GRANT INFORMATION GUIDE

Maryland Robotics Grant Program 2022

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Mohammed Choudhury
State Superintendent of Schools
Secretary-Treasurer, Maryland State Board of
Education

Deann M. Collins, Ed D.
Deputy Superintendent, Teaching and Learning

Larry Hogan
Governor

MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Clarence C. Crawford
President, Maryland State Board of Education

Charles R. Dashiell, Jr., Esq. (Vice President)

Shawn D. Bartley, Esq.

Gail Bates

Chuen-Chin Bianca Chang

Susan J. Getty, Ed.D.

Vermelle Greene, Ph.D.

Jean C. Halle

Dr. Joan Mele-McCarthy

Rachel L. McCusker

Lori Morrow

Brigadier General Warner I. Sumpter (Ret.)

Holly C. Wilcox, Ph.D.

Kevin Bokoum (Student Member)

Table of Contents

Program Description

The Maryland State Department of Education invites Local Education Agencies (LEA), schools, or non-profit entities working with Maryland schools to support the development and/or expansion of robotics education programs. The robotics program activities may take place before or after the school day, on weekends and holidays, or during the school day as determined in partnership with a Local Education Agency (LEA).

NAME OF GRANT PROGRAM

Maryland Robotics Grant Program 2022

AUTHORIZATION

House Bill 115 (2016), Chapter 0682- Robotics Grant Program

PURPOSE

The State of Maryland is committed to helping local school systems maximize the potential of new and emerging technologies to improve student outcomes and better prepare all students for the workforce needs of the 21st Century. House Bill 115 (2016), Education- Robotics Grant Program – Establishment (amended in 2018), created this program to increase the number of robotics programs in the state or to support existing robotic programs. To distribute these funds, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) makes annual grants available to a school or nonprofit entity associated with a public school.

DISSEMINATION

This grant program was released on April 15, 2022.

DEADLINE

Proposals are due no later than 5 p.m. on May 27, 2022.

GRANT PERIOD

July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023
Notification of awards will be sent by mail on or about Friday, June 24, 2022.

FUNDING AMOUNT AVAILABLE

There is $350,000 in funding available.

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF GRANTS

Thirty-five (35)
The number of grant awards will be based on the number of submissions and the availability of funds. MSDE may consider geographic distribution when making awards.

ESTIMATED AVERAGE GRANT AMOUNT

Grant awards range between $5,000 to $20,000.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

The Maryland Robotics Grant Program 2022 Application can be downloaded from the MSDE grants page. A signed electronic copy in PDF format, must be submitted by email to bruce.lesh@maryland.gov.

STATE RESPONSIBILITIES

MSDE seeks Maryland public schools and nonprofit robotics clubs associated with a public school to support the expansion of existing robotics programs and the development of new robotics programs throughout the state. MSDE will review all applications for eligibility and selection for awards.

MSDE will monitor grantee progress through quarterly project updates, financial reports, and an on-site or virtual monitoring visit for each Robotics Grant Program.

PROGRAM CONTACT

Bruce Lesh, 410-767-0519
bruce.lesh@maryland.gov

ELIGIBILITY

This funding opportunity is open to Maryland Public Schools and Nonprofit entities partnering with a public school to support robotics programming, or a nonprofit entity supporting an existing or developing robotics program where the majority (51% or more) of members are public school students.

Use of Funds

Note to Non-profit Organizations: Approved program expenses will be reimbursed upon submission and approval of an invoice with supporting documentation (i.e., receipts, purchase orders, etc.). Please ensure that funding is available within your organization to cover any initial expenses.

Funds may be used to:

- Purchase high-level technology and equipment that support robotics programs. All equipment and programs requiring LEA Internet must follow the LEA User Policies.
- Purchase materials and supplies to support robotics programs, including virtual robotics platforms and/or applications.
- Provide faculty stipends or fees for participation in robotics events (as needed, based on LEA policy).
- Support transportation and hotel costs for students and advisors participating in robotics competitions.
- Support registration or membership fees for students enrolled in robotics related competitions and organizations (including in-person or virtual competitions).

Funds may not be used for:

- Construction of temporary or permanent structures,
- Membership to non-robotics organizations,
- Food or meals,
- Equipment for administrative purposes,
- Renting or maintaining building space,
- Costs of finger printing for LSS educators,
- Supplementing salaries and/or stipends during the regular workday, and

- Supplanting or supplementing an employee's existing salary if job duties and/or role are related to the robotics team/club (i.e., Coordinator, Program Director).

Program Requirements

A Maryland Robotics Grant Program must include the following to be considered for funding:

- Identification of qualified key personnel for the proposed activities,
- Student access to essential technologies and materials, including physical and/or virtual robotics platforms,
- Activities aligned to recognized computer science standards, curriculum, or instructional programs,
- A schedule of meeting dates and location,
- Compliance with LEA safety and privacy policies, including those for non-system employees, and
- Access for students with disabilities regarding location, technologies, and digital resources.

Proposal for Funding

REQUIRED COMPONENTS

A. Application Cover Page (1 page)

The cover page includes all contact information and grant partnership information including eligibility as a public school or non-profit, and status of the robotics program as developing or existing.

B. Project Abstract (1 page)

The project abstract, introduces the project to the reader. It should be factual, brief, and focused on the organization's efforts. Do not assume the reader is familiar with the proposed project. The project abstract should cover the core aspects of the proposed project, such as the populations serviced, brief description of the goals, strategies to meet them, and the roles of the partner(s).

C. Project Narrative (5-page limit)

- Extent of Need

Describe the conditions or needs to be addressed through the Robotics Grant Program. Include a clearly defined problem supported by a needs assessment and supporting data. Document current or past efforts to address the problem and show how those efforts addressed the need. Also discuss the applicant's history or expertise in dealing with the problem.

- Goals, Measurable Objectives, and Milestones

State the overall goal of the project. The goal should address the main problem identified at the beginning of the needs assessment. While there should be at least one goal, it is possible to have multiple goals. For each goal statement, identify objectives or anticipated outcomes to be accomplished. It is imperative that objectives be established for every target population. For instance, if the project seeks to increase student achievement by training teachers, there must be objectives for both students and teachers.

Since goals and objectives are not evaluated until the end of the year, milestones must be established to measure progress during the year. Milestones are evaluated, either quarterly or semiannually.

- Plan of Operation

Discuss the strategies and activities to be used to accomplish the outcomes. Strategies are broad approaches (methods, procedures, techniques) employed to accomplish outcomes. Include in this section a justification as to why the strategies were chosen and how they will help to achieve the outcomes. Who are the target clients, and how will they use or be affected by the project services?

How many clients from each client group will ultimately be serviced by the project, both directly and indirectly? Explain how these numbers were derived.

Activities are specific steps taken to accomplish the project objectives, and involve direct service to clients (students, teachers, parents). Examples include specific teacher in-services, parent nights, and mentoring sessions. They may take place on a single date (e.g., a field trip), or over a period (e.g., the use of an innovative curriculum). List the activities the project will implement and relate each activity to a strategy. Discuss how the activities relate to the respective strategies.

- Evaluation and Dissemination Plan

Grantees are required to submit annual evaluation reports and quarterly progress reports that are consistent with the project's goal and objective(s). Keep in mind that the final evaluation will consider the entire project, beginning to end. It should not be viewed as what is done after the project's completion, but as an integral element in the project's planning, design, and implementation. An effective ongoing plan that evaluates milestones quarterly lends to making informed decisions about needed changes.

- Management Plan/Key Personnel
List on the Management Plan Worksheet, in chronological order, all major management actions necessary to implement the project during the funding cycle. Assign an approximate date for each action. If the action is ongoing, indicate the range of dates over which it will be implemented. A well-considered management plan assigns responsibility for action to a management team member. Indicate on the worksheet who is responsible for accomplishing each action. Include in the Attachments a one-page résumé for each person playing a key role in the project.

D. Budget and Budget Narrative (2-page limit)

The itemized budget form (C-1-25) can be accessed through the MSDE grants website, and a proposed budget must be submitted with the application. If difficulties are encountered in categorizing the budget, consult with the appropriate financial agent from your institution. After submission and before final approval, adjustments may be required based on approved spending amounts. At that time, a final budget form must be signed by both the district's Budget Officer and the Superintendent or the Head of Agency/Non-profit.

The application form includes a space for applicants to provide the program's budget and a budget narrative. All costs described in the project narrative should appear in the budget narrative and must have a corresponding entry in the itemized budget. Reviewers should be able to see a clear connection between the project activities and the budget line items.

E. Attachments and Supporting Documentation:
- Letters of commitment from all project partners and principals of participating schools. These should be addressed to the superintendent or head of the grantee agency acting as the lead agency. Letters should not be addressed to MSDE.
- Résumés of Key Personnel – Include a one-page résumé for each person playing a key role in the project. Only information relevant to the project should be included in the résumé.
- Signed assurances - Please read and complete the Recipient Assurances page which must be signed and dated by the Superintendent of your school system or the head of your grantee agency
- LEA documentation or URL to policies related to safety and privacy, including those related to non-system employees
- An Excel version of the proposed Itemized Budget Form (C-1-25). Upon final approval, the budget form must be signed by the Budget Officer and the Superintendent or Head of Agency.

The Review Process

The review of proposals will be a two-part process.

1) Written applications will be pre-screened for eligibility and inclusion of all required sections. Applicants not meeting all pre-screen requirements will not be read.

2) A review committee established by the MSDE will evaluate written applications. Reviewers will comment upon the proposals and assign numerical scores based on the selection criteria listed below.

REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Robotics Grant Program review committee will be composed of three members of the MSDE Division of Teaching and Learning and one member representing the Maryland Robotics community.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Applications will be reviewed and scored based on the following criteria for the grant program. A total of 100 points may be awarded.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT
(20 Total Points)

Exemplary (In addition to meeting all conditions listed in "Meets Standard") Points: 14-20	Meets Standard (Meets all conditions listed for each criterion) Points: 7-13	Does Not Meet Standard (Does not meet one or more of the conditions listed for each criterion) Points: 0-6
The need is thoroughly described and evident and is aligned with the goals and objectives and milestones outlined. The project will clearly address the need. The project addresses one or both of the stated grant priorities.	There is a limited description of the needs being addressed. The need is not well supported or clearly aligned to the goals, objectives and milestones. The project addresses one of the stated grant priorities.	There is little evidence of need. The project does not address either of the stated grant priorities.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND MILESTONES
(15 Total Points)

Exemplary (In addition to meeting all conditions listed in "Meets Standard") Points:11-15	Meets Standard (Meets all conditions listed for each criterion) Points: 6-10	Does Not Meet Standard (Does not meet one or more of the conditions listed for each criterion) Points: 0-5
Proposal thoroughly describes the goals, objectives and milestones. Strong connections are made between the proposed program, data and content standards.	Proposal describes the goals, objectives and milestones. Connections are made between the proposed program and either data and content standards.	Proposal provides limited description of goals, objectives, and milestones. Connections to data and content standards are not included.

PLAN OF OPERATION
(20 Total Points)

Exemplary (In addition to meeting all conditions listed in "Meets Standard") Points: 14-20	Meets Standard (Meets all conditions listed for each criterion) Points: 7-13	Does Not Meet Standard (Does not meet one or more of the conditions listed for each criterion) Points: 0-6
Proposal includes strategies and supporting activities that exhibit strong connections to objectives, are supported by rationale/research, and align to meet expected outcomes.	Proposal includes strategies and supporting activities that exhibit connections to objectives, are supported by rationale/research, and align to meet expected outcomes.	Proposal does not include strategies nor supporting activities that exhibit connections to objectives, are supported by rationale/research, and align to meet expected outcomes.

EVALUATION & DISSEMINATION PLAN
(10 Total Points)

Exemplary (In addition to meeting all conditions listed in "Meets Standard") Points: 7-10	Meets Standard (Meets all conditions listed for each criterion) Points: 4-6	Does Not Meet Standard (Does not meet one or more of the conditions listed for each criterion) Points: 0-3
Proposal includes a comprehensive evaluation process that identifies evaluators and the plan for the dissemination of results.	Proposal includes an evaluation process and a dissemination plan.	Proposal includes a partial evaluation or dissemination plan.

MANAGEMENT PLAN
(15 Total Points)

Exemplary (In addition to meeting all conditions listed in "Meets Standard") Points: 11-15	Meets Standard (Meets all conditions listed for each criterion) Points: 6-10	Does Not Meet Standard (Does not meet one or more of the conditions listed for each criterion) Points: 0-5
Proposal includes a comprehensive management plan that identifies all personnel, their roles and responsibilities, the organizational structure, and related timelines.	Proposal includes a management plan that identifies personnel, their roles and responsibilities, the organizational structure, and timelines.	Proposal includes a management plan with limited details.

BUDGET
(20 Total Points)

Exemplary (In addition to meeting all conditions listed in "Meets Standard") Points: 14-20	Meets Standard (Meets all conditions listed for each criterion) Points: 7-13	Does Not Meet Standard (Does not meet one or more of the conditions listed for each criterion) Points: 0-6
Budget is clear, reasonable and cost effective. Budget narrative itemizes expenses in detail. Budget calculations are correct.	Budget is reasonable and cost effective. Budget narrative identifies expenses and provides general explanation, but lacks depth and connections between costs and the goals of the program.	Budget is not clear, reasonable and/or cost effective. Budget narrative does not provide detailed explanation of expenditures. Budget contains calculation errors and/or is completed incorrectly.

AWARD NOTIFICATION

Notification of awards will be sent by email in June 2022. Processing of the official Notice of Grant Awards (NOGA) will begin on July 1, 2022. Please note this process can take 4-6 weeks.

Reporting Requirements

Grantees must comply with the following reporting requirements:

Date	Reporting Requirements
Ongoing	Fiscal and program monitoring, with an on-site visit (date to be determined)
Oct. 15, 2022	Q1: Quarterly Project Updates (Narrative and Fiscal)
Jan. 15, 2023	Q2: Quarterly Project Updates
April 15, 2023	Q3: Quarterly Project Updates
September 30, 2023	Final Evaluation Report (Narrative and Fiscal)

Notes: Any requests for programmatic 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 webpage. Final invoices must be submitted no later than 60 days after the grant period.

The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), Section 427

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 in order to overcome barriers to equitable participation.

Non-Discrimination Statement

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

Customer Service Support Session

The MSDE will hold virtual customer service support sessions for interested applicants. During these sessions, MSDE personnel will provide an overview of the program, the requirements, and the application process. Please see the link below for the Webex sessions.

➢ April 21, 2022 from 10-11am

meet.google.com/opi-ivqf-uaw
Join by phone
(US) +1 609-450-3718
PIN: 618 222 379#

➢ April 28, 2022 from 10-11am

meet.google.com/gmz-bbch-nuw
Join by phone
(US) +1 413-489-4126
PIN: 516 430 172#

Grant Timeline

This funding opportunity, including all attachments and updates, are found on the MSDE website.

Date	Program Milestone
April 15, 2022	MSDE disseminates the grant information and opens the application submission window
April 21 and 28, 2022	The MSDE will hold an information session from 10-11am to answer questions and provide customer service and support
May 27, 2022	The grant application period closes – Applications and all attachments are due to MSDE
June 24, 2022	MSDE completes application review and notifies awardees
July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023	Grant Period
Sept. 30, 2023	Final Evaluation and Report (Narrative and Fiscal)

Submission

Proposals for funding must include a completed application with all required components and attachments. The Robotics Grant Application is a fillable Microsoft Word document that may be downloaded from the MSDE Grants Office page. Applications must be submitted in pdf format by email to the program contact at bruce.lesh@maryland.gov. An electronic proposal digitally signed by an Official (Superintendent of Schools, Non-profit agency head, or designee) is due by 5:00 p.m. on May 27, 2022.

Attachments

- Letters of Commitment from School(s) and/or Non-profit(s)
- Résumés of Key Personnel – Include a one-page résumé for each person playing a key role.
- MSDE Recipient Assurances page
- LEA documentation or URL to policies related to on-line safety and privacy
- MSDE Itemized Budget Form (C-1-25)