

AGENDA



Jake ReillyProgram Director



Joe Toolan Program Manager

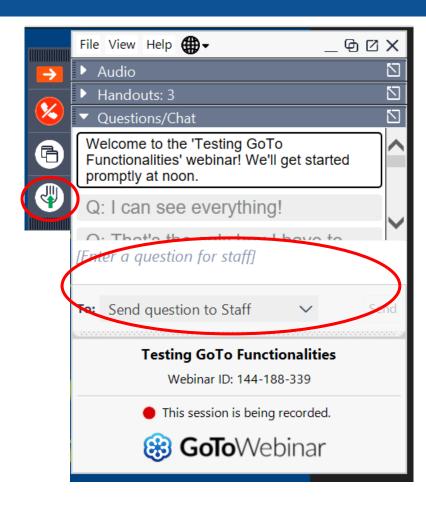
- Welcome/Webinar Instructions
- 2023 PA MEB Program RFP Overview
 - Geographic Focus
 - Eligible Activities and Practices
 - Eligible Applicants and Cooperators
 - Evaluation Criteria
 - Important Additional Considerations
 - Critical Resources for Developing a NFWF Application
- Submitting a Proposal in Easygrants



WEBINAR INSTRUCTIONS

- To improve sound quality, all participants will be muted for the duration of the webinar. To ask a question:
 - 1. Enter your query where it says "Enter a question for staff" and click send. Joe will type a response or read your question aloud when we pause for Q&A. OR
 - 2. Write it down and contact us after the webinar.
- We may ask you to raise your "hand" in the webinar dialogue box to confirm participants can hear us.
- If you experience a technical glitch, please type it into the question box, since we can't hear you. (We may not know about the glitch unless you say something!)

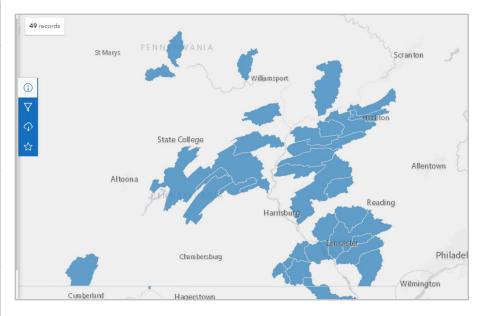
The webinar will be available for download within 48 hrs at NFWF.org/Chesapeake





PA MEB PROGRAM RFP OVERVIVEW

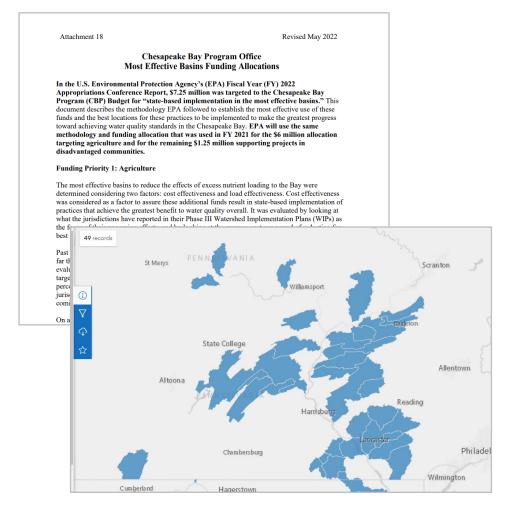
Program Priority:	Rapid implementation of cost-effective agricultural nitrogen load reductions
Geographic Focus:	Selected basins in PA's CB watershed
Applicant Eligibility:	Conservation districts, NRCS-approved Technical Service Providers, county action plan coordinators, local gov't, nonprofits
Landowner/Operator Eligibility:	Individuals and entities with ownership or management control of an agricultural operation
Evaluation Criteria:	 Cost-effectiveness for ag N Readiness to implement Co-benefits
Grant Size:	Up to \$1,000,000 per award
Matching Requirements:	N/A, but encouraged
Project Duration:	18-24 months





GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

- EPA Appropriations: Increase in the CBP budget for "state-based implementation in the most effective basins"
- MEBs subsequently determined by EPA based on both cost effectiveness and load effectiveness
 - Cost effectiveness: emphasis on agricultural nitrogen load reductions (e.g. \$/lb)
 - Load effectiveness: considers effect on DO based on land to water, delivery, and DO response
- Implementation must occur wholly within defined basins of PA's CB watershed









ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

- Activities and costs related to:
 - **1. Direct implementation** of eligible practices on eligible operations within eligible geographic areas
 - 2. Necessary technical assistance tasks associated with conservation planning, and the design, engineering, and permitting of eligible practices on eligible operations within eligible geographic areas that may be implemented subsequently, through other funding sources, etc.
 - 3. Piloting of innovative methods and approaches for **verification of existing practices** in support of ongoing crediting of existing practices for additional nitrogen reduction for on eligible operations within eligible geographic areas

Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund

ELIGIBLE PRACTICES

- Identified by EPA based on the demonstrated ability to yield low-cost reductions in agricultural nitrogen loading
- Includes both annual (i.e., "management") and structural (i.e., "engineered")
 practices
 - Tillage Management
 - Tree Planting
 - Wetland Restoration
 - Prescribed Grazing
 - Animal Waste Management Systems
 - Manure Incorporation
 - Manure Injection
 - Manure Transport
 - Barnyard Runoff Control
 - Loafing Lot Management
 - Alternative Crops

- Retirement of Highly Erodible Land
- Cover Crops –Traditional
- Cover Crops Commodity
- Forest and Grass Buffers
- Forest and Grass Buffers w/ Exclusion
- Core Nutrient Management Nitrogen
- Supplemental NM N Rate
- Supplemental NM N Placement
- Supplemental NM N Timing
- Soil and Water Conservation Plans



ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS AND COOPERATORS

- **Eligible Applicants:** Conservation districts, NRCS-certified TSPs, CAP coordination entities, local governments, and 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations
 - Local gov't and nonprofits must provide letters of support from affected conservation district and CAP coordinators
 - Awards may include actual costs only; recipients may not apply loaded rates or realize profit from an award of federal financial assistance funds
- Eligible Landowners/Operators: Individuals and entities with ownership or management control of an agricultural operation, per PA statute, located in MEB
- Ineligible Landowner/Operators: Operations under enforcement action by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, State Conservation Commission, or U.S. EPA



EVALUATION CRITERIA #1 – CONSERVATION OUTCOMES

- Total Agricultural Nitrogen Load Reduction **Potential:**
 - Proposal contributes meaningful agricultural nitrogen load reduction outcomes in support of the Chesapeake Bay TMDL, Pennsylvania's Phase III WIP and, as applicable, associated Countywide Action Plans.
- **Conservation and Farm Management Co-Benefits:**
 - Proposed implementation actions yield clear and meaningful co-benefits for regional ecosystem conservation and restoration goals and farm management outcomes.









EVALUATION CRITERIA #2 – BUDGET

• Cost-Effectiveness for Agricultural Nitrogen Load Reduction: Proposals that demonstrate the greatest cost-effectiveness for agricultural nitrogen load reductions (i.e., \$/lb. N reduced) will generally be the most competitive proposals.

Additional Considerations:

- Quality and level of detail in the budget notes and budget narrative
- Reasonability of proposed costs
- Clear indication of funding for project partners, stakeholders, and community members, if proposed in proposal narrative
- Leverage by partners and other contributors through cash-, in-kind, and other sources



EVALUATION CRITERIA #3 – TECHNICAL

• **Readiness:** Considering the status of necessary planning, design, and permitting and proposed timeline, projects demonstrate a readiness to rapidly proceed to practice implementation, completion of TA tasks, practice verification

Additional considerations:

- Specific goals that correlate with a clear, logical and achievable work plan, milestones, and timeline
- Core competencies necessary to implement the proposed activities are well-represented on the project team
- Awareness and plans to obtain necessary permits and environmental compliance requirements
- Demonstrated ability to manage and implement similar projects on time and within budget

Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund

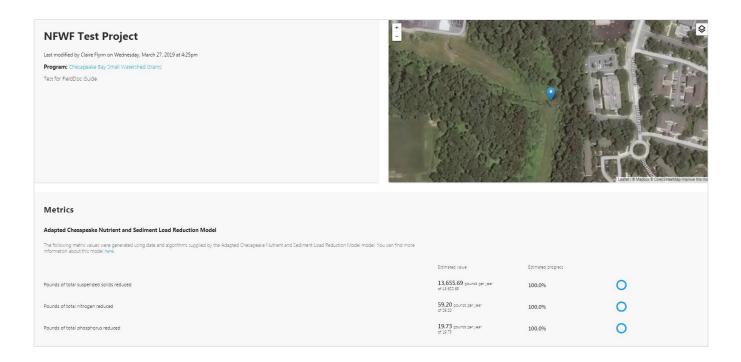
ASSOCIATED EASYGRANTS METRICS

Applicable Metrics	Metric Description/Instructions
CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Lbs N avoided (annually)*	Please use FieldDoc to develop estimates of the total nitrogen load reduction potential your proposed project. Enter FieldDocgenerated pollutant load reduction totals in this field then upload your FieldDoc Project Summary in the "Uploads" section.
CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with BMPs	Enter the total number of acres under agricultural or non-urban BMPs to reduce nutrient or sediment loading. Do not double-count individual acres which have multiple BMPs.
CBSF - Riparian restoration - Miles restored	Enter the number of miles of riparian habitat restored through the implementation of forest or grass buffers that are at least 35 feet wide. If you're implementing livestock exclusion, report associated outcomes instead under the "CBSF - BMP implementation for livestock exclusion miles of fencing installed" metric. In the NOTES section, specify the landcover type prior to planting (barren, cropland, grassland, shrubland), the % of vegetation on the pre-project site (0-20%, 21-40%, 41-60%, 61-80%, 81-100%), the dominant vegetation being planted (Broadleaf, Conifer, Shrub, Grass, Marsh, Swamp), the buffer width, and the acres.
CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with cover crops	Enter the number of cropland acres with cover crops practices. Please describe the cover crop practices in the NOTES section.
CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with conservation tillage	Enter the number of cropland acres with conservation tillage practices. Please describe conservation tillage practices in the NOTES section.
CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with enhanced nutrient management	Enter the number of cropland acres with enhanced nutrient management practices other than or in addition to conservation tillage or cover crops. Please describe the nutrient management practices in the NOTES section.
CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with managed grazing	Enter the number of acres with managed grazing (i.e., promoting plant growth above and below ground, improving wildlife habitat, and maximizing soil carbon through a variety of grazing approaches). Please describe the grazing practices in the NOTES section.
CBSF - BMP implementation for livestock fencing - Miles of fencing installed	Enter the number of miles of livestock exclusion installed. Assume activities include exclusion fencing and a 35-foot forest or grass buffer, unless otherwise noted.
CBSF - Wetland restoration - Acres restored	Enter the number of acres of wetland habitat restored, created, or enhanced. In the NOTES section, specify the landcover prior to restoration (Marsh, Tidal marsh, Wet meadow, Swamp) and indicate % of vegetation on pre-project site (0-20%, 21-40%, 41-60%, 61-80%, 81-100%).
CBSF - Conservation easements - Acres protected under easement	Enter the number of acres protected under long-term easement (permanent or >30-yr). Assuming the specific parcel(s) has been identified, in the NOTES indicate what % of natural land cover would have been cleared in the absence of the easement(s).
CBSF - Land, wetland restoration - Number of trees planted	Enter the number of trees planted for all non-urban projects/practices. In the NOTES section, specify the specify the landcover type prior to planting (barren, cropland, grassland, shrubland), # of acres, and average # of trees per acre.

FIELDDOC

NFWF has partnered with The Commons to develop the <u>FieldDoc</u> tool that allows consistent planning, tracking, and reporting of selected water quality improvement activities and associated load reductions

NFWF is hosting a demonstration webinar for FieldDoc on Thursday, March 9th at 1:00PM EST



COST CONSIDERATIONS – INELIGIBLE USE OF GRANT FUNDS

- X Procurement of equipment, services, or systems that uses telecom equipment or services produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation
- X Political advocacy, fundraising, lobbying, litigation, terrorist activities or Foreign Corrupt Practices Act violations.
- X Direct land or easement acquisition
- X Operations under enforcement action by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, State Conservation Commission, or U.S. EPA



OTHER COST CONSIDERATIONS

- See NFWF's <u>Detailed Budget and Narrative Guide</u> for critical budget development guidance and instructions
- **Equipment:** Applicants are encouraged to rent equipment where possible and cost-effective or use matching funds to make those purchases.
- Grantees may use grant funds for indirect costs:
 - 1. Consistent with the applicant's federally-approved negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA); or
 - 2. If no NICRA, up to a de minimus rate of 10% of proposed costs
- Direct administrative expenses are allowed



2023 UPLOADS – APPLICANT DEMOGRAPHIC FORM

- The information you provide will not be shared with proposal reviewers and will not be considered when making grant decisions.
- The Foundation will not share identifying information about any particular entity or project.
- While the form is a required upload, applicants can opt out of providing the information within the form itself
 - If you have provided NFWF with this information in the last 12 months, you can opt out.
- The information provided on this excel form will be kept confidential, the Foundation may share its anonymized aggregate findings as appropriate with its staff, Board of Directors, funding partners, and publicly on its website or through other media.

2023 UPLOADS – APPLICANT DEMOGRAPHIC FORM

APPLICANT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION		
As part of NFWF's goal to encourage and support diversity across the con To accomplish this task, we are asking organizations that we fund to assi:		l like to better understand the existing diversity in our grantmaking community and in the local communitie about their workforce demographics on this form.
The information provided on this excel form will be kept confidential, alth	hough the Foundation may share its o	nunities where the projects take place and who in those communities might benefit from them. We ask for th aggregate findings as appropriate with its staff, Board of Directors, funding partners, and publicly on its web vill be used by NFWF to better understand the demographic profiles of the organizations that we fund.
The information you provide will <u>not</u> be shared with p	proposal reviewers and will	not be considered when making grant decisions.
	ad of guessing. If a section does not a	e some of the information requested readily available. Please be sure to complete the General Information se pply to your organization you may skip it. Do not make any other changes to this form. ts with your application and complete the first section of the form.
All applicants must complete this section, even if you	have provided this data to	NFWF in the past 12 months or are opting out for another reason.
If you have provided this data to NFWF in the past 12 months you do not r	need to provide it again but you must	still complete this top section of the form and submit it with your proposal.
Easygrants project #from your grant application:		
Grant program name shown on the RFP:		
If you are opting out, select a reason from	n the dropdown list in the green box:	
General Information		
Date Completed:		
Project Title:		
Organization Full Name:		
Organization EIN:		Click and the arrange have the select from the decade will list
Organization Type: Organization Size (number of employees)		Click on the green box to select from the dropdown list Click on the green box to select from the dropdown list
organization size (namber of employees)		and an the green box to select from the dropod will have
PART 1: APPLICANT ORGANIZATION - ALL EMPLOYEES (if applicable)		
Please provide the following demographic information about <u>all</u> of your	r organization's employees, <u>includin</u> e	g senior leaders .
How many people currently work for your organization? (Include temp Total Number:	orary and part-time employees in you	ur response but do not include contractors)
2. How many of your employees identify as each gender?		
Female:		

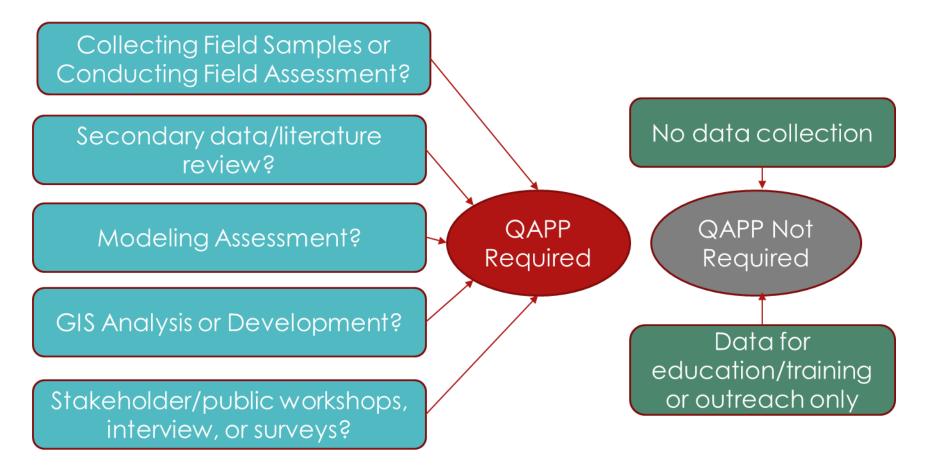
2023 MEB FULL PROPOSAL NARRATIVE – COMMUNITIES IMPACTED

Communities Engaged and Impacted: Describe the community(ies) where the project will take place and any associated target audience(s):

- A. Who will specifically benefit from the project?
- B. How were they or will they be engaged in project development and implementation?
- C. Using the table below, provide information on key demographic and socioeconomic indicators for the community(ies) and target audience(s). Use your response to questions A or B above to provide any other representative demographic or socioeconomic data or information.

Community(ies) and/or Target Audience(s)	Race/Ethnicity (%)	Poverty Rate (%)	Low Income (%)	Annualized Unemployment Rate (%)

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS – QUALITY ASSURANCE



Note that data collection related to engineered practices may not need a QAPP but may be covered under a Quality Assurance Statement which requires no additional documentation

https://www.nfwf.org/programs/chesapeake-bay-stewardship-fund/tools-current-grantees/quality-assurance

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS – QUALITY ASSURANCE

- Applicants can and should budget time and resources in their MEB proposal to complete this task.
- Reimbursement for project activities, including non-data collection activities, may be delayed until quality assurance compliance requirements are complete.
- Projects that require a QAPP should budget time and resources to complete the QAPP and have it approved within the *first 3 months of the grant's period of performance*.
 - The timeline for receiving review feedback and comments and subsequent submittal for EPA approval is dependent upon the quality of the draft QAPP submission and may involve several iterations.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS – QUALITY ASSURANCE

Prepare a draft QAPP: Your document will be reviewed by the external QAPP consultants at Stantec. Comments are dependent upon the quality of the QAPP submission and may involve several iterations <u>prior</u> to submission to EPA. Each resubmission of the draft QAPP to Stantec will initiate a 30-day review and comment period.



QAPP is technically approved and submitted to the EPA by NFWF: EPA will have a chance to review and comment on the draft QAPP prior to providing their signature. It is our goal that QAPPs submitted to EPA receive no additional feedback and are technically sound enough to be signed by them.



QAPP Review and Approvals: NFWF will advise grantees concerning the status of the QAPP review (e.g. approved, requested revisions, etc.) and circulate the final, signed version. The QAPP tag restricting payment on data collection activities is removed.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Grantees must obtain signed agreements with participating landowners prior to grant execution
- Match, while not required, is encouraged. Applicants are strongly
 encouraged to report on both traditional non-federal match, as well as
 "leverage" from complementary federal programs
- All conservation and restoration practices implemented through the PA-MEB program must conform to established and recognized standards and practices specifications (e.g. NRCS practice standards)



ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- All applicants with active grants from NFWF must be in good standing in terms of reporting requirements, expenditure of funds, and quality assurance (if required).
- Applicants must demonstrate awareness and the status of all permits required to comply with federal, state or local requirements.
- When procuring goods and services, NFWF recipients must follow documented procurement procedures which reflect applicable laws and regulations.



CRITICAL RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPING A NFWF APPLICATION



DETAILED BUDGET AND NARRATIVE GUIDE

This **DETAILED BUDGET AND NARRATIVE GUIDE** contains three sections, please refer to the applicable sections. Budgets not completed according to these instructions may create significant delays in evaluation, approval and/or contracting.

SECTION I. GENERAL GUIDELINES – Pg. 1

SECTION II. BUDGET INPUT FUNCTIONALITY – Pg. 1

SECTION III. BUDGETING AND NARRATIVE BEST PRACTICES – Pg. 4

- A complete detailed budget must be submitted with NFWF Full Proposals. In order to complete a budget for your
 proposal, applicants must expand the appropriate categories and provide the information requested.
 - If you do not anticipate an expense for a category, skip that category it is not necessary to enter a "0" value in the cost fields
 - Try to anticipate factors that may affect the budget when developing projections and provide an explanation of those factors
 - Matching funds should not be included in the proposal budget
- II. In addition to the financial aspects of the budget, applicants must include category or full budget level narratives for each line item category.

Below is a snapshot of a **COLLAPSED** blank NFWF summary budget as seen in the Grants Management System. **These** categories will need to be expanded in order to add line item detail for each cost category. It can be helpful to expand only one budget category at a time.



Pennsylvania Most Effective Basins Grants 2023 Full Proposal Tip Sheet

STARTING AN APPLICATION

When you are ready to begin the application process, go to easygrants.nfwf.org.

- New users to the system will be prompted to register before starting their application.
- Existing users should log in using their e-mail address and password.
 If you have forgotten your password, please click the "Forgot your password?" link on the Easygrants login page and a reset link will be sent to you. The link expires within 24 hours of being sent.
- Once you are logged in, click the Apply for Funding button, and select Pennsylvania Most Effective Basins Grants 2023 from the list of "Available Funding Opportunities".
- Complete the Eligibility Quiz and Save and Submit your response.
- If you pass the Eligibility Quiz, Easygrants will return you to your personal Easygrants Home Page. From there, click on the Full-Proposal for the Pennsylvania Most Effective Basins Grants 2023. Now you are ready to get started! If you do not pass the Eligibility Quiz, please contact the NFWF Program Contact identified in the RFP

The instructions below follow sequentially through each section and field in Easygrants required for this program. You may, however, complete these sections and fields in any order. You are encouraged to use the **Help** feature in Easygraphs for additional guidance and examples. Additional recourses for applications and examples.

* * * * *

Take Note!

- Pop-ups: Easygrants uses pop-up windows to display some files. Please make sure your web browser allows for pop-ups. The internet browser pop-up blocker must be disabled prior to beginning the application process. You can also try holding the Shift or Control (CTRL) key when clicking the link.
- Cookies: Easygrants uses cookies to maintain the session information. Please make sure that your browser and computer can accept cookies.
- PDF: Easygrants uses PDFs extensively.
 Make sure you are able to use Adobe Reader.
- SAVING AND SUBMITTING: Once an application has been initiated, it may be saved and then modified and submitted at a later time, up to the application deadline of April 27, 2023, 11:59 PM Eastern Standard Time. Please note DO NOT hit the "Submit" button until you are actually ready to submit. Once you hit submit the application is formally submitted and you may no longer make changes.

Easygrants for additional guidance and examples. Additional resources for applicants, including the Indirect Cost Policy, can be

TIMELINE FOR 2023 PA MEB GRANTS PROGRAM

RFP Released: Wednesday, February 16th

Applicant Webinar: Monday, February 27th

FieldDoc Webinar: Thursday, March 9th

Proposals Due: Thursday, April 27th

Proposal Review: May

Board Approval: August

Award Notification: August

Award Announcement: September (estimated)



QUESTIONS?

NFWF Staff Contacts:



Jake Reilly, Program Director jake.reilly@nfwf.org (202) 595-2610



Joe Toolan, Program Manager joe.toolan@nfwf.org (202) 888-1677

Carley Morton, Program Coordinator carley.morton@nfwf.org (202) 857-0166

Easygrants Questions easygrants@nfwf.org

Field Liaison Contact	Email	Phone
Kristen Saacke Blunk	kristen@headwaters-llc.org	(814) 360-9766
Kristen Hughes Evans	kristen@sustainablechesapeake.org	(804) 554-3457
<u>Liz Feinberg</u>	liz.feinberg63@gmail.com	(610) 212-2345
Katie Ombalski	katie@woodswaters.com	(814) 574-7281

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SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL IN EASYGRANTS

- 1. Log in with existing email and password
 - Register now if you do not have one this will allow for time to familiarize yourself with the system
 - If you have trouble logging in, use the help feature
- 2. Turn off your pop-up blockers
- 3. Download and use the tip sheet available on the program webpage
- 4. You can work on the narrative offline download the template and upload when you're finished
- Please be as specific as possible with mapping AND providing location information on your project
- 6. Click save frequently
- 7. Input budget line-item narratives!
- 8. Make sure all your check marks are green; do not click SUBMIT until you are completely finished

Step One: Create an Account



Enter your login ID and password and click Log In below. If you have forgotten your password, click Forgot your password? below.

If you are a first time visitor to this system, click Register here below.

	Freque	ntly Asked Questions		
Log In			New User?	
Login ID / Email				
Password				
Remember Me			Forgot Password?	
(Log In		
	For the optimal	Easygrants experience, ple	ease:	
♠ Use a Suppo	rted Browser	Enable Pop-ups	Allow Cookies	
=	Only Use One	Tab 🕹 Get Adobe	Reader	
1	E → Log Out and	d Close Browser for Sec	curity	

For Technical assistance, please contact us via e-mail or phone 202-595-2497.

Download Adobe Reader

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Let's try it...

