



# **African American Heritage Preservation Grant Review Panel Handbook**

**Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC)**

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### **● Introduction**

Welcome to the African American Heritage Preservation Grant Review Panel! Your appointment to this distinguished body reflects your commitment to preserving Maryland's rich African American heritage. As a committee member, you join a dedicated team of professionals working to protect and celebrate the historical sites, stories, and cultural landmarks that have shaped our state's identity.

Your expertise and perspective are invaluable in our mission to evaluate and support projects that will preserve these irreplaceable pieces of our shared history for future generations. Through your service, you help ensure that the physical spaces that tell the story of African American resilience, achievement, and community continue to stand as powerful testimonies to our past and anchors for our future.

This handbook will guide you through your responsibilities and empower you to make informed decisions that advance our preservation goals. Thank you for accepting this important role in safeguarding Maryland's African American heritage.

### **● Background**

#### **Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture**

For over 50 years, the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC) has authentically preserved and presented Black history and culture as a tool for racial equity, community empowerment, and social change. Our work includes operating the

newly renamed Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum, the State's official Museum on African American History and Culture, and the African American Heritage Preservation Program grant (AAHPP), the State's five-million-dollar capital grant. In addition, MCAAHC provides training and technical assistance to African American heritage projects and groups throughout Maryland.

In 1964, Maryland Senator Verda Freeman Welcome, the founder of the Banneker-Douglass Museum and the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC), survived an assassination attempt designed to silence her voice in the Civil Rights movement. Senator Welcome was the second Black woman senator in the nation. Her vision was to develop a museum and state commission to preserve and share Black history, and help uproot and diminish racism in Maryland. The Commission established the Banneker Douglass Museum in Annapolis in 1984 to help carry out her vision. Today, the mission of MCAAHC is increasingly essential as our nation is in a new resurgence of social justice, and everyday people of all backgrounds are making equitable and positive changes in their communities. MCAAHC intends to remain at the forefront of these collective efforts.

MCAAHC serves as a model for historic preservation and is a tremendous state resource. As the nation's 1st ethnic commission, MCAAHC inspired the legislation for over 10 state African American and 75 ethnic commissions throughout the nation. MCAAHC makes history as the only African American state commission in the Nation to operate a state's museum and grant program. In addition, to address equity gaps in preservation grant funding, in 2010, MCAAHC, through the leadership of then-Chair Theodore "Ted" Mack, partnered with Maryland Historical Trust to develop the AAHPP grant to support African American Heritage capital projects across the state of Maryland.

### **About the African American Heritage Preservation Program Grant**

The African American Heritage Preservation Program (AAHPP) provides capital grants to assist in preserving buildings, sites, or communities of historical and cultural importance to the African American experience in Maryland. The AAHPP is administered, without regard to the race of the applicant, as a partnership between the Maryland Historical Trust and the MCAAHC, and since 2010, has awarded funds to over 200 preservation projects in Maryland. Prior to 2022, African American heritage capital projects had access to less than \$1 million of the \$12 million annual appropriation of general state heritage funds. To address this need, in 2022, the general assembly increased the annual appropriation of the AAHPP capital fund from \$1 million to \$5 million. Today, the AAHPP has funded capital projects in every County in Maryland, including Baltimore City. Additional information about the program can be found here: <https://mht.maryland.gov/Pages/funding/grants-AAHPP.aspx>.

The Grants Review Panel of the African American Heritage Preservation Program plays a critical role in the review and recommendation of project grant applications each year. The work of the Grants Review Panel focuses on ensuring that the most urgent and impactful projects across the state are recommended for grant funding by the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) and the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC).

## ● Panel Structure/Members

### Leadership

Chair: Robert Patterson

### Committee Members & Leads

- Grant Application Review: Gill, Wood, Morrison, Amen, Mohan, Jones Smith
- AAHP Program Evaluation Report: Glaze
- Site Visit Protocol: TBD
- Panel Reviewer Outreach and Engagement: TBD

Chair	Commissioner	Patterson	Responsible for oversight of the AAHPP grantmaking process, setting program standards and protocols. Coordinates with advocacy leadership to guide vision and ensure the growth and protection of capital and non-capital grants. Oversees evaluation and implementation of program reforms.
Lead: Site Visit Protocol	Commissioner	Moaney	Implements and monitors the AAHPP site visit protocol to ensure transparency, fairness, and consistency. Determines when site visits are appropriate and trains commissioners on how to conduct them in alignment with program guidelines
Lead: AAHP Program Evaluation Report	Commissioner	Glaze	Works with grant administrator to design the assessment of the AAHPP grant program's impact, effectiveness, and alignment with Commission goals. Leads data collection and analysis to inform recommendations for program improvement and long-term strategy.
Lead: Panel Reviewer Outreach and Engagement	Commissioner or Non-Commissioner/Alumnus	TBD	Recruits, vets, and supports a diverse pool of grant panel reviewers. Co-leads orientation sessions, ensures reviewer alignment with program values and protocols, and helps foster a fair and constructive review process
Committee Member At-Large: Grant Application Review	Commissioner	TBD	Participates annually in the AAHPP grant application review process. Required to attend reviewer orientation each year to ensure norming, but not expected to join regular committee meetings

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Agency Staff Liaison: AAHP Program Administrator	Non-Commissioner/ Agency Employee	Alex Anderson	Staff liaison to committee. Administers the AAHPP program. POC to applicants
State Agency Partner: Maryland Historical Trust	Non-Commissioner/ Agency Employee	Stacy Montgomery	Administers the AAHPP program. POC to applicants
Agency Staff Liaison: Grant Specialist	Non-Commissioner/ Agency Employee	Maleke Glee	Coordinates rank and review sessions

### **Panel Composition**

The panel consists of appointed MCAAHC Commissioners selected for their expertise in preservation and grant management, and members of the public who have volunteered for the panel that year. Current members represent diverse geographic regions across Maryland.

### **Panelist Application and Selection**

Grants Review Panelists are community members with a commitment to the African American-related natural, cultural, and historical heritage of the State of Maryland, with knowledge and experience in areas relating to a broad range of corresponding fields. The African American Heritage Preservation Program strives to create a fair and impartial panel environment that is representative of the geographic, economic, and environmental diversity of the State of Maryland, and therefore seeks to create a diverse panel.

Applications/nominations of prospective panelists at the state level are primarily collected in May and June for the upcoming grant cycle. The application/nomination form includes information about the individual's related employment history and background in the form of a brief statement about their knowledge and experience in particular fields and areas of interest as they relate to this opportunity.

Panelists should be comfortable using computers and have access to the internet, as all grant applications are submitted and reviewed online using programs such as Microsoft Teams.

Panelists are interviewed and selected by program staff based on the skill sets needed to review grants, specific educational and experience credentials, and geographic diversity.

To form a well-balanced panel, AAHPP program staff may not be able to consider every qualified candidate in a given year; however, qualified candidates will be retained in a pool for future years.

### **Diversity In Perspectives and Experience**

The African American Heritage Preservation Program seeks to be inclusive and accessible to all applicants and to make diversity, equity, and inclusion central considerations in each step of our grants review process. We believe that varied perspectives and experiences among panelists, staff, and applicants generate better grant projects to steward and share the heritage of our diverse communities. As part of this commitment, we seek to convene a Grants Review Panel that reflects the geographic, economic, and environmental diversity of Maryland.

### **Panelists' Expectations, Requirements, and Time Commitment**

All panelists are expected to:

- Participate in an initial orientation training process when first joining the panel.
- Review and evaluate (score) all applications assigned to them before the panel review meetings.
- Participate in group discussions with fellow grant reviewers
- Submit all their scores by the assigned deadline.
- Attend the two-day Rank and Review Meeting in November
- Participate in an after-action interview at the end of each grant cycle to provide feedback about the process.

Following the orientation, each panelist will be assigned between 20-25 applications to review. Panelists should allow a minimum of 30 minutes to evaluate each of those applications. Panelists will be expected to attend the two-day Rank and Review Meeting in November. Panelists will receive training in advance of the application review period, as well as the support of AAHPP staff and MCAAHC Commissioners on the panel.

In total, panelists should expect to spend between 30 and 50 hours on grants review activities between September and November. This is a significant time commitment, but serving as a panelist also yields substantial benefits. Panelists gain a better understanding of Maryland's cultural resources, become better grant reviewers and writers, gain increased understanding of the grants review process, and serve their communities by playing an important role in the distribution of grant funds to projects across the state. Panelists that are not employed by the state are also eligible to receive an honorarium of \$100.

AAHPP program staff will provide the necessary forms to request an honorarium at the end of the year's grants review process. Panelists will be required to submit I-9 and/or W-9 forms and provide copies of identification documents to be added to the state's payment system and receive an honorarium payment.

## **4. Review of Grant Applications**

The African American Heritage Preservation Program awards up to \$5 million in grants each year through a competitive process. The application deadline for the grant program is late June or early July. Over the summer, applications are reviewed for completeness and eligibility by AAHPP staff before distribution to the Review Panel in the early fall. Panel scores and discussions are used to rank the applications and make funding recommendations to MCAAHC and then to the MHT Board at their meetings in December. Program staff provide ongoing support to the panel throughout the review process. The following grant application review process was developed to ensure sufficient time for a fair and thorough evaluation of each project.

### **Panelist Orientation**

Program staff will host an orientation for all reviewers to introduce participants, provide a program overview, discuss key dates and portal access, discuss the scoring rubric, and address any questions. All panelist information will be shared through a reviewer portal and via email.

### **Recusal**

Panelists will receive the full list of applicant names and will be asked to recuse themselves from any project with which they have a conflict of interest. A recusal form will be provided to panelists by the program staff following the orientation.

### **Application Assignment & Review**

Program staff will create small groups of panelists who will be assigned to review the same set of applications. AAHPP staff will ensure that the assigned reviewers for each group have the expertise and diverse backgrounds necessary to evaluate the applications.

Reviewers will read, score, and provide feedback on all assigned applications. The feedback may be provided to applicants who are not awarded this round. The assigned panelists provide scores for each application through the reviewer portal. The link and instructions will be provided to reviewers following the orientation. Each reviewer will send their score sheets for each application they review to program staff. Program staff will enter the initial scores from each group into a database to establish an initial project score and ranking.

Once all reviewers in a group have read and scored their assigned applications, the small group should meet to discuss their set of applications, identify the top 3 applications, identify any projects (top 3 or otherwise) that could be considered for partial funding; and identify any applications that the group agrees should not be funded this round. The group will present their top 3 at the Rank and Review meeting in November and should share this list with program staff ahead of the meeting.

### **Rank and Review Meeting**

The Grants Review Panel will all attend the two-day Rank and Review meeting in November on the selected dates provided by the Orientation. The meeting will be in person. Panelists should bring a laptop or device to view application materials during the meeting.

On the first day, each group will present its top 3 projects to the larger panel and may discuss any applications assigned to the group (per #6) in their remaining time. If the group identified

projects that could be partially funded or that they felt should not be funded, those can be shared with the panel. Time will be allotted for panelists to ask questions at the end of each group presentation. All panelists will be provided the top applications to review in preparation for the second day.

On the second day, panelists will review and score all “top” projects to create the final ranking of projects. All top applications will be made available for panelists to score (fully fund (3 points), partially fund (2 points), reserve list (1 point), do not fund (0 points)). Point totals will be tallied, and the panel will discuss the results to establish the final ranking.

At the conclusion of the Rank and Review Meeting, the panel will create a list of projects that will receive full or partial funding, and a reserve list of projects for which they recommend awarding grants if additional grant funds become available.

## **Rank and Review Meeting Roles and Responsibilities**

### ***Panel Chair***

- Nominated and elected by the members of the Grants Review Panel
- Preside over the Panel meetings, facilitating discussion by all Panel members.
- Review and evaluate submitted grant proposals assigned to them.
- Present applications as assigned at the grants review meeting.
- Participate in the discussion.
- Represent the Panel at AAHPP meetings, presenting Panel recommendations for AAHPP consideration.
- Participate in orientation activities and review background materials on the program.

### ***Panel Members***

- Review and evaluate submitted grant proposals.
- Participate in discussion.
- Attend the two-day Rank and Review in November to make final funding recommendations to AAHPP.
- Attend a small group meeting with fellow reviewers.
- Participate in orientation activities and review background materials on the program.

### ***AAHPP Program Staff***

- Coordinate meeting schedules and application processing.
- Inform the Panel in matters of AAHPP policy.
- Provide clarification on pertinent facts regarding an applicant to the Panel.
- Provide information related to match, management capability, past performance, and any other pertinent information.
- Record Panel comments and summarize recommendations for AAHPP.
- Generate the ranking chart and keep it up-to-date.
- Lead orientation and small group sessions and provide background materials to reviewers.
- Conduct initial eligibility review of applications.
- Attend and present Recommendations to the MHT board in December.
- If asked, provide clarification on pertinent facts regarding an applicant to the Panel.

- Participate in orientation and training activities.

## 5. Evaluation Criteria & Scoring:

To better assist applicants and to create a transparent process, Grant Guidelines (<https://mht.maryland.gov/Pages/funding/grants-AAHPP-resources.aspx>) for the AAHPP program are published each year, outlining the purpose, review criteria, and accompanying point assignments for scoring and evaluation. The scoring rubric (<https://mht.maryland.gov/Documents/grants/AAHPP-Rubric-2026.pdf>) is also provided to applicants so they can consider it as they prepare their application.

All applications are reviewed and scored according to the published review criteria, following a standard [scoring rubric](#) provided to all panelists. Familiarity with the rubric ahead of scoring applications will facilitate the review process. Another helpful tool to understand the program and content of the application is the AAHPP General Overview Webinar (<https://youtu.be/o6HMwDSz9gA?si=vgrVfL4uaJr49Sg6>). This, and other webinars, are made available for applicants during the application period to assist them in developing compelling applications.

All panelists should express their professional judgment of each proposal through their scores, written comments, and group discussion, and do so with as much of an objective and unbiased perspective as possible. Applications should be evaluated on the merits of their content and not just on how well or professionally they are written. Panelists should assess how well each application aligns with the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture and the Maryland Historical Trust's goals and objectives. A good proposal should:

- Demonstrate that it aligns with the priorities of the African American Heritage Preservation Program.
- Successfully answer each required question in the application.
- Establish an achievable plan and budget to accomplish the proposed work.
- Demonstrate that the applicant will work with qualified individuals to complete the work.
- Demonstrate a sense of urgency and project readiness.
- Provide an educational or community benefit.

In order to facilitate the discussions at the Grants Review Panel meetings, it is important that panelists take notes and enter comments on the application's score sheet. In addition to the score, each panelist is asked to provide pros and cons for each application to facilitate the group discussion. Good comments:

- Are presented in a constructive manner.
- Are concise, specific, and understandable.
- Are specific to the individual application.
- Correlate with the rating given.
- Are framed as recommendations.
- Reflect the application's strengths and identify areas for improvement; and
- Are objective in nature and do not reflect subjective opinions.

Remember – successful AND unsuccessful applicants can use these comments to improve their

awards or future applications! Panelists should approach this process as advocates rather than critics.

Things to avoid in scoring and commenting on applications include:

- Negative remarks about the finances of an applicant. A panelist can take other sources of funding available to the applicant into account when scoring the project; however, negative comments or assumptions not supported by the application about an organization's finances should not be part of the scoring process.
- Penalizing an applicant because their application lacks sophistication and is not written by a professional grant writer.
- Making derogatory remarks – panelists should offer suggestions for improvement rather than harsh criticism.
- Questioning an applicant's honesty or integrity. A panelist may question the accuracy of information provided by the applicant; if unsure how to phrase a concern, panelists should contact program staff.
- Offering or asking for irrelevant or extraneous information – panelist comments should concern only the information requested of applicants.

Panelists should pay attention to their personal biases, both positive and negative, that can create a halo or pitchfork effect and impact their scores and comments. This includes prior knowledge of or experience with an applicant organization, familiarity with the project location or type, or knowledge of individuals involved in the project.

## 6. Conflict of Interest:

For panelists, a conflict of interest exists if an individual panelist or a member of their immediate family during the past or upcoming 12 months:

- Was/is actively involved in the governance of an applicant organization (as a member of a board of directors or steering committee),
- Was/is a paid or unpaid staff member, or
- Gained/stands to gain financially from the funding of an application under review.

Each panelist is required to identify all organizations with which he or she, or an immediate family member, is currently associated as a member, employee, or board member. This information is kept on file at the program office.

Disclosure of affiliation with an applicant is required in order to protect MCAAHC, MHT, the panelists, and applicants from actual, as well as the appearance of, conflict of interest. Affiliation with an applicant is to be declared before review assignments are made, and to be reiterated at the start of the discussion of that application. **Panelists who have an affiliation may not join in the discussion of that application.**

Panelists shall not solicit, accept, or agree to accept any gift of money, goods, loans, or services, or engage in any other arrangements for personal benefit, which would improperly influence them in their panel-related duties and responsibilities.

Panelists shall not attempt to influence the vote of fellow panel members or AAHPP staff on applications or any other matter involving applicants with which they are affiliated.

Panelists who have reviewed an application should never represent the applicant in dealings with MCAAHC, MHT, or other State agencies with regard to the grant application or award.

Violations of the Conflict-of-Interest policy may be investigated by MCAAHC, MHT, or AAHPP program staff. Action resulting from said investigations is at the discretion of the MCAAHC and MHT and may include removal from the Grants Review Panel and forfeit of the honorarium.

### **Confidentiality**

Grants panelists may have access to confidential, proprietary, sensitive or non-public information of either the grant applicants, including applications and financial data, or of the Grants Panel, including documents, recommendations, opinions and/or conclusions. Grant panelists should treat all such information as confidential, whether it is identified as confidential. Do not discuss or reveal names, institutions, project activities, or other information contained in the applications. Contact program staff if you have any questions concerning an application – do not contact an applicant directly.

Panelists must keep all Grants Review Panel deliberations and discussions, as well as all final recommendations for award, confidential. Grant award decisions are not final until the Maryland Historical Trust votes to approve them and are not to be made public until an official press release is issued (usually in December or early January).

Violations of the confidentiality policy may be investigated by MCAAHC, MHT, or AAHPP program staff. Action resulting from said investigations is at the discretion of MCAAHC and MHT and may include removal from the Grants Review Panel and forfeit of the honorarium.

## **7. Site Visit Protocol**

Should panelists wish to make site visits as they review applications, they should use this protocol to ensure equity, transparency, and consistency in the grant application process for the African American Heritage Preservation Grant Program. The guidelines provide Commissioners and Reviewers with a framework for conducting site visits that supports technical assistance without introducing bias.

Site visits are a valuable tool for understanding the context, scope, and needs of grant applicants. This protocol outlines when site visits should be conducted, how to prepare for them, and how to ensure they contribute positively to the grant application process.

### **Principles of Equity and Transparency**

- **Fairness:** Treat all applicants equally, ensuring no preferential treatment.
- **Transparency:** Maintain clear and open communication about the purpose and procedures of the site visit.
- **Consistency:** Apply the same criteria and processes for all site visits.

## Decision to Conduct a Site Visit

### Criteria for Approving Site Visits

Site visits should be considered under the following circumstances:

- **Complex Projects:** The project scope or context is not fully understood through the written application alone.
- **New Applicants:** Organizations applying for the first time or with limited grant management experience.
- **Significant Funding Requests:** Applications requesting substantial funds where a site visit could help in understanding the project's impact and feasibility.

### Criteria for Rejecting Site Visits

Site visits may be declined under the following circumstances:

- **Sufficient Information:** The application is thorough and clear, providing all necessary details.
- **Bias Risk:** A site visit might introduce unintended bias or perception of favoritism.
- **Resource Constraints:** Limited availability of panelists to conduct the visit without compromising the process's integrity.

## Pre-Visit Preparation

### Communication with Applicants

- **Notification:** Inform applicants in advance about the site visit, its purpose, and what to expect. Please reach out to AAHPP staff for standardized email text ahead of scheduling any site visits.
- **Agenda:** Provide a clear agenda, including who will attend, the duration, and the topics to be covered.

### Internal Preparation

- **Review Application:** Thoroughly review the application and any supporting documents.
- **Set Objectives:** Define specific objectives for the visit, focusing on gaining clarity or additional information needed for evaluation.

## Conducting the Site Visit

### During the Visit

- **Introduction:** Start with an introduction, reiterating the visit's purpose, and addressing any concerns or questions from the applicant.
- **Structured Interaction:** Follow the pre-set agenda, allowing time for applicants to present their project and answer questions.
- **Neutral Observation:** Avoid offering opinions or suggestions that could be construed as bias or favoritism.
- **Documentation:** Take detailed notes and record observations objectively.

## Post-Visit Process

### Reporting

- **Objective Report:** Prepare a brief site visit report for the AAHPP Committee summarizing the findings, focusing on information and observations without subjective judgments.

### Feedback to Applicants

- **Constructive Feedback:** Feedback to applicants will be reserved until after the site visit and the final grant selections have been made. Regardless of the final grant award status, applicants will be provided with constructive feedback based on the site visit, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Follow-Up:** Commissioners and Reviewers are encouraged to send a follow-up message to grant applicants immediately following the visit, notifying them to expect feedback directly from the Maryland Historical Trust staff. A member of the technical preservation team – Stacy Montgomery ([stacy.montgomery@maryland.gov](mailto:stacy.montgomery@maryland.gov)), Bill Hersch ([bill.hersch@maryland.gov](mailto:bill.hersch@maryland.gov)), or Alexandria Anderson ([alexandria.anderson@maryland.gov](mailto:alexandria.anderson@maryland.gov)) – will relay the commissioner’s findings and offer technical assistance if needed, directing them to resources or additional support services.

### Avoiding Bias and Ensuring Fairness

- **Standardized Evaluation:** Use a standardized checklist or evaluation form to assess site visits uniformly.
- **External Review:** Consider involving external reviewers to provide an additional layer of impartiality.

### Avoidance of Conflicts of Interest

It is critical that Commissioners and Reviewers avoid even the appearance of conflicts of interest, much less actual ones. While Commissioners and Reviewers should respond to questions, provide limited guidance, and make recommendations, they should not be involved in the actual drafting of an application. Likewise, they should abstain in situations involving personal financial gain or other benefits.

### Conclusion

The Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture is committed to ensuring that the African American Heritage Preservation Grant Program is administered equitably and transparently. By adhering to this site visit protocol, commissioners will support applicants effectively while maintaining the integrity and fairness of the grantmaking process.

AAHPP Annual Schedule	
Workshops	

Identify workshop locations/meet with outreach staff	January
Schedule workshops/draft outreach	February
Advertise/prep materials	March
Hold workshops	April - June
<b>Applications/Review</b>	
Update application/rubric	February
Launch application	Late March/April 1
Application deadline	Late June/July 1
Threshold review (staff)	July - August
Prep panel materials/select and orient reviewers (staff)	July - September
Panel review of assigned applications	mid-September – early-November
Rank and Review Meeting	Early-mid November
Prep MHT & MCAAHC Board materials	November
MCAAHC Ranking w/ descriptions of all applicants (grant chart)	Mid-Late November
<b>MCAAHC Staff sends and collects grant reviewer surveys</b>	<b>Mid-Late November</b>
MHT Board & MCAAHC meeting to vote for rankings	Early December
<b>MCAAHC AAHPP Post-Review Evaluation Meeting</b>	<b>Mid December</b>
Award notification and declination letters (staff)(- <i>continue to provide period to include written feedback</i> )	December/Early January
Press release/announcement (staff)	January
Request Compliance review (staff)	December
Board of Public Works Approval (staff)	January
Generate Grant Agreements/Convey Easements (staff)	January

### **AAHPP GRANT COMMITTEE RANKING PROCESS**

## *Day 1: Group Presentations & Initial Scoring*

### Opening Session

- Chair Patterson and Executive Director Compton-Johnson provide opening remarks
- Grants Administrator Stacy Montgomery presents process overview

### Group Presentations (30 minutes per group)

- Each review group presents their top 3-4 recommended projects
- Format: 20-minute presentation + 10-minute Q&A

### Required Presentation Elements Each group must address:

- Brief description of top 3-4 applications
- Strengths and weaknesses of top applications
- Recommendations for partial funding or non-funding

### Real-Time Scoring All committee members score presentations using standardized scoresheet:

- Fully Fund: 3 points
- Partially Fund: 2 points
- Reserve List: 1 point
- Do Not Fund: 0 points

### End of Day Staff tallies point totals for Day 2 discussion

## *Day 2: Final Ranking & Portfolio Development*

### Morning Session Committee reviews Day 1 presentations, asks clarifying questions, and discusses preliminary rankings

### Mid-Morning Break (30 minutes)

- MCAAHC announcements
- Presentation of previously completed AAHPP projects
- BDTM updates
- *Concurrent:* Staff tabulates final scores

### Ranking Review

- AAHPP staff presents tabulation results
- Committee discusses awards within \$5M portfolio limit
- Committee reconciles tied projects

### Closing Final rankings confirmed; community reviewers dismissed

## **COMMITTEE APPROVAL PROCESS**

Following the ranking session, the AAHPP Committee must approve a recommended resolution addressing:

1. Primary Funding Recommendations List of projects to be fully or partially funded with FY grant funds, including specific scope of work to be funded
2. Contingency Funding Protocol Plan for leftover or additional funds that become available before FY27 grant round opens. Options include:
  - Fully funding partially-funded projects in ranked order
  - Adding to emergency fund (current balance: \$100,000)
  - Funding reserve list projects in ranked order

Committee Vote Members respond via email with their vote on the resolution within specified timeframe (typically next business day or same week of ranking) or directly after the Rank and Review meeting.

## **PRESENTATION TO FULL COMMISSION**

November

- Staff prepares meeting materials including:
  - Final ranked list of funded projects
  - Funding amounts (full/partial) and approved scope of work
  - Contingency funding protocol
  - Committee resolution language
- Materials distributed to all Commissioners for review
- Recommended resolution presented to Maryland Historical Trust Board

December

- Recommended resolution presented to full MCAAHC Commission at public meeting
- Committee Chair or designee presents resolution as formal motion
- Commission votes on resolution

*Note: Agendas remain flexible and may be adjusted as needed throughout the process.*

## **POST-REVIEW EVALUATION MEETING**

### **AAHPP Committee Responsibilities:**

1. AAHPP staff presents grant reviewer survey results to committee for discussion of improvements needed for next cycle
2. AAHPP staff files committee notes and recommendations in MCAAHC's AAHPP shared drive
3. Committee submits suggested application revisions to Alex Anderson, Research Specialist, by end of December, with Committee Chair approval. All proposed changes require review and approval by Maryland Historical Trust and the State's Attorney's Office before implementation.

**Grant Reviewer Compensation:** Non-Commission grant reviewers receive a \$150 honorarium after completing the review process, paid by MCAAHC.

### Committee Member Roles

Chair	Responsible for oversight of the AAHPP grantmaking process, setting program standards and protocols. Coordinates with advocacy leadership to guide vision and ensure the growth and protection of capital and non-capital grants. Oversees evaluation and implementation of program reforms.
Lead: Site Visit Protocol	Implements and monitors the AAHPP site visit protocol to ensure transparency, fairness, and consistency. Determines when site visits are appropriate and trains commissioners on how to conduct them in alignment with program guidelines
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Lead: Panel Reviewer Outreach and Engagement	Recruits, vets, and supports a diverse pool of grant panel reviewers. Co-leads orientation sessions, ensures reviewer alignment with program values and protocols, and helps foster a fair and constructive review process
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### WORKING WITH STAFF LIAISONS

**Staff Provide:**

- Resources and data for committee work
- Implementation support for initiatives
- Technical assistance (graphics, website, distribution)
- Institutional knowledge and connections
- Updates on organizational priorities

**Committee Provides:**

- Content expertise and research
- Community connections and insights
- Volunteer time and talent
- Advocacy in diverse networks
- Fresh perspectives on communications

**Partnership Principles:**

- Respect staff capacity and priorities
- Communicate clearly and promptly
- Understand that staff make final implementation approvals
- Collaborate, don't dictate
- Recognize expertise on both sides

**MEASURING COMMITTEE SUCCESS****Committee Reporting**

- Committee Chair submit Committee Reports on time to LeRonn Herbert for public meetings
- Update committee docs/files in shared drive

**Grant Reviewer Impact**

- Attend annual reviewer training/orientation
- Complete grant reviews on time per the grant review schedule
- Attend and participate in the grant ranking sessions (2 day, in-person)

**Committee Participation**

- Attend monthly/bi-monthly committee meetings

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**CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Committee Chair:** Robert Patterson

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