

# STATE OF WASHINGTON TOURISM

## Technical Assistance Grant Program

Tourism is the fourth largest industry in the State of Washington, employing more than 182,700 workers and generating \$21.4 billion in annual spending. Resources are now available to safeguard and strengthen this incredibly resilient, innovative, and hospitable industry. State of Washington Tourism (SWT) will oversee the Technical Assistance Grant program to meet the needs of industry partners across the state. This grant program will subsidize the cost of industry-specific expertise for tourism-related projects that stimulate economic development for destination communities. Eligible projects for grant funding may include design plans for tourism infrastructure, marketing expertise, economic impact studies, and other consulting services for tourism pursuits.

Washington-based tourism stakeholders may request up to \$10,000 in grant funding based on project eligibility. They must submit a complete and thorough application detailing project objectives, longevity, and budget. If awarded grant funding, the grantee must submit all contracts/contractors involved with each project to SWT for review and approval. The total funding available for the Technical Assistance Grant program is \$70,000.

Though not required for this grant, applicants are strongly encouraged to match a portion of their grant request with cash or in-kind contributions. Grant funds from SWT should not pay for staff salaries, debt, or interest payments associated with eligible projects. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to collaborate with local destination marketing organizations and other tourism-related partners on eligible projects.

SWT will accept the Technical Assistance Grant applications between August 15 and September 15, 2022. A review committee of industry experts will evaluate the leading grant applications and SWT will announce award decisions by September 30 via email. Grant funds must be expended by August 1, 2023.

SWT will release grant funds as a lump sum to awardees upon approval of their grant applications. Awardees will be expected to submit a project evaluation by October 1, 2023. If awardees fail to submit an evaluation, their consideration for future grants may be adversely affected. Each project evaluation should include a final budget, proof of spending, photos, and a written account of how grant funds were used and their impact on travel and tourism.

The grantee must acknowledge the Technical Assistance Grant program and include the SWT logo in material associated with the grant project. SWT must also review and approve this material.

### **Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants for the Technical Assistance Grant include entities that operate in the State of Washington and directly support travel and tourism:

- Local government
- Tribes

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- Non-profit organizations registered with the Washington Secretary of State's Office
  - 501(c)(3) organizations and other 501(c) organizations that support travel and tourism

## **Project Eligibility**

The Technical Assistance Grant program will subsidize the cost of industry-specific expertise for tourism-related projects that stimulate economic development for destination communities in the State of Washington. Tourism-related projects for grant funding may include but are not limited to these industry segments:

### **Agritourism**

Research, strategic planning, and product development pertaining to agritourism may include but are not limited to:

- Expanding or creating new festivals and farm markets
- Enhancing agritourism products and experiences
- Education, environmental, and safety initiatives
- Strategies to improve the coordination and promotion of agritourism products and services with maps, itineraries, digital storytelling, guide training, FAM tours, etc.
- Economic impact studies of agritourism on the local economy

### **Bike Tourism**

Research, strategic planning, and product development pertaining to bike tourism may include but are not limited to:

- Infrastructure planning and design (intersection and crosswalk safety, repair stations, restrooms, signage, seating, bike lanes, expanded shoulders, shared-use paths as well as separated bike paths)
- Cultivating niche markets and networks
- Education, environmental, and safety initiatives
- Strategies to improve the promotion and management of bike tourism, such as guide training, identifying and evaluating recreation sites, bicycle touring routes, marketing collateral, etc.
- Economic impact studies of bicycle tourism on the local economy

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## Cultural Heritage Tourism

Research, strategic planning, and product development pertaining to cultural heritage tourism may include but are not limited to:

- Diversifying, expanding, or enhancing cultural heritage programs and events
- Cultivating niche markets and networks
- Strategies to improve the management of cultural heritage tourism, such as identifying and evaluating cultural heritage resources, guide training, restoration/interpretation projects, etc.
- Economic impact studies of cultural heritage tourism on the local economy
- Strategies to improve the promotion of cultural heritage tourism with maps, itineraries, digital storytelling, FAM tours, etc.

## Indigenous Tourism

Research, strategic planning, and product development pertaining to indigenous tourism may include but are not limited to:

- Diversifying, expanding, or enhancing products and services
- Cultivating niche markets and networks
- Strategies to improve the management of indigenous tourism, such as identifying and evaluating tourism assets, guide training, restoration/interpretation projects, etc.
- Strategies to improve the promotion of indigenous tourism with itineraries, partnership marketing, digital storytelling, FAM tours, etc.

## Outdoor Recreation

Research, strategic planning, and product development pertaining to outdoor recreation may include but are not limited to:

- Projects that improve the accessibility and sustainability of outdoor experiences, such as facility upgrades, visitor education, and environmental practices
- Trail promotion and management, including waste management, parking/transportation strategies, and ways to combat overcrowding
- Infrastructure planning and design for recreation sites
- Economic and environmental impact studies
- Instruction and curriculum development for guide training

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## Scenic Byways

Research, strategic planning, and product development pertaining to scenic byways may include but are not limited to:

- Fundraising, marketing, and partnership strategies
- Developing or updating corridor management plan (CMP)
- Identifying and evaluating tourism assets
- Restoration, interpretation, and conservation projects
- Economic and environmental impact studies
- Infrastructure planning and design (intersection and crosswalk safety, restrooms, parking lots, shuttle service, bike lanes, signage, etc.)

## Water Recreation

Research, strategic planning, and product development pertaining to water recreation may include but are not limited to:

- Infrastructure planning and design (access points, restrooms, parking lots, wayfinding, mile markers, and signage)
- Niche markets and networks, marketing collateral as well as education, environmental, and safety initiatives
- Strategies to improve the promotion and management of water recreation, such as identifying and evaluating water resources, guide training, habitat conservation/restoration, etc.
- Economic impact studies of water recreation on the local economy

## Award Decision

Industry partners may apply for the Technical Assistance Grant between August 15 – September 15, 2022. No applications or materials will be accepted after the deadline. Award decisions will be announced by September 30 via email. A committee of industry experts will review applications and award grant funds on the following criteria:

- Demonstrates an immediate need for the project
- Demonstrates the ability to complete the project in a timely manner (expend grant funds by August 1, 2023)

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- Preference is given to applications that match a portion of their grant request with cash or in-kind contributions

State of Washington Tourism reserves the right to award grants in amounts totaling less than all funds that are available under the Technical Assistance Grant program, to award a different amount than is requested in a grant application, to make changes to the grant criteria, or to cancel the Technical Assistance Grant program in its entirety. Contact Matthew Ozuna (509-945-3026, [matthew@stateofwatourism.com](mailto:matthew@stateofwatourism.com)), SWT destination development manager, for inquiries regarding the Technical Assistance Grant program, including project eligibility, contractors, and budget.

## **Grant Timeline:**

- August 15, 2022 – Grant application opens
- September 15, 2022 – Grant application closes
- September 30, 2022 – Notification of grant funds
- August 1, 2023 – Grant funds expended
- October 1, 2023 – Project evaluation is due; provide a written report on the project, including the final budget, proof of spending, photos, written account of how grant funds were used and their impact on travel and tourism

*State of Washington Tourism supports social justice, human rights, cultural preservation, and public safety for all. As such, all travelers should feel welcome and safe, and host communities and travel and tourism suppliers should be respected by their guests. At its best, travel offers inherent social and cultural exchange that fosters understanding and acceptance. SWT seeks to advance these values throughout its marketing, communications, and travel advisory programs.*