

Tips for FY2011 Project Grant Applicants in the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area (HCWHA)

1. BEFORE YOU BEGIN TO PUT TOGETHER YOUR GRANT PROPOSAL

- Start your Cultural Data Project profile immediately (go to www.md-culturaldata.org, sign up and start the on-line training; this is FREE)
- Contact the appropriate local contact to discuss your project proposal.
- Review the application to see what goes where and collect all supporting materials (request letters of support, and letters of commitment for matching funds early).
- Become familiar with the HCWHA Management Plan and the heritage area selection criteria. This is what reviewers use to rank your application. Calculate the cash needs for your project and create a budget to meet these needs. Identify your sources of match. Do not ask for more money than the project requires.
- Identify who is authorized to sign the proposal (this must be the person legally authorized to act on behalf of the organization or local government).
- Ensure that your non-profit organization is in good standing with the State Department of Taxation.
- Note the deadlines for drafts and final proposals to be submitted to local contacts. Submit the appropriate number of copies and all necessary application materials ON TIME.

2. AFTER YOU HAVE WRITTEN YOUR DRAFT

- Get someone who is unfamiliar with your project to read it. That person should read for content, clarity, construction, readability, intellectual excitement, grammar, and spelling!
- Reread the proposal with a critical eye: Is the proposal convincing? Worthy of funding? Interesting? Will it be a model for future projects regionally or statewide?
- Think of the reader - *font*, *type size*, *formatting!* Use 10 or 12-point type.
- Use the spell check feature on your computer, but don't neglect to proofread your document for grammatical and spelling errors that may not be caught by the software.
- Double-check the budget. Is it reasonable and within the grant cap (\$50,000 non-capital; \$100,000 capital). Fully itemized? Do the totals agree with those on the cover sheet? What costs will be covered by the MHAA grant? By the applicant's cash (75%) and in-kind (25%) match? Can you provide proof of match? Use the budget format provided.

3. WHEN PUTTING TOGETHER THE FINAL APPLICATION PACKAGE:

- Make sure the application is neat, clean and EASY TO READ.
- Mark the originals with a Post-It saying "original copy."
- Review the application requirements to be sure you have completed them all. If you are unsure, check with your local contact or the heritage area director.
- Attach all required supporting documents. Only attach those supporting documents that are required and those that you are certain will enhance your application (non-essentials are not appreciated).

- Do NOT use special binders, spiral binding, table of contents, separator pages or cover pages.
- Enclose the correct number of copies (two paper originals and 11 paper photocopies, and one electronic/digital version on a CD-R).
- Submit application on time.
- Always keep a copy of your proposal in a file.

4. A STRONG PROPOSAL WILL DESCRIBE:

- An important need and a project that aligns with the goals and priorities of the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area Management Plan;
- A clear plan of action;
- The specific goals to be accomplished;
- The quality of the people involved (attach resumes of key personnel describing their relevant experience);
- The ability of the organization to carry out the project;
- Ways that this project will leverage other support (match);
- How you plan to measure the outcomes and prove success.

FOLLOW DIRECTIONS!

When in doubt, talk with your local contact (see below)!

Daphne Daly, **Carroll County** Bureau of Planning, 225 North Center Street, Westminster, MD 21157-5194
Phone: 410-386-2145; 1-888-302-8978, x2145; FAX: 410-386-2120; Email: ddaly@ccg.carr.org

Janet L. Davis, **Frederick County** Dept. of Planning & Zoning, 12 East Church Street, Frederick, MD 21701
Phone: 301-600-2958; FAX: 301-600-2054; Email: jdavis@frederickcountymd.gov

Charissa Stanton, **Washington County** Heritage Area Assistant, 16 Public Square, Hagerstown, MD 21740
Phone: (301) 791-3246 x 15 FAX: (301) 791-2601; Email: charissas@marylandmemories.com

Elizabeth Scott Shatto, Director, Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area, 19 E. Church Street,
Frederick, MD 21701 Phone: 301-600-4042; FAX: 310-600-4044; lshatto@fredco-md.net

ALSO APPRECIATED - Advocacy for the MHAA program is needed now more than ever. In fact, the availability of project grants depends entirely on how well this program fares in the state budget process. The Maryland General Assembly session starts January 13, 2010. You will be asked to communicate with your legislators, asking them to maintain level funding for the heritage area program at \$3 million. Please do so! You can locate contact information for your legislators by visiting <http://www.mdelect.net/electedofficials/>.