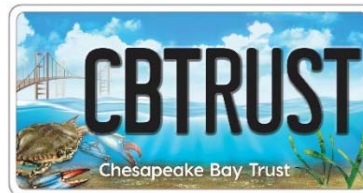




Chesapeake Conservation Corps Member Application

FY 21 Request for Proposals



Chesapeake Bay Trust

108 Severn Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21403

(410) 974 – 2941 ♦ www.cbtrust.org

Chesapeake Conservation Corps

At a Glance

Program Summary:

The Chesapeake Conservation Corps Program is designed to provide young adults with a professional experience in the environmental field, develop valuable career skills, and enhance the influx of new leaders working on Chesapeake Bay issues.

Deadline:

Thursday, March 4, 2021, at 4:00 PM EST

Eligible Corps Member Applicants:

Age 18-25 on August 17, 2021 and able to work fulltime (approximately 40 hours a week) during the duration of the service year.

Duration of Chesapeake Conservation Corps:

Full-time (approximately 40 hours a week) over a 12-month period
August 17, 2021 – August 16, 2022

Submit Your Application:

Follow the instructions online at
https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_1520/?SA=SNA&FID=35168

Contact:

Tara Drennan, Senior Program Officer, 410-974-2941 ext. 102,
tdrennan@cbtrust.org



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Introduction to the Chesapeake Bay Trust

The Chesapeake Bay Trust (Trust) is a nonprofit, grant-making organization dedicated to improving the bays, streams, rivers, forests, parks, and other natural resources of our local ecosystems, from the Chesapeake to the Coastal Bays to the Youghiogheny River. The Trust, supported in large part by Maryland's Chesapeake Bay License Plate and partnerships with other regional funders, engages and empowers diverse groups to take actions that enrich natural resources and local communities of the Chesapeake Bay region. Since 1985, the Trust has awarded over \$120 million in grants to municipalities, nonprofit organizations, schools, and public agencies throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

As part of this effort, the Chesapeake Bay Trust is proud to partner with the State of Maryland, BGE an Exelon Company, and the National Park Service to administer the Chesapeake Conservation Corps Program (the Corps Program).

Program Goals

The purpose of the Corps Program is two-fold: The first is to enable stipend Corps Members to work with Host Organizations and communities to implement a wide variety of environmental projects and programs including those in the fields of restoration, environmental education, forestry, sustainable agriculture, energy conservation, climate change, and community engagement. The second is to provide leadership and training opportunities for young adults who may pursue environmental and conservation careers. The specific objectives of the Corps are to:

- 1) provide young adults with meaningful experiences, trainings, and mentorship to become better professionals and leaders for careers in the green workforce;
- 2) promote, preserve, and protect the local streams, rivers, the Chesapeake Bay, and the region's other natural resources;
- 3) expand the impact and reach of organizations advancing environmental issues;
- 4) advance the diversity and influx of young talent to increase the accessibility to environmental careers and build the capacity of organizations working on Chesapeake Bay issues.

The Trust is committed to the advancement of diversity and inclusion in its award-making and environmental work. As a result, the Trust strongly encourages Corps Member applications from underrepresented groups and applications from Host Organizations that serve communities that are traditionally underrepresented, such as communities of color. For a full description of the Trust's efforts to engage under-engaged groups, see our strategic plan at www.cbtrust.org/strategic-plan and <https://cbtrust.org/diversity-inclusion/>.

In partnership with BGE, an Exelon Company, the Trust is offering a new Diversity Fellowship to assist Corps Members with the financial challenge of a year of service. The Diversity Fellowship Opportunity provides an additional \$5,000 to Corps Members who demonstrate financial need and identify with an underserved group including but not limited to the list that is provided in the Request for Proposal (RFP). In creating this opportunity, our partnership commits to using our resources to lessen the disproportionate financial burden that has been placed on certain communities. The Trust hopes this Diversity Fellowship will increase access to the Chesapeake Conservation Corps program and expand its reach allowing more young individuals to make the choice to apply an easier one financially. Go to <https://cbtrust.org/chesapeake-conservation-corps/prospective/> to learn more about this opportunity and find the RFP.

Who are the Chesapeake Conservation Corps Members?

The Chesapeake Bay Trust anticipates placing 30-35 individuals at Host Organizations from August 17, 2021 to August 16, 2022. Individuals will be between the ages of 18 and 25 years at the time of enrollment and will include individuals with and without college degrees. They will work full-time (approximately 40 hours a week) over a service term of 12 months. The individual Corps Member will receive a living stipend of \$20,000 for the year. The individual Corps Member is expected to be covered under the Host Organization's general liability insurance.

Who are the Chesapeake Conservation Corps Host Organizations?

Host Organizations include nonprofit organizations, higher education institutions, faith-based organizations, community associations, and local, state, and federal government agencies. To see the organizations who applied to be a Host Organization for the 2021-22 Chesapeake Conservation Corps Program go to www.cbtrust.org/ChesapeakeConservationCorps.

Chesapeake Conservation Corps Match Process and Timeline

Due to interest in the Program, we anticipate receiving more applications from potential Host Organizations and Corps Members than can be accommodated in the program. The Trust will organize and determine placements based on the following criteria: 1) mutual match listings, 2) quality of the Corps Member application and the value they will receive from being accepted into the Corps, 3) quality of the Host Organization application and proposed experience offered to the Corps Member, 4) field of interest matches, and 5) geographic location constraints and needs of the Corps Member applicant.

Sept 2020-Dec 2, 2020	Host Organization applications solicited
Dec 3, 2020	Host Organization application deadline
Dec 2020-Mar 3, 2021	Corps Member applications solicited. Eligible Host Organization applicants will be posted at www.cbtrust.org for potential Corps Member applicants to view.
Mar 4, 2021	Corps Member application deadline
Mar 10-Mar 31, 2021	Review Phase: Corps Member applications reviewed by Corps Alumni. Based on feedback from Corps Alumni a portion of Corps Member applicants will be invited as finalists to the Matching Phase.
Apr 7-May 19, 2021	Matching Phase: Applications of Corps Member Finalists made available to Host Organization applicants to view and applications of Host Organizations made available to Corps Member Finalists to view. During this time, Host Organization applicants will contact their top Corps Member applicants to potentially setup an interview and Corps Member applicants will contact their top Host Organization applicants to potentially setup an interview.
Apr 20-21, 2021	Corps Virtual Job Fair: Opportunity for potential Hosts and Corps Members Finalists to interact. (Optional but strongly encouraged)

May 20, 2021	Placement Phase: All Host Organization applicants are required to submit a list of up to five Corps Member applicants they would be willing to be placed with in no particular order. All Corps Member applicants are required to submit their list of Host Organization applicants they want to be placed with in ranking order.
May 27, 2021	Placement offers to the top Corps Members and Host Organization matches begin. Placements decisions are based on (1) the feedback from Corps Alumni of the strength of Corps Member applications and value to the Corps Member applicants if placed in the program, (2) strength of the match between the Corps Member applicant and Host Organization applicant based on the Ranking and Willing to Host Forms, and (3) strength of the positions offered by the Host Organization applicants. Host Organizations will be expected to agree to host any potential Corps Member identified on their placement lists.
Mid-June, 2021	Placement offers complete.
Aug 17, 2021	Service terms begin. All Host Mentors and Corps Members will be required to attend an orientation event on August 17, 2021.

Eligible Corps Member Activities

Corps Members will be engaged in a wide range of activities in the fields of environmental restoration, energy conservation, sustainable agriculture, forestry, community engagement, and/or preK-12 environmental education during their service year. The activities must meet an identifiable public need, with specific emphasis on projects and programs that result in long-term preservation, protection, and conservation of the environment. If placed, each Corps Member will work with their Host Organization and the Trust to expand the scope of work section of the application into a 12-month work program for the service term. This work plan will include specific responsibilities and quantifiable metrics in which the Corps Member will be engaged, including a capstone project led independently by the Corps Member that will be expected to comprise roughly 25% of the Corps Member's time during the year-long service term.

Examples of Environmental Restoration Projects include:

- Watershed restoration, including stream restoration, rain gardens, and other low-impact development projects
- Implementation of specific nutrient reduction activities, such as innovative stormwater practices (rain gardens, bio-retention cells), planting of bay grasses and oysters, installing living shorelines
- Implementation of green infrastructure projects to address pollution of nearby waterways or flooding from increased storm events
- Working with communities to improve their environmental impacts and activities and to encourage environmental stewardship
- Implementing tree planting projects with tree species and forestry practices less vulnerable to storms and fires
- Planning to identify and plan for land corridors to help species migrate

Examples of Energy Conservation Projects include:

- Implementation of community greening and urban tree canopy projects that create energy savings
- Assistance to schools in becoming "green schools" and reducing energy costs

- Promotion of energy efficiency of households and public structures within neighborhoods through energy audits, weatherization, and other on-site energy conservation measures – e.g., “green street” energy projects
- Implementation of clean energy projects in communities to enhance the use of renewable energy, reduce carbon emissions, and mitigate climate change
- Improvement of the energy efficiency of housing for elderly and low-income households
- Implementation of clean energy projects in communities to enhance the use of renewable energy, including free and low-cost energy audits

Examples of Agricultural and Forestry Projects include:

- Implementation of agricultural best management practices to prevent or reduce nutrient runoff
- Working in partnership with the agricultural community on outreach and engagement projects to encourage stewardship
- Implementation of carbon sink projects like soil health or ‘blue carbon’ efforts that accumulate and store greenhouse gases
- Working with forestry programs to increase the number of forested acres in the watershed
- Working with urban tree canopy programs

Examples of Education Projects include:

- Development of interactive environmental education programs for elementary and secondary school students and/or the public
- Development of curriculum targeted at training high school students and apprentices to obtain skills necessary to create and implement clean energy and climate resiliency projects in their communities and to compete for jobs in the emerging clean energy sector
- Assistance to schools to become “green schools” through hands-on projects with their students
- Building infrastructure to promote environmental education including outdoor classrooms, nature trails, public access to natural resources, and schoolyard habitats

Examples of Community Engagement Projects include:

- Development of environmental outreach tools and materials for a specific target audience
- Implementation of community-based restoration and conservation demonstration projects to engage citizens and encourage individual behavior change that will benefit watershed health
- Implementation of environmental and/or energy conservation awareness programs and projects to engage and educate citizens about the Bay and their local watersheds
- Assessment of public park access for residents
- Planning to increase equity in public access to green spaces
- Air quality monitoring and assessment programs that engage and educate community residents
- Water quality monitoring and assessment programs that engage and educate community residents
- Assessment of health impacts of micro plastics and/or fish consumption on community health
- Behavior change campaigns to increase adoption of environmentally responsible behaviors that improve human and environmental health

Ineligible Corps Member Activities

Corps Members may not:

- Participate in any partisan political activity while engaged in the performance of duties as stipend volunteers.
- Participate in any regulatory or statutory enforcement activities while engaged in the performance of duties as a member of the Corps Program.
- Undertake a project if the project would replace regular workers or duplicate or replace an existing service in the same locality.

Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will be used by reviewers to evaluate applications. Preference will be given to applications that meet multiple criteria.

Scoring Criteria:

- General Quality of Application (Scale of 1 to 5): What is the level of completeness and attention to detail? Is the application well-written with enough information for sound evaluation? Did the applicant put time, thought, and effort into their application?
- Essays (Scale of 1 – 10): Are the essays well-written, thorough, and clear? What is the quality of the answers to the questions being asked? What is their level of interest in the program? Do the essays show personality and/or passion? Are the essays memorable? Are the answers consistent with the Corps goals?
- Value to Corps Member (Scale of 1 – 10): Will the applicant get value out of the Corps experience? What is their level of interest in the environmental field and/or a year of service? Will they benefit from the professional experience provided by the Corps? Will they benefit from the development of background/experience/skills provided by the Corps? Have they already experienced numerous internships and/or professional positions? Are the benefits this applicant will receive from the Program consistent with the Corps goals?
- Value to Host Site (Scale of 1 – 5): Will the applicant be a valuable asset to a Host Organization? Does the applicant have the background/experience/skills to be effective in a Corps position? What is the likelihood the applicant can work responsibly in a professional environment? Does the applicant express interest and/or need in being placed in the Corps Program? Does the application elicit confidence that the applicant will be productive and/or passionate working in a Corps position? Is the value to the Host consistent with the Corps goals?

Corps Member Responsibilities

The Corps Member has several responsibilities to the Program and its Host Organization:

- 1) The Corps Member is expected to work with their Host Organization and the Trust to structure a work plan based on a 40-hour per week Corps Member schedule for the one-year term of service.
- 2) The Corps Member is expected to participate in the six leadership and professional development trainings and three project days provided by the Chesapeake Conservation Corps program during the year of service. This includes attending the Chesapeake Watershed Forum in fall 2021.
- 3) The Corps Member will select and complete a capstone project with the support of their Host Organization by the end of the service year.
- 4) The Corps Member must complete at least four, ideally five to ten, peer-to-peer site visit days visiting fellow Corps Members and participating in activities at other Host Organizations throughout the service year.

- 5) The Corps Member is expected to submit quarterly status reports to the Chesapeake Bay Trust and a final report at the end of the service term.
- 6) The Corps Member will be required to participate in all other program components. A calendar of program events and deadlines will be provided to Corps Members at the start of the program year.

Host Organization Responsibilities

The Host Organization has several responsibilities to the Program and its hosted Corps Member:

- 1) The Host Organization is expected to work with the Corp Member placed at their organization and with the Trust to structure the Corps Member's work plan based on a 40-hour per week Corps Member schedule for the one-year term of service.
- 2) The Host Organization is expected to provide a Corps Member with desk or office space and access to a phone and computer with internet access, provide parking or reimbursement for parking on-site, and provide mileage reimbursement for program-related travel, *including travel to program training activities and required site visits*. Host organizations must have office space.
- 3) The Host Organization is expected to cover the Corps Member under the Host Organization's general liability insurance for Corps Members in an aggregate amount of at least \$500,000 and list the Chesapeake Bay Trust as an "Additional Insured." The Trust is willing to be flexible on being listed as an Additional Insured for political subdivisions of the State of Maryland who are self-insured by Maryland State Law. However, coverage of the Corps Member is required of all Host Organizations.
- 4) The Host Organization is expected to submit quarterly status reports to the Chesapeake Bay Trust and a final report at the end of the service term.
- 5) The Host Organization is strongly encouraged, but not required, to provide costs (travel, registration, and lodging, if required) to enable the Corps Member to attend at least one professional conference during the service term.
- 6) The Host Organization is expected to designate a mentor to the assigned Corps Member; this mentor is expected to provide support and guidance to the Corps Member throughout the year. This is an important element of the program; both the mentor and the Corps Member should have mutual ownership over the Corps Member's experience. The designated mentor may be required to participate in mentor education or training the format for which is to be determined. The time commitment for the mentor education and training will not exceed 6 hours.
- 7) Host Organizations that have been matched with a Corps Member for the past two consecutive program years (Program Years 2019-20 and 2020-21) must provide 10% of the Corps Member stipend (\$2,000). By submitting an application to serve as a Host Organization, Host Organization applicants who match this criterion are committing to provide these resources if a successful Corps Member match is made. If selected, the 10% cash match would be due on August 13, 2021.
- 8) By submitting an application in response to this solicitation, Host Organizations are committing to participate in the matching process and agree to accept a Corps Member if a mutual match is made. Host Organizations must be aware that given demand, there is a chance that they will not be placed with a Corps Member.

Chesapeake Bay Trust Responsibilities

The Chesapeake Bay Trust has several responsibilities to the Corps Member and their Host Organization.

- 1) The Trust will provide the Corps Member with a stipend of \$20,000 for the one-year, non-renewable service term.
- 2) The Trust will cover workers compensation, FICA, and payroll costs for the one-year service term.
- 3) The Trust will provide an orientation event, five mandatory training experiences, and three Corps project days during the service term.
- 4) The Trust will make available the opportunity for Corps Members to apply for Chesapeake Conservation Corps Mini Grants for projects associated with their service work of up to \$1,250.
- 5) The Trust will provide registration costs for each Corps Member to attend the 2021 Chesapeake Watershed Forum, attendance at which will be required of Corps Members. The Trust will also provide registration costs for each Corps Member to attend the 2022 Watershed Forum, attendance at which will be optional.

Deadline

Applicants must submit applications in the **Chesapeake Bay Trust Online System** by **4:00 PM EST on March 4, 2021**. Late applications will not be accepted, and the online application form will close automatically and promptly at 4 PM EST. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit at least a few days prior to the deadline given the potential for high website traffic on the due date. The Trust cannot guarantee availability of technical assistance for our online system on the deadline date.

Please note this is the same deadline for the Diversity Fellowship Opportunity which is submitted separately of the Corps Member application. The Diversity Fellowship Opportunity provides an additional \$5,000 who demonstrate financial need and identify with an underserved group including but not limited to the list that is provided in the Request for Proposal (RFP). Go to <https://cbtrust.org/chesapeake-conservation-corps/prospective/> to learn more about this opportunity and find the RFP.

Application Review Process

Each application will be reviewed by a review committee composed of Chesapeake Conservation Corps Alumni based on the criteria listed in the “Evaluation Criteria” section above. Then based on the scores a subset of applicants will be invited to participate in the matching process. Please see the *Corps Match Process and Timeline* section on page 5 for more details on that process and placement selection.

To allow applicants to set expectations prior to investing time in application, the Trust provides historical application approval rates for the same or similar programs. The average approval rate from the last round in this program is 35%.

Contact

For technical assistance contact Tara Drennan at (410) 974-2941 x 102 or tdrennan@cbtrust.org.

Narrative Questions

You will be asked to upload a MS Word or PDF file not to exceed 3 pages of text addressing the following points. We recommend that you copy and paste the questions to use as an outline in your narrative to ensure that you address all questions.

- 1) Share your story and what has led you to apply to the Chesapeake Conservation Corps?
- 2) Describe an environmental issue that you are passionate about or has impacted you. Given your area of interest what types of activities and projects described above in “Corps Member Eligible Activities” are you most interested in and why?
- 3) Tell us about a meaningful experience you have had or accomplished in the last five years. The experience does not have to be environmentally focused, just one that has made a significant impression on you or of which you are proud.

Resume Upload:

Recommended but optional: You will be able to upload your resume.

Letters of Recommendation Upload:

Recommended but optional: Letters of recommendation from references listed on your application are encouraged but not required. Letters should describe your work competence, leadership potential, and your ability to build relationships. If you are not able to obtain letters of recommendation in time for submittal they can be emailed separately to jtoolan@cbtrust.org.

Online Application Submission Instructions

The Trust uses an online system for the application process, and if awarded, project management. To apply for an award, click on “Get Started” to begin a new application. This will open a new window asking you to log in or create an account on our online system. If you have applied in the past, use your existing username and password (if you have forgotten either of these use the ‘forgot password’ feature). If you have not used our online system before, click on “New Applicant” and follow the instructions.

Applicants must submit applications in the **Chesapeake Bay Trust Online System** by **4:00 pm EST on Thursday, March 4, 2021**. Late applications will not be accepted, and the online funding opportunity will close promptly at 4:00 pm.

By submitting an application to become a Chesapeake Conservation Corps Member, you attest that all information provided is true to the best of your knowledge, and commit to being placed with a Host Site for the service period and fulfill all responsibilities outlined above.

Watch our video on how to apply for and submit an application using our online system at <https://cbtrust.org/grants/>.

Online Application Form

You will be asked to provide the following information on the online application form. Some items are required in order to submit your application. Refer to the online application for details.

- Eligibility Quiz
 - This two-question quiz is meant to assist you in determining if you are eligible to apply for the Corps program.
- Contact Information Tab
 - Provide your name, mailing address, phone number, and email address.

- Applicant Information Tab
 - Provide your highest degree awarded, year degree awarded, school name, how did you hear about the Corps, types of activities preferences, geographical area preferences, employment history, skills, community and volunteer activities, references, legal information, race Race/Ethnicity (for survey purposes only; this information will not be shared), gender (for survey purposes only; this information will not be shared), age (for survey purposes only; this information will not be shared).

- Narrative Tab
 - Upload a Microsoft Word or PDF file that contains your answers to the narrative questions found in the Narrative Questions section of this RFP. Upload additional supporting documents, if needed.