



TRAVEL OREGON COMPETITIVE GRANTS

2023-2025 GUIDELINES

I. PROGRAM INTENT

TRAVEL OREGON'S MISSION AND GRANTS PROGRAM OUTLINE

The mission of Travel Oregon is to inspire travel that uplifts Oregon communities. Collaborating with stakeholders and partners to align as stewards of Oregon, we work to optimize economic opportunity, advance equity and respect the ecosystems, cultures and places that make Oregon...Oregon. Travel Oregon has established a program to grant awards “to eligible applicants for projects that contribute to the development and improvement of communities throughout the state by means of the enhancement, expansion and promotion of the visitor industry.”

Travel Oregon’s [10-Year Strategic Vision](#) holds four objectives:

- Oregon’s tourism economy is flourishing.
- Oregon is striving to be a place of equity.
- Oregon delivers remarkable experiences.
- Oregon respects its natural environments.

Each of the interconnected objectives are supported by priority strategies to help bring Travel Oregon’s mission to life. The 2023-2025 Competitive Grants Program is designed to address the following strategic priorities that are part of [Travel Oregon’s 2023-2025 Biennial Plan](#):

1. Reduce high visitation pressures and increase community livability by investing in the development of niche tourism product that is based on growing visitor demand and Oregon’s competitive advantage (e.g., outdoor recreation, culinary, agritourism, arts and culture).
2. Expand opportunities for residents and tourism stakeholders to actively engage and collaborate in destination management processes.
3. Align and support communications across the tourism industry to improve visitor behaviors and experiences with timely information, responsible recreation practices and respect for all communities.
4. Support the development of new and existing tourism-related facilities and products (e.g., visitor experiences, attractions, and public spaces) to better serve historically and currently underserved and under-resourced communities.

Moving in alignment with the objectives and strategic priorities, the 2023-2025 Competitive Grants Program will center funding around accessibility and inclusivity. Communities that are underserved and under-resourced, including people with disabilities, BIPOC, Oregon’s nine federally recognized tribes and LBGTQIA+ communities are encompassed in this focus. Grant funds are intended to support projects that align with Travel Oregon’s vision: Oregon is a welcoming destination where tourism drives economic prosperity, benefits the natural environment and celebrates rich, diverse cultures.

Eligible entities must choose between two project categories: *Enhancement and/or expansion of tourism infrastructure to be more accessible/inclusive* or *Accessible/inclusive tourism promotion*. Only one option may be requested and only one application may be submitted per entity.

The applicant will also need to show how their specific project ties back to at least one of the four strategic priorities outlined above.

Total funding available for the 2023-2025 Competitive Grants program is \$3.5 million. Of that total, \$500,000 will be dedicated to accessible/inclusive tourism promotion projects. Requests between \$20,000 to \$100,000 will be accepted. No cash match is required. Applications that show additional funds provided through cash or in-kind contributions may be given preference. Projects must be completed by April 14, 2025.

INVOLVING YOUR REGIONAL DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION (RDMO)

Travel Oregon has identified seven (7) regions within the state through the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program.¹ Each region of the state is represented by a Regional Destination Management Organization (RDMO)².

In order to receive access to the online grant application, applicants must submit a project idea form (letter of intent) that will be shared with their RDMO. Once the form is submitted and reviewed by Travel Oregon, applicants will be provided with a confirmation email to access the grant application. Please note: Review of the letter of intent will occur based on the order received and may take up to 14 days for a response.

Applicants whose application varies substantially from the letter of intent form that has been approved, will be ineligible to receive funding.

Applicants are encouraged to discuss their project idea with their RDMO prior to completing the grant application. RDMOs will **not** write letters of support for applicants, but RDMOs may provide feedback to Travel Oregon for the grant review committee after reviewing the letter of intent form.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to reach out to their local Destination Management Organization (DMO)³ about the grant project idea and request letters of support to enhance their overall application.

II. ELIGIBILITY

ENTITY ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants include those listed below that are *doing business* in Oregon and must be able to demonstrate direct work in support of improving the economic impacts of Oregon's travel and tourism industry:

- Local government
- Port districts
- Federally recognized tribes
- Non-profit entities registered with the Oregon Secretary of State's Office

¹ Read more about the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program, including the marketing plans for each region, Industry.TravelOregon.com/RCTP

² For more information about RDMOs, visit Industry.TravelOregon.com/RDMO

³ For more information about DMOs, visit industry.traveloregon.com/industry-resources/destination-marketing-resources/destination-marketing-organizations/

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Eligible projects must clearly show alignment to tourism infrastructure that is accessible/inclusive or accessible/inclusive tourism promotion. Though not a comprehensive list of eligible projects, the projects listed below are preferred for funding. Project categories include:

1) Enhancement and/or expansion of tourism infrastructure to be more accessible/inclusive.

Eligible projects include:

- Access point improvements to recreational activities.
- Removal or mitigation of physical barriers and/or obstacles for visitors with mobility or sensory restrictions.
- Improvements to structures, pathways, gates and doorways at tourism-related facilities.
- Multi-language interpretive signage or wayfinding.
- Development of culturally relevant programming, products and/or materials to support placemaking for communities that are underserved and under-resourced.
- Parking/transportation strategies and solutions in areas of high visitation.
- Accessibility and walkability audits.
- Assistive technology infrastructure (including adaptive devices) that service a variety of needs to enhance the visitor experience.
- Planning/feasibility studies for tourism-related facilities (includes attractions, public spaces, visitor experiences).

2) Accessible/inclusive tourism promotion.

Eligible projects include:

- Print/broadcast advertising.
- Digital advertising, including social media and search.
- Content development that supports accessible tourism marketing, including photography and video.
- Familiarization tour support focused on people living with disabilities, communities that are underserved and under-resourced, including BIPOC, Oregon's nine-federally recognized tribes and LGBTQIA+.
- Promotion of guided experiences focused on people with disabilities, under-resourced or under-served communities, including BIPOC, Oregon's nine-federally recognized tribes and LGBTQIA+.

INELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

The following activities are **not** eligible for grants:

- Mobile app development
- Deferred, regular or ongoing maintenance and upkeep
- Cannabis or tobacco tourism-related projects
- Recreational trail construction (with the exception of access improvements of the entrance to a trailhead)
- Restroom construction or improvements

III. FUNDING

REQUESTS FOR FUNDING

No match is required for any funding request. Applications that show additional funds provided through cash or in-kind contributions may be given preference. Requests for funding must range from \$20,000-\$100,000.

IV. DEVELOPING A STRONG APPLICATION

Applicant shows a clear connection to how project is aligned with at least one of the four strategic priorities in the Program Intent section on page 1 of these guidelines.

For accessible/inclusive marketing projects, applicant details what factors are guiding their advertising decisions (demographics/census/audience data). For example: [Here are some of the DEI insights and key performance indicators that Travel Oregon uses.](#)

Applicant shows community/stakeholder engagement/support through narrative answers, supplemental uploads and/or the project budget.

Applicant includes bids for work or proposals from contractors that show the work can be completed in the timeline of the grant (prior to April 14, 2025).

V. REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS; DECISION TO AWARD

All applicants must submit a letter of intent form between 8 a.m. PDT on July 13, 2023 and 5 p.m. PDT on Aug. 18, 2023. Review and approval of the letter of intent will be based upon the order received (submission date). Applicants should plan to have a response to their letter of intent within 14 days from the date of submission. All potential applicants need to submit a letter of intent form by the 5 p.m. PDT deadline on Aug. 18, 2023.

Once the letter of intent has been approved, applicants will be provided access to the online application. Deadline to complete the online application is 5 p.m. on Sept. 15, 2023. No applications or materials will be accepted after the 5 p.m. PDT deadline. Award decisions will be announced by Nov. 15, 2023 via email.

Projects are intended to contribute to the development and improvement of communities throughout the state by means of the enhancement, expansion and promotion of the visitor industry. Applications will be reviewed and decisions to award will be made based on the following:

- Demonstrates an immediate need for the project that is recognized by the community/stakeholders.
- Demonstrates the ability to complete the project in the required timeline (by April 14, 2025).
- Demonstrates that applicant and project meet the eligibility requirements of Section II and Section III and that the application is complete and contains all information required by these grant guidelines.
- Preference given to projects that are identified as an area of focus as the result of an assessment or planning process.
- Preference given to those projects that are listed as eligible projects on page 2 of the grant guidelines.
- Preference given to projects that are part of the rebuilding efforts of communities that have been impacted by wildfire.
- Preference given to entities with required permitting (if needed) secured.
- Applications that show additional funds provided through cash or in-kind contributions may be given preference.

Travel Oregon reserves the right to award grants in amounts totaling less than all funds available under the Competitive Grants Program, to award a different amount than is requested in a grant application, to make changes to the Grant Guidelines or to cancel the Competitive Grants Program in its entirety.

VI. GRANT CONTRACTS

Applicants who are awarded a grant will enter into a contract with Travel Oregon that includes agreements to comply with all guideline requirements and to complete the project as approved.

FUNDING USE/BUDGET AND TIMELINES

Projects will be monitored by Travel Oregon. Grant recipients shall maintain accurate records of how dollars are spent and must agree to provide Travel Oregon with access to these records in a timely manner, when requested. Grant recipients will be required to keep an ongoing, updated timeline and budget throughout the lifetime of the grant. Grant recipients are required to spend awarded funds by April 14, 2025. Any unspent funds will be returned to Travel Oregon.

TRAVEL OREGON RECOGNITION

In many areas of Oregon, a regional style guide has been developed for use by tourism businesses and destination marketers. Grant recipients are encouraged to adopt these guidelines in order to better align with other communication efforts. Travel Oregon may be available to consult on specific design needs.

Grant recipient shall visibly display on all finished grant projects (publications, websites and other significantly visible project activities) Travel Oregon's logo along with the acknowledgement: "This project has been funded in part by a grant from Travel Oregon." Travel Oregon will work with grant recipient to ensure proper usage and placement of the Travel Oregon logo.

Do not place Travel Oregon recognition on wayfinding signage, unless authorized by Travel Oregon to do so. Grant recipient must submit signage designs to Travel Oregon for review prior to production and placement.

PROJECT DESIGN

Grant recipient shall allow at least two weeks for Travel Oregon to review the project design and provide feedback (timing will depend on the complexity of the project). Grant recipient must cease further grant project design work until feedback from Travel Oregon has been delivered. While grant recipient is not required to make all recommended changes Travel Oregon may provide, recipient must adhere to all grant program requirements. Required recognition will be included in the grant recipient's contract or determined while working with grant recipient.

GRANT REPORTS

Required reports will be submitted through Travel Oregon's online grant management system.

Mid-Project Report

Recipients are required to provide an update on the status of their project and submit a current project budget to Travel Oregon nine months after award notification. The Mid-Project Report is due August 15, 2024.

Accomplishment Report and Final Budget

Recipients are required to complete a final Accomplishment Report. The final project budget along with copies of detailed project expenses (receipts) must be uploaded as part of the report. The Accomplishment Report is due by April 30, 2025.

GRANT FUNDS DISBURSEMENT

Any grant funds not used as approved shall be returned to Travel Oregon pursuant to the grant contract. Projects must be completed within the approved grant timeline. Following approval and execution of contract, an initial disbursement of

50% of the grant award will be sent to recipient. Recipients are eligible to receive up to 90 percent of the remaining awarded funds through a reimbursement system upon invoice and with documentation of expenses. These funds may only be used for costs related to the project and clearly identified in the grant budget. Final disbursement of funds will be sent once the project is complete, the Accomplishment Report has been submitted and the final budget and proof of spending documentation has been reviewed and approved by Travel Oregon.

VII. QUESTIONS

View the 2023-2025 Competitive Grants Program [Frequently Asked Questions page](#) for commonly asked questions. Submit additional questions via email to Grants@TravelOregon.com. Please be aware that email response time may be delayed, but questions will be answered as quickly as possible.

VIII. GRANT TIMELINE

July 12, 2023 – Grant Guidelines available online

July 13, 2023 (8 a.m. PDT) – Letter of intent form available online

Aug. 18, 2023 (5 p.m. PDT) – Deadline to submit letter of intent form

NOTE: Review of the letter of intent will occur based on the order received from July 13-Aug. 18 and may take up to 14 days for a response. The letter of intent must be approved to access the online application.

Sept. 15, 2023 (5 p.m. PDT) – Online application closes

Nov. 15, 2023 – Application status notification

Aug. 15, 2024 – Mid-Project Report due (includes updated project status and current budget)

Apr. 14, 2025 – Project completion deadline (grant funds spent)

Apr. 30, 2025 – Accomplishment Report due (includes final budget and proof of spending)

IX. GRANT APPLICATION CHECK LIST

In order to access the online application form, all applicants must submit a letter of intent form that will be reviewed and approved by Travel Oregon. Once the form is approved, the applicant will receive an email confirmation allowing them to access the application. Applicants whose application varies substantially from the letter of intent form that has been approved will be ineligible to receive funding.

Many of the fields completed on the letter of intent form will automatically populate into the online application.

Access the 2023-2025 Competitive Grants Letter of Intent ONLINE:

[View the letter of intent questions before you begin.](#)

View the [application questions](#) in advance so you are prepared if your letter of intent is approved.

Refer to the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\) page](#) for troubleshooting.

REQUIRED MATERIALS FOR LETTER OF INTENT

The following uploads are required as part of the letter of intent form:

- ✓ [Travel Oregon Substitute Federal W-9 Form](#) – form must be complete, signed and dated
- ✓ Project Budget ([must use the required form](#))

APPLICATION INFORMATION/REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Before beginning the online application, we encourage applicants to gather all information and/or documents required to submit the application:

- ✓ [Travel Oregon Substitute Federal W-9 Form](#) – form must be complete, signed and dated
- ✓ Project Budget ([must use the required form](#))
- ✓ Project Timeline ([sample](#))
- ✓ Project Support Letters (recommended, not required)
- ✓ **Construction Permitting:** Required evidence of approval from permitting authorities for tourism infrastructure development/construction, if required locally.
- ✓ **Signage Project:** Required evidence of approval to place signage.
- ✓ **Distribution Plan:** If producing collateral, you must describe your distribution plan and associated budget costs.

Remember to review section IV. Developing a Strong Application and section V. Review of Applications; Decision to Award to help guide any additional supplemental uploads that may be valuable or additional details to include in your narrative responses.

ONLINE LETTER OF INTENT/APPLICATION

The 2023-2025 Competitive Grants letter of intent form will be available for completion and submission beginning at 8 a.m. PDT on July 13, 2023. All letters of intent must be completed and submitted online by 5 p.m. PDT on Aug. 18, 2023.

Access the letter of intent form (beginning July 13) here: <https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=otc>

Applicants who have previously applied for a Travel Oregon Competitive Grant or an Oregon Wine Country License Plates Matching Grant may use their existing password to log in. Once logged into your applicant dashboard, you can access the letter of intent by selecting “Apply” in the top navigation. All other applicants will need to select “Create New Account” to begin.

Review of the letter of intent will occur based on the order received from July 13, 2023 - Aug. 18, 2023 and may take up to 14 days for a response. The letter of intent must be approved to access the online application.

Travel Oregon will email approved applicants with an invitation to complete the online application. The application will be accessed through this same link: <https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=otc>

Once you log back into your applicant dashboard after receiving the invitation email, applicants will see the application assigned in the ‘Active Requests’ tab. On the right-hand side, in blue, click ‘Edit Application’. This will take you to the full application. NOTE: You MUST click ‘Edit Application’ to access the application. DO NOT click ‘Apply’ or you will only access the letter of intent form.

All applications must be completed and submitted online by 5 p.m. PDT on Sept. 15, 2023. All submissions are final. Be sure to triple-check your work prior to submitting the application.

OREGON'S SEVEN REGIONAL DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

RDMO: REGIONAL DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

The Oregon Tourism Commission has identified seven (7) regions within the state. Each region has one DMO to act as its Regional Destination Management Organization (RDMO). RDMO's submit regional plan proposals for use of state dollars for the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program (RCTP). By leveraging state dollars along with private and public resources, the RDMO's work with Travel Oregon to bolster Oregon's tourism economy. RDMO contact information is listed below.



CENTRAL OREGON

Visit Central Oregon
visitcentraloregon.com | 800.800.8334
Kristine McConnell,

kristine@visitcentraloregon.com

**Counties: Jefferson, Deschutes, Crook, South Wasco County*



MT. HOOD AND COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE

Mt. Hood and Columbia River Gorge Regional Tourism Alliance

hood-gorge.com | 971.378.4006

Lizzie Keenan, lizzie@hood-gorge.com

**Counties: Hood River, portions of Wasco, Multnomah and Clackamas*



EASTERN OREGON

Eastern Oregon Visitors Association
visiteasteroregon.com | 541.970.4551
Alana Garner Carollo,

execdirector@visiteasternoregon.com

**Counties: Sherman, Gilliam, Wheeler, Morrow, Union, Umatilla, Wallowa, Grant, Baker, Harney, Malheur*



OREGON COAST

Oregon Coast Visitors Association
visittheoregoncoast.com | 541.819.9240
Arica Sears, deputy@thepeoplescoast.com

**Counties: Clatsop, Tillamook, Lincoln, Coos, Curry, portions of Lane and Douglas*



PORTLAND REGION

Travel Portland
travelportland.com | 503.568.5119

Amanda Lowthian, amanda@travelportland.com

**Counties: Washington, Columbia, portions of Multnomah and Clackamas*



SOUTHERN OREGON

Travel Southern Oregon
southernoregon.org | 541.326.2640

Bob Hackett, bob@southernoregon.org

**Counties: Klamath, Lake, Jackson, Josephine, portions of Douglas*

ACCESS AND DOWNLOAD REGIONAL TOURISM PLANS

<https://industry.traveloregon.com/opportunities/programs-initiatives/regional-cooperative-tourism-program/>



WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Willamette Valley Visitors Association
willamettevalley.org | 971.388.6185

Katie McFall, katie@willamettevalley.org

**Counties: Yamhill, Polk, Benton, Marion, Linn, portions of Lane and Clackamas*

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