Washington County Visitors Association

TOURISM CAPITAL GRANT PROGRAM
ABOUT THE WASHINGTON COUNTY VISITORS ASSOCIATION

Established in 1983, the Washington County Visitors Association (WCVA) is a not-for-profit, 501 (c)(6) destination and marketing organization, charged with marketing and promoting Washington County, Oregon, as a traveling destination to a variety of audiences.

The WCVA is funded solely by transient lodging taxes (hotel occupancy tax) paid by tourists, business travelers, and other visitors for stays of 30 days of less in hotels, motels, bed-and-breakfasts, and RV parks. The WCVA receives 26% of the 9% room tax collected in Washington County.

The WCVA’s mission is to encourage visitors to stay, spend and play in Washington County, Oregon, by selling, marketing and promoting the county’s diverse collection of tourism-related assets.

DEFINITION OF TOURISM

The WCVA utilizes the state definition of tourism, which is aligned with Oregon’s legal definition:

“Tourism” means economic activity resulting from tourists.

“Tourist” is a person who for business, pleasure, recreation or participation in events related, but not limited, to the arts, sports, heritage, or culture, travels from the community in which that person is a resident to a different community that is separate, distinct from and unrelated to the person’s community of residence, and that trip:

a) Requires the person travel more than 50 miles from the community of residence, or
b) Includes an overnight stay

WCVA TARGET MARKETS

Athletic or competitive sporting events: Athletic and sporting events are comprised of amateur and youth athletic competitions and/or tournaments that attract participants from outside a 50-mile radius of the Tualatin Valley Region, and require an overnight stay for participants, their families, coaches, tournaments/event staff and spectators.
**Wine tourism:** Wine tourism includes the tasting, consumption, or purchase of wine, often at or near the source. Wine tourism can consist of visits to wineries, vineyards, and restaurants known to offer unique vintages, as well as organized wine tours, wine festivals, or other special events.

**Nature-based tourism:** Ecotourism (or recreation-based tourism) attracts people in visiting natural areas for the purpose of enjoying the scenery, including plant and animal wildlife. Examples of nature-based tourism include hiking, cycling, kayaking, fishing, photography, bird watching, and visiting parks.

**Agri-tourism:** Agri-tourism attracts people interested in visiting produce or animal farms, farm stands and other agricultural attractions or events. Examples of agri-tourism include u-pick farms; farm stand and farmers’ markets; garden, farm, and equestrian tours; alpaca and livestock farms; and agricultural events, such as produce festivals.

**Arts & Culture Tourism:** Cultural tourism attracts visitors interested in performing arts, cultural history, fine arts and other related attractions, activities, and events. Examples include attending a play or concert, visiting a museum, cultural exhibit, or art fair.

**WCVA TOURISM CAPITAL GRANT PROGRAM**

The Capital Grant Program supports entities with projects and programs that the WCVA Board of Directors believe have extraordinary merit and will positively impact and increase overnight visitation to Washington County, Oregon. The grant supports initiatives that are aligned with the WCVA’s mission and strategic goals, and grant funds are intended to be invested in the development of assets that will directly lead to an increase in visitors to Washington County. The board seeks projects with the following characteristics (*this list is not intended to be all-inclusive, nor is it a listing of all criteria that will be used in evaluating proposals*):

- Projects that result in overnight stays in paid accommodations (e.g. hotels, motels, B&B, RV parks, camping);
- Projects that serve unmet visitor needs;
- Projects to create, expand, and/or improve business activity focused on visitors;
- Projects that have clear objectives and deliverables and are accompanied by a plan for evaluating the short-term and long-term impacts of the project, with a concentration on tourism-related economic impact (see definition of tourism);
- Projects that leverage support from other sources, including funds that may be available through state or federal programs;
• Projects that are collaborative in nature and/or linked with or supported by existing multi-community, regional, or statewide programs and efforts;
• Projects that provide evidence of support, endorsement, and demand by the communities or constituencies the project proposed to serve;

In evaluating proposals, the Board will look for projects that will bring about tangible results. Applicants will be asked to address the following questions on the application when completing their proposals:

**Project Description**
1) What is the proposed project?
2) What difference does the project make in the community it serves?
3) How will you measure the success of your project? Be as specific as possible.
4) What tourism need is the project addressing?
5) How does this project increase opportunities for tourism in Washington County?
6) How will this project encourage overnight visitation or day trips?
7) What will be the long-term economic impact of this project?

**ELIGIBILITY FOR GRANT**

**Grant Cap**

Capital Grant applicants may request up to $100,000 for funding.

The WCVA will fund no more than 75% of the total amount of the entire project. The Capital Grant Program requires a minimum 25% cash match from the applying organization. The use of in-kind for matching purposed must be specifically requested and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The grant funds are given at completion of the grant project through cost reimbursement.

**Applicant Eligibility**

Eligible applicants include government entities and 501 (c) non-profit organizations. If an organization has previously been awarded a tourism grant by the WCVA, it will only be considered for a grant if all previously awarded grants complied with grant agreement requirements and procedures, including filing progress reports.
If a city has a Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) they are eligible for a grant but will be asked to explain how their TLT funding is being used so as not to be available for the requested project.

Applicant is allowed one grant award every two years.

Project Eligibility

Eligible projects include development or redevelopment of tourism product relevant to the WCVA’s tourism development vision. Projects must provide for the development of tourism projects designed to increase visitation to and overnight stays in paid accommodations within Washington County. Consideration for the Capital Grant is given to activities that may include (but are not limited to):

- New tourism product development that adds to the county’s tourism inventory (e.g. cultural, historic, nature, wine, sports, event space)
- Revitalization of areas (e.g. downtowns, town centers, etc.)
- Way-finding signage
- Projects that offer special or unique experiences
- Capital improvements that increase the projects useful life or types of uses

Funding Restrictions

Ineligible projects, activities, or expenses include:

- Administrative or membership fees
- Salaries of the grantee organization
- Business operating costs
- Travel and mileage
- Architectural and engineering planning or studies
- Apparel for volunteers and/or staff
- Projects directed for the sole benefit of local residents
- Marketing projects or expenses
- Events

Grant Timeline

Grant projects should be completed in a span of 12 months. A detailed project timeline that illustrates the step by step progress will be required when submitting an application.
APPLICATION PROCESS

Capital Grant Program Process Overview

Grant applications must be submitted between January 1st-March 1st of each year. If deadline date falls on a weekend or holiday, applications must be received on the last previous business day. Presenting a project for review will involve a multi-step process:

1) Eligible applicants are invited to submit an application. The Capital Grant Application can be found on our website [tualatinvalley.org](http://tualatinvalley.org) or through emailing the Grant Administrator, Ariel Kanable, at ariel@wcva.org. Applications will be accepted between January 1st-March 1st, with evaluation in March and grant awards given in April. The application will gather information about the project, including:
   - Organizational information
   - Project description and expected tourism outcomes
   - Project timeline
   - Most recent fiscal year-end financial statements-audited, if available (Government entities are excluded from this requirement)
   - Evidence of tax-exempt status, if applicable
   - Detailed project budget
   - Certification and signature

2) The Grant Committee will review applications to determine which projects meet the Board’s priorities and should be considered for funding. The Grant Committee will submit the recommendations to the Board of Directors. The Board will then review the Committees’ recommendation and final grant proposals before voting on what grants to approve.

The application process is not intended to replace the opportunity for potential applicants to contact WCVA staff to discuss project ideas and receive informal feedback. If unsure of eligibility, we encourage potential applicants to contact the WCVA prior to applying.

Application Submittal

Completed applications can be submitted to the WCVA starting January 1st and by March 1st by 5pm end of the day. If deadline date falls on a weekend, applications must be received on the last business day. Applicant will submit 6 copies of completed application for Grant Committee. Incomplete applications or submissions of incorrect forms will be returned and not be considered for funding
until the forms are properly completed. Please submit your completed application to the following address:

Washington County Visitors Association
Attn: Ariel Kanable
12725 SW Millikan Way, Ste. 210
Beaverton, OR 97005

Evaluation

The WCVA Grant Administrator will review Capital Grant Project applications to determine if the project is eligible and meets the WCVA mission. Ineligible or incomplete applications will be returned and won’t be reviewed until the application is properly completed. Eligible projects will go to the Grant Committee to be assessed on the criteria below:

Tourism
Applicant addresses what tourism need will be filled by the project and answers the tourism question on the application. Applicant will demonstrate how proposed project may create opportunities for overnight stays in paid accommodation from visitors traveling at least 50 miles from residency. The proposed project will increase local and regional awareness and visitation of the area. Applicant has thoroughly analyzed project benefits for the community and economy.

Project Description
A description of the project’s details and benefits is provided. The project shows evidence of being well thought through and in-depth knowledge is presented on the subject. Applicant explains how the project will be implemented, how the successes of the project could be displayed or measured, and what the effects on the community will be.

Detailed Project Budget
All the appropriate fiscal year financial statements are attached (Statement of Activity, Balance Sheet, etc.). A detailed operational budget and expense sheet for the project is provided. The grant amount requested is reasonable and listed with details on the source(s) of the required grant match. The organization seems to be in good financial health.
**Timeline**
Applicant provides clear timeline for grant project. The grant project is shown to be completed within 12 months after grant award is given. Timeline shows the detailed steps needed to be taken for project completion.

**GRANT AWARD PROCESS**

**Grant Agreements**

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a grant agreement with the WCVA. The agreement will specify the scope of work, allocation of funds, conditions for reimbursement, reporting, project performance and expectations.

Once the grant agreement is signed, the grant project will have a year to be completed. The recipient shall provide quarterly progress updates to the WCVA in June, September, December, and March as specified in the grant agreement. The updates should detail the current status, progress and timeline of the project. Additionally, the Grant Administrator, Ariel Kanable, may check-in on grant projects as needed.

If awarded a grant, the WCVA expects recipients to support the mission and vision of the WCVA to increase visitors to the county and increase room nights for county lodging properties.

**Expense Reimbursements**

Grant funds are not paid in advance. The WCVA shall reimburse the grant recipient based on submission of documentation outlining eligible expenditures and proof of payment detail at the completion of the project. Organizations applying for funds under this program are obligated to spend funds in the manner described in their application and agreement. Failure to meet the requirements in the agreement may result in non-payment of expenses or termination of the agreement.

Recipients must use the request for reimbursement form provided by the WCVA and attach the following:

- Summary listing of all expenses incurred with a description of the purpose of the expense
- Copy of invoices
- Copy of check or other proof of payment
WCVA RECOGNITION

Credit must be given to the WCVA through the inclusion of a sign located in a visible location, printed on collateral material, or included in all promotion of projects or events recognizing the financial contribution and support provided by the WCVA. Where possible credit should say: “This project funded in part with a grant from the Washington County Visitors Association,” and include the WCVA logo.

The type of grant project will determine which WCVA branded logo is required for recognition. A current logo can be obtained from the Grant Administrator. Please review our style guide for more information.

QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions regarding the process, please call Ariel Kanable at 503-644-5555 or email ariel@wcva.org.