



Introduction

Created in 1981, the Idaho Regional Travel and Convention Grant Program is funded through 2% tax on the sales of hotels, motels and private campground accommodations. Total collections are disbursed as follows:

- 10% to administration of the program
- 45% to fund travel promotion statewide
- 45% to grants within the region it was collected

The Idaho Travel Council (ITC) oversees the grant program which distributes funds to non-profit, incorporated organizations which have a primary purpose of tourism promotion through a viable travel or convention marketing program. The ITC has the goal of promoting the State of Idaho and the designated travel regions within the state through:

- Meaningful programs to develop and promote scenic attractions and tourism assets of the state.
- Return on Investment, validated through reporting, that the implemented marketing plan is the best use of marketing dollars to achieve overnight stays.
- Use of cooperative marketing opportunities to leverage budget and market penetration.
- Collaboration and consolidation of marketing plan with partners to align strategies and leverage consistent messaging.
- Electronic and social media opportunities that have an ability to target a broader market base or specific niche audiences.

Application Schedule

February 12, 2021 Application Open
April 2, 2021 Application Close for Council Pre-Review: ***Due 4:30pm MDT***
May 6 - May 7, 2021 Grant Application Presentations to Council
May 8, 2021 Application Re-Open for Edits
May 28, 2021 Application Close - Final: ***Due 4:30pm MDT***
July 26-27, 2021 Grant Awards

Mandatory Use Templates

The following templates must be used with the grant application:

- [2021 ITC Budget Detail Spreadsheet updated 02/08/2021](#)
- [Cash Match – Grantee Cash Reserves](#)
- [Cash Match – Partner Pledge](#)
- [Cash Match - Wages and Benefits](#)

Available Funds

The availability of grant funds is driven by the 2% tax collection of each region, which is reported by the Idaho State Tax Commission and finalized in July of each state fiscal year. The maximum award for any grant is the total amount available to the region. Applicants should request adequate funding to implement the proposed marketing plan.

Eligible Applicants

The application is regionally competitive and open to non-profit, incorporated organizations which have in place a viable travel or convention program in their region. Eligible applicants must show they have a goal oriented plan for travel and/or convention promotion and demonstrate adequate resources to carry out the marketing plan, operate and maintain a financial management plan, as well as the ability to administer the requirements of the grant. Preference is given to programs of Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO) that have a primary focus of promoting overnight visits to their region. Repeat applicants must be in good standing as determined by the Department and the ITC. Past grant performance including grant management and execution of the marketing agreement will be considered when evaluating applications.

Eligible Costs

Marketing plans must promote the marketing, study, research, analysis and development of Idaho's travel and convention industry with a focus on drawing overnight visitors to the area that are beyond a 2 hour drive from the applicant's immediate area. Subject to ITC approval, eligible costs include the following travel and tourism categories:

- Advertising including print, television and radio, website and social media, co-operative advertising, direct marketing and email campaigns, and collateral material production.
- Familiarization (FAM) tours and site visits
- Sponsorship of major events and other partnerships
- Trade shows, conferences and associated travel costs
- Training
- Public relations
- Marketing research
- Capital outlay
- Administration as defined in the ITC grant handbook

Non-Eligible Costs

The following is not an all-inclusive list but serves as an example of the types of costs that are not allowable: entertainment, honoraria, alcohol, attend meetings, marketplaces, board meetings or other committees etc., fees associated with the applicants membership work or any other cost that does not meet the objective of the program. Grant writing and costs of grant presentation attendance are not allowable costs under current or future grants.

Time Period

Grant will begin August 1, 2021 and must be completed and closed out by September 30, 2022.

Match Requirements

As a way to leverage grant funding and increase the regional and local commitment and plan participation, the program requires 12.5% cash match. Cash match must be documented through a financial exchange of money showing an investment by the applicant or its partners. Evidence of higher match that shows community and partner buy-in is favorable.

Presentations

Grant application presentations will be held **May 6–7, 2021 virtually in Boise,**

Idaho. Applicants requesting \$50,000 or more are required to present their marketing plan. A grant presentation schedule and template will be provided by the Department and the template and timeline will be strictly adhered to. Applicants requesting less than \$50,000 have the option to present their marketing plan and must contact the Department at grants@commerce.idaho.gov to be added to the schedule.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be scored by the ITC based on the criteria below. Each section is assigned a weight and will be scored on a scale of 1-10.

Eligibility (Weight 10)

Key application elements are completed, necessary documents are uploaded.

Presence of an adequate financial management system and ability to administer grants.

Marketing Plan (Weight 50)

Proposed marketing plan addresses the current needs of the region.

Shows evidence that other resources are not available, or insufficient, to support the marketing plan and that requested funds are sufficient to accomplish the marketing plan.

Goals and objectives can be accomplished within a reasonable time frame.

Marketing plan demonstrates a sound methodology for measuring achievement.

Marketing plan has long lasting benefits beyond the grant cycle.

Translates new ideas, creativity and technologies into tangible successes.

If applicant is a previous grantee, success is adequately demonstrated through performance measures.

Regional Impact & Support (Weight 10)

Proposed marketing plan will increase local/regional awareness and encourage visitors to stay longer or promote intra-region travel.

Details contributing partners who will participate in and benefit from the marketing plan.

Detailed Budget (Weight 30)

Provides a detailed operational budget for the tourism marketing plan, including the sources of cash match.

Grant Agreements

Following ITC award of grant funds, the Department will issue a notice of award detailing any award stipulations. If the full requested amount has not been awarded a revised budget and scope of work will be required prior to issuance of a grant agreement.

Narrative Reports

Narrative reports are a contractual requirement of the program. Four reports will be filed with Department. If the grant cycle is extended, an additional report will be required for that time period. Capital outlay reports are also required, if applicable.

Audit Requirement

All grantees with awards of \$100,000 or more are required to participate in an independent compliance audit. Grantees with awards less than \$100,000 may be selected at random for an audit as well. The Department will arrange for, and will bear the cost of, the audits.