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**GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT**  
**Wisconsin Tourism Relief to Accelerate Vitality  
and Economic Lift (TRAVEL) Stimulus Grant  
Program**

Applications Due:  
**4:00PM CST, Monday, September 28, 2020**



**Grant Announcement  
Wisconsin TRAVEL Stimulus Grant Program**

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<b>Application Materials</b>	
<a href="#">Linked here.</a>	GRANT APPLICATION (pdf)
<a href="#">Linked here.</a>	Budget
<a href="#">Linked here.</a>	DOA-3027 Designation of Confidential and Proprietary Information

**1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION**

1.1 Introduction

The Wisconsin Department of Tourism will provide grant funding to Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development organizations for the purposes of resuming business operations in the context of a public health emergency and assist entities with helping restore economic activity amid the current COVID-19 public health emergency. These grant funds may be used to cover costs as described in Budget section 5.0 in this document directly related to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

These Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development organizations, through their core marketing mission, have a significant impact on Wisconsin’s economy by creating incremental visitation and the resulting incremental visitor spending throughout the State.

The purpose of this document is to provide eligible Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development organizations with information to prepare and submit a grant application. The State as represented by the Wisconsin Department of Tourism intends to award up to \$8 million in grants through this Grant Announcement. Funding for this assistance is provided to Wisconsin by the Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

1.2 Granting Agency

This Grant Announcement is issued by the Wisconsin Department of Tourism which is the sole point of contact during the selection process. The person responsible for managing the grant process is:

Heidi Schultz, Grant Administrator  
 Wisconsin Department of Tourism  
 201 West Washington Avenue  
 P.O. Box 8690  
 Madison, WI 53708-8690  
 Email: [TourismCARES@travelwisconsin.com](mailto:TourismCARES@travelwisconsin.com)

The agreement(s) resulting from this Grant Announcement will be administered by the Wisconsin Department of Tourism.

1.3 Electronic Communication

The ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency and related disruptions require this program to accept documentation electronically and may result in amendments to the grant process or documentation in accordance with changes to guidance issued by public health or other authorities.

1.4 Definitions

Applicant	The legal entity that will enter into a Grant Agreement with the Department in the event of an award.
Department	Wisconsin Department of Tourism
Government Entity	Any organization that is established as a department or subunit of a county, municipality or tribal government AND is not otherwise registered as a nonprofit AND is not a for profit.
Program	Wisconsin TRAVEL Stimulus Grant Program
State	State of Wisconsin
Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development	Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development is the marketing and promotion of communities, geographic regions and facilities to leisure and business travelers through a range of activities, such as advertising media buys, creation and distribution of printed or electronic promotional tourist materials, transient tourist informational services, or efforts to recruit conventions or sporting events.
Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development Budget	Operating and/or marketing revenues and expenditures associated with Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development.

### 1.5 Eligible Applicant

The Department acknowledges the diversity of organization types that may have tourism components and seeks to provide guidelines for eligibility below. The Department shall interpret eligibility criteria to align with program objectives and CARES Act requirements. Eligibility determinations by the Department are final.

Eligible Applicants are those Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development organizations that meet the following requirements:

1. Be a tourism focused Wisconsin government or private organization not organized or incorporated for profit. This includes, but is not limited to those classified as 501c3, 501c4, or 501c6,
2. provide Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development services for geographic based (community/county/regional/statewide) traveler destinations.
3. if a nonprofit, be registered with the Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions and have one of the following statuses as of the Grant Announcement closing date: "restored to good standing", "incorporated/qualified/registered", "organized", or "registered",
4. conduct operations in Wisconsin and have an administrative presence in Wisconsin,
5. operate for the benefit of the public,
6. be in continuous operation since March 1, 2019.

### 1.6 Ineligible Applicants

1. For profit organizations
2. Non-tourism related organizations
3. Individuals
4. Non-profit independent arts organizations
5. Exclusively event-based organizations
6. All political organizations subject to tax under IRC section 527 such as political parties; campaign committees for candidates for federal, state, or local office; and political action committees.
7. Other organizations which are not explicitly eligible in section 1.5 as determined by the Department.

### 1.7 Clarifications and/or Revisions to the Grant Announcement

If an applicant discovers any significant ambiguity, error, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or other deficiency in this Grant Announcement, the applicant should notify immediately the above-named individual of such error and request modification or clarification of the Grant Announcement. If it becomes necessary to provide additional clarifying data or information, or to revise any part of this Grant Announcement, revisions/amendments and/or supplements will be posted to the Program [website](#).

The Department will accept questions by email to: [TourismCARES@travelwisconsin.com](mailto:TourismCARES@travelwisconsin.com)

Each application shall stipulate that it is predicated upon the requirements, terms and conditions of this Grant Announcement and any supplements or revisions thereof.

1.8 Reasonable Accommodations

The Department will provide reasonable accommodations, including the provision of informational material in an alternate format, for qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. Any applicant in need of reasonable accommodations should contact the Grant Administrator, Heidi Schultz, at (608) 669-6526 or via email at [TourismCARES@travelwisconsin.com](mailto:TourismCARES@travelwisconsin.com).

1.9 Calendar of Events

Listed below are specific and estimated dates/times of actions related to this Grant Announcement. The actions with specific dates must be completed as indicated unless otherwise changed by the Department or State. If the Department or State finds it necessary to change any of these dates and/or times, it will do so by issuing an amendment(s) to this Grant Announcement. There may or may not be formal notification issued for changes to target dates and times.

EVENT	DUE DATE
Eligible Expense Incurred Period	March 1, 2020 through December 30, 2020
Grant Announcement Issue Date	September 14, 2020
<b>Applications Due</b>	<b>September 28, 2020 at 4:00 PM CST</b>
Notification of Award Issue Date	October 2020 (estimate)
Grant Agreement Execution	October 2020 (estimate)
Final Report Due	February 1, 2021

1.10 Grant Agreement Term

The Grant Agreement shall be effective on the execution date and shall be in force until all eligible activities are completed and all required documents are submitted to the Department. Expenditures must be incurred between March 1, 2020 and December 30, 2020.

1.11 Reporting Required

Grantees shall submit monthly payment requests through December and a final report to the Department no later than February 1, 2021 summarizing the use of funds and describing the impact on the grantee. The Department shall supply documents for completion by grantees.

**2.0 PREPARING AND SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION**

2.1 General Instructions

The evaluation and selection of a grantee(s) and the grant agreement will be based on the information submitted in the grantee's application. Failure to respond to each of the requirements in the Grant Announcement may be the basis for rejecting an application. Elaborate applications (e.g. expensive artwork), beyond that sufficient to present a complete and effective application are not necessary or desired.

2.2 Incurring Costs

The Department or State of Wisconsin is not liable for any cost incurred by applicants in replying to this Grant Announcement.

2.3 Submitting the Application

Applicants must submit one (1) electronic copy of all materials no later than **September 28, 2020 at 4:00 PM Central Time by email to: [TourismCARES@travelwisconsin.com](mailto:TourismCARES@travelwisconsin.com)**

Applications must be received by the specified time stated above. All applications will be timestamped by the State email system. Receipt of an application by the Department's state email system constitutes receipt of an application by the Department for the purposes of this Grant Announcement. The Department may provide confirmation of application receipt by request ([TourismCARES@travelwisconsin.com](mailto:TourismCARES@travelwisconsin.com)).

The Department **will not** accept applications by mail, hand delivery or facsimile machine (fax).

2.4 Application Organization and Format

All applications shall adhere to the form, format, and organization of the application. The application contains the following sections. All sections are required. The application is available on the Program [website](#) and contains further instructions. Any alteration of the forms or attachments is prohibited and may result in disqualification of the application.

Section 1	Applicant Information
Section 2	Narrative
Section 3	Budget (Appendix A)
Section 4	Attestations and Required Signature
Attachments	Supporting documentation, as submitted by the applicant

2.5 Multiple Applications

Multiple applications from an applicant are not allowed.

2.6 Withdrawal of Applications

Applications shall be irrevocable until grant agreement award unless the application is withdrawn. Applicants may withdraw an application, in writing, at any time by submitting a written request that is signed by an authorized representative of the applicant to the Grant Administrator. This written request may be submitted via email. If a previously submitted application is withdrawn prior to the application submission due date and time, the applicant may submit another application on or before the Grant Application submission due date and time.

**3.0 APPLICATION SELECTION AND AWARD PROCESS**

3.1 Preliminary Evaluation

Applications will be reviewed initially to determine if eligibility requirements, as stated by Eligible Applicant listing in section 1.5, are met. Failure to meet eligibility requirements will result in rejection of the application. If all applicants do not meet the eligibility requirements, the Department reserves the right to continue the evaluation of the applications and to select the application(s) which most closely meets the requirements specified in this Grant Application as allowed by law.

3.2 Application Scoring

Accepted applications will be reviewed by an evaluation committee (“Committee”), consisting of members who have been selected because of their professional expertise and knowledge of the topic(s) that are the subject of this Grant Application.

The Committee will score all accepted applications against the criteria stated in Section 3.3. The Committee’s scoring will be tabulated, and applications will be ranked based on the numerical scores received.

3.3 Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be scored against the following criteria:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Percent (%)</u>	<u>Possible Points</u>
1. Financial need	60%	60
2. Continuation of Operations (4.1) and/or Marketing Local/Regional Business Activities (4.2)	40%	40
TOTAL	100%	100

3.4 Right to Reject Applications and Negotiate Grant Agreement Terms

The Department reserves the right to reject any and all applications. The Department reserves the right to negotiate the terms of the grant agreement(s) that result from this Grant Application, including the award amount, with the selected applicant prior to entering into a grant agreement. If grant agreement negotiations cannot be concluded successfully with the awarded applicant(s), the Department may negotiate a grant agreement with the next highest scoring applicant(s).

3.5 Award Amounts

Grant amounts shall be based upon financial need, not to exceed \$500,000 per award or 25% of the applicant’s average Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development Budget over the three previous fiscal years, whichever is less. Fewer fiscal years may be used for Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development organizations in existence for less than three years. The Department reserves the right to negotiate, limit or amend awards in accordance with objectives of the program and available funding.

3.6 Method of Award

The Department will compile the final scores for each application (see section 3.3). The Department intends to award multiple grant agreements. Awards will be based upon the highest scoring responsive and responsible application(s) for eligible funding categories.

3.7 Notification of Award

All applicants who respond to this Grant Announcement will be notified in writing of the Department’s funding decision.

After a notice of award is made, copies of the accepted applications, excluding materials deemed to be confidential and proprietary information on Appendix B: Designation of Confidential and Proprietary Information, may be made available for public inspection in accordance with applicable Wisconsin law.

## 4.0 NARRATIVE

The purpose of this section is to provide the Department with a basis for determining an applicant's financial need. Be specific when answering the following questions. Applicants shall thoroughly and concisely answer each question.

Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development organizations with a nonprofit classification can apply for one or both types of grant funding listed below in the same application.

Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development organizations that are government entities can only apply for Marketing Local/Regional Business Activities.

### 4.1 Continuation of Operations

- Explain how the COVID-19 pandemic and public health emergency impacts the organization's Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development business operations.
- Explain how these impacts are directly tied to financial need.
- Explain how grant funds (as defined in Budget section 5.0) restore economic activity amid the current COVID-19 public health emergency.

These expenditures must be made or incurred between March 1, 2020 and December 30, 2020.

### 4.2 Marketing Local/Regional Business Activities

- Explain how the COVID-19 pandemic and public health emergency impacts the organization's Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development activities.
- Explain how these impacts are directly tied to financial need.
- Explain how granted funds (as defined in Budget section 5.0) support the resumption of local and/or regional business activities to ensure a safe and healthy experience for travelers and resident consumers and restore economic activity amid the current COVID-19 public health emergency.

These expenditures must be made or incurred between March 1, 2020 and December 30, 2020 and do not include long-term positioning marketing or more traditional marketing campaigns unrelated to the pandemic.

## 5.0 BUDGET

### 5.1 Eligible Use of Funds

All use of funds shall be compliant with applicable provisions of the Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and Program provisions, and include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Necessary expenditures incurred or revenues lost due to the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19),
- expenditures must be made or incurred, or revenues lost by the applicant between March 1, 2020 and December 30, 2020,
- expenditures made or incurred supporting the resumption of local and/or regional business activities and ensure a safe and healthy experience for travelers and resident consumers,
- expenditures not reimbursed or under consideration for reimbursement by another program.



Examples of eligible Continuation of Operations uses of funds (not exhaustive):

- Emergency operation activities and services related to public health, emergency services, and public safety response.
- Lost revenues that are attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic, as evidenced by:
  - Financial commitments (memberships, room tax, event revenue, etc.) made to the organization that were rescinded or reduced due to COVID-19, or
  - the difference between Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development organization revenues during the 2020 period for which payment is requested and revenues during the same period in 2019.
- Employee costs such as salary and fringe that are not reimbursed from another source such as the Department's Travel Information Center (TIC) Grants, the Federal "Paycheck Protection Program" or unemployment insurance. If claimed as an expense, the same employee costs may not also be reimbursed using funds received from a lost revenue claim to this Program.
- Increased workers compensation costs due to COVID-19.
- Medical and protective services and equipment, including personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Testing costs incurred by the applicant above those covered by existing State or Federal programs.
- Cleaning, sanitizing, and other costs of COVID-19 mitigation in public areas and facilities.
- Purchase of services or equipment to facilitate telework by employees.
- Implementation of safety protocols, as well as unanticipated costs associated with facility improvements and supply purchases directly related to the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- Enhanced screening measures at events or event facilities.

Examples of eligible Marketing Local/Regional Business Activities uses of funds (not exhaustive):

- Supporting the resumption of local and/or regional business activities by promoting or publicizing a destination, specific attraction, convention/event facility, or scheduled event as being open for business or occurring during COVID-19 public health emergency and ensuring a safe and healthy experience for travelers and resident consumers.
- Demonstrating that the destination/attraction/facility/event has implemented COVID-19 response measures to promote a safe experience for visitors/attendees; COVID-19 response messaging/imagery may include but is not limited to encouraging or demonstrating the need for visitors/attendees to utilize face coverings, follow social distancing guidelines, wash hands often and thoroughly, and limit attendance/close contact when visiting attractions/attending events.
- Marketing safe travel ideas to potential visitors; showcasing activities and attractions taking the [Wisconsin Travel Pledge](#); promotion of outdoor activities; campaigns with messaging around masks, social distancing and sanitization; and other COVID-19 response safety messaging, such as [We're All In](#).

## 5.2 Ineligible Uses

- Governmental entities are not eligible for Continuation of Operations funding (section 4.1).
- Funds may not be requested for expenditures reimbursed or planned to be reimbursed from any other program, including Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) and Tourist Information Center (TIC) grants.
- Additional ineligible uses include, but are not limited to, fees incurred submitting an application, taxes (except sales taxes on eligible use of funds), and other uses ineligible under the CARES Act.
- Funds may not be used for long-term positioning or more traditional marketing campaigns unrelated to the pandemic.

## **6.0 ATTESTATIONS AND REQUIRED SIGNATURES: APPLICANT AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE**

All components are required as detailed in the application, including attestations and required signatures.

## **7.0 SPECIAL GRANT AGREEMENT TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

### **7.1 Funds reimbursement and recordkeeping**

No expenditures may be reimbursed from another funding source. If the applicant later receives funding from another source that is used to reimburse any expenditure that was previously reimbursed through this program, the applicant will notify the Department, withdraw the claimed expenditure to the extent covered by another source, and (a) utilize the funds for other eligible expenditures sufficient to cover the payment received for the withdrawn expenditure during the program period, or (b) repay the amount to the Department.

The applicant has and will maintain for at least five years records sufficient to demonstrate that the expenditures were compliant with applicable CARES Act provisions.

### **7.2 Order of Precedence**

In the event of grant agreement award(s), the contents of the Grant Announcement (including all attachments), Grant Announcement addenda and revisions, and the application of the successful applicant(s), and additional terms agreed to in writing by the Department and the applicant(s) shall become part of the grant agreement. Failure of the successful applicant(s) to accept these as a contractual agreement may result in a cancellation of award. The following priority for grant agreement documents will be used if there are conflicts or disputes:

1. CARES Act provisions
2. Applicable State of Wisconsin statutes and regulations.
3. The terms of the resulting grant agreement.
4. The terms of the applicant's response as accepted by the State.
5. The terms of the Grant Application as amended.

### **7.3 Grant Agreement**

A grant agreement between the grantee and the Department will cover the period of performance, payment requirements, document requirements, reporting requirements, and budget. Grant agreements cover a pre-determined period after the date the Department signs the contract. Applicants must agree to abide by applicable state and federal rules and regulations.

### **7.4 Public Disclosure**

Copies of the application materials, excluding materials deemed to be confidential and proprietary information on Appendix B: Designation of Confidential and Proprietary Information (DOA-3027), will be made available for public inspection in accordance with applicable Wisconsin law.

### **7.5 Compliance with the Federal CARES Act**

The applicant is solely responsible for demonstrating that payments it receives under the Program meet the eligibility requirements set forth under this document, state law, federal law, and federal guidance. The applicant will hold the Department and the State harmless for any audit disallowance related to the eligibility of costs or revenues, irrespective of whether the audit is ordered by federal or state agencies or by the courts, and will be solely responsible for repaying the ineligible amounts (plus any assessed interest, costs, or fees) to the State or the federal government.

7.6 Miscellaneous

The State of Wisconsin reserves the right to audit any grantee. The grantee will cooperate and provide any relevant information or records requested by the Department, any of its authorized representatives, the State of Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau or the Department of the Treasury Office of Inspector General at any time relating to the expenditures.

7.7 CARES Act Funding

The Program utilizes federal funds provided under the CARES Act. The Department of Administration provides the following information regarding the source of funds:

Federal Award Identification Number: N/A

Federal Award Date: N/A

CFDA #: 21.019, Coronavirus Relief Fund

Federal Awarding Agency: Department of the Treasury

Total Amount of the Federal Award: \$1,997,294,785.80

Amount of Federal Funds Obligated by this Award: Refer to Allocation Amount

Total Amount of Federal Funds Obligated: Refer to Allocation Amount

Research & Development: No

Indirect Cost Rate: N/A

7.8 Indemnity

By providing funds to the applicant, the State assumes no liability for any acts or omissions of the organization or any of its officers, employees, contractors, or agents which are in any way related to the costs for which the applicant seeks funding. The applicant will indemnify and hold harmless the Department and the State and all of its officers, agents and employees from all suits, actions or claims of any character brought for or on account of any injuries or damages received by any persons or property resulting from the operations of the applicant, or of any of its contractors, in performing the activities for which the applicant seeks funding.

7.9 Nondiscrimination

As required by Wis. Stat. § 16.765, the applicant will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of age, race, religion, color, handicap, sex, physical condition, developmental disability as defined in s. 51.01 (5), Wis. Stats., sexual orientation as defined in s. 111.32 (13m), Wis. Stats., or national origin. This provision shall include, but not be limited to, the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer; recruitment or recruitment advertising; layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation; and selection for training, including apprenticeship. Except with respect to sexual orientation, the institution will take affirmative action to ensure equal employment opportunities. The applicant will post in conspicuous places, available for employees and applicants for employment, notices to be provided by the contracting officer setting forth the provisions of the State of Wisconsin's nondiscrimination law.

Pursuant to 2019 Wisconsin Executive Order 1, the applicant will hire only on the basis of merit and will not (and did not) discriminate against any persons performing any work for which funding is sought on account of their military or veteran status, gender identity or expression, marital or familial status, genetic information or political affiliation.

7.10 Subawards

Subawards, transfer of funds to another organization (except as payment of eligible services or goods) or use of funds for grantmaking is not permissible.