



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE 2016 Spay and Neuter Grants Program Guidelines for Feral Cat-Focused Applications



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) is offering grants pursuant to [MD. AGRICULTURE Code Ann. § 2-1602 \(2013\)](#)

The purpose of the fund is to reduce animal shelter overpopulation and cat and dog euthanasia in Maryland shelters.

BASIC GUIDELINES FOR ALL GRANT APPLICANTS

The following information under the GOLD banners is general guidance with important Program information and other details that may apply to your application. Please read this information first before proceeding to the application-specific guidance under the BLUE banners.

There are 3 categories of grant applications: Pet-Focused Projects, Feral Cat-Focused Projects, and Capital Expense/Equipment Requests. Please be sure you are using the correct application and correct guidelines for your specific type of project.

PLEASE NOTE: This is a competitive grants program. Submissions are not only judged on their own merits, but also against all other applications.

● ELIGIBILITY AND FUNDING CRITERIA AND REQUIREMENTS

- Municipal or county governments or non-profit animal welfare organizations with tax exempt status under 501 (c)(3) are eligible to apply to facilitate and promote the provision of spay and neuter services for cats and dogs.
- A competitive grant proposal (quoting Agriculture Article, §2-1602, Annotated Code of Maryland):
 1. Shall target low-income communities and populations to the maximum extent possible and detail how that goal is to be accomplished;
 2. May target feral cat populations if MDA determines that this targeting does not violate local law.
 3. Shall efficiently and effectively facilitate and promote and increase the provision of spay and neuter services for cats and dogs; and

4. May include public education and outreach components.

- Grant projects must meet the purpose of the Fund. Grant projects that most effectively and efficiently facilitate, promote and increase spay and neuter services for cats and dogs in Maryland will be given priority.
- Applicants must comply with all other statutory and regulatory requirements pertaining to the Spay/Neuter grant program. Applicants should familiarize themselves with those provisions of the Maryland Code. [Program Regulations](#) Link and the [Statutory Link](#)
- The Applicant and personnel described in the application must have the qualifications and resources necessary to perform and complete the project proposal.
- Applicants must complete and submit the grant application, with any required accompanied documents as specified in these Guidelines and on the application forms, by close of business (5:00 PM EST) on or before the posted grant deadline as it appears on the Request for Proposals (RFP) and on the MDA website ([Spay and Neuter Grants Program webpage](#)).
- Applicants must only propose projects that result in a net increase in spay and neuter procedures above the level of service they normally provide or accomplish. These funds cannot be used to maintain the organization's status quo or replace other funds.
- Applicants and their organizations generally should have no history (within the last 3 years) of violations or fines with Maryland Animal Control authorities and any history of violations may be a basis for denying funding. If such prior violations exist, the applicant should provide a thorough explanation in the application of the violation and how it has been rectified.
- The program generally does not provide support to organizations that have lost their IRS tax-exempt status, have unusually high administrative expenses or show other indicators of financial mismanagement. Please make sure your organization is in good standing with the IRS and the State of Maryland.

COMPLETING AND SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

A Request for Proposals (RFP) will be posted online at [Spay and Neuter Grants Program webpage](#) and on Governor's Grant Office-Maryland Grant Opportunities site at grants.maryland.gov.

The applications are downloadable fillable WORD forms that must be filled out in full and submitted to MDA by close of business (5:00 PM EST) by the proposal deadline, as stated in the RFP. The completed application forms must be submitted in WORD format. Accompanied documents may be in Word, PDF or other commonly supported formats.

Downloadable fillable WORD application forms are available on the MDA Spay and Neuter website ([Spay and Neuter Grants Program webpage](#)). Download the appropriate document and

enter the information requested. Please be as concise as possible, but without sacrificing essential detail. Please check for spelling errors and missing information. Save your completed form to your computer. Be sure to fill out the entire application form. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

In addition to the completed application form, all applicants must provide the following:

- A Price Assurance Form from the veterinarian(s) or clinic used as indicated on the application. The required form is available on the Spay and Neuter Grants Program webpage.
- For non-government applicants: Copy of most recent 990 Form (if required) or other appropriate tax form confirming tax exempt status.

Applications are submitted by completing the application form and attaching the completed form, and any required additional pages or documents, to an email and sent to mda.spayandneuter@maryland.gov. The time and date MDA receives this email will be considered the submittal date and time of the application. Applicants will receive a notice from the system confirming the receipt of the email with attachments. Applications submitted to any other email address, faxed or mailed WILL NOT be accepted. We recommend that you retain a copy of your sent email with the attachment in your email archive for your records.

Important Note: Once emailed and received by MDA, no changes or updates may be made to the application and no additional information may be added, except at MDA's request. Applicants may only request a submitted application be withdrawn.

This email address (mda.spayandneuter@maryland.gov) must only be used to submit applications, Quarterly Project Progress, and Final Project Fact Sheets and **not** for any other inquiries or correspondence. For any other Program-related correspondence, please contact Jane.Mallory@maryland.gov or call Jane Mallory, Program Coordinator, Spay and Neuter Grants Program at (410) 841-5766. Any emails that are not application or report submittals sent to mda.spayandneuter@maryland.gov will not be answered or forwarded.

Number of applications and continued support:

Multiple project proposals submitted by the same applicant are permitted but not encouraged. Qualified applicants may apply for one or more project types, but must submit separate category-appropriate application forms with appropriate supporting documents. Pet-Focused, Feral Cat-Focused and Capital Expense/Equipment projects may not be presented in the same application form.

If submitting multiple applications, the applicant must provide sufficient evidence of the qualifications, personnel, experience, and resources that would be necessary to perform and complete all work proposed in all the applications combined. Do not submit multiple applications in a single grant cycle unless your organization is clearly able to establish it has the capacity to perform all of the proposed projects at the same time.

Organizations submitting multiple applications must indicate which application has the highest priority. The Spay and Neuter program has limited funding and receives far more proposals than can be funded in any given year.

Joint applications:

Multiple organizations may partner and present a joint application. In this case, a LEAD Organization must be specified in the application to be the recipient of the funds if funded. All organizations must agree that the Lead will allocate funds to the partner in whatever schedule the partners have agreed upon. All organizations must include information for Sections A-Proposal Administration Information and Section B-Point of Contact & Organization Information for all organizations, listing the LEAD first. The duties of each organization are then described in the Project Description and Work Plan of the application.

If funded, all organizations must be signatories on the Grant Agreement and must provide the required reports, either separately or jointly.

As part of the program legislation, MDA is required to collect quarterly shelter survey data from all county shelters. This data is used to track the impact the program has on intake and euthanasia numbers over time. If more than one of the joint applicants maintains a shelter, both organizations are required to report shelter survey data until the program sunset in 2022.

PROJECT BUDGET LIMITS

The **minimum grant** request is **\$5,000**.

There is not a maximum grant amount at this time but please be aware that the overall program budget (which includes program operating expenses) is limited and total requests for grants far exceed available funds. MDA will strive to fund those projects that can most efficiently and effectively achieve the purposes of the program.

Please consider the amount of funds requested relative to your organizations current operating budget and capacity. Applications should clearly establish an organization's capacity to undertake a project and the ability to handle increased staffing and resource needs associated with the project.

BUDGET REQUIREMENTS

The Budget Line Item section is very important for all applications. It is crucial that you demonstrate in your application and detailed work plan that each line item is necessary to the specific project and relates to the overall purpose of the program: sterilizing cats and dogs to reduce shelter intake and euthanasia. While some employ the "shotgun strategy" (i.e.: *Throw everything in and let the reviewers delete what they don't like*), we do not recommend this strategy and it can negatively impact your grant review. Applications should demonstrate a thoughtful effort by applicant to limit expenses to those that most effectively and efficiently increase spay and neuter services and reduce intake and euthanasia.

Budget items must be detailed enough to show what will be done with the funds. Vaguely written items (for example: Misc. Materials- \$1,000) will not be considered, will be red-lined during the review process, and may even downgrade the proposal's overall review.

However, detailed breakdowns are not required for the veterinary sterilization package offered by the veterinary practice.

Rabies Vaccine: A rabies vaccination is required for all dogs and cats without proof of a current rabies vaccination. Offering free pre-operative rabies vaccinations can serve as an incentive for the public to bring their pets in for altering. Be sure to factor this into your budget. All budgets must include the cost of rabies vaccine for each animal, capped at a maximum \$5.00/dose.

Other medications: MDA expects all grant recipients to meet the Maryland Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners minimum standards of care for spay and neuter procedures and care of animals altered under the program. You should budget for any equipment or medicine, including post operative pain medicine, as the attending veterinarian deems appropriate for a spay/neuter service. These costs are generally included in the Veterinary Services line item.

SOME COMMON ALLOWABLE AND PROHIBITED EXPENSES

The following are examples of some allowable expenses. If you have an expense that is not listed here it does not necessarily mean it is prohibited. Please contact the Program Coordinator to discuss if you are unsure.

- **Special training:** MDA requires any recipient of grant funds to meet all standards of care set forth by the Maryland Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners for the practice of veterinary medicine in the State of Maryland ([Maryland Standards and Practices](#)). We strongly support training for individuals that further elevate capabilities in spay/neuter techniques for High-Quality High-Volume Spay/Neuter (HQHVSN) operations. Special consideration may be given to grant applicants who have this specialized training or are proposing for this specialized training. Likewise training in the proper and safe application of non-surgical zinc neutering (such as neutering with Zeuterin™ injectable solution) is also allowable. Funding requests may include the following types of costs: expenses associated with travel, lodging, and course costs in these techniques. This should be detailed in budget line items as to who would attend, where, what program will be attended and cost per person per day. Training requests should be connected with a proposed pet or feral cat-focused project.
- **Equipment and supplies:** This covers those medical and non medical items (durable or exhaustible), that directly results in an increase in the number of spay/neuter procedures and which are necessary for the applicant to carry out the project. If a durable equipment request in this budget category exceeds \$5000 you must prepare and submit a separate Capital Expense Application. These items must be related to and explained in the project work plan, and must be necessary to achieving the goals of the project and program. For durable items (life over 1 year) you must explain how it will have a lasting benefit to the program purpose beyond the term of the grant. For equipment identify each piece of equipment and include quote from supplier.

Capital expenses/equipment requests are generally larger (greater than \$5,000) equipment requests and do not include funds requested to perform a set number of procedures (such as pet-focused or feral-focused applications). Equipment requests in this category may include durable surgical equipment and surgical supplies for a new stationary spay/neuter clinic, for the expansion of an existing clinic or to obtain and equip a mobile clinic. You must make a case that the capital expense/equipment will aid in increasing the number of spays and neuter procedures and the number of altered animals in Maryland, and explain how it will have a lasting benefit to the program purpose beyond the term of the grant. *More information about capital expense/equipment requests may be found in the Capital Expense/Equipment Guidance and Application form.*

- **Transportation assistance*:** Because travel to/from appointments is often challenging for many people and can affect a pet owner's decision to get their animals altered, we highly encourage you to include a travel assistance outreach element to your project and budget. If your experience has shown this is not the case in your particular area or transportation is routinely handled by volunteers and a budget is not required, please state this in your project description narrative. Transportation assistance should be calculated at the cost per mile. The applicant should use the IRS determined rate. <https://www.irs.gov/uac/Newsroom/2016-Standard-Mileage-Rates-for-Business-Medical-and-Moving-Announced>
- **New technical staff or other personnel:** This expense is limited to personnel necessary to effectively and efficiently increase the delivery of spay and neuter procedures related to the proposed project as detailed in the work plan. Examples might include: outreach coordinators, or transport drivers. This is only intended to increase staff, not replace existing personnel and this must directly relate to increasing the number of spay and neutering procedures and altered animals by the applicant. Personnel requests must relate to the activities in the proposed project and generally applicant should be able to show there are special circumstances or other unique challenges requiring personnel costs. The cost of new staff is only covered during the period of performance of the grant and not in perpetuity.
- **Marketing/Outreach costs:** This may include printing and distribution of outreach material, and other expenses related to outreach to the target community or population. These items must be directly related to spay/neuter and explained in the project work plan.
- **Veterinary sterilization package offered by the veterinary practice:** All costs associated with providing the veterinary services and sterilization procedure should be included in the Veterinary Services line item on a per animal basis. There is generally no need to list individual items in the veterinary sterilization package. Applicants should not list a separate line item for the veterinarian's and vet technician's time, or for any other item customarily associated with providing the veterinary services and sterilization procedure. Standardizing these budget items will help facilitate MDA's review process.

*Applicants are encouraged to look for ways to make transportation a cost share item, and thereby leverage grant funds to make their application more competitive. This is an area applicants have found ripe for cost sharing.

PROHIBITED EXPENSES

The program has limited annual funds, with a goal to fund projects that spay and neuter as many animals as possible, and that can have the greatest impact on reducing shelter overpopulation and euthanasia. The following are examples of items that, while they may have value, are not necessarily a good allocation of these limited resources, and therefore may not be considered.

- **No Co-Pays Are Allowed:** Requiring a co-pay for any service or cost is not permitted for projects funded by this program. The cost of procedures must be all inclusive (materials, veterinary services, rabies vaccine, and all required pre and post operative medicines/exams related to the procedure). Be sure to keep this in mind when developing budget line items and calculating your cost/animal information in the Expected Outcomes section.
- **Requiring Other Procedures Is Not Allowed:** Providing the spay/neuter services paid for under this program cannot be contingent purchasing other services.

Examples of expenses that may not be allowed:

- Overhead, office equipment and supplies, name tags and uniforms.
- Capital Campaigns and large construction projects.
- Giveaways (such as promotional items other than pamphlets, postcards and other educational materials).
- Flea treatments, de-worming, ear-cleaning, bathing, and microchipping.
- Web design and hosting, professional photography.
- Vaccines (other than rabies), blood tests and other tests.
- County pet licenses. It is important for government applicants to note this and find alternative funding for licensing.
- Contingency funds. While a contingency fund is not an allowable expense, if in the course of a sterilization procedure, complications arise that necessitate additional medical treatment, and the Project Manager may get subsequent approval from the Program Coordinator to use project funds to cover the cost.
- Education curriculum development. This type of expense is under review and currently not considered an allowable expense.

Applicants who have these types of items as part of their project should find ways to fund them through other sources and can list such items in the “Cost-Sharing and In-kind Contributions” section of the application (provided they are related to the project and program purpose). Please contact the Program Coordinator if you have a question about a proposed expense.

TARGET AREA AND TARGET NUMBERS

Target Areas:

Whether an application is focusing on pets, feral cats, or for capital expense, target areas should be as specific and as focused as possible. A target area should be a realistic and manageable size for the applicant's capacity. For pet projects: a neighborhood, zip code, housing block, etc. For feral cat projects: the locations of a specific colony or colonies. Proposing to target an entire city, county or whole portions of the state may be perceived as overly ambitious for many applicants. Large target areas may make it difficult to predict and evaluate impact to shelter intake and euthanasia rates.

Applicants should also remember that this program is a multi-year program and there will be more opportunities to apply for funding to cover other areas. *Not every target site must be done at once.*

Choosing a Target Area:

Sources of Shelter Intake: Target areas need to directly relate to those areas identified as sources of intake for the county shelter in which the target areas occur. It is imperative that applicants coordinate with animal control and local shelters and confirm that their proposed target area(s) will ultimately help reduce intake at a shelter or shelters, or seek their direction as to what would be the best target area. For those counties without county shelters or with limited facilities, applicants should investigate whether applicant's target area contributes to the adjacent county shelter's intake. All coordination should be discussed in the application and any letters of support should be included.

Looking for the Gaps and Redundancy: A **Project Map** showing all the current and past projects funded by the Program **is posted on the program webpage.** A review of this map will show where work has been or is currently in progress and where projects may be needed. MDA strongly recommends that all applicants look at the map to make sure their target area is not duplicative of another project. If your target area duplicates another funded project site, you should coordinate with the contact person for that project and see if your proposal complements their effort or can with some adjustment. You should include a discussion of this process as part of your target area justification in your application. Duplication of target areas of other funded projects with no justification may be a basis for downgrading the proposal in the review process.

Target Numbers:

MDA expects applicants to choose their target number (i.e. the number of animals to be altered with the project funds) with care and should determine this number based on how many unaltered animals are currently in the target area. Applicants should discuss the method by which they estimated the number of unaltered animals living in the target area (either by use of proven formulas detailed in the specific guidance below or by direct knowledge, such as reliable data on feral cat colony size, etc).

Applicants should discuss the animal demographics of their target area and specify what percentage of the unaltered animals in their target area the applicant proposes to alter. Once a project begins, if the actual conditions in the field differ from what was anticipated when using a formula to estimate numbers, grantees may use the quarterly reporting form to include this

new information. If a funded project needs to change its target area to achieve the target number of animals, this is possible through coordination with and permission from MDA to revise the parameters of the target area with a MDA-approved change of scope request.

Target numbers should also reflect a “Net Increase” in the number of animals currently being altered or arranged by the applying organization.

Estimating Number of Unaltered Pets:

For Pet-Focused applications it is important in the Target Area section to provide an estimate on the number of unaltered pets in your target area. This may also be useful information in a Capital Expense/Equipment application to demonstrate need and justify the request for funding and a Feral Cat-Focused application in any discussion on the correlation of unaltered pet cats and the subsequent populations of feral cats in a target area.

Please estimate the unaltered pets in your targeted area by using the Pet Estimate Tool, available by following the link below or visiting the Program webpage and downloading the tool located under the Application Materials Section. Please follow the instructions to this easy to fill-out tool provided in Excel and provide a printout of your calculation with your application.

[Demographic Guidelines and Tool](#)

[Pet Estimate Tool](#)

REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION PROCESS

The grant review process from the submittal deadline to notification of approval is usually completed within 60 days. During this time, MDA conducts a Due Diligence check on all applicants to confirm eligibility, tax status, good standing of project veterinarians with MDA Vet Board, and good standing of applicant with local animal control agencies. The Advisory Board reviews and evaluates each grant application **competitively** in relation to all applications, with focus on how well the project addresses and meets program requirements and goals, the potential beneficial and measurable impact on shelter intake and euthanasia rates, applicant experience and capacity, and cost effectiveness of the proposed effort with respect to program purpose. The Advisory Board then submits their recommendations for funding to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Secretary has final approval on all applications.

Awards go to proposals that most effectively meet the purpose of the Fund and best meet grant criteria under this competitive grant program. Funded grant amounts may differ from requested amounts. If changes in funded amounts are required, MDA coordinates any changes with the Primary Point of Contact (POC) listed on the application prior to finalizing the grant agreement.

All applicants (both recommended and not recommended for funding) are notified by email sent to the Primary Point of Contact listed on the application. Notifications are sent as promptly as possible after the final funding decision by the Secretary.

MDA sends out grant agreements to grant recipients within 30 days following approval. MDA will notify the recipients by emails when the Grant Agreements have been mailed out. Grant recipients must return their signed agreements to MDA within 30 days after this notification. Recipients must not commit any funds until the Grant Agreement is signed, returned to MDA, finalized by MDA, and the recipient has received their signed copy back.

Please Note: If the grant agreement is not returned to MDA within required time, MDA may choose to withdraw the grant offer and reallocate the funds.

It is highly recommended that prior to any award, all applicants review the Grant Agreement example that appends the posted RFP and make sure their organization's officers (including any legal staff) are aware of the requirements within the Grant Agreement and the 30 day limit for signing and returning the agreement to MDA.

SOME COMMON REASONS AN APPLICATION MAY BE TURNED DOWN

Applicants should keep in mind that **this is a competitive grants program** with limited annual budgets. Unfortunately for this reason it is quite possible that good applications could still be turned down simply due to stiff competition and lack of funds.

The following are examples of other reasons an application may be turned down.

- Incomplete Application or Incorrect Format: All application fields MUST be filled in and returned to MDA in WORD format using the correct application form.
- Ineligible Applicant: Applicants must be registered with the IRS as a 501 (c) (3) or be a Maryland state or local government agency or department.
- Fines and Violations: Applicants with a history of violations with local Animal Control Agencies may be considered ineligible.
- Lack of Clarity or Details: Request does not state a specific purpose or does not provide adequate explanation or information.
- Limited Resources/Budgetary Constraints: Grant budget for the proposed project is inadequate to accommodate the request.
- Application does not establish applicant's ability to complete the project.
- Request Does Not Meet RFP requirements and program guidelines.
- Other Concerns/Poorly Presented: Application is vague or incomprehensible, contains excessive errors. Putting information in the wrong section of the application hinders the review process.
- Applicant does not clearly demonstrate that the funds would be used to increase their capacity (i.e.: does not show a net increase in sterilizations above what they normally do).
- Poorly described and unjustified budget items.
- Failed to demonstrate an attempt to coordinate with animal control and/or correlation between their project and the intake and euthanasia data from the county shelter.
- Failed to indicate how many surgeries would be done with the grant funds and what the cost per animal would be.

- Poor performance on previously funded projects (such as late reporting, unresponsive to communication requests from MDA, unapproved changes in project scope and expenditures of funds, failure to reach target number of animals without discussion with the Program Coordinator as to reason, etc.).
- The proposal duplicates an existing effort.
- Outside Geographic Operating Area: The geographic area for which grant funds are requested does not fall within state of Maryland.
- Failed to demonstrate that they considered MDA's recommendations on any turndown notice for previous applications.
- Unrealistic number of animals proposed to be altered in the given time frame.
- Missed the stated submittal deadline on the RFP.



FERAL CAT-FOCUSED APPLICATION GUIDANCE

The following information is guidance to those applicants who are proposing projects that focus solely on feral cats within Maryland.

The Basics:

MDA considers any unowned cat to fall under the “feral” category and eligible to be spayed/neutered under this project type. A Feral Cat-Focused project must advance the purpose of the program, which is to reduce animal shelter overpopulation and euthanasia rates. In the following sections, applicants should provide project specifics and data that support their assertions that their projects will work towards this goal. Applicants should avoid the use of vague or emotional language, or unsubstantiated claims. Clear, logical and to-the-point text is crucial.

Feral cat projects must not take place in those counties or municipalities where feral cat projects are prohibited by law. MDA contacted the county attorneys in each county for information on any prohibitions relating to feral cats. The responses are provided in the document: *Maryland County Laws Regarding Feral Cats* and is available on the program webpage.

Please note: Responses in this document may not take into account recent changes in policy that a county may be considering. If an applicant is applying to work in a county that until recently has prohibited such work, it is up to the applicant to obtain a statement from the County Attorney or Animal Control Authority stating that feral cat-related projects would be allowable. This statement must be included with the application.

Projects must not occur on or immediately adjacent to sensitive Department of Natural Resources (DNR) land, MD Park Service land, or in or immediately adjacent to a protected habitat supporting sensitive species or sensitive resources, unless written consent is provided by a DNR or MD Park Service representative. Applicants may find the Merlin Online Interactive Map V 2.0 helpful in identifying protected areas (<http://www.mdmerlin.net/uses.asp>).

Applicants must provide signed consent from landowners (or authorized representatives, or legal tenants), employ efforts to re-home cats whenever possible, and employ the most responsible and effective methods possible, including adhering to best management practices outlined in these guidelines to ensure responsible and effective project execution and results. The required Landowner Permission Form is available on the Spay and Neuter Grants Program webpage.

MDA will only support those organizations that seek to ultimately decrease the populations of unowned cats. MDA will not support any individual or organization that intends to increase unowned cat populations or release more cats into the wild.

APPLICATION GUIDANCE

The following provides guidance on how the applicant might address selected application sections in the Feral Cat-Focused Application form. The applicant should also carefully review the General Guidance for more helpful information, especially with regards to budgets, prohibitions and requirements.

C-1: PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

THE PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE section should list the month/year of the start and completion date of the proposed project. You should keep in mind that after the application due date, there may be one to 3 months before awards are made and agreements sent and signed, so you should choose your start and end date with this in mind.

The length of a project should be the time you estimate to complete the proposed funded effort. A project does not necessarily have to be limited to 12 months, if you feel more time would be needed.

C-2: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

THE PROJECT DESCRIPTION section should be well-crafted paragraphs that concisely describe what you plan to do, where, how, and why.

It should also identify the location where the proposed project will take place and what specific shelter(s) the project will impact. This should be based on data collected from shelter staff and from discussions with shelter and animal control staff, in addition to any data collected by the applying organization.

Make sure to state why this project is needed in this area, what you will do, how you will do this and what will be the specific benefit. (The step-by-step of what will be done should be saved for the Detailed Work Plan section.)

It may be helpful to think of this section similar to the Abstract of an article (with the “article” made up of the Methods and Strategy, Target Area Detailed Work Plan and Expected Results sections).

Applications seeking to continue work funded in a previous cycle (whether completed or still in progress but scheduled to finish soon) should include a discussion in their project descriptions what lessons/challenges they have encountered in their previous project(s) and how they plan to address them in the proposed application.

Here is an example of a Project Description Section:

Based on coordination with local animal control, the estimates provided by the animal control and the city shelter indicate that approximately XX, XXX community cats occur within the city limits. Last year the city shelter took in X, XXX cats of which X,XXX had to be euthanized. According to Mr. W at County Animal Control, Feral or un-owned cats make up 80% of the cats taken in by the shelter and almost 90% of the cats euthanized. Furthermore the city has had 5 incidences of rabies (3 raccoons and 2 cats) in the past year. This project seeks to reduce this number by offering no cost TNR services (capture, alter, transport and monitor) to several cat caretakers within the area bordered by Elm St, Main St, Birch Ave, and First St. Using the Petsmart Census formula, it is estimated that XXX un-owned cats live in this area. With permission from landowners and a team of trained volunteers, we will set traps each weekend over several months, arrange for spay/neuter (including ear tipping and vaccinations). We will evaluate each cat and explore re-homing potential. For those that are not suitable for re-homing, we will return the cats to the point of capture. A project coordinator will manage volunteers, engage with the community, and lead the education effort. Trained volunteers will oversee the complete TNR process and the cat caretakers will be trained and advised. We will partner with two local veterinarians who will be providing in-kind contributions in the form of substantially discounted TNR services. Our organization will also contribute the cost of other vaccines not covered by grant money. This Project should help reduce the shelter intake by at least 2 percent. It will also help reduce the risk of rabies spread, start to reduce the cat population in this area, begin to relieve the burden on the local caretakers and also reduce problematic behavior frequently displayed by unaltered cats.

C-3: EXPECTED OUTCOMES

THE EXPECTED OUTCOMES section is one of the most important as this is a way to measure the success of your project at the completion and how your project helps meet the goal of the program: to reduce intake and euthanasia in Maryland shelters. It is important that each objective have a specific outcome that can be quantified.

In the first part of this section in the spaces indicated, applicants must list how many cats will be altered using the project funds. This needs to be presented in this format:

Example*: # of cats spayed: 200 Cost per cat: \$40/cat

The cost per animal must match the cost per animal on your budget line item for Veterinary Services. If you cannot anticipate how many cats of each sex you will alter, you may assume that 50 percent will be male and 50 percent will be female.

The number of animals proposed to be altered must represent a “net increase” from the number of animals you currently alter or arrange to alter on an annual basis.

For Project Impacts, applicants should specify and explain how the project achieves the purpose of the Fund to reduce intake and euthanasia in shelters. Applicants should cite which specific counties and shelter(s) will directly benefit from their project and to the best of their abilities, the anticipated extent of the project’s impact on those shelters.

Applications must identify a method that can measure impact of project on shelter overpopulation using objective reliable data (anecdotal information is not adequate). Applicants should provide the most recent intake and euthanasia data for each shelter the project will

impact, discuss coordination efforts with local shelters and animal control agencies to confirm that the target area is a source of intake for the shelter, and explain how the project is expected to beneficially impact shelter numbers. If your project would directly benefit more than one county, don't forget to include that!

SHELTER DATA: Shelter data is public information and should be available from shelters on request. Quarterly shelter data is also collected by MDA. If you are having difficulties obtaining the quarterly statistics you need, you can make a request to MDA by sending an email to Jane Mallory, Spay and Neuter Grants Program Coordinator at Jane.Mallory@maryland.gov. In the request you must specify for what facility and time period you wish the data to cover. **Please keep in mind, MDA does not have data intake and euthanasia from specific locations within counties.** This information must come from the shelters themselves or other knowledgeable organizations.

In addition to detailing how many cats an applicant expects to alter with the requested funds (both the target number of cats and estimated percentage these cats are of the entire colony), the applicant should also discuss how long he/she estimates it would take to bring the colony to as close to 100% altered as possible and how many seasons of subsequent funding to achieve this it might take.

Here is an example of an Expected Outcomes section:

This project will result in the altering and vaccination of approximately 80% of the cats that make up a colony located on the block of 5th and Elm, in the Any City. The Any County Animal shelter confirms that this area is one source of intake of unowned cats in the city. It is estimated that reduction of this breeding population will eventually decrease the intake of cats to this shelter by as much as 2% and euthanasia in the shelter by 3% since many cats and kittens come from this area. This will also have the immediate benefit of vaccinating cats that might otherwise contract and spread rabies to neighborhood pets, other urban wildlife, and people. This will also alleviate problem behavior by the cats that have been a source of concern by residents. We estimate that to achieve 99% altered status, it will take another year of TNR at a similar level, with several seasons of monitoring.

C-4: PARTNERING

THE PARTNERING section should include information on any organization(s) that will be contributing to this specific effort but will not be receiving the grant funds as an applicant (as opposed to a joint applicant (see Joint Applicant information in General Guidance above). This section should include information on any organization(s) that will be contributing to this specific effort (donations should also be quantified in the Cost Sharing and In-Kind Contributions section) applicant. This section should summarize what tasks the partnering organization will perform under this project (with more detail on these tasks provided in the **Detailed Work Plan** section).

This section should also include the names of the veterinarians and/or clinics that will provide the surgeries. (Applicants also need to provide confirmation from the veterinarians that the price per surgery will not change over the course of the project's period of performance-See the Program webpage for the Price Assurance form).

C-5: TARGET AREA

THE TARGET AREA section should identify the location where the project will occur and the shelter(s) that will benefit from the proposed project. You must provide a map indicating your target area and colonies. Be sure to review the crucial Target Area section in the General Guidance.

Targets:

Specific known colonies should be targeted, and applicant should have already conducted the preliminary data collection for any targeted colonies prior to submitting an application. Applicant must pinpoint on a map the specific location(s) of the cat colony or colonies. The map should indicate what property or properties will be accessed by project personnel to perform project tasks (such as placing traps, returning traps and accessing these locations). You must provide signed consent from the landowners, legal tenants, or authorized representatives of the properties in the target area where the activities will occur. A Permission Form is available on the Program webpage.

Applicant must describe each target colony including details such as the general make up of the colony, estimated number of cats, number of cats already altered (if known), whether or not it is a managed colony, and whether there is an identified caretaker. If easier, you may consider putting this information in a Table format and attaching it to your application.

Applicant must include an assessment of shelter data as it relates to the target location. Corroboration from shelter staff or animal control departments that this is a good target site that will impact shelter intake and euthanasia should be sought.

Applicants can find helpful information at the Petsmart Charities website:

(<http://www.petsmartcharities.org/pro/community-tnr-tactics-and-tools>).

C-6: PROJECT METHODS AND STRATEGY

PROJECT APPROACH AND STRATEGY section should describe the specific methods that the applicant will use both during the project and after the grant period has concluded to ensure the project results are long-lasting and that the most responsible methods are employed that safeguard the wellbeing of the cats but also other wildlife and the public.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with the best management practices (BMP) for feral cat colony management and reduction at the Petsmart Charities website: (<http://www.petsmartcharities.org/pro/community-tnr-tactics-and-tools>).

These BMPs will be considered in reviewing your application. It is your responsibility to make sure your application and project conform to these customarily accepted BMPs.

To ensure maximum effectiveness, the applicant must demonstrate an understanding of the targeted approach and confirm in their narrative that their goal is to fix a substantial percentage of the community cats in the target area – as close to 100% as possible. MDA realizes

achieving close to 100% might take a multi-season effort, but applicants must consider that multi-year funding may not be available and should discuss how the effort will continue toward achieving the 100% goal after the grant cycle, and how the colony will be monitored to ensure it remains near 100% sterilization.

The applicant must state what approximate percent of the population will be altered with these funds.

Methods:

The applicant should discuss how the project will be approached to maximize effectiveness.

Describe the following:

- **Collecting transporting and short term care:** Any specific collection strategies (for example: trapping known females with litters first, mass trapping in a short period of time, transporting method, holding and recovery procedure, etc.).
- **Evaluating:** Assessing cats for adoptability and any re-homing possibilities for friendly adults and kittens before returning to site.
- **Re-homing:** Any re-homing or long term shelter strategies and plan (identifying any shelters or sanctuaries that may be used) and outreach efforts to the community (to identify potential adopters or identify potential owners of cats before they are rehomed).
- **Returning:** Describe the strategy to return altered cats that are not suitable for adoption or rehoming.
- **Monitoring and Caretaking:** Describe plans for ongoing monitoring of the colony, including sterilizing/vaccinating any unsterilized or new cats coming into the area. Applicants should describe the long term care of the colony (Will there be a caretaker? Will records be kept? How will feeding stations be employed and maintained? How will the caretaker deter other wildlife, such as rats and raccoons from feeding at stations and thus increasing their numbers?)
- **Long Term Management:** The applicant should describe plans for how to complete the work. If the goal of close to 100% will take more than one year or beyond the period of performance of this grant, the applicant should discuss how the work after the grant expires will be accomplished (Subsequent grants? Funds from other organizations or sources?) and how long they estimate it would take to get a specific colony to as close to 100% altered as possible.

An effective way to present this section is to copy each bulleted bolded topic above and then state how you would address this topic. This way the review committee can easily see that you have considered each element of the Methods section.

Applicants will find necessary information on best management practices at the Petsmart Charities website: (<http://www.petsmartcharities.org/pro/community-tnr-tactics-and-tools>).

C-7: DETAILED WORK PLAN

THE DETAILED WORK PLAN section should list all activities and/or tasks and the sequence that will be performed to accomplish the objectives of the project. Clearly state who will be conducting the work described, including appropriate timelines for the project and expected

date(s) of completion. Budget items should be justified. Use of bulleted statements where possible should save text and provide clarity.

Here is a partial example Detailed Work Plan section:

Outreach Activities and Schedule:

- *General Dates (Examples: May 1st, or every weekend, each month), each event or action (posting, articles, announcements, community events) and list who will perform this (example: Outreach Coordinator and Volunteers)*

TNR Activities and Schedule

- *t General Date (Examples: May 1st, or every weekend, each month, etc), each event or action (setting traps, collecting cats and transporting, providing surgeries, evaluations and returning, etc. and list who will perform this (example: volunteers, XXX, Project Coordinator, Dr. JXXXX DVM, etc)*

The budget items requested are as follows:

-15 traps-presently our organization has 10 traps. In order to effectively and efficiently spay/neuter as many as the colony as possible, it is best and less stressful on the colony as a whole to complete the process as soon as possible, avoiding multiple trapping sessions. In order to do this we estimate a need for at least 20-to 25 traps at any one time.

-Cat crates-currently we have 20 crates. Since each cat should be housed in its own transportation crate, we expect to require at least as many crates as traps.

C-8: OUTREACH PLAN

THE OUTREACH PLAN section should state how the applicant plans to gain landowner support, public support and also inform the community about their specific project (and how the community will benefit from it) and educate about feral cats in general. This may include outreach to the community on the importance of spaying and neutering cats while they are still in homes since intact owned cats are at greatest risk for abandonment, escape, and relinquishment to shelters, communicate with individuals who have expressed interest in helping, and providing information on humane deterrents to homeowners seeking to keep cats off their property.

Applicants may find helpful information at the Petsmart Charities website:

(<http://www.petsmartcharities.org/pro/community-tnr-tactics-and-tools>).

In addition to being an information source for Pet-related projects, The Pets for Life Community Outreach Toolkit ([Pets for Life Toolkit](#)) can provide valuable information when developing an outreach plan for engaging with the public with respects to unowned cats.

C-9: PROJECT SUPPORT

THE PROJECT SUPPORT section should document how the applicant has made an effort to gain support for their project.

REQUIRED: Applicants must provide written permission from land owners (or their authorized representatives) or legal tenants where traps will be placed and project personnel must enter or work, as proof to MDA that the proposed project is viable. A [Permission Form](#) is provided on the Spay and Neuter Grants Program webpage ([MDA Spay and Neuter Grants Program Webpage](#)) and must be included with the application at the time of submission.

RECOMMENDED: In addition to coordinating with local animal control and shelter staff to ensure that the target area is a source of intake (and detailed in the Expected Outcomes section), applicants are encouraged to provide endorsements from other organizations, or local government that can confirm the value of their proposed project in reducing shelter intake and euthanasia.

Examples of ways to demonstrate support may include providing the following with the application:

- Letter from animal control agency servicing the project area
- Letter from local health department
- Support from county/city council – especially if the city or town that allows Trap/Neuter/Return (TNR) work is in a County that does not support TNR
- Letters from other organizations or from a county representative where policy is being revised.
- Documentation of a history of success with other TNR projects, etc.

C-10: KEY PERSONNEL

KEY PERSONNEL section should briefly identify the project personnel and their role. This section need not contain lengthy biographical information.

Here is excerpt from a concise, well-presented “Key Personnel” section from a previous application:

Xxx Xxx (President) with seven years' experience in trap/spay/neuter/vaccinate/return work is the main planner, transporter and trapper.

Xxx Xxx (Secretary) with four years' experience assists Jack on transports and keeps organization records.

Xxx Xxx (Treasurer) with 15 years' experience does the accounting for the organization, including grant expenditures.

Xxx Xxx (Vice President) with 12 years' experience assists with trapping and transport as needed.

Xxx Xxx is the main adoption coordinator.

D: PROJECT BUDGET LINE ITEMS

The Budget Line Items section specifies how the grant dollars are to be used and consist of an itemized list of expected expenditures. It is important to be as clear as possible. Lumping items under a vague description (such as “outreach materials”, or “medical supplies”, or “additional personnel” or “more traps” etc.) is not acceptable, and vague budget items will not be considered, nor will the Advisory Board seek clarification during the review process.

The application and work plan should clearly demonstrate that each line item is necessary to the project, and relates to the purpose of the program: sterilizing cats to reduce shelter intake and euthanasia. **It is up to the submitter to provide a level of detail in the application that leaves no question what the budget item is for.**

For more details on Budgets, please see the General Guidance.

E: COST SHARING & IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

COST SHARING & IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS section lists any financial or other quantifiable support for the project donated or contributed by the applying organization or others, and can

include matching grants or commitments for other leveraged funds. This can be commitments of real dollars or contributions of time, materials, services, or personnel that can be quantified in dollars.

Although not required, efforts to share project costs and thereby make grant dollars go further is an overall program goal. Cost sharing adds to the total value of the work that can be performed and can add weight to an application during the review process. By leveraging grant funds with outside funds and resources, a project can provide a more efficient use of limited program funds and be more competitive.

Ask some of these questions:

- Is our organization donating any additional services like microchipping, other vaccines, flea treatment or other services not covered in the Veterinary package?
- Are we using volunteers or other groups to help gather information, meet with the public or help transport pets, etc? If so, how many hours do we estimate we will use and using a minimum hourly rate, how much is this time worth in dollars?
- Are we going to use some funds from other grants to cover some of the costs in executing this proposed project?
- If licensing is a requirement, is your department or organization in some way covering that cost?

Do your best to think of all the contributions and estimate their worth in dollars. This can only help you in the review process.

Here are a few good examples of some cost sharing from previous applications:

- *Cost of wormer, Feline Leukemia and FIV tests, distemper shots, transportation, food and shelter during recovery- \$12,460*
- *Real dollar contribution to cover ancillary medical care not covered by the grant-\$5,000*
- *In-kind contribution in form of steeply discounted vet. Services-\$21,200*
- *Commitment from local government for contribution to provide department van up to 3 days/month for transportation of animals to veterinarian. 3 x 6 months = 18 days. Estimated value \$1800.*
- *Matching grant from XYZ Inc. for part time project start-up coordinator. 10 hrs/week x 20 weeks. \$3500.*
- *Matching grant from ABC Cat Rescue Trap Bank for 30 traps at \$35. Ea. \$1,050.*