

2024 TOURISM

# RECOVERY GRANT PROGRAM

GUIDELINES





The 2024 Recovery Grant program is funded and administered by Explore Minnesota for the purpose of providing funds to individual and collaborative, non-profit Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) and other organizations for the purpose of tourism marketing and promotion for the economic benefit of their communities.

## OPEN SOLICITATION PERIOD

Grant applications will be accepted during the Open Solicitation Period beginning July 12, 2023, at 9 a.m. CST and will continue until all funds are awarded or Dec. 1, 2023.

## ELIGIBILITY

- » Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs)
  - Legally organized, nonprofit (501c6 or 501c3) Minnesota organizations whose primary purpose is to market their community or area for tourism or has been appointed this authority by the area(s) they represent. Examples of eligible organizations include, but are not limited to, convention and visitor bureaus, chambers of commerce and resort associations.
- » Statewide Tourism Associations
  - Associations whose primary purpose is to market tourism on behalf of their members.
- » Collaborative Initiatives
  - Groups consisting of three (3) or more primary tourism marketing organizations, as defined above.
  - **Grant award will be based on the collaborative initiative budget, NOT the fiscal agent's budget.**

A maximum of one (1) grant award will be given per city, community or promotional area.

If there are multiple entities within a single destination applying for this grant, the first complete application will receive the award and all applications for the same or overlapping geographical area will be declined.

Grants will be awarded based on application review and acceptance in order they are received in the electronic queue.

## BORDER COMMUNITIES

Qualifying border communities with a Minnesota Tax ID number may apply but must utilize funds to market or support their Minnesota product or event.

## AWARD LEVELS

Organizations are not required to request the maximum award provided below.

Organization Total Budget	Max Award Amount
\$99,999 or less	Up to \$5,000
\$100,000 to \$499,999	Up to \$10,000
\$500,000 to \$999,999	Up to \$15,000
\$1,000,000 to \$4,999,999	Up to \$20,000
\$5,000,000 and higher	Up to \$40,000

A complete report of grantees and award amounts, including any canceled or returned grant funds will be posted on the Explore Minnesota Tourism Industry website. All grantee information is public data per Minn. Stat. §13.599.

## MATCH DOLLARS

There are no matching funds required to receive a grant award.

## GEOGRAPHICAL PLACEMENT OF ADVERTISING

There are no geographical limitations on the radius or proximity of advertising placement, as well as no in-state or out-of-state advertising requirement.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Program **guidelines** and **application** will be available beginning **June 26, 2023**, and can be found on the [Minnesota Tourism Industry Website](#).

Applications will be accepted electronically, beginning at **9 a.m. CST on July 12, 2023**, via email only to [emtgrant@state.mn.us](mailto:emtgrant@state.mn.us). PLEASE NOTE: This mailbox is for applications and reconciliation only and is not monitored for questions.

Applications that do not include signature, attach a Project Summary Worksheet and Budget Worksheet or fail to provide complete or adequate responses will be considered incomplete at the discretion of Explore Minnesota grants review team. If an application fails to meet minimum requirements, the applicant will be notified via email.

Rejected applications may be resubmitted and will be reviewed in the order received, until all funds have been awarded.

Please direct questions regarding the program to your [regional representative](#).

## ELECTRONIC QUEUE

Applications received during the Open Solicitation Period will be electronically time and date stamped and will determine the applicant's place in the electronic queue. Applicant will receive an automatically generated email response indicating that their application has been received. This email does not imply the application is receiving a grant award.

[Emtgrant@state.mn.us](mailto:emtgrant@state.mn.us) is an electronic mailbox created and hosted by the State of Minnesota (MNIT), with the sole purpose of receiving and reconciling grants. The time and date stamp is electronically generated and cannot be changed or manipulated. Replies from this mailbox will be automatically generated. Explore Minnesota is not responsible for any electronic outages or faults outside of its control.

## NOTIFICATION OF AWARD

Explore Minnesota will review applications in the order received and will notify the applicant of acceptance or rejection, contingent amount of grant award and next steps in the grant contracting process via email. Upon acceptance of the application, a grant contract will be created and sent to the grantee, indicating the award amount. The grant award is not guaranteed until the contract has been fully executed and signed by the grantee representative and by Explore Minnesota.

## GRANT CONTRACT

All grant awards are contingent until there is a fully executed grant contract between the applicant and Explore Minnesota. A fully executed contract does not guarantee repayment of expenses. Requirements of the grant contract must be completed by **June 30, 2024**, to be eligible for reimbursement under this program. Execution of a grant contract with Explore Minnesota signifies the applicant's acceptance of the terms of the contract and the program guidelines.

## PROGRESS REPORT

Progress reports are due **March 15, 2024**.

## RECONCILIATION & REIMBURSEMENT

Reconciliation documentation and reimbursement request can be submitted at any time during the program cycle, but no later than **Aug. 15, 2024**.

A fully reconciled grant is one in which: the grantee has submitted all the necessary documentation required for reimbursement; documents are approved, payment has been determined. Notification will be made via email to the primary contact listed on grant reconciliation materials.

Please contact your regional representative at any time if you have questions about grant status.

## ELIGIBLE MARKETING

- » **General Consumer Marketing:** Projects targeted to the individual consumer.
- » **Travel Trade, Meetings & Conventions and Sports:** Projects with primary distribution to tour operators, tour planners and/or travel agents, advertising in meeting & convention media, and targeted sports media. Marketing and/or sales activities to secure or promote group business, such as meetings, conventions or sporting events.
- » **Marketing Public Events**
- » **Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion Marketing and Programming**

## ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

### » **Consumer, Travel Trade, Meetings and Conventions and Sports Advertising:**

- Print advertising.
- Digital advertising.
- Television and video advertising.
- Radio and audio streaming advertising.
- Out-of-home and billboard advertising.
- Paid social media advertising.
- Google AdWords and search engine marketing.

### » **Trade Shows**

- Registration fees.
- Booth space rental.
- Utilities, furniture rental, carpet, and cleanup costs.
- Shipping of materials or display elements to the show site.

## ELIGIBLE SERVICES CONTRACTED THROUGH A THIRD-PARTY VENDOR

### » **Website Development and Enhancement**

- Content creation.
- Accessibility.
- Search Engine Optimization.

### » **Social Media Management**

### » **Fulfillment pieces such as visitor guides, maps and brochures.**

- Development/creation.
- Production, printing, digitizing.
- Distribution.

*To be eligible, printed fulfillment pieces MUST also be produced in a digitally accessible format which allows for electronic screen readers - software programs that read aloud most text on the screen of a computer or mobile device.*

### » **Media Production**

- Media production, ad creation, graphic design services.
- Production of photo and video assets.

*Assets must be shared with Explore Minnesota and licensed for our use. Contact your industry relations representative with questions.*

*Include the following in contracts with photographers and videographers regarding Explore Minnesota Usage Rights:*

- Contractor grants Explore Minnesota and its partners unlimited editorial and commercial use in perpetuity of all assets provided under this agreement, including but not limited to websites, emails and print publications.
- Contractor grants Explore Minnesota the right to edit submitted materials to fit size, space and other requirements of different mediums, as determined by Explore Minnesota.
- Contractor shall retain copyright and self-promotional rights.
- Contractor retains the right to reproduce, in whole or in part, in every manner or form, and circulate, publish, distribute, show, play or otherwise display the photos provided under this Agreement.
- Explore Minnesota may use Contractor's name and likeness in any of the above.

» **Direct Mail**

- Production.
- Printing.
- Mailing.

» **Public Relations Services**

- Identification of media trends, consumer interests, target markets/media outlets.
- Editorial calendar development and planning.
- Crafting and distribution of news releases and wire releases.
- Development of long- and short-lead media pitches.

## **ELIGIBLE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION MARKETING AND PROGRAMMING**

- » Targeted marketing, tactics and services.
- » Destination development specifically for inclusion improvements.
- » Audit of marketing and advertising materials, destinations or websites.
- » Language translation services.
- » Focus groups facilitated through a third-party vendor.
- » Professional consultants/services (e.g., diversity/accessibility marketing plan development, diversity/accessibility stakeholder communications and outreach planning, cultural sensitivity training, accessibility training, or other diversity, inclusion and equity training or planning programs).

## **MARKETING PUBLIC EVENTS**

Any new or existing, one-time or recurring event which is open to the general public. Eligible events are organized for the purpose of attracting visitors to the community, generating revenue for the non-profit organizer, elevating awareness of the community and/or for entertainment purposes. Examples of eligible event types include:

» **Eligible Event Types**

- Entertainment
- Exhibitions
- Fairs
- Festivals
- Leisure events
- Meetings and conventions
- Ongoing performance series
- Sporting competitions
- Tradeshows and Expositions

» **Ineligible Event Types**

- Award Ceremonies and Banquets
- Fundraisers and Benefits
- Political Events

## EXPLORE MINNESOTA PROGRAMS

### » Eligible Programs

- Advertising in Explore Minnesota print publications
- Consumer lead generation program on exploreminnesota.com
- Advertising on exploreminnesota.com
- Advertising in Explore Minnesota e-newsletters
- Explore Minnesota Brochure Distribution Programs

### » Ineligible Programs

- Explore Minnesota Co-op advertising
- Explore Minnesota Partnerships
- Explore Minnesota Events including the Annual Tourism Conference and Governor's Opener Events

Explore Minnesota reserves the rights to deny grant funding for Ads or content that appear on a political or unsavory website or publication, determined at the discretion of Explore Minnesota.

If you have questions regarding eligible or ineligible expenses, please contact your [regional representative](#).

## EXPLORE MINNESOTA COBRANDING REQUIREMENTS

**ALL GRANTEES ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE A CURRENT [EXPLORE MINNESOTA LOGO](#) WITH A LINK TO [EXPLOREMINNESOTA.COM](#) ON THE HOMEPAGE OF THEIR WEBSITE.**

It is recommended that the grantee place a current Explore Minnesota logo with a link to [exploreminnesota.com](#) in the footer of their website.

Current Explore Minnesota logos are available in the [Explore Minnesota Brandfolder](#).

## ADVERTISING

A current Explore Minnesota logo must be used in all grant projects listed below and the size of the logo must be legible and proportionate to the size of the ad.

- » Print advertising.
- » Digital ads.
  - Mobile Ads sized 320px x 50px and Native Advertising campaigns where the Explore Minnesota logo cannot be accommodated must link to a landing page where the Explore Minnesota logo is present.
- » Television and video.
- » Out-of-home and billboards.
- » Front cover on fulfillment pieces such as visitor guides, maps or brochures.
- » Direct mail.
- » Radio and audio streaming.
  - Scripts must mention Explore Minnesota in the voiceover.
- » Social Media
  - Organic social posts administered by a third-party vendor and paid social ads require the inclusion of the Explore Minnesota handle in the post or ad copy/text

Twitter @exploreminn

Facebook @exploreminnesota

Instagram @exploreminnesota

Pinterest @exploreminn

TikTok @exploreminnesota

## **APPLICATION PERIOD**

Grant funding is available through **Dec. 1, 2023**. Eligible grant expenses must incur on or after the date the State obtains all required contract signatures under Minn. Stat. §16C.05, Subd. 2.

## **PUBLIC DATA**

Per Minn. Stat. §13.599: Names and addresses of grant applicants will be public data once proposal responses are opened. All remaining data in proposal responses (except trade secret data as defined and classified in Minn. Stat. §13.37) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed (for the purposes of this grant, when all grant agreements have been fully executed).

All data created or maintained by Explore Minnesota as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret data as defined and classified in Minn. Stat. §13.37) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed (for the purposes of this grant, when all grant agreements have been fully executed).

## **RECORDS RETENTION & AUDITS**

Per Minn. Stat. §16B.98 Subdivision 8, the grantee's books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant or transaction are subject to examination by the granting agency and either the legislative auditor or the state auditor, as appropriate. This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant agreement end date, receipt, and approval of all final reports, or the required period to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.



Explore Minnesota  
1217th Place East, Suite 360  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101, USA  
[exploreminnesota.com/industry](https://www.exploreminnesota.com/industry)