

New Start Grant Program Pre-Proposal Conference Questions & Answers

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Q: Who should I contact for a letter of support to provide services within Maryland State Correctional Facilities?

A: Danielle Cox, Director of Education for the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS): danielle.cox1@maryland.gov.

Q: How many awards are being given out?

A: There is no set number of awards that will be given out. Awards will be made as long as funding allows.

Q: Can the proposal/programming be at a juvenile facility?

A: No. The program must include the provision of services to “covered individuals” who are defined as having been convicted of a criminal offense and having completed a term of imprisonment in federal prison, or a State or local correctional facility. Per Maryland Code, Correctional Services Art. § 1-101(d), a Correctional Facility is defined as a facility that is operated for the purpose of detaining or confining *adults* who are charged with or found guilty of a crime.

Applicants are encouraged to review the [New Start Grant Program Policy](#) to ensure that their proposal meets the requirements for funding.

Q: Do applicants have to provide a letter of support or MOU, or both?

A: One letter of support or memoranda of understanding is strongly encouraged, but not required, from an agency, organization, or institution that can speak to the applicant’s capacity to serve incarcerated and previously incarcerated individuals, including confirmation of any necessary security clearances and permissions to offer programming within a secure facility. Examples include Maryland correctional institutions, federal prisons, or county departments of corrections.

Q: Can private and for-profit companies apply?

A: Yes, all entities that meet the programming requirements may apply and receive funding.

Q: Can an applicant contract with another nonprofit to deliver services like workforce development?

A: Yes, all project partners must be included on the application.

Q: How do we define a “nationally recognized curriculum?”

A: The New Start Grant Program does not endorse a single entrepreneurship curriculum and defers to applicants to research and select entrepreneurship development curriculum that have support from national organizations, US federal government programs, or other national leaders in the field. Applicants must justify the national recognition of their curriculum source in their application.

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Q: How many awards can one organization receive?

A: One award per year per organization, with an opportunity to renew as long as program funding is available. Awarded programs will be given instructions on how to complete the “Letter of Intent” process to seek grant renewal.

Q: Is there a specific modality on how to reach students?

A: No, applicants may choose the instruction and/or program delivery modality that works best for their project and is aligned with any requirements put forth by partner entities.

Q: Will incarcerated students have access to technology and in particular, web-based platforms and virtual instruction?

A: Applicants may choose to incorporate the use of technology, such as web-based platforms and virtual instruction into their curriculum so long as they have first received approval from their partners to do so.

Q: Does the grant program exclusively serve incarcerated individuals?

A: The New Start Grant Program is intended to serve “covered individuals” as defined in the [New Start Grant Program Policy](#) on page 4 as well as currently incarcerated individuals. For currently incarcerated individuals, applicants must only demonstrate their ability to hold a business plan competition within a correctional facility..

Q: Can inmates receive awards for a business plan competition?

A: Applicants should communicate with their federal, state, or local corrections partners to determine what, if any, awards can be given to incarcerated individuals participating in the business plan competition.

Q: Can the grant pay for staffing?

A: Yes.

Q: What are indirect costs?

A: The State of Maryland does not have a singular definition of indirect costs but applicants should be clear about costs that support programming, such as administrative overhead, fees, and other costs that do not directly relate to delivery of services. Questions about program budgeting can be directed to Dorothee Schlotterbeck (dorothee.schlotterbeck@maryland.gov).

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Q: Can businesses provide training to currently incarcerated individuals via virtual sessions?

A: Prospective applicants should work directly with the correctional institution with whom they intend to partner to determine if the institution has the capability to support virtual training.

Q: Are there restrictions on how many proposal teams a business can support?

A: Businesses may partner with multiple applicants. However, organizations are only permitted to submit one proposal.

Q: Do you have a consolidated list of the point of contact for Maryland Correctional Facilities?

A: Please contact Danielle Cox at danielle.com1@maryland.gov

Q: Where can I find a copy of the Pre-Proposal Conference Presentation?

A: A copy of the Pre-Proposal Conference can be found on the New Start [website](#).

Q: Can you provide guidance or best practices for prospective applicants?

A: Please review the entire policy and application thoroughly. Answer all questions. Ensure your paperwork is organized.

Q: Where should additional questions be sent?

A: Questions may be submitted to Heather Evans at heather.evans1@maryland.gov. Questions will be accepted until close of business on Friday, March 21, 2025.

Q: How many programs are currently active?

A: The Maryland Department of Labor has issued one New Start grant.

Q: Can cooperatively owned businesses be included in the program?

A: Yes, any entity that meets the program requirements is eligible to apply for funding.

Q: Please clarify the training requirements for individuals who are currently incarcerated versus individuals who have been released.

A: Grantees must be able to provide currently incarcerated individuals with the ability to participate in a business plan competition. The other program requirements may be offered to current or formerly incarcerated individuals who meet the definition of covered individuals, as defined by the New Start Act.

Q: Can an organization that wants to work with entities in need of workforce placement options apply for this grant?

A: The focus of the New Start Grant Program is to provide entrepreneurship development programming to covered individuals who wish to start their own businesses.

Q: Is there an expectation for the number of people served by this program?

A: No.

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Q: Is the Department of Labor helping to provide students to organizations?

A: Grantees will be responsible for outreach and recruitment.

Q: Is there any requirement that the people who are doing post-incarceration entrepreneurship training be enrolled in the Maryland Workforce Exchange?

A: No.

Q. Can you clarify the match requirement?

A: Applicants must be able to match at least 25% of the award amount from new or existing non-State funding sources, including indirect costs and in-kind contributions.

Q: Will additional funding be available for this program?

A: Additional funding opportunities are contingent on appropriation in the State budget.