



Union County Chamber of Commerce

207 Depot Street
La Grande, OR 97850
www.VisitUnionCounty.org
541.963.8588

TRT PROJECT GRANT APPLICATION

The Union County Chamber of Commerce ("The Chamber") and the Union County Tourism Promotion Advisory Committee ("UCTPAC") invite grant applications for projects which will promote tourism to Union County. The purpose of the Union County TRT Grant Program is to increase the quantity and quality of overnight stays in lodging establishments in Union County, where the grants program funds tourism marketing and promotion in accordance with ORS 320.300. Grant applications will be accepted January 1 - March 15th. The Chamber and UCTPAC, appointed by the City of La Grande and Union County Board of Commissioners, will review and make recommendations for grant awards up to \$10,000 (based on the Chamber's budget allocations). Awards will typically be announced no later than April 15th. A 50% match is required with up to 15% in-kind matching and a minimum of 35% cash match is required. The availability of funds will determine how many applications are awarded and if full or partial funding will be awarded.

Organizations may submit one or more grant applications for consideration – during the Grant Application Period as outlined above for recurring projects, or throughout the calendar year for new projects. Provided there is funding available, the Chamber will earmark up to \$5,000 per calendar year for new projects, defined as projects/events never before occurring in Union County. This "Seed Grant" is available throughout the calendar year with no application deadline. The Chamber will not hold aside grant funding for projects throughout the year. The Chamber and UCTPAC reserve the right to deny projects not meeting grant application criteria or supporting the mission of Union County Tourism, even if funding is available. Projects submitted outside of the grant cycle must be for new, nonrecurring projects/events (which were not planned in time to apply during the regular grant cycle) and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Nonprofit and for-profit organizations, businesses, and entities may apply for the Union County TRT Grants; however, grants will not be awarded to projects emphasizing private profitability and/or where investment could be considered a regular cost of doing business.

Grant funds may only be used for Tourism Promotion or Tourism Related Facilities. Tourism Promotion is defined as materials and supplies, staffing, professional contracted services, or other costs in direct relation to advertising, publicizing, or distributing information for the purpose of attracting and welcoming tourists and visitors from outside the area (50+ miles) with the focus of generating tourists to encourage economic vitality. Tourism Related Facility costs are those related to conference, convention, or visitor information centers, other improved real property which has a useful life of ten or more years and has a substantial purpose of supporting tourism or accommodating tourist activities.

Goals:

- Increase tourism to Union County, specifically overnight stays.
- Increase the length and quality of overnight stays in Union County.
- The target market for projects is not Union County residents. Marketing and promotion efforts should be directed outside of Union County. Preference will be given to projects drawing from key target regions of Portland, Yakima, Seattle, Eugene, and Boise.
- Preference shall be given to projects focusing on agritourism, outdoor recreation, and projects occurring during shoulder seasons (i.e., October through March), etc.
- Additional promotion which directly increases or expands in-county visitor stays.

Projects/activities may include, but are not limited to, any of the following efforts:

- Development of new local and regional maps intended for niche market development or tourism promotion.
- Event creation/promotion positioned to attract a high volume of visitors to an area.
- Event-related transportation.
- Growth of local capacity for tourism development, including the ability to recruit and host large-scale conferences and conventions.
- Strategic collaborative marketing initiatives based on the research and marketing plans from the Local Destination Marketing Organization's (Visit Union County) brand and executed in conjunction with them (see Cooperative Advertising Grant Application).
- Visitor wayfinding signage plans or implementation of an existing plan for production and/or installation.
- Other related items fostering greater visitor travel to Union County.



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Projects including the following are not eligible for grant funding:

- Projects involving modifications to eligible historic structures or items.
- Projects unable to be completed within the allowable timeframe (calendar year).
- Projects where funding could be considered a regular cost of doing business.

Matching Requirements:

- Grant applicants are required to demonstrate a total match of 50%, with minimum cash match of 35%. Matching must be clearly described in the application. In-kind matches are not applied toward the cash match requirement. Cash matches are required minimums; larger cash matches may be demonstrated. Cash matches exceeding the minimum requirement may make the project application more competitive during the evaluation process. In-kind matches higher than the minimum requirement may not make the project application more competitive.

Partial Funding:

- The number of grant applications received may exceed the amount of available funding, which makes grant awards extremely competitive. In some instances, only partial funding may be recommended for the project/application. Applicants are asked to identify, in advance, how a project would be modified if the full amount is not awarded.

Multiple Grant Applications:

- More than one application per entity may be submitted; however, each project must be different and independent of one another. Overlap should clearly be defined, including how they will be maintained separately if funded.

Evaluation:

- In conjunction with the Chamber's Executive Director, the UCTPAC will review grant applications. The Executive Director will review and recommend top-ranking applications to the UCTPAC who will make the final decision. Any members of the Chamber or UCTPAC associated with a grant applicant will abstain from all participation in the process to include discussions, evaluations, scoring, and voting. The "Selection Criteria Summary" is attached to demonstrate how applications will be scored.

Qualifications/Delinquency:

- If your organization has previously been awarded a grant and was delinquent in meeting any of the requirements of the award, your organization is not eligible to apply for another award until all reporting requirements are brought current and three (3) application cycles have passed. If your organization has not maintained compliance with the agreements, you are not eligible to apply for awards under this program for three (3) application cycles.

Grant Budget Forms:

- Each applicant will submit proposed budget forms for their event and a detailed marketing plan. The budgets should encompass all aspects of the event and include the value of any non-cash (in-kind) or barter contributions. Value all volunteer labor hours at the rate of \$25.40¹ per hour as a non-cash (in-kind) contribution. Those organizations requesting more than \$1,000 must submit budget-to-actual financials for the project for the previous two years.

Demonstration of Community Support:

- Each applicant is required to submit three (3) letters of support/endorsements from community partners, stakeholders, or supporters not related to the organization or its primary management team (board members, event planners, etc.). Each letter should be unique and specifically address why the writer believes the project will benefit the community.

¹ <https://independentsector.org/value-of-volunteer-time-2021/>



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Applications should address the following selection of Criteria Summary:

- Does the application clearly demonstrate overnight stays as a result of the project? (i.e., multi-day events, partnerships with lodging properties)?
- Does the applicant clearly demonstrate how this project will increase out-of-county visitors?
 - o Does the applicant have reliable, accurate methods for tracking attendance?
- Does the project clearly demonstrate alignment with current marketing research (i.e., target demographics, seasons, etc.)?
- Does the applicant demonstrate they have the ability to complete the project?
- What is the management and/or administration structure in place to execute this project?
- Does the applicant clearly demonstrate how the project will leverage funding and demonstrate ability to manage these funds?
- Does the application clearly identify the amounts and sources of both cash and in-kind support?
- Is there a strong evaluation method with measurable objectives?
- Does the applicant demonstrate partnerships with lodging properties to effectively track overnight stays?
- For recurring events/projects:
 - o Did the event/project satisfactorily demonstrate and support growth through post-event reporting?
 - o Does the applicant clearly demonstrate generating future funding sources for marketing the project/event for more a more self-sufficient event/project (i.e., not needing TRT grant funds)?
 - o Did the applicant previous post-event reporting requirements?
- Is the application complete, thorough, and effectively address all criteria?

All applications and subsequent follow-up reports must be complete, professional, accurate, and typed. Handwritten applications and follow-up reports will not be accepted. Applications must demonstrate the organizational capacity and readiness by providing comprehensive marketing and project budgets and complete project plans.

Using a separate document, please complete the application packet addressing the following. Only typed, clear and concise, completed applications will be considered.

- Item 1 should be the project application cover page;
- Items 2-5 should be project narratives;
- Item 6 should use the attached Excel file for the project budget and associated marketing budget.

All projects awarded with TRT Grant funds are required to submit a follow-up report within 60 days of project completion. Any funds awarded and not used for eligible purposes must be returned with the required report. Follow-Up Reports are to be complete, typed, and provide a detailed narrative of grant fund usage, impact to Union County Tourism, and include a final budget with records of all invoices for eligible expenses. Reports should also include a description of how the Tourism Grant Funding was acknowledged during the project advertising, including photos, website inclusion, press releases, etc. Failure to submit the necessary follow-up report and supporting documentation, or who do not return funds not used or used for ineligible purposes are ineligible to receive TRT grant funding from the Chamber for a minimum of three consecutive grant cycles.

In the event internal or external factors cause an applicant to significantly shift the scope or nature of the event/project from the original application, Applicants must seek prior approval and authorization from the Executive Director for this change, prior to using funds. An addended application may be requested with plan and budget modifications outlined.

If the scope of the project changes significantly during the planning phase due to internal or external forces (i.e., an international pandemic, turnover in project organizers, etc.) after grant awards are made, an updated project plan must be submitted to the Chamber Director for review and approval. All or part of the originally awarded grant may be subject to repayment, depending on the scope of the updated project plan.

Completed applications with all supporting materials are due by 5:00 p.m. on March 15 to Director@VisitUnionCounty.org.



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TRT Grant Application

1. Application

Title of Project:

Funds Requested:

Organization:

Contact Name:

Phone:

Email:

Mailing Address:

TRT Grant or Seed Grant: TRT Grant Seed Funding

2. Project Description

Provide a detailed description of the project and activities, including planning and activation timeline.
Note: projects must be completed within 12-24 months of contract signature.

Provide a detailed description of use of grant funds, including a full project budget (see item 6 below).
For an infrastructure project, describe how ongoing maintenance will be addressed and funded.

3. Project Goals

How many out-of-county visitors do you expect to attract for this project? How will you track the ratio of out-of-county to local attendees?

How do you plan to extend the out-of-county visitors' lengths of stays? How will you encourage early arrive and late departure? How will you track this?

Which lodging partners will you coordinate with to review increased hotel stays and/or partnerships for promotion? (Indicate "N/A" if none, and reasoning.)

4. Qualifications of Applicant

Describe your organization, including staff/management team and key volunteers. How are these individuals qualified to lead the project?

Describe your organization's experience in operating past or similar projects.

5. Project Plan

How will you give credit to Union County Tourism for its support in your project?

Who is the target market? (Demographic including age, group size, region)

What is your strategy for reaching the target market? (For infrastructure projects, marketing components are still expected.)

Describe specifically how you will market the project to your target audience?

How will you measure success (specifically define metrics and performance indicators of success)?

Describe in-kind, barter, volunteer labor or discounted services expected in support of this project (volunteer labor hours valued at \$25.40/hr. for purposes of the budget form).

List potential sponsors and partners and how they contribute to the project.

If this is a regular recurring event or ongoing project, identify how you plan to use this funding to elevate the project to more than it has been in the past and future funding sources *not* reliant on this grant.

Outline the comprehensive marketing plan and advertising strategies for the project.

6. Project Budget & Marketing Budget: Use the Project Budget Excel Sheets and attach the Project Budget and Marketing Budget.