

2023-24 Tourism Marketing Grant FAQs

Q: Is this grant the same as the Developmental Co-op?

A: Yes, the grant has been renamed and changed slightly to avoid confusion with other co-op programs.

Q: What is the budget and how many grants will be awarded?

A: Last year, 89 were awarded. The amount varies based on number of applicants and the amounts requested. The budget is \$1,500,000.

Q: What is the match requirement for this grant?

A: Organizations within counties that are designated as distressed per the current or previous two FYs Appalachian Regional Commission guidelines are eligible for an 80/20 reimbursable grant. Organizations within counties that are designated as at-risk per the current or previous two FYs Appalachian Regional Commission guidelines are eligible for an 70/30 reimbursable grant. All other qualified organizations will be eligible for the regular 50/50 reimbursable grant as offered in years past.

Q: Is there a cap?

A: While there is no cap this year, there are a few things to consider when applying:

- Total requests typically far exceed the allocated budget. All proposed projects may not be funded.
- Is this project going to move the needle in your marketing efforts?
- Are there new projects that would increase exposure for your destination?
- **Will your marketing budget accommodate your ask?** Can your organization pay for the entire project and get reimbursed for 80%, 70% or 50%, depending on county economic status?
- Is there a commitment to seeing the project through?
- **Be cautious in applying for funds that you aren't certain you can spend.**

Q: Who is eligible?

A: The Official Destination Marketing Organization for each county or region, such as:

- Convention & Visitors Bureaus
- Chambers of Commerce
- Community development-related organizations that are non-profit and considered "official tourism organizations" (*i.e. Middle East Tennessee Tourism Council, South Central Tourism Association*)
- Regional organizations that are non-profit who brand and market tourism to drive visitation (*i.e. Tennessee Distillers Guild, Tennessee Farm Winegrowers Alliance*)
- Note: The following Destination Marketing Organizations in the top five counties are **NOT eligible** for this grant: (*Nashville CVC, Chattanooga Tourism, Visit Knoxville, Gatlinburg CVB, Pigeon Forge Dept. of Tourism, Sevierville CVB and Memphis Tourism*)



Q: What is the definition of an “Official Tourism Organization”?

A: An “Official Tourism Organization” indicates an organization designated by a county or municipality as the entity that promotes the region as a tourist destination. For a particular county or region, an “Official Destination Marketing Organization” is generally recognized as the area’s “Official Tourism Organization” (OTO). An Official Destination Marketing Organization (ODMO) is an organization whose task it is to represent that community to potential travelers and generate economic benefits to that specific county or region of Tennessee through visitor expenditures. ODMOs can act as Convention & Visitors Bureaus, Chambers of Commerce, and community development-related organizations that are not-for-profit. Examples of tourism partners that are not considered to be an ODMO or OTO are: attractions, festivals, museums, multi-state programs, or Tennessee Main Street organizations.

Q: Will you accept more than one application from a county?

A: More than one entity in a county can apply, as long as those entities are a DMO or OTO as defined in the grant.

Q: What if we didn’t use our grant funds last year? Can we apply?

A: Organizations that did not utilize funds can still apply, although this will be considered when reviewing grants and determining award amount.

Q: Can you apply for more than one project?

A: Yes, you can apply for multiple marketing projects. Projects must be itemized AND prioritized on the application with timeline and cost as TDTD might only fund certain projects presented.

Q: Can you give us examples of what you have funded in the past?

A: This grant has funded many projects. Examples include but are not limited to: Photography, Videography, Facebook boosts, outdoor or digital advertising, social media paid advertising, rack cards, brochures, new or updated websites, trade show materials, branded racks, branded promotional items.

ELIGIBILITY:**Q: What projects/expenditures are eligible?**

A: The grant projects should be for Tourism Marketing and should align with the state’s pillars and brand; they should allow for strong measurement capabilities. The following is a list of potential marketing projects that are eligible:

- Tourism related rack cards, brochures, visitor guides, newsletters, etc.
(The distribution must reach consumers, not the organization’s members.)
- Photography and videography
- Rack card design
- Interpretive or directional signage **See signage examples below*
- Print advertising
- Broadcast advertising
- Digital support programs, such as paid media/ads, social media (i.e. Facebook boosts) or paid search.
(This does not pay admin for someone to post to social media.)
- Website development
(Includes the enhancement of an existing website or a new site)
- Tourism-related tradeshow and exhibit promotional materials
(Does not include travel expenses, registration or expenses while on-site.)



Q: What projects/expenditures are NOT eligible?

- Projects included in approved scope of work for ARPA. No overlap between the two programs is allowed.
- Agency time
(*Projects completed by an agency are eligible, but commission for ad buys or retainer fees are not.*)
- Reprinting of an existing brochure, etc. without changes or updates
- Salaries or administrative expenses, such as travel reimbursement or office equipment
- Fees paid to TDTD for program participation (Retire TN, Sales Program sponsorships, advertising co-op programs)
- Development or enhancements to infrastructure
- Speaker fees, entertainment, trophies, prize money or event supplies
- Promotion for **community-based** events/campaigns that are not a draw for visitors from 50+ miles away
- *TDTD maintains the discretionary right to create exceptions or additional eligibility regulations on a case-by-case basis.*

Q: What are some examples of interpretive or directional signage?

A: The following are examples of **eligible** interpretive or directional signage:



A: The following are examples of **ineligible** signage:



Q: Must we include “The Soundtrack of America. Made in Tennessee” or “Discover Tennessee Trails and Byways” logo on all projects?

A: No, the logos do not have to be on all ads and brochures. However, the current TDTD brand logo must be on the home page of each organization’s tourism website. The logo must be within the current TDTD brand guidelines. [Click here](#) to read the latest brand guidelines. Logos cannot be cut from a website or used outside of the guidelines. Once contracted, you will be sent the logo to place on your website. **All department logo usage must be approved.**

Q: Can we use TDTD logos on items that will be sold?

A: No, state logos cannot be used on items for sale without a licensing agreement. Items funded by the grant may not be sold.



Q: If we want to include the logo in our projects, do we need approval?

A: Yes, the grant now requires approval before using the logo on projects. In some cases, a licensing agreement may be requested.

FUNDS:**Q: Can the funds be used in connection with other grants?**

A: It depends. Other grants cannot be used as the matching funds, but if the community puts in the required match, then other grant funds can be used to complete a bigger, more impactful project.

Q: What is my match?

A: Organizations within counties that are designated as distressed per the current or previous two FYs Appalachian Regional Commission guidelines are eligible for an 80/20 reimbursable grant. Organizations within counties that are designated as at-risk per the current or previous two FYs Appalachian Regional Commission guidelines are eligible for an 70/30 reimbursable grant. All other qualified organizations will be eligible for the regular 50/50 reimbursable grant as offered in years past.

Q: Does TDTD pay part and we pay part?

A: No. The OTO must pay for the entire project, then submit paperwork to TDTD for reimbursement of 80%, 70% or 50%, depending on county economic status.

Q: Do I have to submit for reimbursement all at once?

A: No! We encourage you to submit for reimbursement throughout the year as projects or payments have been made. Just remember the match must be shown with supporting documents.

Q: What are considered supporting documents?

A: You must show the following supporting documents when submitting for reimbursement:

- An invoice from your organization to TDTD for the reimbursement funds with the following:
 - On the organization's letterhead
 - An invoice number
 - Organization's Edison Vendor ID #
 - Project name
 - Total amount requested (half of amount of invoices, up to amount awarded)
- Invoice from the vendor or provider who has completed the project
- Proof that payment to the vendor has been processed by May 31, 2024. TDTD will not pay the vendor *(Bank/credit card statement, copy of cleared check back or statement from the vendor showing a zero balance. QuickBooks reports or copies of the front of the check only do **not** fulfill this requirement.)*
- Proof the project has been completed
(Digital copy, screen shots of ads, links to videos, a copy of project, etc.)

Q: How soon can I submit for reimbursement?

A: As soon as your contract has been fully signed and executed, the project has been completed and you have proof that the payment has cleared.

Q: What if we use an agency to purchase advertising or to work on a project?

A: Using an agency is fine, although TDTD will not reimburse for commission or agency retainer fees.

SUBMISSION:**Q: Can I mail in my application or reimbursement paperwork?**

A: No. It must be submitted via email to Andi.Grindley@tn.gov CC: tourism.grant@tn.gov

Q: What is my Edison Vendor ID?

A: Your Edison Vendor ID is the number assigned to your organization in the state accounting system. It is a 10-digit number that can be found on the second line of your grant contract and begins with several zeros.

IMPLEMENTATION:**Q: How will we know if we are awarded?**

A: Tourism Marketing Grant award notifications will be sent on or before **August 18, 2023**. You will receive official notification of your award status via email.

Q: Once awarded, do I have to be contracted to start projects?

A: No, however the signed contract is due back to TDTD by August 31, 2023. Eligible projects must be completed and paid for between July 1, 2023 and May 31, 2024.

For any additional questions not answered here regarding the 2023-24 Tourism Marketing Grant please contact:

Andi.Grindley@tn.gov OR Melanie.Beauchamp@tn.gov
615-741-7994 615-741-9009



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312 Rosa L. Parks Avenue, Tennessee Tower, 13th Floor, Nashville TN 37243-1102