



## Travel Nevada Rural Marketing GrantFY24 Request for Applications

Applications Open: March 1, 2023

Application Due Date: April 28, 2023 at 11:59 pm

Anticipated Award Announcement: June 9, 2023

Project Period: July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024

Questions regarding the Travel Nevada Rural Marketing Grant should be directed to [ruralgrants@travelnevada.com](mailto:ruralgrants@travelnevada.com).

Pursuant to NRS 231.260, the Division of Tourism is empowered with the authority to provide and administer grants of money or matching grants to political subdivisions of the State, to fair and recreation boards, and to local or regional organizations which promote travel or tourism. These guidelines have been established to assist grant applicants in developing proposals for grant funds. The Division of Tourism hereby reserves the right to reject any and all proposals. This rejection may be based on the availability of funding and the number of proposals submitted. The Division of Tourism further reserves the right to waive any irregularities in any proposal if it is in the best interest of the Division to do so.



**\*\*Please review carefully the entire application packet,  
as program criteria and instructions have changed\*\***

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# I. Program Overview

## 1. Program Description

The Division of Tourism operates within the [Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs](#) to help achieve the Governor’s strategic priority of a vibrant and sustainable economy by effectively promote statewide tourism to enhance the economic vitality of Nevada.

In addition to managing state tourism efforts, the Division provides communities and businesses with development resources, training, and grant assistance that help bolster local economic bases and diversify regional economies while strengthening communities’ sense of place, supporting arts and culture, developing outdoor recreation opportunities, and celebrating history and local traditions.

The Nevada State Legislature has appropriated funds for the Nevada Department of Tourism to make available as matching grants for the fiscal year to support marketing efforts that develop, promote, and improve tourism to and within the state of Nevada.

## 2. Key Objectives

The Travel Nevada Rural Marketing Grant Program’s key objectives include:

- Enhancing tourism in rural Nevada communities through evidence-based marketing strategies.
- Collecting data on the reach and impact of tourism programs in rural communities across the State.
- Enabling rural communities to share their authentic stories with visitors through the support of Travel Nevada.

## 3. Funding and Award Period

Through the Rural Marketing Grants program, the Division of Tourism will make available \$1.5 million in funding in FY2024. The project period for this funding is July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024. All awards must be expended by the close of the project period.

Anticipated award announcement date: June 9, 2023.

Please note:

- Grant awards are subject to the availability of funding and/or appropriations of funds.
- Division of Tourism reserves the right to use this solicitation and competition to award additional grants this fiscal year, should additional funds become available.

## 4. Allowable Costs

The following are allowable costs for the purpose of the grant funds:

- a. Administration of Territories. The marketing territories set up by the Division of Tourism may apply for up to \$5,000 under regular application procedures. Funds

will be transferred to the designated entity agreed upon by the territory once approved by the Commission. Eligible costs under this provision are as follows:

- Long distance phone calls related to territorial business; alternatively, a portion of a cellular phone bill that is equal of the percentage of time that the phone is used to conduct official territory business. Phone calls must be logged and backed up with a phone statement.
- photocopying costs related to Territory business
- stationery supplies for territorial mail
- maintenance and hosting of territory websites
- mileage reimbursement for travel to Territory meetings by a member of each DMO within the territory. The amount allowed for mileage reimbursement shall be based on the current GSA rate. The maximum amount for mileage reimbursement to attend territory meetings shall not exceed 50% of the funding provided for in the territory administrative cost grants and must be requested as a line item in the administrative grant budget. The chairperson of each territory will be responsible for the administration of mileage reimbursements. State of Nevada forms and procedures for mileage reimbursement must be followed.

b. Paid Advertising

- i. The purchase of advertising space or time, reasonable fees of a recognized advertising agency specific to the proposed project, production or fulfillment costs.
- ii. Event Promotion. Non-local advertising, promotional literature, measurable publicity outside the local area. Advertising must encourage attendance from out of town, county and/or state. Overnight stays are preferable.

c. Travel/ Trade

- i. Familiarization Tours. Reasonable expenses for transportation, food and lodging for the invited travel professionals, provided the end result is measurable publicity for the area and/or the development of saleable tour itineraries within the area or the state.
- ii. Missions and Trade Shows. Booth rental, equipment and services rental, reasonable shipping costs for booth and literature.

d. Public Relations

e. Organizational Assets

- i. Audio/Visual Assets. Printing, photography, videography, separations, art services, services of a recognized advertising agency or audio-visual firm. Project must have a plan for use in targeted regions, organizations and trade shows outside the local area.
- ii. Travel Promotion Literature. Printing, layout, design, typesetting, separations, photography and distribution. Print assets should conform to Division of Tourism standards for content, brochure size and distribution. Consideration will be given to specially targeted literature that may be exempt from these requirements.

- f. Strategic Planning
  - i. Projects which result in the development of an organizational strategic plan or an organizational marketing plan.
- g. Market Research
  - i. Projects related to gathering statistics and/or data informing the further development of marketing and advertising programs and attractions and/or analysis of economic impacts upon areas within the state. Projects must complement and/or supplement ongoing research by the Division of Tourism.
- h. Conferences, Education, and Professional Development
- i. Postage, when specifically expended on direct mail or bulk rate mail related to the application project, provided a postmaster's receipt is presented.

## **5. Ineligible Costs**

The following are NOT allowable costs for the purpose of these grant funds:

- a. Capital investments or improvements
- b. Rent, utilities and other overhead expenses (e.g. administrative costs, supplies, fees, insurance, legal fees, except for those outlined in I.4a)
- c. Staff salaries and benefits
- d. Ongoing or recurring costs (e.g. web hosting, retainer fees, web updates, subscriptions, except for those outlined in I.4.a)
- e. Staff food or lodging, entertainment or transportation, except as in (I.4.e)
- f. Equipment purchase, rental or maintenance, except as in (I.4.h)
- g. Administrative postage and bulk permit fees
- h. Non-budgeted expenses and cost over-runs
- i. Expenses incurred or commitments made prior to the project period
- j. Indirect or expenses not directly in support of the proposed project

## **6. Matching Requirements**

Match is the share of the proposed project cost for which the grantee is responsible. Grantees or their partners may make the required match as either cash or in-kind contributions.

- a. Match Percentage. Excepting Territories or those grantees for whom a match waiver is granted, the matching share must amount to at least 50% of the total project budget.
- b. Failure to Match. Travel Nevada Rural Marketing Grant funds may account for no more than 50% of the total project budget. Grantees who are unable make the match requirement will have their award reduced to an amount equal to the match accrued. (excepting grantees who have been granted Match Waivers, as per I.6.e or Territories, as per I.6.f)
  - i. Note: For grantees who have received a disbursement of funds prior to making their full required match (e.g. A reimbursement request was made and funds

were disbursed midway through the project period in anticipation of match outlined in the Budget Narrative, but the match was not subsequently met), the full required match amount must be met prior to the submission of the final request for reimbursement or a.) The Division of Tourism will reduce the amount of the final reimbursement proportionate to the amount of match owed or b.) If the amount of the final reimbursement request is LESS THAN the amount of outstanding match, the grantee must remit payment to The Division of Tourism for the amount disbursed in excess of the required match, taking into account any sliding scale match waiver. Failure to do so will place the grantee in a non-compliance status and render them ineligible for future funding opportunities.

- c. In-kind contributions may include volunteer hours, donations of services, meeting space, or other resources to be used specifically for the proposed project. The value of anticipated in-kind contributions should be noted in the application.
- d. For budgeting purposes, the rate for In-kind volunteer hours is \$28.16 in accordance with the Nevada state rate for 2022 in the Value of Volunteer Time Report available at [independentsector.org](http://independentsector.org). Organizational staff may not submit volunteer hours with their employer.
- e. Entities for whom the match requirement presents a substantial financial hardship are encouraged to apply and may submit a Match Waiver/ Statement of Need on organizational letterhead with their application. The letter should outline the reasons why the agency will have trouble meeting the full match requirement and should indicate the amount of match, if any, the applicant organization is able to provide. The request for a match waiver will not affect the applicant's chances of being selected. Match Waivers must be requested at the time of application and will be granted based on a sliding-scale formula developed by Travel Nevada.
- f. Territory Organizations representing one of the Division of Tourism-designated territories are exempt from the match requirement.
- g. In instances where match will be made by contributions from project partners, commitments of cash or in-kind contributions should be demonstrated through Letters of Commitment and included in the application package where possible.

To be eligible as match, the contribution must be:

- ✓ Directly in support of the project.
- ✓ Accrued during the project period.
- ✓ Documented and verifiable in your records.
- ✓ Necessary and reasonable for carrying out the proposed project.
- ✓ Exclusive to the project, and not used as match for any other grant.

## II. Eligibility Information

### 1. Applicant Eligibility

The following entities are eligible to apply for funding through the Travel Nevada Rural Marketing Grant Program:

- a. Territory organizations representing one of the Division of Tourism's designated territories (Cowboy Country, Pony Express, Nevada Silver Trails, Reno Tahoe, Las Vegas, Indian Territory)
- b. Local governments representing a Nevada community of less than 100,000 population (2020 US Census) regardless of the county in which the community is located.
- c. Non-profit organizations based in Nevada communities of less than 100,000 population (2020 US Census) regardless of the county in which the community is located. Applicants must demonstrate in their application that they are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.
- d. Tribal government entities and non-profit organizations based on Tribal Lands within Nevada.
- e. All applicant organizations must be domestic entities and shall be owned, operated, and located within the State of Nevada.
- f. All applicants must view the Travel Nevada Rural Marketing Grants Webinar prior to submitting your application.

The following entities are **NOT** eligible to apply for funding through the Travel Nevada Rural Marketing Grant Program:

- a. Communities with population over 100,000. However, communities which exceed the population limit may partner on a territory application (II.1.a.) or on an application submitted by one or more eligible communities as part of a multi-jurisdictional application (II.1.b.).
- b. The Division of Tourism WILL NOT consider applications from any entity not in compliance with a current contract, policy or agreement with the State of Nevada.

Note: Applicants are encouraged to develop partnerships with public or private, non-profit or for-profit entities, and/or other appropriate professionals, community-based organizations, and local government agencies for the purposes of providing additional resources and strengthening the proposed project. Only the applicant organization must meet the eligibility requirements specified in II.1. Project partners and collaborators need not meet the eligibility criteria.

### 2. Project Eligibility

#### a. Eligible Project Types

Applicants are invited to submit proposals for funding in one or more of the following project areas:



- i. Administration (Territories only, see I.4.a)
- ii. Paid Advertising
  - Examples: Broadcast TV and streaming services, print newspapers and magazines, online display ads, social media, SEM, radio, email direct marketing, out of home
- iii. Travel/ Trade
  - Examples: Domestic and international sales missions, association trade shows, consumer trade shows, trade FAM tours
- iv. Public Relations
  - Examples: Paid influencers, media missions, media FAM tours
- v. Organizational Assets
  - Examples: Photography and video, branded collateral, website refresh
- vi. Strategic Planning
  - Examples: Organizational strategic plans, marketing plans
- vii. Market Research
  - Examples: Research that aligns with or complements Travel Nevada research programs or priorities, research that supports tourism marketing, research evaluation of marketing strategies and outcomes
- viii. Conferences, Education, and Professional Development
  - Examples: Registration and travel for tourism, trade, or closely-related conferences, online registration for courses directly tied to tourism or tourism marketing-related professional development, hosting tourism marketing or closely related educational workshops for partners
- ix. Other projects may be eligible. For questions regarding project eligibility, please reach out to [ruralgrants@travelnevada.com](mailto:ruralgrants@travelnevada.com).

Eligible projects include but are not limited to those which are aimed at promoting specific events and attractions including adventure, arts, cultural, history and others that have potential to generate tourism; Attending conferences/conventions of professional tourism organizations; Hosting educational workshops and seminars on topics such as marketing, hospitality, event management skills or facility improvement in local communities; Providing for unique research and model projects which would inventory, assess, compare, plan or assist development or demonstrate feasibility of attractions in rural Nevada.

**b. Ineligible Projects**

- i. Projects that do not meet the standards set forth in the Division of Tourism’s Content Policy are ineligible for funding. Please review this policy prior to submitting a proposal. To review the Division of Tourism’s Content Policy, visit [travelnevada.biz/programs/grants](http://travelnevada.biz/programs/grants).
- ii. Projects which do not meet the criteria outlined in 2.a above are not eligible.

# III. Application and Submission Information

## 1. Before you Begin

The following information will be necessary to complete your application:

- The applicant organization's Nevada Secretary of State Corporate ID Number. If they have not already done so, Applicants should register for a Secretary of State Corporate ID number by visiting <https://www.nvsos.gov/sos>
- The applicant organization's IRS-issued Federal Tax ID number. This number is assigned to non-profit entities and can be found by visiting <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/tax-exempt-organization-search>. If your organization is not already incorporated as a 501(c)(3), visit <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p4220.pdf> to learn about how to become a 501(c)(3) organization. Local government and Territory entities may disregard this.
- The applicant organization's registered State of Nevada Vendor information. The applicant organization must be registered as a vendor with the State of Nevada to receive reimbursement.

## 2. Content and Format of Application Submission

**Only ONE application will be accepted per organization** (excepting Territories as designated by the Division of Tourism, which may submit ONE Administrative Application for UP TO \$5,000 as well as a separate Project Application). Applicants are encouraged to look holistically at their plans for the year and budget accordingly. Applicants may apply for project funding for one or multiple eligible project types (II.2.i-ix). Partial funding may be awarded.

Applications for FY24 Travel Nevada Rural Marketing Grant funding will be accepted exclusively through the Submittable Platform. Applicants will need to create an account on Submittable by clicking the link on the [travelnevada.biz/programs/grants](https://travelnevada.biz/programs/grants). After registering, a confirmation email including instructions and next steps will be sent to the address used to create the account. Submittable will generate an organizational log-in which will be used to access your application. Applicants are encouraged to view the Applicant Webinar at [travelnevada.biz/programs/grants](https://travelnevada.biz/programs/grants) for a demonstration of the platform.

## 3. Submission Date

Applications for funding must be received through the Travel Nevada Rural Marketing Grant Submittable platform no later than midnight on April 28, 2023 to be considered for funding. Applications or supplemental materials received after this date will not be included in the review and selection process. Allow plenty of time to complete the application.

## 4. How to Submit an Application

Once you have created a Submittable account, you will be able to access the application. You will be able to save your work and return to your application to continue editing it until you click Submit, at which time your application will no longer be available for editing. Please be sure to answer every question on the application completely and to the best of your ability.

**Your application on Submittable must be complete to be considered. Failure to complete the application in its entirety will jeopardize your organization's eligibility to receive funding.**

The application sections are as follows:

**Organizational Summary** – Complete the required fields regarding your organization.

**Project Summary** – (300 words) The project summary should clearly identify what the applicant is proposing to do and how it will enhance tourism in Nevada, the expected results and benefits of the project, and how it coincides with Travel Nevada's brand pillars. If you wish, you may attach up to two additional pages of project description and background information as Supplemental Materials.

**Evaluation Plan** – As this funding is intended to support marketing to increase tourism, identify how reach and economic impact will be measured for the project. What measures/KPIs will be used to define success for the project? How will this information be collected? What types of evaluation tools will be included in the project? *Note: If the applicant plans to utilize a survey instrument in their evaluation, it should be submitted to the Division of Tourism for review two weeks prior to the planned date of deployment.* Upload the evaluation plan using the Evaluation Plan form on Submittable. The Division of Tourism reserves the right to work with grantees to modify Evaluation Plans to align with agency data collection needs and standards.

**Budget Narrative** – Include the total budget amount in the Budget field in the application form. Supplemental Budget Information (e.g. cost estimates for services) should be uploaded using the Supplemental Materials form on the Submittable platform. The Budget Narrative must document anticipated sources of match that will be used to meet the required match for the project.

## 5. Submission Checklist

Prior to submitting your application, please review the following checklist to ensure that you have included all the required documentation with your application.

- Completed Rural Marketing Grants Application on Submittable (Required)
- Partner Letters of Support (Optional)
- Marketing Strategic Plan (If applicable)
- Evaluation Plan (Required)
- Supplemental Budget Information (Required)
- Statement of Need/ Request for Waiver of Match (If applicable)

## **6. Application Review Information**

Applications will be reviewed by a panel using the criteria outlined below in (III.7). Upon review, the selection committee will submit for approval a recommended list of grant awardees for approval by the Nevada Commission on Tourism. The decision of the Nevada Commission on Tourism regarding awardees is final.

## **7. Project Selection Criteria**

The Division of Tourism is interested in promoting marketing best practices, projects that offer a demonstrable return on investment, program sustainability, evidence-driven programming, and collaborative marketing efforts. Funding for the Rural Marketing Grants Program must be renewed annually, and projects which contribute evidence and data in support of a robust tourism marketing program are preferred. Please reference the Rubric for Scoring, available on [travelnevada.biz/programs/grants](http://travelnevada.biz/programs/grants), for scoring criteria for each project type. Additionally, priority in scoring will be given to projects which demonstrate:

- a. Partnerships between jurisdictions or political subdivisions of the state (e.g. more than one municipality, tribe, county, or Territory)
- b. Public-private partnerships that integrate local agencies and small business or other for-profit entities working cooperatively to support the local tourism economy.
- c. Support for diversity and inclusion
- d. Utilization of best practices
- e. An evaluation plan to collect, analyze, and report metrics that measure project impact
- f. An ability of the project to become sustainable without ongoing support from the Division of Tourism.
- g. Incorporation of the Travel Nevada Brand Pillars (Arts and Culture, Museums and History, Outdoor Recreation, Tribal Nations, Weird Nevada, or a Signature Event)
- h. Potential to generate new economic impact for the destination
- i. Availability of other funding support for the project (room tax, local funding, sponsorships, ad sales)
- j. Novel approaches or optimization of existing approaches to maximize benefit or return on investment

## IV. Reporting Requirements

In order to remain in compliance with the requirements to receive this funding, grantees are asked to provide reports on project status to the Division of Tourism. Prior to applying for funding, please review these requirements to ensure that your organization is capable and willing to complete and submit the necessary reports as outlined below.

### 1. Financial Reporting and Reimbursement Procedures

- a. Reimbursement Procedures –
  - i. In order to receive reimbursement, grantees must submit a Reimbursement Request, available on [travelnevada.biz/programs/grants](http://travelnevada.biz/programs/grants).
  - ii. The Reimbursement Request must include an outlay report detailing each expense for which reimbursement is being requested, as well as receipts/invoices as documentation of expenses incurred.
  - iii. Any match that has accrued, along with proof of match, should be submitted with the Reimbursement Request.
  - iv. Reimbursement requests for mileage and per diem expenses should be accompanied by the appropriate forms, available on [Travelnevada.biz/programs/grants](http://Travelnevada.biz/programs/grants).
  - v. The Reimbursement Request, along with all documentation, must be scanned and uploaded to Submittable.
  - vi. A hard copy of the Reimbursement Request with a wet signature must be mailed to Nevada Division of Tourism, c/o Rural Grants, 401 N. Carson St., Carson City, NV 89701.
- b. Only expenses which are directly related to the project and which are accompanied by supporting backup are eligible for reimbursement.
- c. Reimbursement requests may be made monthly, but a request need not be submitted if no expenses were incurred.
- d. Final Reimbursement Requests must be received by the Division of Tourism within 30 days of the completion of the project, no later than July 31, 2024.
- e. Match – Match must be documented on each outlay report, but the entire match amount does not need to be met until the final reimbursement. If no match was accrued during the period being requested for reimbursement, simply report as “0”. For complete matching requirements, see I.6.a-g.
- f. Overspending – Grantees are solely responsible for any and all expenses that exceed the original grant amount.
- g. Returning Funds – If a grantee for any reason cannot expend any portion their award, they should email [ruralgrants@travelnevada.com](mailto:ruralgrants@travelnevada.com) as soon as possible so that the funding can be re-allocated. Failure to notify the Division of Tourism of unspent funds may result in denial of future funding.

- h. Grants may be audited at any time by the Division of Tourism or its representatives. Performance on past projects will be considered by the organization in advisement to any additional funding awards.
- i. In order to receive reimbursements, the grantee must be in compliance with project reporting requirements, see IV.2. and IV.3.

## **2. Performance Evaluation – Quarterly and Final Project Reports**

- a. Quarterly Reports. On a quarterly basis, grantees must submit a Progress Report to the Division of Tourism. A link to the reporting form will be sent to the email address on the organization's Submittable account. The due date for the report will be 30 days from the date it is sent by the Division of Tourism. In the Progress Report, grantees should include updates on milestones included in the Project Timeline as well as progress on measures and KPI's outlined in their Evaluation Plan and any barriers encountered during the project. Grantees are also encouraged to submit additional information or attachments such as earned media and feedback from visitors.
- b. Final Reports. At the close of the project, grantees will be required to submit a Final Report/Project Evaluation. The final reimbursement will not be processed until this report is received by the Division of Tourism. The Final Report/Project Evaluation should include a summary of the completed project activities and the impact and success of the project based on the metrics established in the Evaluation Plan. Additionally, grantees will be asked to reflect on lessons learned and future plans, if any, for the project. Grantees should complete the Final Report/Project Evaluation template on Submittable.

## **3. Materials and Assets**

- a. Prior to publication, Materials and Assets must be submitted to the Division of Tourism for review. The Division of Tourism requires two weeks to review a submission and make requests for edits or alterations, so allow for this as you are planning. Send draft materials, along with a Materials Review Request, to [ruralgrants@travelnevada.com](mailto:ruralgrants@travelnevada.com).
- b. For Photography and video funded projects the Nevada Division of Tourism retains the right for unlimited usage with no expiration date. It is the responsibility of the grantee to provide photography and video files to the Nevada Division of Tourism.
- c. Projects funded for print require the grantee to follow the Division of Tourism Content Policy and Brand Guidelines. Guidelines for content, print projects and the use of the logo can be found at [travelnevada.biz/programs/grants](http://travelnevada.biz/programs/grants).
- d. Projects funded for websites and online advertising require the recipient to include a reciprocal link to [TravelNevada.com](http://TravelNevada.com).
- e. Final versions of Materials and Assets should be provided to the Division of Tourism accompanied by the Asset Submission Form on Submittable to be kept on file. For grant-funded projects that produce digital assets (photography and video), the Nevada Division of Tourism requests the final deliverables be sent in the highest resolutions

- possible. For photography, please send the highest resolution images available in JPEG format. For video, please send the highest resolution files in .MOV format.
- f. Compliance with section IV.3 is a requirement to receive reimbursement.

## VI. Project Amendments

If a grantee wishes to amend their original project, they may request to do so by contacting [ruralgrants@travelnevada.com](mailto:ruralgrants@travelnevada.com). Project amendments must include rationale for the change and will be granted at the discretion of Division of Tourism staff. Project amendments may not exceed the original award amount. Project amendments may not change the overall scope/purpose of the project. In order to receive reimbursement for expenses that are included in a project amendment, expenses must not be incurred prior to approval of the amendment.