

STATE OF NEVADA DIVISION OF TOURISM

Nevada Division of Tourism Covid-19 Rural Recovery Grant Guidelines

These grant funds have been approved by the Nevada Governor's Finance Office and the Interim Finance Committee utilizing the Coronavirus Relief Funding allocated to the State of Nevada under section 601(a) of the Social Security Act, as added by section 5001 of the Coronavirus Relief Fund (the "Fund"). Under the CARES Act, the Fund is to be used to make payments for specified uses to States and certain local governments; the District of Columbia and U.S. Territories (consisting of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands); and Tribal governments. The CARES Act provides that payments from the Fund may only be used to cover costs that—

1. Are necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19);
2. Were not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020 (the date of enactment of the CARES Act) for the State or government unless there was a substantial shift in messaging to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic; and
3. Were incurred during the period that begins on March 1, 2020 and ends on December 30, 2020. **ALL PROJECTS MUST BE EXPENDED AND COMPLETED BY DECEMBER 30, 2020.**

1. Nevada Division of Tourism COVID-19 Rural Recovery Grant expenditures must be used for actions taken to respond to second-order effects of the emergency, such as by providing economic support to those suffering from interruptions due to COVID-19-related business closures. The Nevada Division of Tourism requires that all expenditures through the COVID-19 Rural Recovery Grant Program are intended exclusively to develop, promote and improve tourism to and within the State of Nevada to provide economic support to communities and businesses through resumption of activities and steps taken to ensure a safe experience. The funds also must be used to provide an immediate impact towards COVID-19 pandemic recovery. They may be used for no other purpose and must be obligated and/or expended for invoices dated between the grant award date and December 30, 2020.

a. Organizations applying for Nevada Division of Tourism COVID-19 Rural Recovery Grants may also be eligible for Nevada Division of Tourism Voluntourism Impact Project Grants. Voluntourism Impact Project Grants must follow all Rural Recovery Grant guidelines and requirements. The project budget must be between \$5,000 and \$10,000, and a Nevada Division of Tourism staff member must be involved in the project planning and execution when applicable. Projects utilizing community volunteers will receive preference. Organizations may apply for the Voluntourism Impact Project Grant using the same application as the COVID-19 Rural Recovery Grant.

2. Grant funds will be allocated by the Division of Tourism and distributed to political subdivisions of the state, fair and recreation boards, and to local or regional non-profit organizations, which promote travel

and tourism, to assist them in projects that will contribute to the immediate economic recovery of the community during the COVID-19 pandemic by:

- a. Developing and executing plans and programs for marketing and advertising which are consistent with the state plan;
- b. Promoting specific special events and attractions within their communities including adventure sports, arts and cultural, history and other activities that have potential to generate increased visitation and overnight stays;
- c. Becoming members of and/or attending travel tradeshow, both in person and virtual.
- d. Providing for unique research and model projects which would inventory, assess, compare, plan or assist development or demonstrate feasibility of non-profit attractions in rural Nevada during and post the COVID-19 pandemic;
- e. Improving publicly owned property, facilities, and infrastructure within Nevada to support and attract tourism recovery.

3. The Division of Tourism will consider applications as follows:

- a. Applications from the 6 volunteer territory organizations with projects that are multi-jurisdictional and demonstrate territory-wide or statewide impact will have a higher priority.
- b. Applications will only be accepted from political subdivisions of the state, fair and recreation boards, and non-profit organizations based in communities of less than 100,000 population (2010 U.S. Census) regardless of the county in which the community is located.
- c. Applications from federally recognized Nevada tribes and non-profit organizations based on tribal lands will be considered;
- d. The Division of Tourism WILL NOT consider applications from communities in excess of 100,000 population unless part of a territory application as specified in "a" or unless part of a multi-jurisdictional application involving one or more communities as specified in "b".
- e. Higher priority will be given to applications submitted from jurisdictions, which collect transient occupancy taxes where taxable lodging exists.
- f. Priority will be given to organizations following the current State of Nevada COVID-19 health directives. Organizations that refuse to follow the current State of Nevada COVID-19 health directives will be ineligible.
- g. Higher priority will be given to organizations with previous satisfactory grant compliance.

4. Preference will be given to projects which embrace more than one political subdivision such as umbrella organizations, territories, chambers or other similar groups, or to projects which have the highest potential for drawing overnight visitation in the following ranking:

a. Tourism Recovery. Projects that focus on immediate impact towards tourism recovery and have the flexibility to be adjusted quickly based on the current State of Nevada COVID-19 health directives will be given the highest priority.

b. Multi-Jurisdictional. Projects that have the potential to develop, promote and improve visitation for multiple areas of the state as to have the largest statewide impact economically and provide regional promotion.

c. National or International Impact. Projects which are unique unto themselves or unique to Nevada which help to create media exposure nationally and internationally for the destination and the state, thus helping to promote tourism to and within the state through increased awareness and interest.

d. Destination Improvements. Projects will be considered that will develop, enhance and improve tourism related infrastructure or equipment that will assist in developing attractions and improve the visitor experience.

e. Regional Impact. Projects, which attract visitors from traditional target markets and projects which draw non-local attendance such as, organized tours, familiarization tours, and press trips.

f. Events. Applications for special events, festivals, pow wows, live entertainment, etc. must demonstrate that the event will be in full compliance with all current state and local COVID-19 health and safety guidelines.

5. Applications to request grant funding should be submitted before the grant deadline and completed on the official on-line application form located at travelnevada.biz to include a statement of the project goals, specifically how the grant funds will be used and an itemized budget of the project.

6. Funding allocation will consider measurable results provided by the prospective grantee organization. Each grant application should project the expected increase in visitor/revenue numbers and provide an estimate of the financial impact this project has on the local economy. A statement should be included with the grant application as to how the number of visitors and the financial impact on the local economy will be measured. These projections will be used in the evaluation of grant awards and will be reviewed and compared with the evaluation of the project when reimbursement is requested. The measurable results will be used in the evaluation of future grant applications if for the same or similar projects.

7. The following are Allowable Expenses for the purpose of the grant funds:

a. Advertising. Allows for the purchase of advertising space or time, the reasonable fees of a qualified advertising agency, production or fulfillment costs. Funding for advertising should be primarily for projects in markets that will have the highest potential to generate overnight visitation.

b. Audio-Visual Presentations. 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 and/or use in a local area.

c. Events. Advertising and promotional literature. Events that attract significant non-local attendance will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Advertising must encourage attendance from out of town, county and/or state to encourage over-night visitation. All events must have a plan to fully comply with all State and local COVID-19 guidelines in place at the time of the event.

d. Familiarization and Media Tours. Reasonable expenses for transportation, food and lodging for the qualified 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.

e. Research. Projects related to developing statistical information or background for the further development of marketing and advertising programs, attractions and economic impacts upon areas within the state as it relates to COVID-19 recovery. Projects must complement and/or supplement ongoing research undertaken by the Division of Tourism and be made available to the commission upon request.

f. Travel Promotion Literature. (Print) Printing, layout, design, typesetting, color separations, photography, writing copy and distribution of literature. General promotional brochures should be in conformance with Division of Tourism standards for brochure size and distribution. Consideration will also be given to other specially targeted literature that may not need to conform.

g. Travel Trade Shows. Booth rental, equipment and services rental, reasonable shipping costs for booth expenses and collateral. In-person Travel Trade shows are transitioning to a more virtual experience. Virtual travel/trade shows are an allowable expense.

h. Capital Improvements. Wayfinding, interpretive signage, banners, billboards, equipment used as part of the project, construction costs, permit fees required by local, state, or federal entities.

8. The following are NOT allowable expenses for the purpose of these grant funds:

a. Salaries, cost over-runs, overhead, staff food or lodging, staff benefits, entertainment or transportation, supplies (except as authorized in Item 7f).

b. Equipment purchase that does not directly improve the visitor experience, not specifically tourism related or available to the general public.

c. Administrative postage and bulk permit fees. Other postage that is specifically expended on direct mail fulfillment or bulk rate mail related to the distribution of brochures or a direct mail campaign is acceptable provided a postmaster's receipt is presented.

d. Expenses incurred, cost overruns or commitments made prior to the notification of the grant award.

e. Operating costs such as office rent, supplies, telephone, cell service, postage (except as authorized in Item 7g), utilities, regular maintenance, auto expense, or maintenance of equipment.

f. Cost of ongoing operation or maintenance as it pertains to capital improvements

Questions as to what constitutes expenses that are allowed or not allowed should be addressed to the Nevada Division of Tourism. The Nevada Division of Tourism will make the final determination as to which expenses are allowed or not allowed based on the grant stipulations approved by the Nevada Division of Tourism and the Coronavirus Relief Fund guidelines.

9. Deadlines will be set by the Division of Tourism for the submission of new applications for this recovery grant cycle. All projects must be completed by 12/30/20. Any grant funds not utilized in an approved manner must be returned to the Nevada Division of Tourism.

10. Expenditures by a grantee can commence as soon as the Commission has approved the grant recommendations and the grantee has a signed grant agreement. All projects must adhere to provisions set in the Grant Agreement and Nevada Division of Tourism COVID-19 Rural Recovery Grant Guidelines. Payments cannot be made until after the execution of the Grant Agreement by the recipient's authorized official. The Grant Agreement must be signed by the authorized official and returned to the Division of Tourism. A reimbursement billing requires the submission of two Outlay Reports and Request for Reimbursement forms, each with original signatures, along with copies of bills, contracts, invoices or purchase orders, and copies of the materials for which the grant was used. An Evaluation Form must be fully completed online before final payments can be made.

11. The Nevada Division of Tourism retains the rights for unlimited usage with no expiration date for all grant funded video and photography. It is the responsibility of the grant recipient for such projects to provide photography and raw video files, B-roll, etc. to the Nevada Division of Tourism prior to any final reimbursement payment.

12. Projects funded for websites and online advertising will require the recipient to include a reciprocal link to travelnevada.com which will be provided to the recipient at the time of the grant award.

13. Grants may be audited at any time by the Division of Tourism or its representatives. Performance and compliance on past and pending projects will be considered before further applications by the organization will be considered.

14. Nevada Division of Tourism COVID-19 Rural Recovery Grants may not be combined with other federal aid programs, but if an organization has already received Coronavirus Relief Fund disbursements, Recovery Grant funds may augment those funds. Organizations must provide what entity granted the Fund disbursements, the amount, and how the Rural Recovery Grant Funds would be used differently than any other Fund disbursements already received.

Per United States Treasury Guidance:

Are recipients required to use other federal funds or seek reimbursement under other federal programs before using Fund payments to satisfy eligible expenses?

No. Recipients may use Fund payments for any expenses eligible under section 601(d) of the Social Security Act outlined in the Guidance. Fund payments are not required to be used as the source of funding of last resort. However, as noted below, recipients may not use payments from the Fund to cover expenditures for which they will receive reimbursement.

Are there prohibitions on combining a transaction supported with Fund payments with other CARES Act funding or COVID-19 relief Federal funding?

Recipients will need to consider the applicable restrictions and limitations of such other sources of funding. In addition, expenses that have been or will be reimbursed under any federal program, such as the reimbursement by the federal government pursuant to the CARES Act of contributions by States to State unemployment funds, are not eligible uses of Fund payments.

15. 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 securing grant funding. 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 applications 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.

* * * * * For further information please go to <https://travelnevada.biz/about-grants/>