

TRAVEL



OREGON

**COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAM
2024 OREGON DESTINATION ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE**

Photo: Dylan VanWeelden

Travel Oregon Competitive Grants

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Travel Oregon directs 10 percent of the state transient lodging tax to a competitive grants program. The program awards grants for projects that contribute to the development and improvement of communities throughout the state by means of the enhancement, expansion and promotion of the visitor industry.

1.5% Lodging Tax



10%



\$20.2 Million



377

Projects Funded



In 2017-2019: Eligible projects provided for the improvement or expansion of the tourism economy in Oregon. Competitive Small and Medium projects were intended to increase the likelihood of visitation from 50 miles outside the local area.

2017: The Competitive Large grant was intended to create statewide imports or to impact multiple regions. Eligible projects provided for the improvement or expansion of the tourism economy in Oregon by showcasing the state on a national or global stage or is a world-class asset.

2020-Present: Life during COVID and in a post-COVID landscape. RESPONSE – save jobs. RECOVERY – safe gatherings outside. RESET – organizational capacity and accessibility+inclusion.

Travel Oregon Competitive Grants Program

IMPACT OF GRANT DOLLARS

Travel Oregon has established a program to make grant awards “to eligible applicants for projects that contribute to the development and improvement of communities throughout the state by means of the **ENHANCEMENT, EXPANSION and PROMOTION** of the visitor industry.”

ENHANCE

an improved
experience

Development of
interpretive signage
panels placed throughout
the Columbia River
Maritime Museum
campus.

EXPAND

something that
doesn't exist

Remodel the Cottage
Theatre facility to increase
seating capacity (in
addition to ADA seating),
improve sightlines and
upgrade technical
capabilities.

PROMOTE

marketing an
asset

A multi-media
marketing and
advertising campaign to
inspire travel to
Newberg and its
surrounding area during
the shoulder season.

Projects fit into the categories: Enhance, Expand, Promote based on outcome

Travel Oregon Competitive Grants Program

RESET: CAPACITY AND SMALL PROJECT GRANT

As Travel Oregon looked to return to a more consistent cadence in grant funding beginning in spring of 2023, there was a desire to strengthen local communities by supporting destination marketing/management organizations (DMOs) and federally-recognized tribes through capacity building efforts.

Funds were intended to develop and refine skills, systems, structures and strategies so the organization can successfully fulfill its mission and achieve outcomes that are more impactful. Funds also supported diversity, equity and inclusion training and coaching to support these entities as they advance racial equity initiatives within their organizations and through their work.

If an entity finds greater impacts for their community could be achieved through project funding, a Small project grant of up to \$20,000 may be requested.

Targeted funding was for DMOs and Tribal entities, \$1.5M budget.

Travel Oregon Competitive Grants Program – CAPACITY AND SMALL PROJECT GRANT AWARDS

| Region | Amount Requested | Amount Awarded | Total Applications Submitted | Number of Grants Awarded |
|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Central Oregon | \$295,490.00 | \$217,990.00 | 7 | 6 |
| Eastern Oregon | \$ 165,781.00 | \$141,031.00 | 7 | 6 |
| Mt. Hood/Gorge | \$ 167,500.00 | \$167,500.00 | 4 | 4 |
| Oregon Coast | \$ 326,120.00 | \$326,120.00 | 12 | 12 |
| Portland Region | \$ 38,217.00 | \$38,217.00 | 1 | 1 |
| Southern Oregon | \$ 268,622.80 | \$268,622.80 | 9 | 9 |
| Willamette Valley | \$ 266,142.00 | \$246,142.00 | 8 | 7 |
| TOTAL | \$ 1,527,872.80 | \$1,405,622.80 | 48 | 45 |

Travel Oregon Competitive Grants Program

2023 COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAM

Moving in alignment with the objectives and strategic priorities, the 2023-2025 Competitive Grants Program centered funding around accessibility and inclusivity. Eligible entities could choose between two project categories, the enhancement and/or expansion of tourism infrastructure to be more accessible/inclusive or accessible/inclusive tourism promotion.

Funds were intended to support projects that align with Travel Oregon's vision: Oregon is a welcoming destination where tourism drives economic prosperity, benefits the natural environment, and celebrates rich, diverse cultures. Funds also support underserved and under-resourced communities, including people with disabilities, BIPOC, Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes and LGBTQIA+ are encompassed in this focus.

Entities could request funding for projects between \$20,000 to \$100,000. No cash match.

Total funding budgeted for the 2023 Competitive Grants program was \$3.5M.

Travel Oregon Competitive Grants Program

2023 COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAM

| Region | Amount Requested | Amount Awarded | Total Applications Submitted | Number of Grants Awarded |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Central Oregon | \$392,310.50 | \$307,310.50 | 8 | 6 |
| Eastern Oregon | \$1,081,485.00 | \$469,805.00 | 16 | 9 |
| Mt. Hood/Gorge | \$401,700.00 | \$190,700.00 | 6 | 3 |
| Oregon Coast | \$1,882,990.96 | \$1,109,761.00 | 25 | 15 |
| Portland Region | \$1,258,498.00 | \$535,610.00 | 17 | 6 |
| Southern Oregon | \$921,944.35 | \$354,850.00 | 17 | 8 |
| Willamette Valley | \$ 1,658,909.00 | \$643,053.00 | 24 | 9 |
| TOTAL | \$7,597,837.81 | \$3,611,089.50 | 113 | 56 |

Travel Oregon Competitive Grants Program

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

| Grant Program | Amount Awarded | Amount Requested | Applications Submitted | Grants Awarded |
|---|-------------------------|------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| 2017-2018 Competitive Small Grants | \$ 399,655.60 | \$2M | 137 | 29 |
| 2017-2019 Competitive Large Grants | \$ 10,000,000 | \$13.6M | 15 | 1 |
| 2018-2019 Competitive Small Grants | \$ 348,640 | \$2.5M | 157 | 23 |
| 2018-2020 Competitive Medium Grants | \$ 853,000 | \$4.2M | 61 | 12 |
| 2019-2020 Competitive Small Grants | \$ 470,996 | \$2.4M | 153 | 30 |
| 2020 COVID-19 Emergency Response Grants | \$ 800,225 | \$3.48M | 332 | 121 |
| 2021 Competitive & Recovery Grants | \$ 2,408,264.70 | \$20.4M | 418 | 60 |
| 2022 Capacity & Small Project Grants | \$ 1,405,622.80 | \$1.5M | 48 | 45 |
| 2023 Competitive Grants Program | \$ 3,611,089 | \$7.59M | 113 | 56 |
| | \$ 20,297,493.10 | \$57.99M | 1,434 | 376 |

| Grant Program | Amount Awarded | Number of Grants Awarded |
|---|----------------|--------------------------|
| Competitive Small and Medium Grants | \$2,072,291.60 | 94 |
| COVID Response and Recovery Grants | \$3,208,489.70 | 181 |
| Reset: Capacity + Accessibility/Inclusion | \$5,016,711.80 | 161 |

Travel Oregon Competitive Grants Program

REGIONAL IMPACTS

| Tourism Region | Amount Awarded | Number of Grants Awarded |
|--------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Central Oregon | \$1,085,477.62 | 36 |
| Eastern Oregon | \$1,227,582.80 | 53 |
| Mt. Hood/Gorge | \$714,679.00 | 26 |
| Oregon Coast | \$2,474,475.00 | 96 |
| Portland Region | \$1,425,484.00 | 38 |
| Southern Oregon | \$1,463,996.05 | 56 |
| Willamette Valley | \$1,905,799.10 | 72 |
| TOTAL | \$10,297,493.57 | 376 |

\$2,666,296.80

**Grant funds awarded to DMOs
since 2022**

Travel Oregon Competitive Grants Program

7 GRANT WRITING TIPS

1. Detail visitation numbers.
2. Planning is critical.
3. Tell us what you want to do with the grant funds, be SPECIFIC.
4. Letters of support.
5. Do not make assumptions.
6. Reach out to funders to ask questions.
7. Always reference your grant guidelines.

Travel Oregon Competitive Grants Program

2024 COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAM

What Travel Oregon is doing:

- Evaluating Project Status Reports for the Capacity & Small Project grant cycle
- Debriefing the 2023 Competitive Grants process
- Developing a longer window for applicants to plan around the next funding cycle
- Onboarding new VP for Destination Stewardship

What you can do:

- Capacity & Small Project awardees look for a follow-up survey and complete it
- Think about the 7 Grant Writing Tips
- Explore other available funding opportunities

Thank you

