



# Strategies for Capacity Building and Partnership Development for Federal Funding Success

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# Team Introductions:



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# Agenda

## 1. Internal Capacity Building

- Defining capacity building
- Assessing current resources
- Developing internal structures
- Addressing capacity building barriers

## 2. Developing Partnership Networks

- Defining the benefits of collaborative partnership networks
- Identifying and engaging local and regional partners to obtain grants
- Examples of partnership networks

## 3. MTAP Fund Mapping Service

## 4. Upcoming Funding Opportunities

## 5. Q&A

# Fund Mapping Service Reminder

**The MTAP Team offers a fund mapping service to connect your envisioned projects with potential IIJA/IRA funding sources.**

- Please visit the [MTAP Fund Mapping Request Form](#) to submit projects ideas your municipality is considering.
- The MTAP team will help you match your project to an array of IIJA/IRA relevant funding opportunities.



# Internal Capacity Building



## Participant Question:

Have you applied for a federal grant in the past year?

# What is Capacity Building?

Capacity building means increasing an organization's programmatic and operational capability to achieve their mission and its underlying goals.

## Requires organizational leadership to:

- Identify agreed-upon internal and community goals and potential barriers.
- Accurately assess the resources needed to reach those goals.
- Determine where their organization is lacking in internal or external resources.
- Outline steps to improve the ability to carry out those goals.

# The Importance of Building Capacity

## Capabilities of an organization that has capacity:

- Can identify stable, consistent, long-term priorities for funding.
- Seeks out and, over time, secures funding.
- Delivers grant-funded projects or services in compliance with grant requirements.
- Seeks out additional opportunities to further build capacity.

## Effects on an organization that lacks capacity:

- Misses out on grant funding opportunities.
- Carries an elevated compliance risk.
- Fails to compete and thrive.



# Internal Capacity Building Checklist

## Step 1



**Assess existing internal capacity** and identify projects and their alignment with stakeholder priorities and grant requirements.

## Step 2



Confirm availability of resources for pre-award work and **post-award administration**.

## Step 3



**Identify and address potential barriers** to capacity building.

# Step 1: Assessing Existing Internal Capacity

## Facilitate Stakeholder Discussions

- Identifying the gap between current capacity and ideal capacity needed to obtain and administer federal funding and to meet expected post-award compliance measures.
- Establish realistic expectations and benchmarks based upon an assessment of the organization's current capacity state.

## Identify Pre-Award Barriers

- Assess staffing resources including current and desired staff knowledge, capability, and availability over project timelines and grant application periods.
- Identify current and required capacity for grant writing, grants management and administration, cross-departmental coordination, internal controls, capacity for compliance and monitoring, and the availability of cash funds or in-kind matching.

## Step 2: Post-Award Capacity Assessment

When determining next steps **prior** to developing an application, local governments can conduct a post-award capacity assessment, which considers:

### Grant Management Capacity

- ✓ Managing (planning, tracking, and directing) new project tasks on top of current work.
- ✓ Creating an executive staffing plan that considers current workloads.
- ✓ Evaluating staff experience and identify training gaps.

### Implementation Planning

- ✓ Identifying necessary new positions.
- ✓ Pre-qualifications for needed contractor support.

# Step 3: Identify Potential Barriers to Capacity Building

## Lack of Continuity



- Inconsistency and instability in organizational priorities.
- Political cycles tend to reset established priorities.

## Lack of Resources



- Shared or under-trained staff.
- Local governments tend to have to do “more with less.”
- Lack of investment in core organizational competencies.

## Chasing the Funds



- Organizations struggle to maintain operating resources.
- Year-to-year swings in funding can cause chaos.
- Pursuing available grants can mean stressing your locality’s core goals and capabilities.

# Addressing Barriers: Lack of Continuity

**Supporting Continuity:** Political cycles are a fact of life as a local government, but internal steps can be implemented to support organizational stability:

- Establish a system of standardized best practices to ensure the grant application approach stays consistent over time.
- Document successful application approaches to create a precedence for incoming leadership.
- Facilitate conversations with designated grant officers throughout the transition.

**Compliance:** Changes in leadership can disrupt long-term award compliance. Additionally, compliance requirements can differ across grant awards. Encourage grant management personnel to keep compliance support documents readily available to all grant personnel and familiarize leadership and incoming staff with all relevant documents and data.

# Addressing Barriers: Lack of Resources

Resources can include time, finances, and personnel. Finding creative solutions to maximize existing resources can benefit organizations and mitigate barrier impacts throughout the grant application and management lifecycle.

**In-Kind Matches** are materials and services, space and utilities, equipment, and technical assistance provided by an organization as an alternative to cash matches to satisfy non-federal match requirements. For example: Grants that welcome In-Kind matching:

- Urban and Community Forestry Program
- Local Food Promotion Program

Additionally, developing extensive **partnership networks** can introduce your local government to new resource pools.

# Addressing Barriers: Lack of Resources

Leveraging existing programs is encouraged during grant applications to increase award impact and can have a synergistic effect on the program goals.

- **Leveraging Programs Example – Department of Transportation (USDOT) Job Training:** When awarding grants, the USDOT expects 10-30% of project costs to go to towards job development and training in partnership with local trade or job training programs.
- **Synergistic Example - Flood Mitigation Projects:** A local government is building dry ponds to support ongoing flood mitigation efforts. These will increase the effectiveness of planned flood mitigation projects. Reviewers of future grant applications could consider these synergistic benefits during the review process.
- **Grant Example - Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE):** The USDOT’s RAISE program provides higher application scores and encourages applicants to “coordinate with other types of projects such as economic development, commercial or residential development near public transportation, power/electric infrastructure projects, or broadband deployment.”

# Municipal Capacity Building Case Study

When COVID-19 brought new grant management challenges with an **unprecedented scale of federal funding flowing into the locality**, departments tried to identify ways to build effective communication channels to align previously incompatible ARPA CLFRF workflows with potential IIJA programs.

The finance and grants teams invited staff from other offices on a regular basis, including staff from the purchasing department, IT, attorney's office, and emergency management, and:

- **Supporting Continuity:** Held regular priority coordination meetings with the official who oversaw the administration of the ARPA CLFRF program for potential fund matching.

- **Consistency in Organizational Priorities:** Facilitated in-person events with local Commissions, elected officials, business and nonprofit leaders, local city and town leaders, and the public to generate project ideas and identify community capacity for implementing pandemic recovery solutions.
- **Compliance:** Introduced compliance-focused project management tools to streamline grant tracking and grant administration.
- **Results:** Improved information flow between departments and processes for approving, designing, and implementing compliant programs and grant applications.





# Developing Partnership Networks





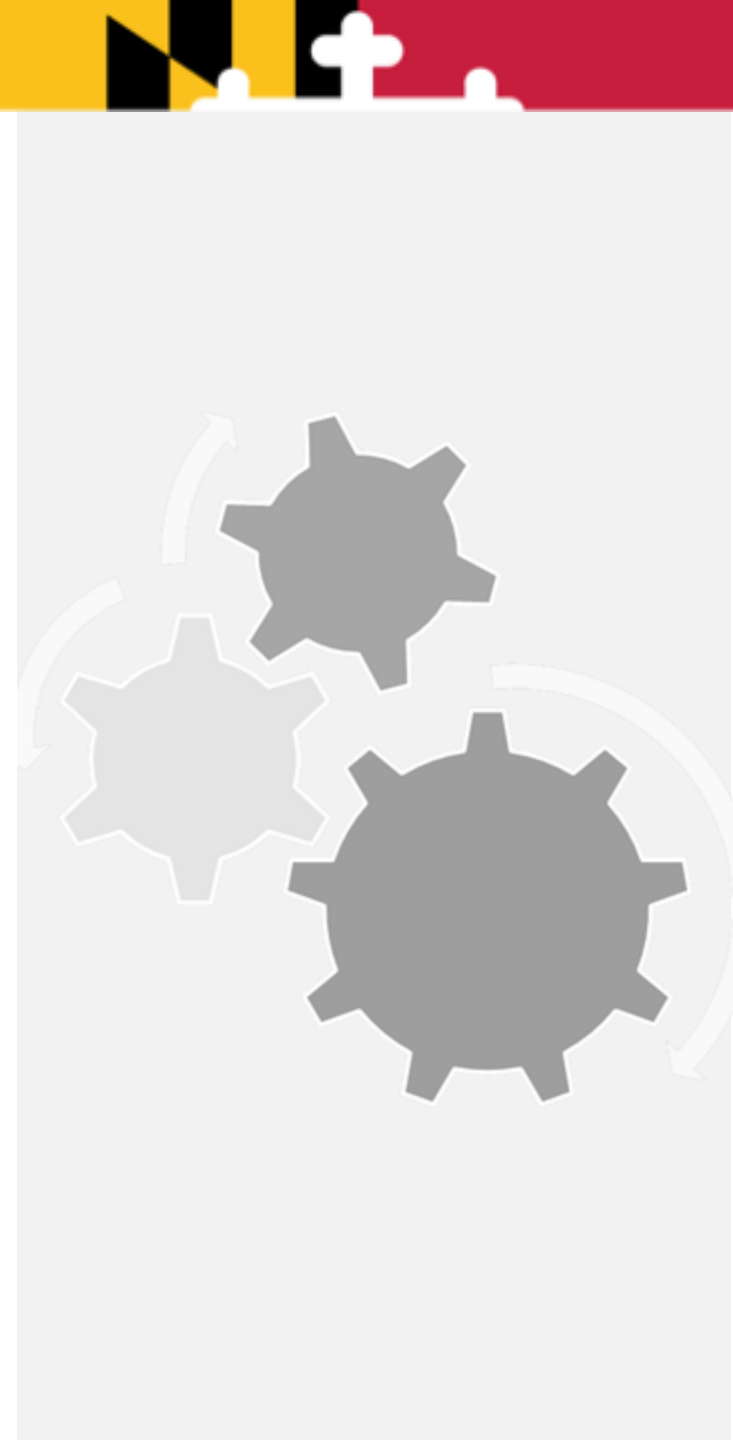
## Participant Question:

Has your municipality established programs with external partners?

**Select all that apply.**

# What Does Collaboration Look Like?

- Seeking and documenting feedback from residents, businesses, and other constituencies.
- Engaging in community-wide planning and aligning strategic priorities with those plans.
- Sharing funding opportunities with local and neighboring stakeholders.



# Benefits of Partnership Networks

- ✓ Improves competitiveness for federal grants – some programs, such as Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Program, explicitly encourage partnerships.
- ✓ Can provide access to resources your municipality could be lacking.
- ✓ Develop expertise from organizations more knowledgeable in grant management or project principles, regulations, and best practices.
- ✓ Can help you find more efficient ways to deliver services across a wider impact range.

## Potential Partners:

Local non-profits

Trade groups and unions

Colleges and universities

Businesses

Energy Providers

Neighboring local governments

County and State governments

# Benefits of Building Meaningful and Strategic Partnerships

Even partial partnerships can be synergistic and have exponential benefits to grant applicants. Interested applicants should identify key stakeholders that may be crucial to the success of the application and project.



Joint grant application planning and development process can ensure a shared vision.



Letters of Support strengthen applications.




Creates opportunities to braid and blend funding sources (Non-profit, private sector businesses, and governments).

**Example:** Governments combining CLFRF funds to share the non-federal match burden.




# Identifying Potential Partners


## When identifying potential partners, consider:

-  Shared visions and priorities.


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-  Current capacity to commit to applications, program implementation, and/or program management.

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-  Regional access to additional populations, including vulnerable or disenfranchised groups.

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-  Availability of in-kind or cash funds.

# Partnership and Project Highlights

## Successful Application



**Example:** Eagle Harbor - Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreement Program

- An Implementation grant project utilizing nature-based solutions to address legacy air and water pollution contamination impacts from the Chalk Point Generating Station, a former coal-fired power plant located adjacent to the community.
- The project was a joint application/cooperative agreement with the non-profit Ridge to Reefs.



# Partnership and Project Highlights

## Unsuccessful Application



**Example:** A County in Maryland – Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Grant

- County applied directly for funds under the CFI Grant for electric vehicle charging stations but was **not** awarded.
- The rewarded competing project was a consortium of local governments that worked with the Maryland Clean Energy Center on a coordinated application.







# MTAP Fund Mapping Service



# Fund Mapping Service Reminder

**The MTAP Team offers a fund mapping service to connect your envisioned projects with potential IIJA/IRA funding sources.**

- Addresses the potential lack of capacity to pair project ideas with potential funding sources.
- Please visit the [MTAP Fund Mapping Request Form](#) to submit project ideas.
- The MTAP team will fund map your project to an array of IIJA/IRA relevant funding opportunities.





## Participant Question:

Has your municipality utilized the fund mapping service?

# Submitting a Fund Mapping Request Form

## You will be asked to submit:

- A short overview of the project or concept.
- A description of the need for the project.
- Information on the current status of the project.
- Whether a joint application with other regional partners could be appropriate.
- In the event you've already identified a funding stream or started an application, information on your progress.

## MTAP Fund Mapping Service



The MTAP team is providing a **fund mapping service** to match IIJA funding streams with municipalities' interests. Municipalities can submit information through the [Project Intake Form](#) on infrastructure projects or priorities and receive tailored information on relevant IIJA programs. This is an opportunity for your municipality to receive **individualized support** towards success with IIJA funding!

If your organization has additional questions or would like to better understand how the Project Intake Form works, please submit a question through our [Question Portal](#) or contact our team at [arpa.neuadmin@maryland.gov](mailto:arpa.neuadmin@maryland.gov). For more information on IIJA, please refer to MTAP's [Introduction to IIJA Webinar](#) and visit the [IIJA Resources](#) page.

# Fund Matching Service Example

A municipality identified electric vehicle infrastructure and transitioning their fleet to electric vehicles as a need. The municipality has not identified specific programs or begun any projects but does have ARPA funding available to serve as match funding and to cover pre-award costs.

MTAP meets with the municipality to discuss its goals and identified that its top priority is creating infrastructure to allow for electric vehicles.

MTAP identified the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grant Program as a potential match for the municipality's goals and informed the municipality about the provided parameters.

MTAP also informed the municipality about funding received by the state for electric vehicle infrastructure to discuss their plans, referred the municipality to U.S. DOT technical assistance, and is monitoring upcoming NOFOs related to funding for public EV such as buses.



# What You will Receive from MTAP

After submitting a Project Intake Form, you will receive personalized guidance from the MTAP staff. In some cases, the next step will be to meet with MTAP to learn more about your proposed project.

**MTAP will provide your municipality with information** on a program (or programs) that match your municipality's needs to help you select which programs to pursue.

This information will include:

- Details on application requirements and timelines.
- Local match requirements, if needed.
- A list of eligible pre-award costs and uses.

**When considering proceeding with program applications after receiving these results, your municipality can consider:**

- Availability of resources for pre-award work and post-award administration.
- Whether there are regional partners for applications.
- Potential for a successful funding application.
- Local match.



## Participant Question:

Is your municipality considering seeking out state or federal funding for a potential project?



# Upcoming Funding Opportunities





# Notable Open NOFOs

## Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicles (CHDV)

The [CHDV Program](#) provides \$932 million in Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funding to local, county, state, and tribal governments to incentivize and accelerate the replacement of existing non-zero emission (ZE) Class 6 and 7 heavy-duty vehicles with ZE vehicles. This includes school buses, transit buses, street sweepers, and a variety of heavy-duty trucks. Non-federal cost share can range from 0-40%, depending on the vehicle. Additionally, ZE vehicle purchases can be eligible for [Direct Pay tax credits](#). Applications are due through [Grants.gov](#) by 11:59 p.m. ET on July 25, 2024.

## Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI)

The [CFI Program](#) provides \$1.3 billion in Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding to local, county, state, and tribal governments to deploy EV and alternative fuel charging infrastructure in publicly available areas or along designated alternative fuel corridors. This program requires a 20% non-federal cost share. Applications are due through [Grants.gov](#) by 11:59 p.m. ET on August 28, 2024.

# Notable Open NOFOs

## Wildlife Crossing Pilot Programs (WCPP)

WCPP grants use \$145 million in IIJA funding to provide local, county, state, and tribal governments the resources to improve safety, protect motorists and wildlife by reducing wildlife-vehicle crashes (WVC), and improve habitat connectivity for terrestrial and aquatic species through planning and construction projects. Non-federal cost share is 20%. Applications are due through Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. ET on September 4, 2024.



# Q&A

# ARPA Obligation Deadline Reminder

**As of June 2024, there are only 6 months to meet the ARPA December 2024 obligation deadline.**

- The current budget cycle is the last formal budget cycle before the deadline and these funds must be obligated by **December 31, 2024**, and spent by **December 31, 2026**. Funds that are not obligated by the December 31, 2024, date will need to be returned to Treasury.
- Please note: Having a line item in an internal budget does **not** qualify as obligated funds.



# How to Engage with MTAP's Services



# Upcoming MTAP Events + Reminders

- The next MTAP Office Hours Session will be on July 9 at 10:00 am ET.
- Per Treasury's guidance, the ARPA obligation deadline is December 31, 2024. Be on the lookout for additional guidance from our team to assist you with meeting Treasury's obligation deadline.



# Engage with MTAP

- **[Complete a Fund Mapping Request Form](#)** - we can assist your municipality in finding IIJA programs that support your project ideas.
- **[Subscribe to our newsletter](#)** and forward it to colleagues.
- **[Watch the recording](#)** of the MTAP Intro to IIJA Webinar.
- **[Attend Office Hours](#)** [July 9](#) at [10:00 am ET](#).
- **[Submit a Question](#)** on ARPA or IIJA.
- **[Visit our Website](#)** and **[IIJA Resources Page](#)**.

Share Feedback with MTAP at **[arpa.neuadmin@maryland.gov](mailto:arpa.neuadmin@maryland.gov)** – and let us know how we can help!

