

**TOURISM ENHANCEMENT GRANT: ROUND 8**

Applications due on August 22, 2025

**Grant at a Glance:**

* Eligible grantees include a non-profit entity, e.g. non-profit unincorporated community such as a historic village, or a Tennessee local or a quasi-governmental entity.
	+ Historic Village means a settlement or collection of buildings that are preserved to represent a specific period in history.
* Up to $100,000 grant with a grantee participation commitment based upon the grantee’s economic status.
* Approximately 25-30 grants will be awarded, depending on available funds
* Project must be completed on applicant-owned property, or property leased by the applicant from TVA or the US Army Corps of Engineers that has a remaining term of at least the useful life of the project
* Prior Tourism Enhancement grantees (Rounds 6 & 7) with completely, officially CLOSED grants will be eligible to submit an application. Tourism Enhancement grantees with OPEN grant projects are automatically ineligible.
* More than one application within a county may be submitted

**Application Checklist:**

* Application – document fully completed and emailed to Andi.Grindley@tn.gov
* Two letters of support from local/regional partners (minimum). One must be from official local tourism entity as defined by TN Dept. of Tourist Development (see [FAQ](https://industry.tnvacation.com/industryresourcestourism-grants-and-scholarships/tourism-enhancement) for definition)
* Letter of commitment from organization providing matching funds
* If match commitment must be approved by legislative body, please have approval completed prior to application deadline
* Project property map - PDF map of area with project property marked, showing street address, and certifying ownership from the local Tax Assessor’s office or by going to [www.assessment.cot.tn.gov](http://www.assessment.cot.tn.gov) and searching for the property map
* Images of the overall site as well as specific areas of work (1 page max)

**Grant Overview:**

Tourism is one of the largest industries and most important economic drivers in Tennessee. The purpose of this grant is to support Tourism Development projects by eligible grantees to allow for the creation or expansion of physical attractions, facilities, or events that are available and open to the public, that improve the appeal of the destinations to tourists, and that enhance tourist experiences that are primarily promoted to or used by tourists.

**Grant Review Board Members:**

TN Dept. of Tourist Development, TN Dept. of Economic and Community Development, TN Dept. of Agriculture, TN Dept. of Environment and Conservation, TN Dept. of Transportation and TVA and/or the US Army Corps of Engineers (where applicable).

**TDTD Tourism Grant Program Manager:**

Andi Grindley

Andi.Grindley@tn.gov

(615) 487-5867

**Reimbursement-based Grant:**

Maximum request $100,000. No other state or federal funds or in-kind contributions may be used for the match requirement. Grantees will be reimbursed for eligible expenditures.

**Grantee Participation:**

Match amount for a county is determined by tier level designation at the time of application submission. Please see the [TN Jobs Tax Credit map](https://tnecd.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Tax_Tier_Map_FY2025-2026.pdf) for your designation.

Tier 1: 50/50 match – Tier 2: 70/30 match – Tier 3: 90/10 match – Tier 4: 95/05 match

**FAQ:**

Frequently asked questions may be found [here](https://industry.tnvacation.com/industryresourcestourism-grants-and-scholarships/tourism-enhancement).

**Grantee Eligibility:**

* Eligible:
	+ A non-profit entity, e.g. non-profit unincorporated community such as a historic village, or a Tennessee local or a quasi-governmental entity.
		- Historic Village means a settlement or collection of buildings that are preserved to represent a specific period in history.
	+ Prior Tourism Enhancement grantees (Rounds 6 & 7) with completely, officially CLOSED grants will be eligible to apply.
* Not Eligible:
	+ Attractions, festivals, Main Street organizations, regional tourism organizations, and non-governmental institutions. More than one application from within a county may be submitted. Tourism Enhancement grantees with OPEN (Rounds 6 & 7) grant projects are ineligible.

**Administration Fees:**

Grantee may request up to 5% of grant total toward administration costs. This must be included as a line item in the grant budget in the application.

**Property Eligibility:**

Property must be owned by the applicant or held in long-term lease / easement from TVA or the US Army Corps of Engineers. The lease term must be at least as long as the useful life of the project. If leased property, the grantee must meet all approvals through the appropriate federal agency. Lease confirmation must be submitted with application.

**Definitions:**

“Tourist” or “Visitor” means an individual who travels more than fifty (50) miles from their primary residence or travels from an out-of-state primary residence to a destination for the infrequent purpose of leisure, entertainment, business, or recreation and whose spending contributes to the state’s tourism economy.

“Tourism development” means the creation or expansion of physical attractions, facilities, or events that are available and open to the public, that improve the appeal of destinations to tourists, and that enhance tourist experiences that are primarily promoted to or used by tourists.

**Project Eligibility:**

Eligible projects should improve or create facilities and destinations visited by in-state and out-of-state tourists, with the goals of increasing visitation, enticing repeat visitation, and increasing the direct and indirect economic impacts of the tourism industry in all regions of the state. Extra consideration will be given to innovative, cost-effective projects with robust partnerships. Projects must be completed within an approximate 12 -18-month timeframe. Additional requirements may apply for specific projects, depending on their nature.

* **Examples of eligible projects:**
	+ Stages such as music, theatre, etc. if used for tourism events
	+ Lighting/electrical for tourism-related public spaces
	+ Boat ramps with public access
	+ Historic preservation of tourism property or facility
	+ ADA compliancy resources for tourism assets
	+ Wayfinding signage (with proper approval from TDOT as needed)
* **Examples of ineligible projects:**
	+ Projects that target local community infrastructure, with limited tourism-related programming
	+ Any project on private property
	+ Marketing, advertising, or billboards
	+ Office supplies or basic operating costs
	+ Entertainment, food, or and beverages
	+ Travel expenses, medical, accounting, legal fees, or salaries
	+ Prizes or prize money, scholarships, awards, plaques, t-shirts, uniforms, certificates, or any other promotional items

TDTD reserves the right to reject any project inconsistent with the program goals. For consideration of a project outside of the definition or if you have any questions about eligibility, please contact Andi.Grindley@tn.gov.

**Scoring Algorithm:**

* Building on existing historical, cultural, recreational, scenic, or natural resources/assets (max 20)
* Number and quality of public/private, public/public, or regional/local partnerships (max 15)
* Degree of innovation (max 10)
* Project potential for economic impact – quality and viability of project metrics (max 30)
* Level of need based on TNECD tier levels / economic status (max 10)
* County population – 2020 census (lowest population receives highest points) (max 15)

**Guidelines for Funding:**

In order to score the maximum points possible, the project proposal must include information describing how the project meets eligibility requirements with detailed goals for measuring project metrics and increasing tourism revenues.

This is a reimbursement-based grant. Guidelines and templates for reimbursements will be provided to awarded projects. No work done outside of the final approved contract period will be eligible for reimbursement.

Grant monitoring by TDTD may include ownership verification for five years. Grantee must meet with TDTD twice per year to report on the status of the project. Properties enhanced or improved through this grant may not be transferred from the approved grantee within five years of project completion. If property does change ownership outside of program scope within that timeframe, the grantee may be responsible for returning grant funds to the State, up to the full amount of the grant.

**Tourism Enhancement Grant Timeline – Round 8**

Jul 14, 2025 Applications open

Aug 22, 2025 Applications due

Aug 25 – 27, 2025 Application review/score period

Aug 28, 2025 Group application review/discussion/finalize awards

Sep 5, 2025 Award notifications and contracts

Oct 31, 2025 Signed contracts due

Jun 30, 2026 Reimbursement request paperwork due for work completed within fiscal year 2026

Sep 30, 2026 Annual reports due

May 29, 2027 Project completed, reimbursement request paperwork and final reports due

Tourism Enhancement Grant: Round 8

Application

**Handwritten applications will not be accepted.**

Organization Name as it Appears on W-9:

County:

Person Authorized to Sign Grant Contract:

 Name:

Title:

Email:

Person Administering the Grant:

Name:

Title:

Email:

Organization Mailing Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Office phone:

Mobile phone of grant administrator:

Use the checklist on Page 1 to verify all requirements. Application must be typed and emailed to Andi.Grindley@tn.gov. Answer all questions completely and label each answer with the corresponding question number. All fields must be completed for submission.

1. Executive summary with budget overview: Include physical address or GPS coordinates of proposed project (no more than two paragraphs).
2. Describe the process of how this specific project was chosen and why is it needed?
3. How does this project relate to and support existing musical, historical, cultural, recreational, scenic, or natural resources and experiential assets?
4. Describe any partnerships leveraged and what their specific role will be in the project.
5. Who will be the primary user of / beneficiary from this project?
6. How is this project an innovative or creative approach?
7. Following project completion, who will be responsible for the maintenance/accountability of the project? Provide contact information for responsible entity. Who will manage programming, if needed? Project sustainability will be monitored by TDTD.
8. Are there plans for marketing related to the proposed project once completed? If yes, please describe.
9. Describe how this project will improve the county’s tourism economic impact. Use the most recent [2023 County Snapshot](https://tdtdfiles.egnyte.com/fl/zeGxQk8ETI#folder-link/2023%20County%20Snapshots/2023%20County%20Snapshots) numbers for your baseline. Include intended objectives and outcomes and describe how project metrics will be measured. \*\*See examples below for guidance on developing project metrics.

**Output Measurement Examples:**

* Asset created or improved:
	+ Describe how this project will increase tourism capacity in the county.
* Costs reduced:
	+ Costs reduced, as a result of project activities, within one year of project implementation.
* Programs implemented:
	+ The number of new programs or the number of ongoing activities related to the defined goals that are implemented as a result of the project. If possible, use with other measures that will indicate the results of the project.
* Leveraged private investment:
	+ The dollar amount of private-sector financial commitments, outside of project costs, that result from a project, measured during the project period and up to three years after the project end date.
* Revenue increase projections:
	+ The projected increase in revenue that will be realized as a result of the project.
* New visitor increase projections:
	+ The number of new visitors to a tourism destination multiplied by the number of the days they visit, within one year of project implementation.

**Project Budget:**

If the project you are submitting is part of a larger project, please only include expenses for the portion being requested.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Spending Category** | **Description** | **Full Cost** |
| Planning/Feasibility |  |  |
| Design/Engineering |  |  |
| Review/Permitting |  |  |
| Materials |  |  |
| Labor |  |  |
| Contingency |  |  |
| Grant Administration |  |  |
| Equipment(Any single item with a cost of $10,000 or more and a useful life of more than 1 year) |  |  |
| Other / Miscellaneous |  |  |
| TOTAL BUDGET |  |  |

Provide line-item explanation, justifications, and/or notes, as needed:

**Timeline for Completion:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Milestone** | **Start Date** | **End Date** |
| Planning/Feasibility |  |  |
| Design/Engineering |  |  |
| Review/Permitting |  |  |
| Bid/Contract |  |  |
| Start Project |  |  |
| 25% Complete |  |  |
| 50% Complete |  |  |
| 75% Complete |  |  |
| 100% Complete |  |  |

I/We hereby certify that I/we have been authorized to file this application and to provide the information within and accompanying this application. I/we certify that the information provided herein is true and complete and that it reflects the applicant’s intentions to the best of my/our knowledge. I/We understand that the information provided within this application will be relied upon by the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development in deciding whether to contract with the organization and that the state reserves the right to take action against the applicant organization or any other beneficiary if the state discovers that the applicant intentionally provided misleading, inaccurate, or false information. I/We make this certification under the pains and penalties of perjury.

Written Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_