



# GRANT INFORMATION GUIDE

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## Next Generation Scholars of Maryland

### **Maryland Higher Education Commission**

217 East Redwood Street, Suite 2100  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

### **Deadline**

July 16, 2026  
No later than 5:00 p.m. EDT

**MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION**

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Maryland Higher Education Commission

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Governor

Wes Moore, Governor

Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor

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## Program Description

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The Next Generation Scholars of Maryland (NGS) Program is a college access program established by the Maryland General Assembly in 2016 that supports low-income students in high poverty school systems by providing access to postsecondary educational opportunities. NGS programs provide a cohort-based model of support, mentoring, and college guidance for first generation students. Cohorts are identified as early as 7th grade and receive support through high school graduation and into college.

### AUTHORIZATION

Next Generation Scholars of Maryland 2016 [HB 1403](#)

[§18-303](#)

### GRANT OVERVIEW

#### Name of Grant Program

Next Generation Scholars of Maryland FY27

#### Purpose

Next Generation Scholars of Maryland Fiscal Year 2027 grant funds will be awarded to nonprofit organizations to provide guidance and services to cohort students who prequalify for the Guaranteed Access Grant in eligible school districts. Students are expected to successfully transition to college and continue to receive support in their first year of college.

#### Dissemination

This Grant Information Guide (GIG) was released on June 17, 2026.

#### Deadline

Proposals are due no later than 5:00 p.m. EDT on July 16, 2026

#### Grant Period

July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027

#### Funding Amount Available

\$5,450,000

#### Estimated Number of Grants

11-15

#### Eligibility

This grant funding is available to nonprofit organizations.

Nonprofit organizations must support grade 7-12 students in one or more of the following school systems:

- Allegany County Public Schools

- Baltimore City Public Schools
- Caroline County Public Schools
- Dorchester County Public Schools
- Kent County Public Schools
- Prince George’s County Public Schools
- Somerset County Public Schools
- Wicomico County Public Schools

**Submission Instructions**

Grant applications must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. EDT July 16, 2026 via email to [reshma.roy@maryland.gov](mailto:reshma.roy@maryland.gov)

- File Naming Convention: **Grant Application – [Organization Name] – NGS FY2027**
- Email Subject Line: **Grant Application – [Organization Name] – NGS FY2027**

**PROGRAM CONTACT**

**Reshma Roy**

Postsecondary Access Programs Coordinator  
Maryland Higher Education Commission  
[reshma.roy@maryland.gov](mailto:reshma.roy@maryland.gov)

**State Responsibilities**

MHEC will provide information and technical assistance to facilitate the grantee’s implementation of the NGS program. MHEC will monitor grantee progress through meetings, project updates, financial reports, and monitoring visits.

**Use of Funds**

The following are examples of approved uses for the grant funds in accordance with the purpose of the grant. Other costs not listed here may be presented to the grant manager for determination of allowable expenditures.

**Funds may be used for:**

- Salaries and wages;
- Stipends;
- Paid student internships;
- Student transportation;
- Travel;
- Equipment;

- Materials and supplies; and
- Other costs approved by MHEC.

**Funds may not be used for:**

- Supplanting existing program funds.
- Capital improvements.
- Purchase of gift cards.
- Cost(s) incurred prior to the approval of the grant.

## Application Requirements

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**PROPOSAL COVER PAGE**

Proposals must include a completed Proposal Cover Page using the form provided in the application. The cover page must be signed by the Head of Nonprofit Organization.

**PROJECT ABSTRACT**

Introduce the project to the reader. The abstract 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, such as the populations served, a brief description of the goals, the strategies to meet them, and the roles of partners.

**EXTENT OF NEED**

Discuss the specific needs, including cohort-specific needs, of the students to be served during the FY27 grant period. Describe the barriers and challenges these students face in accessing and navigating higher education. Discuss relevant disparities and gaps in existing services and explain why the proposed services and support are needed. Use relevant data and research to support your discussion.

**EVIDENCE OF IMPACT**

Discuss your history of impact on the target population, including what has worked, what has not worked, and your track record in effectuating change. Document current or past efforts to address the problem. Explain why these efforts failed or are inadequate to address the total need. Discuss how past performance has informed the proposed activities, and the future impact your proposed activities are likely to have on the target population. Briefly describe the evidence-based strategies that will be implemented and how they will be measured to determine the impact on the target population.

**GOALS, MEASURABLE OUTCOMES, AND MILESTONES**

Eligible nonprofit organizations are expected to clearly identify a series of goals, outcomes, and milestones that align with all requirements of the Next Generation Scholars legislation.

Goals, measurable outcomes, and milestones must cover **each** of the following statutory requirements:

- A high school graduation plan;
- Summer work or internship opportunities;
- Financial aid literacy assistance;
- Career interest assessments;
- Mentorship and one-on-one counseling;
- Visits to college campuses and workplaces;
- An intensive summer bridge program for students entering an institution of higher education directly from high school; and
- A plan to matriculate and graduate from an institution of higher education.

Goals should address the main problems and issues identified when assessing the needs of the target low-income student population. Goals must be developed in consultation with the students' LEA(s).

Additionally, applicants must align goals to Pillar 3 of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, College and Career Readiness, preparing graduates for success in college and the workforce by ensuring they have the knowledge and skills to complete entry-level credit-bearing college courses and work in high-wage and high-demand industries.

The Next Generation Scholars program mandates measurable outcomes, including:

- Prequalification for the Guaranteed Access Grant;
- Other financial aid awards;
- High school graduation;
- Institutions of higher education matriculation, retention rates, and graduation; and
- Amount and quality of services provided by nonprofit organizations.

Additional measurable outcomes specific to the nonprofit organization's program must be directly aligned to the legislation and the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

The legislation requires ongoing evaluation and reporting. As some goals and outcomes for students in a cohort are not evaluated until the end of the Next Generation Scholars program, milestones must be established to measure progress during the year. Milestones should be evaluated quarterly.

## **MANAGEMENT PLAN & PLAN OF OPERATION**

It is critical that Next Generation Scholars Programs meet all requirements and deadlines established by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) to ensure that students prequalify for and receive the Guaranteed Access Grant and other financial aid.

**MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Submit a detailed and time-specific management plan with pre-assigned responsibilities. In this section, 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).

Applicants will be asked to complete the following management plan table as part of the proposal. Examples of key management activities include purchasing equipment or conducting steering committee meetings.

**Management Plan Worksheet**

Key Management Actions	Individual Responsible	Time Frame

**Key Personnel**

List the staff or personnel involved in the project's implementation. What are their 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?

**PLAN OF OPERATION**

In the Plan of Operation, design the project and discuss the activities to be used to meet requirements and accomplish each goal. Include the specific activities that involve direct service to students and parents. Examples include specific 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 career exploration tool). Identify who will be served and how many by each activity.

Actions outlined in the management plan, such as purchasing equipment or conducting steering committee meetings, are not activities for the purposes of the Plan of Operation. Do not address the elements of the management plan in this section.

Applicants will be asked to complete the following plan of operation table as part of the proposal.

**Plan of Operation Worksheet**

Key Operational Activities	Individual Responsible	Time Frame

**EVALUATION & DISSEMINATION**

Grantees are required to submit quarterly progress reports and a final evaluation report consistent with the project’s goals and outcomes. An effective ongoing evaluation plan should evaluate milestones quarterly and allow for making informed decisions about needed changes to achieve project goals.

**Performance Measures**

Each grantee must evaluate the project and provide a detailed description of measures and instruments used to evaluate program implementation. For each project goal, provide at least one performance measure.

Example:

Goal: The program will provide an effective summer bridge program for students entering an institution of higher education.

Performance measure: 100% of program participants are prepared to enter their freshman year of postsecondary education.

Data Source: Feedback from student evaluation survey, 1st semester grades.

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.

Include information on how the following data will be collected and used:

- the number and percentage of students in each cohort;
- the number and percentage of students who have completed the FAFSA;
- the number and percentage of students participating in services;
- the number and percentage of students earning a 2.5 or better GPA;
- the number and percentage of students who have participated in rigorous college preparatory coursework (AP, IB, Honors level courses);
- the number and percentage of students earning CCR status by the end of grade 10; and
- the number and percentage of students who have been accepted to college.

## Budget and Budget Narrative

This section 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 must have a corresponding entry in the itemized budget. The budget narrative should provide justification for each line item and cover all costs described in the project narrative.

Each line on the itemized budget 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. Show how the expenses were calculated for each line item. 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.

A Budget Summary Form must also be completed and submitted as an appendix.

See the sample budget below:

### Salaries and Wages (list separately for each position)

Line item	Calculation	Requested	In-Kind	Total
Project Manager	\$50/hr. x 40 hrs. per week x 52 weeks	\$83,200	\$20,800	\$104,000
<b>Total for salaries &amp; wages:</b>		\$83,200	\$20,800	\$104,000

## ENOUGH Alignment (Appendix F – Optional)

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Applicants partnering with organizations in the Governor's Office for Children's Engaging Neighborhoods, Organizations, Unions, Governments and Households ([ENOUGH Grant Program](#)) initiative will receive bonus points. The 28 ENOUGH communities and corresponding Census Tracts, which have high levels of concentrated child poverty, can be found [here](#) under "ENOUGH Act Grantees." In order to receive bonus points for this funding opportunity, summarize your collaboration with the initiative and upload a letter of support from at least one project partner (ENOUGH Quarterback) in the designated community. A list of ENOUGH Quarterback organizations and contact information can be found [here](#).

## Appendices

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The following appendices must be included.

- Appendix A: Signed Project Contacts Page
- Appendix B: Signed Budget Summary Form
- Appendix C: Signed Statement of Assurances
- Appendix D: Evidence of Status of a [Nonprofit 501\(c\)\(3\) Organization](#)
- Appendix E: Key Personnel Resumes

The following appendix is optional and may be submitted for up to 5 bonus points.

- Appendix F: ENOUGH Alignment
  - F1: Summary of ENOUGH Alignment
  - F2: Letter of Support from ENOUGH Quarterback

## The Review Process

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The review committee will evaluate applications using the scoring rubric and confirm that the application includes all required components.

### Review Committee

The committee will be composed of representatives from the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). Reviewers will assign numerical scores to each application based on the criteria provided in the scoring rubric.

## Next Generation Scholars of Maryland Scoring Rubric

### EXTENT OF NEED (10 points)

Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
<p>A needs assessment or existing program evaluation was conducted that identifies multiple related problems. Multiple data sources are used, including both quantitative and qualitative data. These data are presented and clearly identify areas of growth that connect to clear implementation strategies.</p>	<p>There is a clear description of the extent of need. Problems are identified that the grant funds will be used to address.</p>	<p>The extent of need is not clearly identified.</p>

### EVIDENCE OF IMPACT (15 points)

Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
<p>The application describes how the proposed program implementation will lead to the desired goals. The application includes a detailed description of the program's experience in implementing an effective college access program and the impact the proposed activities are likely to have on the target population. The application goes further, citing data and research specific to high impact strategies that link planned programming to a likely impact on student success in post-secondary education.</p>	<p>There is a summary of the efficacy of the program. Proposed outcomes are supported by research data and/or previous program data.</p>	<p>The evidence of impact or efficacy is not clearly defined or identified.</p>

**GOALS, MEASURABLE OUTCOMES, AND MILESTONES (20 points)**

<p><b>Level 3 Exceeds Criteria</b></p>	<p><b>Level 2 Meets Criteria</b></p>	<p><b>Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria</b></p>
<p>The application contains more than one goal and outcome that aligns with each requirement of the Next Generation Scholars Program. The application goes further, including goal(s) aligned to Pillar 3 of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future and additional high leverage strategies.</p>	<p>A complete list of goals, outcomes, and milestones are included. The goals and outcomes are aligned to the extent of need and program requirements.</p>	<p>The goals, outcomes, and milestones are not clearly identified, not measurable, and/or not aligned to the requirements of the Next Generation Scholars Program.</p>

**MANAGEMENT PLAN & PLAN OF OPERATION (25 points)**

<p><b>Level 3 Exceeds Criteria</b></p>	<p><b>Level 2 Meets Criteria</b></p>	<p><b>Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria</b></p>
<p>In addition to meeting all previously mentioned criteria, the submission provides a detailed management plan that anticipates potential challenges and offers contingency plans. The submission also includes a risk management plan and outlines strategies for monitoring progress and making necessary adjustments, showing commitment to effective project management and continuous improvement. The roles and qualifications of key personnel are comprehensively described, demonstrating how their unique skills and experiences will contribute to the project's success. The plan of operation provides a comprehensive overview of project activities, timelines, and responsible personnel. The project timeline is detailed, realistic, and accounts for potential delays, indicating thoughtful planning.</p>	<p>The management plan identifies key management actions, assigns responsibilities, and reasonable timeframes. Key personnel are listed along with % FTE and summary of their experience with grant management and program specific knowledge.</p> <p>A detailed plan of operation is included that addresses all items identified in the statement of need. The plan of operation includes key operational activities, implementation timelines, and responsible personnel.</p>	<p>The management plan is incomplete.</p> <p>The plan of operation provided does not address the items identified in the statement of need.</p>

**EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION (15 points)**

Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
<p>In addition to meeting all previously mentioned criteria, the application identifies advanced metrics and utilizes sophisticated data analysis methods. The methodology for data collection, evaluation, and reporting is detailed, innovative, and ensures effective use of data. The data dissemination plan is extensive, ensuring that all stakeholders can access and understand the data. The application also outlines a clear process for using data and feedback to continually refine and improve the program.</p>	<p>The application provides a plan for program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement and inform future decisions. The plan identifies data and instruments, and the method that will be used to collect, evaluate, and report on the data.</p>	<p>The application does not include a clear plan for program evaluation and continuous improvement. There is a limited plan to report on outcomes.</p>

**BUDGET AND BUDGET NARRATIVE (15 points)**

Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
<p>In addition to meeting all previously mentioned criteria, the applicant provides additional information and justification related to costs in each budget category and how they will support program goals and student success.</p>	<p>The application includes the Budget Summary Form, itemized budget, and a detailed budget narrative. Calculations for the cost of each item was included, there are no errors, and all line-item costs are justified, reasonable, and allowable. The itemized budget, Budget Summary Form, and budget narrative align with the proposed activities.</p>	<p>The application includes budget expenses with limited justification and/or does not align with the prescribed categories or the proposed activities. Cost may not be reasonable or allowable. Budget contains errors and/or missing calculations.</p>

**BONUS:** Applications may receive up to 5 bonus points for ENOUGH alignment.

## Reporting & Submission Requirements

Grantees must comply with the following requirements:

Date	Requirements
Ongoing	Fiscal and program monitoring.
October 15, 2026	Quarterly progress report reflecting the months of July – September. Quarterly budget summary report.
January 15, 2027	Quarterly progress report reflecting the months of October – December. Quarterly budget summary report.
April 15, 2027	Quarterly progress report reflecting the months of January – March. Quarterly budget summary report.
August 30, 2027	Final project report reflecting the months of April – June and the full year project. Final budget summary report.
October 4, 2027	Legislative report summary and student data sheet.

Notes:

- Grantees must comply with all reporting requirements and submission procedures established by MHEC, including the use of reporting forms and templates provided by MHEC.
- Grantees must maintain financial records and supporting documentation for all expenditures charged to the grant.
- Any requests for amendments must be submitted **at least 30 calendar days** before the grant period ends and must be submitted using the Budget and Project Amendment Request Form found on the [MHEC Next Generation Scholars webpage](#).

## Grant Application Timeline

Date	Timeline Event
June 17, 2026	The Grant Information Guide and the application for participating are released.
July 16, 2026	The grant application period closes.
July 20-August 12, 2026	MHEC Review Committee will evaluate proposals and finalize awards.
August 13-21, 2026	MHEC will notify applicants of the award status.
July 1, 2026	The grant period begins.
June 30, 2027	The grant period ends.

## Non-Discrimination Statement

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) 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 various youth groups.

## The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Sect 427

Each application must develop and describe the steps the 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 to overcome barriers to equitable participation.

## Customer Service Support

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If you have questions about the application or the process, please contact:

### PROGRAM CONTACT

**Reshma Roy**

Postsecondary Access Programs Coordinator

Maryland Higher Education Commission

[reshma.roy@maryland.gov](mailto:reshma.roy@maryland.gov)

To help identify and address support requests in a timely manner, please use the following email subject line: **Support Request – Grant Application – NGS FY2027**

This funding opportunity, including all attachments and updates, can be downloaded from the [MHEC Office of Outreach and Grants Management webpage](#).