



Protocol for Letters of Support

Finalized following Board meeting on April 13, 2023

Developed in response to Board input following related 2022 requests

PREFACE

The York River and Small Coastal Basin Roundtable, equipped with technical and sociocultural assistance capabilities, is printed to serve its members and watershed communities as a validator of meaningful watershed work. As such, the Roundtable supports projects and programs that align with its mission and vision, outlined in its [Strategic Plan](#). Receiving Roundtable support/validation requires that sufficient documentation of mutual benefits be provided, and that synergies be demonstrated between expected outcomes of proposed projects/programs and Roundtable goals.

To serve those seeking Roundtable support in an equitable manner, and in a manner reflective of the collective perspectives on the Roundtable, the following protocol was developed. All those seeking support must adhere to this protocol and the timing in it to receive a signed document from the Roundtable Coordinator and/or Board Chair. Notably, following the below protocol does not guarantee that the Roundtable will provide a letter of support for the proposed project/program.

PROTOCOL

- As soon as possible in advance of due date:
 - Applicants are to submit a request in writing, by email to Roundtable Coordinator, Cirse Gonzalez, cagonzalez@vims.edu
 - Requests in writing must contain the following:
 - A link to the grant award/RFP
 - Explicit due date and point of submission (to applicant, to portal?)
 - A summary of the proposed project
 - A draft letter of support containing information relevant to the grant (min. name of grant, addressee, grant goals) and applicant, and language desired from the Roundtable
 - A request for either the Coordinator or Board Chair to sign off on documents
 - Roundtable Coordinator will email a draft letter of support to all Board members for their vote of pursuit (subject heading to include urgent language, e.g. "HOT POTATO")
 - Board members will review draft letter and provide any edits in addition to their eligible vote on the pursuit of a letter of support (in the affirmative or negative)
 - Board members are encouraged to consider:
 - Relevancy to watershed
 - Alignment with Roundtable [goals, mission and vision](#)
 - Their respective conflicts of interest
 - Respective member conflicts of interest

- Consensus must be reached
- In the event that consensus is reached, the Roundtable Coordinator will submit the letter of support as stipulated by the applicant
- In the event that consensus is not reached, the collective Roundtable will not sign on (with branding, etc.)
 - The Roundtable Coordinator is to alert applicants should a vote in the negative surface
 - The Roundtable Coordinator at this point can encourage members to provide their respective letters
- Should timing align, reviews of any requests may take place during Board meetings rather than over email. Discretion will remain that of the Roundtable Coordinator's.

TEMPLATE

- Applicants requesting a letter of support from the Roundtable are required to revise [this template](#) accordingly, and submit along with their request for support.

FOLLOW-UP

- Regardless of success, applicants are required to provide final decision on award outcome to the Roundtable Coordinator.
- Successful applicants **will be required to report out** on their grant during biannual membership meetings; arrangements for related delivery to be made with Roundtable Coordinator.