NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA)

Lacrosse Opportunities Program

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 212101

Deadline: Monday, November 5, 2021

No later than 4:00 p.m. EST

PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

Name of Grant Program:
Lacrosse Opportunities Program

Authorization:
Maryland House Bill 1188 (2012) and Maryland House Bill 708 (2017)

Dissemination:
Friday, September 3, 2021

Deadline:
Friday, November, 5 2021
No later than 4:00 p.m. EST

Purpose:
The State of Maryland is committed to helping local education agencies (LEAs) and nonprofits maximize opportunities for minority students to participate in lacrosse in their communities. Maryland House Bill 1188 (2012), Education-Lacrosse Opportunities Programs, created this program designed to increase the number of lacrosse opportunities in LEAs for minority students. Maryland House Bill 208 (2017), Education-Lacrosse Opportunities Programs – Youth Lacrosse Nonprofit Organizations, amended the previous version to increase the number of lacrosse opportunities by including nonprofit organizations. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) will issue grants to qualifying LEAs and nonprofit organizations serving a population of students at least 80% of which are minority students.

Required Components:
Proposals must contain the following to be considered for funding:

- Description of Project
    - Name of LEA
    - Name(s) of school(s)
    - Name of Nonprofit Organization
    - Statement of need and justification of school(s) or nonprofit selected, including the following data
        - School or organization minority and poverty statistics
    - Number of targeted student participants
    - Scope and purpose of the proposed program
    - Program activities and timeline
- Business Plan
    - Budget narrative
    - Verification that the requested funding does not exceed 50% of the total annual cost of the LEA's program
    - Description of required matching funds from any combination of federal county, municipal, or private sources
    - C-125 budget form

Priorities:
Priority will be given to projects that incorporate one or more of the following:

- Schools and nonprofit partnerships, and/or
- Schools without existing programs.

Eligible Applicants:

- Local Education Agencies (LEAs) serving a population of students at least 80% of which are minority students.
- Nonprofit Organizations serving a population of students at least 80% of which are minority students.

Proposal Review:

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

1) Written applications will be prescreened for submission requirements and inclusion of all required sections. Applicants not meeting all prescreen requirements will not be read.
2) A review committee established by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) will evaluate written applications. The committee will be composed of representatives from outside agencies and MSDE personnel. Reviewers will comment upon the proposals and assign numerical scores.
3) Applicants may be scheduled for an oral program presentation as determined by the review committee.
4) Final approval for awards will be determined by Lacrosse Opportunities Program Committee.

MSDE reserves the right to take into consideration geographic distribution when making awards.

Award Notifications:

Notification of awards will be sent by email on November 19, 2021.

Total Funds Available:
$40,000

Length of Grant:
11/1/2021 – 6/30/2021

Estimated Number of Grants:
Based on the committee's recommendation

Estimated Average Grant Amount:
Based on the committee's recommendation

Fund Use

Cost(s) incurred prior to the approval of the grant may not be funded through the award. Fundable activities include programs that create lacrosse opportunities programs for minority students to participate in lacrosse in their communities.

The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), Section 427:

Each application must develop and describe the steps such 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.

Reporting Requirements:

- Grantees must submit:
- Annual financial reports;
- Annual evaluation reports;
- Proof of matching funds;

Proposals must contain the following information, assembled in the order indicated:

1. Proposal Cover Sheet.
2. Project Abstract.
3. Table of Contents.

4. Project Narrative ([**PAGE LIMIT**]-page limit).
    4.1. Extent of Need.
    4.2. Goals, Objectives, and Milestones.
    4.3. Plan of Operation.
    4.4. Evaluation and Dissemination Plan.
    4.5. Management Plan/Key Personnel.
        4.5.1. Management Worksheet.
        4.5.2. Project Time Line.
    4.6. Integration with Education Reform.
    4.7. Future Plans.
5. Budget Narrative.
    5.1. Line Item Listing of Budgetary Expenses.
    5.2. Itemized Budget Form.
6. Appendices. Do not append any required sections indicated above. Appendices are included below.
    6.1. Works Cited
    6.2. Letters of commitment from all project partners and principals of participating schools (as appropriate).
    6.3. Résumés of Key Personnel.
    6.4. Signed assurances.
    6.5. LEA documentation or URL to policies related to safety and privacy, including those related to non-system employees.
    6.6. Nonprofit documentation or URL to policies related to safety and privacy, including those related to those with direct contact to participants.

Submission Requirements:

- All pages of the project narrative must use one-inch margins and be numbered according to the prescribed numbering convention. (See "Table of Contents" section)
- The project statement that appears on the cover sheet must not exceed 100 words.
- The abstract must not exceed one page.
- Narrative must use line spacing of at least 1.5, and a type size of 12-point font. Charts may use single spacing and a type size of 10-point font.
- All copies of the proposal should be on standard size (8½" x 11") paper of regular weight.
- Bound copies must be stapled in the upper left corner. They should not be bound by glue, spirals, wire, clasps, or any other means.
- The prescribed coversheet must be the first page of the proposal.
- The original coversheet must be signed in blue ink. Copies of the coversheet must not be color photocopied.
- All tables and charts must follow prescribed formats.

An unbound original proposal, together with 2 bound copies, and an electronic copy in Microsoft Word format, must be submitted to:

Maryland State Department of Education
Office of Athletics/MPSSAA
200 West Baltimore Street Baltimore, MD 21201-2595
Attention: R. Andrew Warner
Electronic copy should be sent by email to Robert.Warner1@maryland.gov.

Program Contacts:

R. Andrew Warner
Office of Athletics, MSDE
410-767-0555
Robert.Warner1@maryland.gov
Fax: 410-333-3111

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 Finance and Administration Maryland State Department of Education
200 W. Baltimore Street - 6th Floor Baltimore,
Maryland 21201-2595
410-767-0426 - voice
410-767-0431 - fax
410-333-6442 - TTY/TDD

PROPOSAL COVER SHEET

Proposal must have a Proposal Cover Sheet. No other page may cover the proposal cover sheet. The subsequent information must be clearly stated in the following order:

- Name of applicant;
- Title of project;
- The words **"[Lacrosse Opportunities Grant]"**;
- Name of contact person;
- Address of contact person;
- Telephone, fax, and email address of contact person;
- Project partners;
- Amount requested;
- Project statement (100-word limit); and
- Dated signature of Superintendent of Schools/Head of Grantee Agency.

The Proposal Cover Sheet should be printed on plain white paper and contain neither graphics nor additional information. The Cover Sheet should be signed by the Superintendent of Schools.

The project statement should briefly describe the project's outcome(s) and strategies (i.e., what the project will do, and how it will be accomplished). Do not exceed the 100-word limit. This statement will be used in press releases, board exhibits, etc.

PROJECT ABSTRACT

1-page limit

In the Project Abstract introduce 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, while addressing the following questions:

- What is the problem?
- What populations, schools, or geographic areas will be served by the project?
- What are the goals and objectives of the project? (For brevity, these should be paraphrased.)
- What strategies are to be employed to address the problem?
- Who are the partners, and what are the roles of each?

TABLE OF CONTENTS

[PAGE LIMIT]*-page limit*

The Table of Contents is an important aid for the reader. When writing the proposal and constructing the table of contents, use the following conventions:

- The Proposal Cover Sheet is not numbered but is considered to be page "i" (lower case, Roman numeral one);
- The Project Abstract is page "ii" (lower case, Roman numeral two);
- Do not list the Table of Contents as one of the pages in the table of contents;
- Table of Contents page(s) is/are numbered iii, iv, etc.;
- The extent of need is the first page of the project narrative and is numbered "1"; Subsequent pages are numbered consecutively;
- The Budget is numbered as follows: "B-1, B-2, B-3"; and
- Appendices are labeled "Appendix A, Appendix B, Appendix C ", etc.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

[PAGE LIMIT]*-page limit* *100 points total*

The Project Narrative provides an opportunity to convince readers that the project is sound and deserves to be funded. The Project Narrative should encompass the entire life of the project. When writing the Project Narrative keep the following suggestions in mind:

- Be succinct and clear. Readers need to understand quickly and easily the components of the project and how they work together to address the stated needs.
- Do not assume the reader is familiar with the project; readers represent diverse backgrounds. Avoid jargon, and define all acronyms.
- Proofread the Narrative once it is complete. Check for style inconsistencies, redundancies, factual omissions, and unexplained assumptions. A good strategy is to let someone not familiar with the project read and critique the proposal before submitting it to MSDE.
- Be as detailed as possible. Use the entire page limit to explain the project. Use the Appendices to include information that may be important for the reader but will not fit within the Project Narrative. For clarity, it is important to reference in the body of the proposal any supplemental information included in the appendices.

Extent of Need

15 of 100 points

A compelling proposal will have a clearly-defined problem supported by a needs assessment. A needs assessment is a systematic review of information collected from a variety of sources, analyzed to determine strengths and weaknesses, and prioritized for action in the proposal.

Below are some suggestions for the needs assessment.

- Clearly state the main problem in the first paragraph.
- Cite research supporting the need for the project.
- State what data were collected to confirm the existence of the problem, the sources of the data, and methods used to collect them.
- Present easily measured quantitative data. (e.g., test scores, absentee rates).
- Present qualitative data in support of quantitative data (e.g., interviews, focus groups).
- Use multiple methods to document the problem (e.g., surveys, analysis of school records, previous studies, focus groups).
- Use multiple data sources (teachers, students, parents, etc.).
- Use national or state data to establish the problem's existence outside of the local area.
- Use local data to document the problem in the local area. Include relevant demographics and other statistics about each and every population to be served. Include all relevant data from the Maryland Report Card.
- State who is affected by the problem. State when and where the problem exists.
- Document the factors contributing to the problem.
- Document current or past efforts to address the problem.
- Show why those efforts failed or are inadequate to address the total need.
- Discuss the applicant's history or expertise in dealing with the problem.
- Discuss the consequences of not dealing with the problem.

Goals, Objectives, and Milestones

10 of 100 points

Goals, objectives, and milestones are all outcomes. Outcomes themselves are statements that tell how the project's target population would improve. Every outcome should describe a change in a target population. In addition, they set standards of progress towards alleviating the problems identified in the needs assessment. **Statements that describe strategies or management issues are not proper outcome statements.**

Outcome statements:

- **Identify the target population**. Who is the specific population the outcome addresses?
- **Are realistic**. Outcomes must be attainable. It is unrealistic to expect that all students will achieve 4.0 grade point averages. Unrealistic outcomes set the project up for failure and are "red-flags" for reviewers.
- **Are measurable**. Outcomes must demonstrate clear achievement. A good outcome statement references easily quantified indicators (e.g., test scores, absenteeism, grades, and promotion rates).
- **Have deadlines.** All outcome statements specify by when they are to be achieved.
- **Reference state, local, or school-defined baseline data or standards.** To determine if the goal is both reasonable and ambitious, include local baseline data for comparison.

A proposal should identify three kinds of outcomes: goals, objectives and milestones.

Goal

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; however, the more goals established the more complex the project becomes.

Goals must have long-term deadlines. If the project period covers multiple years, the goal should be set for the end of the project. If the project period is one year or less, the goal may have a deadline that extends beyond the project period.

Objectives

Objectives are the anticipated outcomes to be accomplished for each year of the project. Objectives must be directly related to a goal. Objectives may break the long-term goal into steps or address the factors contributing to the problem addressed by the goal.

It is imperative that objectives be established for every target population the project is designed to affect. For instance, if the project seeks to increase student achievement by training teachers, there must be objectives for both students and teachers.

Milestones

Ongoing evaluation is essential to the management of a project. Since goals and objectives are not evaluated until the end of the year, milestones must be established to measure progress during the year. Milestones should be evaluated during the year, either quarterly or semiannually.

Because milestones are intended to indicate progress towards an objective, each milestone must be related to an objective. Keep in mind that milestones are indicators of progress, and may not use the same measurement tool as the objective to which they are related. A project may take months before there is a significant impact on clients, or the rate of improvement may level off over time. Milestones should anticipate this and be gauged accordingly. Don't set overly-ambitious milestones.

Plan of Operation

10 of 100 points

In the Plan of Operation discuss the strategies and activities to be used to accomplish the outcomes.

Strategies

Strategies are broad approaches (methods, procedures, techniques) employed to accomplish outcomes. Begin this section with a justification as to why the strategies were chosen and how they will help to achieve the outcomes. The justification should <u>cite research to support the strategies</u>. It is essential that the project include strategies for each outcome, and outcomes for each strategy.

Upon identifying the strategies, discuss how they will be adapted to fit the particular project. Who are the target clients, and how will they 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

Activities are specific steps taken to accomplish the project objectives, and involve <u>direct service to clients</u> (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 of time (e.g., the use of an innovative curriculum).

Actions outlined in the management plan are **<u>not</u>** activities. While these actions are needed to facilitate direct service, they do not render direct service themselves. Examples include the purchasing of equipment, the hiring of staff, evaluation procedures, and steering committee meetings. Do **not** address the elements of the management plan in this section.

List the activities that the project will implement and relate each activity to a strategy. Activities should be grouped with respective strategies. Discuss how the activities relate to the respective strategies. Finally, identify which clients and how many will be serviced by each activity.

PLAN OF OPERATION

Please use a separate worksheet for each goal to be addressed with supporting objectives, strategies, activities and milestones. Extend the worksheet as necessary to accommodate the number of strategies or activities planned.

Need to be addressed:
Goal #1 (related to need):
Objective (marking progress toward Goal #1):
Strategy #1 (supporting Goal #1):
Activity #1 (supporting Strategy #1):
Activity #2 (supporting Strategy #1):
Activity #3 (supporting Strategy #1):
Activity #4 (supporting Strategy #1):
Milestones to document progress toward Goal #1):

Evaluation & Dissemination Plan

20 of 100 points

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.

Evaluation & Dissemination Narrative

The topics listed below provide the basis for review of the evaluation plan that should be addressed with specificity.

- **Evaluation Questions**: What questions will the evaluation seek to answer, based on the project's goal and objectives, implementation plan, and anticipated consequences? Examine the relationship between the expected outcomes, efforts, and what is important to evaluate.
- **Evaluation Strategy**: What approach will be taken to find answers to the evaluation questions? What criteria will be used to assess lessons learned from the project? What populations will be included in the evaluation?
- **Data**: The type of data and method of data collection will depend upon the nature of the program, the questions, and the evaluation strategy. What measurement instruments will be used? How will the baseline be established? There should be a combination of quantitative and qualitative data identified. How will project staff collect data from the various sites and organizations involved in the project? When considering data collection techniques, ensure that the resources are sufficient to use the proposed data collection techniques.
- **Evaluator(s)**: Specify the individuals or groups who will conduct the evaluation. What are the qualifications of each? What are the responsibilities of key personnel?
- **Budgeting of resources and staffing for evaluation:** The application's budget should reflect sufficient funds to carry out a thorough and useful evaluation.
- **Dissemination:** Details on how the evaluation results will be disseminated to major stakeholders and individuals interested in the project. Information, requirements and dissemination methods differ from stakeholder to stakeholder. Will information be posted on the Internet? Will presentations be made at important national conferences to present lessons from the project? How and when will demonstrations of the project be provided? Descriptions of the types of reports and other by products developed during the course of the project may be made available.

Management Plan/Key Personnel

25 of 100 points

Where many projects fail is in the management. Submit a detailed and time-specific management plan with pre-assigned responsibilities so as to avoid the following common errors:

- Failure to submit required reports.
- Failure to regularly monitor performance of the project during implementation.
- Failure to start the project on time.
- Failure to keep adequate project documentation.
- Failure to assure continuity and quality of the project in light of personnel turnover.
- Changing without approval from MSDE the overall project from that described in the grant proposal.
- Submission of biased or incomplete project evaluation data.
- Having no approved project fiscal procedure in place.
- Disposal of project supplies, equipment, or other assets in unauthorized ways.
- Budget deviations due to unauthorized transfers from one budget category to another.
- Failure to manage inherent conflicts of policies, perspectives, and philosophies between project's host agency and the funder.
- Failure to form partnerships in which all members recognize and fulfill clearly-defined roles, responsibilities, and contributions to the project.
- Failure to complete the project in a timely fashion.

Present a clear discussion of partners, respective roles in the project, the benefits each expects to receive, and the specific contributions each will make to the project (financial, equipment, personnel, or other resources). It is essential that partner commitments be documented. Append letters of commitment from each, describing roles and quantifying contributions. Never assume that reviewers will automatically be familiar with a proposed partner, what that partner is capable of or willing to commit to the project, or why the partner is joining in on the project.

The project should have a steering committee to govern the project. Duties of the steering committee include establishing major program policies, reviewing quarterly evaluation reports, and making recommendations for programmatic change. Steering committee members should represent the major stakeholders in the project. (e.g., representatives from project partners, parents, principals, Board of Education). Steering committees that are too large are often non-productive. Project directors act as advisors to the committee. The duties, members and meeting dates of the committee should be identified in this section of the project proposal.

List the staff or personnel involved in the project's implementation. Detail individual qualifications? Append résumés of key personnel. How much of the Project Director's time is devoted to this project? Are there sufficient staff hours devoted to the project to ensure proper implementation? What plans are in place to ensure the project will continue if there are problems with staff turnover?

Management Plan Worksheet

The Management Plan supports the implementation plan but does not contain direct service activities. Direct service activities belong in the Plan of Operation. Examples of management actions are hiring staff, ordering equipment, developing curricula, and holding steering committee meetings. None of these actions render direct service itself, but enables direct service activities to take place.

List on the Management Plan Worksheet, in chronological order, all major management actions necessary to implement the project during the first year of funding. Worksheets for subsequent years will be included in the action plans for those years. 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 the individual(s) responsible for accomplishing each action.

Requirements made by the funder, MSDE, should also be included in the management plan. These include the annual financial report, submission of progress reports to MSDE, and the final evaluation. The final report will serve as the final evaluation.

Management Plan Worksheet

Action Description	**Date**	**Person Responsible**
Brief Description #1	*Date*	*Name or Position*
Brief Description #2	*Date*	*Name or Position*
Brief Description #3	*Date*	*Name or Position*
Funder's Requirements		
Quarterly Report #1 Due	*Date*	*Name or Position*
Quarterly Report #2 Due	*Date*	*Name or Position*
Quarterly Report #3 Due	*Date*	*Name or Position*
Final Evaluation Process	*Date*	*Name or Position*
Financial Report Due	*Date*	*Name or Position*
Annual Evaluation Due	*Date*	*Name or Position*

Project Timeline

The Project timeline is a Gantt chart with columns representing the months of the funding cycle. It should contain three sections: management, implementation, and evaluation.

Activity	Date
Hire Project Director	Date
Teacher Training	Date
Submit Mid-Year Evaluation	Date

Integration with Education Reform

5 of 100 points

If a project is to be successful, it must be aligned with the goals, efforts and plans of Federal, State, and local governments. This section illustrates how the project is part of overall education reform.

This section should address the following questions:

- How does this project help meet the goals and objectives of the School Improvement Team plan?
- How does this project fit into the local school systems' (LSS) master plan?
- How does this project help meet State educational standards (e.g., MD College and Career Readiness Standards, Next Generation Science Standards, etc.)?
- How does this project help meet national education goals or fit into national initiatives?
- Does this project coordinate efforts with other projects currently underway?
- Are there plans for future projects that will coordinate with this one?
- Will resources be shared to increase efficiency and cost effectiveness?

Future Plans

5 of 100 points

Describe plans for continuing the project beyond the funding cycle. How will it be sustained after funding ends? How will the project's partnerships be sustained?

Budget Narrative

10 of 100 points

The project's budget should detail every year of the project in a separate itemized budget for each year. It should demonstrate the extent to which the budget is reasonable, cost-effective, and integrates other sources of funding. All costs described in the project narrative should appear in the budget narrative and must have a corresponding entry in the itemized budget for that year.

Begin the budget with a narrative, justifying any line item expenses that are not obvious from the project narrative. Explain how line item costs were estimated, if the rationale is not obvious. Show how the budget is cost effective.

Immediately following the justification, include a line-item description using the format in the example below. Group line items according to the following categories: *Salaries & Wages*, *Contracted Services*, *Supplies & Materials*, *Other Charges*, *Equipment*, and *Transfers*. Total each category.

Each line must be detailed and specific. General expenses should be broken down into specific line items. For example, "meeting expenses" can be broken down into room rental, photocopying and refreshments. There is no page limit for the budget, so be as detailed as possible.

Clearly show the requested funds and in-kind contributions for each line item if applicable. Indicate the source of the in-kind contribution. Both requested and in-kind funds must be reasonable with current market prices.

Show how the expenses were calculated for each line item. Reviewers will use this information to determine if the budget is reasonable and cost-effective.

Use the format indicated by the following excerpt from a sample Budget Narrative. The Budget Narrative can be accessed by coping and pasting the following link into the web browser: (http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/Grants/BudgetInfo.aspx).

Itemized Budget

The itemized budget form (C-1-25) can be accessed by copying and pasting the following link into the web browser (http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/about/Documents/Grants/GrantFormsRev072418.xls?Web=1)) and must be submitted with the application. If difficulties are encountered in categorizing the budget, consult with the appropriate financial agent. The form must be signed by both the district's Budget Officer and the Superintendent or designee.

APPENDICES

The following Appendices must be included but not apply to the page limit of the Project Narrative. Include other Appendices as deemed necessary.

Works Cited

Use a standard format such as MLA or Chicago Manual of Style. Be consistent.

Letters of Commitment

Letters of commitment are required from all project partners, school principals, and local school systems participating in the project. A good letter should contain the following:

- A statement acknowledging and supporting the goal and objectives of the project;
- The participant's expected gains from the project;
- The expertise, resources and financial contributions the participant is making towards the project. Financial contributions (in-kind and cash) should be quantified;
- A clear statement detailing the responsibilities of the partners; and
- A clear statement that the partners intend to continue the partnership beyond the grant period.

Letters of commitment should be addressed to the Superintendent, Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D., or head of the grantee agency acting as the lead agency. Letters should not be addressed to the MSDE. All letters should be included in the proposal and not sent directly to the MSDE. Any letters sent directly to the MSDE cannot be appended to the proposal.

Resumes of Key Personnel

Include a one page resume for each person playing a key role in the project. Only information relevant to the project should be included in the resume.

Signed Assurances

Please carefully read and complete the Recipient Assurances page, http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/about/Documents/Grants/GrantRecipientAssurances.pdf, which must be signed and dated by the Superintendent of the school system or the head of the grantee agency.