

## **MALT Small Grants Program FAQ**

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## Small Grants Program FAQs

### **What is the small grants program?**

The purpose of this program is to invest in projects that support both agricultural production and conservation of natural resources in Marin. The program is open to all commercial agriculturalists operating in Marin County - no conservation easement is required.

MALT's small grants program funds projects that protect and steward agricultural land through supporting a healthy local food system, expanding environmental benefits, and building climate resilience. The small grants program prioritizes agricultural and operational diversity, encourages climate-smart conservation practices that increase agricultural utility, protect soil and water quality, and strengthen the long-term viability of both public and private lands across Marin County.

### **Is this different from SAP?**

Yes, the small grants program is open to all agriculturalists engaging in commercial agriculture in Marin County. A MALT Conservation Easement **is not required** to apply for a grant from this program. To be eligible for Stewardship Assistance Program funding, a MALT Conservation Easement is required.

### **Who is the program open to?**

The small grants program is open to **all** agriculturalists engaging in commercial agriculture (i.e., producing food and/or fiber products for sale) in Marin County. Current members of the MALT Board of Directors, MALT staff, and their immediate family members are not eligible for funding.

### **Can someone apply for this program round while they have received a recent MALT grant?**

Yes, however, applicants may be awarded only one (1) small grant and one Stewardship Assistance Program (SAP) grant per fiscal year (July 1 to June 30) and must not have an active small grants program award.

### **What are the conflict of interest policies around this grant program?**

Current MALT Board of Directors, MALT staff, and their immediate family members are not eligible for funding. For more information, please see the [MALT Conflict of Interest Policy](#).

### **How much application assistance will be offered?**

MALT staff is available to assist with the application process. Office hours will be offered. Please visit our website for office hour schedules and please contact Scott Dunbar at [sdunbar@malt.org](mailto:sdunbar@malt.org), (415) 663-1158, ext: 313 for additional assistance.

### **What is the applicant cost share?**

The applicant cost share must be at least 10% of the total award amount. The 10% is calculated from the total project cost once the project is completed. For example, for a project that costs \$40,000, the landowner will be reimbursed \$36,000, and for a project that is \$75,000, the applicant will have maxed out the grant amount at \$50,000.

### **Who is on the selection committee?**

The selection committee will depend on availability and will be composed of MALT staff, representatives from partner organizations such as the Marin Resource Conservation District, Point Blue, University of California Cooperative Extension, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, etc., and previous award recipients.

### **How will we rank the projects we fund? What are the selection criteria?**

Projects are evaluated to the degree that they advance MALT's mission and the goals of the small grants program to promote agricultural and conservation practices that protect and steward agricultural land by supporting a healthy local food system, expanding environmental benefits, and building climate resilience. Projects should support economic stability by contributing to the maintenance of existing agricultural production. Projects that also have an ecological benefit by improving soil health and/or improving water quality are encouraged.

Priority consideration will be given to proposals from applicants serving/and or located in communities of Marin County that are most impacted by social and economic inequities due to race, income level, gender, identity, religion, immigration status, disability, age, sexual orientation, or zip code.

Proposals will be evaluated, scored, and ranked by the following selection criteria:

- Project alignment with mission and theme

- Project impact
- Project innovation
- Implementation and timeline
- Project readiness
- Permitting and other compliance issues
- External funding
- Additional benefits/outcomes
- Budget and budget clarity
- Diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice

### **How are we addressing bias?**

We are addressing bias in the funding process through a number of means including our conflict of interest policy, eligibility for all Marin County agriculturalists, a selection committee that includes partner organizations, and transparency about the scoring and ranking criteria.

### **Do we think there will be any funds left remaining after we award grants?**

We anticipate that all \$400,000 in available funds for this grant round will be awarded.

### **How long after project completion do grantees get reimbursed?**

Funding reimbursement will occur upon successful implementation of the proposed project, as determined by MALT staff after a site visit, usually within 30-45 days. All projects **must be completed within 18 months of grant execution**, unless otherwise noted in the executed grant agreement.

MALT reserves the right to rescind funding if the project is not complete within 18 months of a signed Grant Agreement.

### **Why did my project not get funded?**

Because this is a competitive funding opportunity and we have limited funds, we do not anticipate all proposals will be funded. It is dependent on the funding needs versus the resources available. Projects that will have been funded will have ranked higher on the scoring of the selection criteria.

### **If someone is rejected from this round, can they apply for a future round?**

Yes.