

The Montana Office of Tourism & Business Development (MOTBD) Tourism Grant Program awards funds to projects that strengthen Montana's economy through the development and enhancement of the state's tourism industry.

## **TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM POLICY**

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### **Section I Tourism Grant Categories**

The Tourism Grant Program will assist projects that fall within the following categories:

- Tourism Digital Development
- Tourism Infrastructure
- Tourism Event Paid Media Advertising

### **Section II Application Deadlines**

Applications are accepted online and successful projects will be chosen and awarded funding throughout the fiscal year based on actual Lodging Facility Use Tax collections.

### **Section III Funding**

The grant funding pool will be based on fiscal year Lodging Facility Use Tax collections, up to 5.8% of the Lodging Facility Use Tax revenue distribution to Commerce.

- Applications will be evaluated on a pass/fail rating system.
- Applicants may not apply more than once per category during the fiscal year.
- The grant program is not intended to be a sustainable funding source.
- No "pass through" entities may be utilized to apply for grant funding.
- No state or federal agencies may apply.

### **Section IV Preference**

Preference will be given to projects that:

- Clearly demonstrate their role in the tourism industry and benefit the region and state by increasing capacity and nonresident expenditures.
- Have been identified as key tourism projects in a professionally-conducted community master planning process.
- Are being undertaken in partnership with:
  - ✓ other programs within the Montana Department of Commerce
  - ✓ one of Montana's six official Tourism Regions
- Complement, enhance and incorporate design elements of the Montana Brand.

### **Section V Eligible Organizations**

- Montana nonprofit organization
- Montana tribal government
- Montana city or county government
- Montana private business

## **Section VI Matching Funds**

The applicant match must be "hard" dollars, an actual money investment in the project. In-kind services are not considered a qualified match.

- Montana nonprofit organization - \$1 grantee: \$2 state
- Montana tribal government - \$1 grantee: \$2 state
- Montana city or county government - \$1 grantee: \$2 state
- Montana private business - \$1 grantee: \$1 state

## **TOURISM DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT**

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- I. Eligible Projects - Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - a) Website development or enhancement
  - b) Responsive website design
  - c) Regional or statewide mobile app development
  - d) Regional or statewide collaborative digital development initiatives
  
- II. Ineligible Projects and Activities – Projects and activities will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Examples of ineligible projects and activities include, but are not limited to:
  - a) Domain registration and Website hosting
  - b) Social media posts, Google AdWords and press releases
  - c) Workshops and training
  - d) Market research and feasibility studies
  - e) Applicant's personnel costs including wages, travel, per diem
  - f) Administrative overhead/indirect costs
  - g) Office supplies, including but not limited to, postage, photocopies, telephone or internet charges
  - h) Costs of promotional items (pens, pencils, t-shirts, hats, general merchandise, etc.)
  - i) Annual subscriptions/membership costs
  - j) Projects that do not contribute to increased visitation to Montana
  - k) Projects where the investment could be considered a regular cost of doing business.
  - l) Routine upkeep and maintenance expenses

## **TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE**

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- I. Eligible Projects - Projects must be "shovel ready" and completed within approximately one (1) year. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - a) Project "brick & mortar" costs associated with building new, remodeling old or preserving existing tourism and recreation attractions, historical sites and artifacts
  - b) Visitor way finding signage production or installation

- II. Ineligible Projects and Activities - Projects and activities will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Examples of ineligible projects and activities include, but are not limited to:
- a) Public Works infrastructure not directly related to the project
  - b) Marketing, advertising, trade shows
  - c) Market research
  - d) Feasibility studies, preliminary architectural and engineering reports
  - e) Workshops and training
  - f) Applicant's personnel costs including wages, travel, food, lodging
  - g) Administrative overhead/indirect costs
  - h) Applicant's project and construction oversight
  - i) Entertainment, honoraria
  - j) Office supplies, including but not limited to, postage, photocopies, telephone or internet charges
  - k) Annual subscriptions/membership costs
  - l) Projects that do not contribute to increased visitation to Montana
  - m) Projects where the investment could be considered a regular cost of doing business.
  - n) Routine upkeep and maintenance expenses

#### **TOURISM EVENT PAID MEDIA ADVERTISING** \_\_\_\_\_

- I. Eligible Projects - Examples include, but are not limited to:
- a) National magazine advertising
  - b) National digital advertising
- II. Ineligible Projects and Activities - Projects and activities will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Examples of ineligible projects and activities include, but are not limited to:
- a) Domain registration and Website hosting
  - b) Social media posts, Google AdWords and press releases
  - c) Applicant's personnel costs including wages, travel, per diem
  - d) Administrative overhead/indirect costs, project oversight
  - e) Office supplies, including but not limited to, postage, photocopies, telephone or internet charges
  - f) Costs of promotional items (such as pens, pencils, t-shirts, hats, general merchandise, etc.)
  - g) Annual subscriptions/membership costs
  - h) Workshops and training
  - i) Market research and feasibility studies
  - j) Projects that do not contribute to increased visitation to Montana
  - k) Projects where the investment could be considered a regular cost of doing business.
  - l) Routine upkeep and maintenance expenses