal and want to provide feedback as to your decision for the purposes of improvement toward future grant opportunities developed by Labor, please email Heather Evans
- This presentation will be shared with attendees

Maryland New Start Act of 2022

- Maryland General Assembly enacted House Bill 158, The Maryland New Star Act, establishing the:
 - New Start Grant Program (MD Labor)
 - New Start Microloan Program (Maryland Department of Commerce)
- Purpose: provide entrepreneurship development opportunities for *certain covered individuals* through training, programming, and direct access to small business financing
- Annual allotment through FY28 to MD Labor to administer and disburse awards for the New Start Grant Program is contingent on State appropriation.
- MD Labor will consider up to \$60,000 per project per program year

Definitions

The Act defines a covered individual as one who:

- Has been convicted of a criminal offense;
- Has completed a term of imprisonment in federal prison, or a State or local correctional facilities; or
- Is approved for release by a correctional facility for the purpose of participating in a training program; and,
- Meets the offense eligibility requirements put forth by the US Small Business Administration (SBA) for the Federal Microloan Program

Definitions

- SBA Offense Eligibility Requirements for Federal Microloans¹
 - Effective July 15, 2015, businesses with an associate on parole or probation are eligible to receive SBA microloans **except** if the offense:
 - a) Involved fraud or dishonesty; or
 - b) In the case of a childcare business, involve an offense against a child.
 - Offenses involving fraud or dishonesty include, for example, larceny, theft, embezzlement, wrongful abstraction, conversation, counterfeiting, willful misapplications or anything other fraudulent or dishonest acts resulting in financial loss.

¹<https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/2018-05/Microloan%20SOP%2052%2000%20B.pdf>

Key Component: Curriculum

- Nationally Recognized Model, or a model based on nationally recognized standards of entrepreneurship education, may be included as Appendix
- Business Plan Competition for Currently Incarcerated Participants
- Executive Mentoring with business/executive leaders

Key Component: Program Requirements

- Reentry Services
- Access to business financing for covered individuals
- One letter of support or memoranda of understanding is **required** from at least one local business or employer that is committed to partnering on the proposed program.
- One letter of support or memoranda of understanding is **strongly encouraged**, but not required, from an agency, organization, or institution that can speak to the applicant's capacity to serve incarcerated and previously incarcerated individuals.

Letters of Support and/or MOUs

- For MD Correctional Institutions, requests for Letters of Support or MOUs must be made three (3) weeks in advance and must be approved by DPSCS, Office of Program, Treatment, and ReEntry Services
 - POC: Danielle Cox, Director of Education for DPSCS, danielle.cox1@maryland.gov
- Federal facilities: Letters of Support and MOUs must be signed by the facility Warden or Executive Director

Key Component: Eligible Applicants

In addition to being able to feasibly implement the curriculum and program design for the target population, eligible applicants should be able to:

- Meet all reporting and monitoring requirements outlined in the CGP
- Contribute at least 25% of the award amount from new or existing non-State Sources, including indirect costs and in-kind contributions
- Are in good standing with the Comptroller of Maryland and MD Labor

Program Evaluation and Performance Targets

1. Number of participants expected to be enrolled in ongoing entrepreneurship development programming, annually.
2. Number of participants expected to graduate/complete entrepreneurship programming, annually.
3. Number of participants expected to be prepared to pursue small business or entrepreneurial financing, annually.
4. Expected average attendance rate for programming (percentage).

Program Evaluation and Performance Targets

5. Target recidivism rate for participants and program completers/graduates (percentage).
6. Number of participants expected to earn a credential or course credit, annually. (if applicable)
7. Number of participants expected to be served through wraparound, reentry, or job readiness services, annually.
8. Target participant satisfaction rate, based on participants' evaluation of the program.

Proposal Format and Submission

- **Maryland New Start Grant Program Application for Initial Grant Funding (Attachment A)**
 - Applicants should respond thoroughly to each prompt
 - For ease of review, do not remove the prompts from the document
 - Letters of support and/or MOUs should be included as an Appendix to Attachment A
- Optional documents such as additional letters of support/MOUs, sample program curriculum, and program promotional materials should be included as an Appendix to Attachment A

Proposal Format and Submission

- **Maryland New Start Program Budget (Attachment B)**
 - Requests for funding should not exceed \$60,000
 - Non-State committed funds should be greater than 25% of the total grant amount requested
 - The total amount requested should equal the amount entered in Question 23A of Attachment A
 - The total amount of non-State funds committed should equal the amount entered in Question 23C of Attachment A
 - Program Budgets should be submitted as an Excel sheet
- Completed applications should be submitted to Heather Evans at heather.evans1@maryland.gov and include all required documents in a **single email**.

Awards and Timeline

Event	Date(s)
Solicitation Released	January 6, 2025
Pre-Proposal Conference	January 23, 2025
Proposals due to MD Labor	April 4, 2025
Review Process	April-May 2025
Awards Announced	May 2025
Grant Start	June 1, 2025
Period of Performance	June 1, 2025-May 31, 2026

Reporting Requirements

- Grantees will be required to track the ongoing progress of all proposed program evaluation and performance targets previously outlined
- Grantees must provide narrative descriptions of:
 - Key activities and services
 - Outreach activities
 - Updates on the timeline/work plan, including challenges or areas of concern
 - Promising approaches, innovative processes, lessons learned, milestones
 - Participant-level accomplishments
- Grantees must submit programmatic (narrative) and fiscal reports together as a single email on a **quarterly** basis

Annual Reporting Requirements

- A quarterly report is not required for Quarter 4, as Quarter 4 should be provided in the annual report
- Grantees must submit a cumulative annual report that details information gathered through the program year
- The annual report includes five sections comprised of 39 data points
 1. Participant Demographic Information
 2. Program Entrance Profile
 3. Program Enrollment Profile
 4. Program Exit Profile
 5. Participant Business Profile

Contact Information

Questions about the New Start Grant Solicitation will be accepted via email through
Friday, March 21, 2025

Heather Evans

Strategic Initiatives Grants Program Manager

heather.evans1@maryland.gov

All questions will be posted to the New Start Grant website

www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/newstart/