

2023 TOURISM
GRANT PROGRAM
GUIDELINES



2023 TOURISM MARKETING GRANT PURPOSE

The 2023 Tourism Marketing Grant Program provides matching funds to individual and collaborative, non-profit Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) and other organizations for the purpose of marketing and promotion of travel for the economic benefit of their communities. This program will work in tandem with Explore Minnesota's primary tourism marketing initiatives while aligning with the agency's current strategic objectives.

ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS

- 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.
- Tribal Governments
- Statewide Tourism Associations
 - » Associations whose primary purpose is to market tourism on behalf of their members.
- Collaborative Initiatives
 - » Groups consisting of five (5) or more primary tourism marketing organizations, as defined above.

BORDER COMMUNITIES

Qualifying border communities with a Minnesota Tax ID number may apply. Use of grant funds is limited to support of their Minnesota products or events only.

AWARD LEVELS

Eligible organizations may apply for one award in each of the following categories: **1) as a single organization/entity; 2) as part of a collaborative (5 or more organizations)** and receive up to the following maximum amounts for the purposes stated:

Up to \$5,000

- Exclusively in-state targeted general consumer marketing, tactics and services.

Up to \$10,000

- Exclusively out-of-state targeted general consumer marketing, tactics and services.

Up to \$20,000 for targeted marketing in the following categories:

- Marketing of events (in-state or out-of-state).
- Meetings, conventions, sports and groups marketing (in-state or out-of-state).
- Diversity and Inclusion and/or Accessibility:
 - » Targeted marketing, tactics and services (in-state or out-of-state).
 - » Destination development specifically for inclusion improvements.
 - » Audit of marketing and advertising materials, destinations or websites.
 - » Language translation services.
 - » Digitizing visitor guides or other materials for the purpose of digital distribution; compliant with e-readers.
 - » Focus groups facilitated through a third-party vendor.
 - » Professional consultants/services (i.e. 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).

MATCH DOLLARS

There is a 1:1 cash match requirement for all grants.

Match Ratio	Total Grant All Projects Cost	Organizational Match	Grant Reimbursement
1:1	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
	\$40,000	\$20,000	\$20,000

GEOGRAPHIC PLACEMENT OF MARKETING

As outlined in Award Levels, applicants must identify geographic targets.

ELIGIBLE MARKETING TACTICS AND SERVICES

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.

Services contracted through a third-party vendor

- Website development and enhancement, including:
 - » Content creation.
 - » Accessibility.
 - » Search Engine Optimization.
- Media production, ad creation, graphic design services.
- Direct mail campaigns, production, printing; mailing.
- 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.
- Fulfillment pieces such as visitor guides, maps and brochures. **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.**
 - » Development/creation.
 - » Production, printing, digitizing.
 - » Distribution.
- Social Media Management.
- Public relations services provided by a vendor, including:
 - » 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.

Trade Shows

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

Explore Minnesota Eligible Programs

- Advertising in Explore Minnesota print publications.
- Consumer lead generation program on exploreminnesota.com.
- Banner ads on exploreminnesota.com.
- Advertising in Explore Minnesota e-newsletters.

If there are questions about the eligibility of a campaign, please contact your [industry relations representative](#).

EXPLORE MINNESOTA LOGO AND TAGGING 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 where the Explore Minnesota logo cannot be accommodated must link to a landing page where the Explore Minnesota logo is present.
 - » Native campaigns must include #OnlyinMN in the ad headline or ad copy if the Explore Minnesota logo cannot be accommodated on the ad. Logo on the article or landing page does not suffice.
- Television and video.
- Out-of-home and billboards.
- Fulfillment pieces such as the **cover** of visitor guides, maps or brochures.
- Direct mail.
- Radio and audio streaming.
 - » Scripts must mention Explore Minnesota in the voiceover.

Social Media

- Organic Social Media
 - » Posts administered by a third-party vendor require use of the #OnlyinMN hashtag or the inclusion of the Explore Minnesota handle (Twitter [@exploreminn](#), Facebook [@exploreminnesota](#), Instagram [@exploreminnesota](#) and Pinterest [@exploreminn](#)).
- Paid Social Media
 - » Paid social media on Facebook and Instagram requires use of Facebook's branded content tool. For help, visit [Facebook's Business Help Center](#).
 - » Paid social media on Twitter requires use of the #OnlyinMN hashtag and the inclusion of the Explore Minnesota Twitter handle [@exploreminn](#).

OPEN SOLICITATION PERIOD

ALL CURRENT GRANTS WITH EXPLORE MINNESOTA MUST BE FULLY RECONCILED BEFORE APPLICATION WILL BE REVIEWED.

A fully reconciled grant is one in which: the grantee has submitted all of the necessary documentation required for reimbursement; documents are approved and payment has been determined; and, regional representative has notified grantee that their current grant is now satisfied/closed. Notification will be made to 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.

Grant applications will be accepted beginning at **9 a.m. Dec. 1, 2022**.

Program funds will be available through **March 31, 2023, at 4 p.m. CST or until all funds are exhausted.**

APPLICATION PROCESS

ALL CURRENT GRANTS WITH EXPLORE MINNESOTA MUST BE FULLY RECONCILED BEFORE APPLICATION WILL BE REVIEWED.

A fully reconciled grant is one in which: the grantee has submitted all of the necessary documentation required for reimbursement; documents are approved and payment has been determined; and, regional representative has notified grantee that their current grant is now satisfied/closed. Notification will be made to 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.

Applicant's grant performance from the last grant cycle will be considered in determining eligibility and award levels. For more information, please refer to [MPG22 Grant Guidelines](#).

Applications, including the required Project Summary and Budget Worksheet, can be found on the [industry website](#).

Applications will be accepted electronically via emtgrant@state.mn.us only. 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.

Applicants will receive an automated response when the application has been received via email. This email does not imply the applicant will receive a grant award; it is only an automated notification that the application has been received.

If an application fails to meet minimum requirements at the discretion of the Explore Minnesota grants review team, the applicant will be notified via email.

Rejected applications, including applications with missing Vendor/Supplier ID information, may be resubmitted, and will be reviewed in the order received, until all funds have been awarded.

Application requirements include:

1. All of the applicant's Explore Minnesota current and/or outstanding grants must be reconciled.
 - A fully reconciled grant is one in which: the grantee has submitted all of the necessary documentation required for reimbursement; documents are approved and payment has been determined; and, regional representative has notified grantee that their current grant is now satisfied/closed. Notification will be made to 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.
2. Completed application including:
 - Applicant's Minnesota Vendor/Supplier ID number and
 - EFT/ACH direct deposit information in the State of Minnesota vendor system (SWIFT).
3. Hand-signed signature, no scripted or font signatures allowed.
4. Project summary.
5. Budget worksheet.

It is the applicant's responsibility to confirm mailing address and direct deposit bank account information is accurate with SWIFT Vendor Resources.

Inaccurate banking information with Vendor Resources will result in funding payment delays.

For help with your Supplier/Vendor ID or banking information, please contact Vendor Resources.

Vendor Resources	Website or email address	Phone
SWIFT Vendor Resources	mn.gov/mmb/accounting/swift/vendor-resources/	
EFT/ACH Helpline	efthelpline.mmb@state.mn.us	651-201-8106
Vendor Assistance	vendor.mmbefax@state.mn.us	651-201-8100

ELECTRONIC QUEUE

The email, emtgrant@state.mn.us, is an electronic mailbox created and hosted by the State of Minnesota for the purpose of receiving Tourism Grant Program applications. The time and date stamps are 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.

This mailbox is for application submissions only and is NOT monitored for questions. Please direct all questions to your [industry relations representative](#) or via questions.exploreminnesota@state.mn.us.

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 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 AND GRANT PROJECTS CANNOT BEGIN UNTIL ALL SIGNATURES ARE OBTAINED AND A FULLY EXECUTED CONTRACT IS ISSUED 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 fully completed by **June 30, 2023**, 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

In March of 2023, grantees will receive an email from their industry relations representative requesting a Progress Report on the status of their grant. Progress Reports must be submitted by **March 31, 2023**, or the grantee's contract may be subject to cancellation.

AMENDMENTS OR CANCELLATIONS

Grantees with funding canceled or unused **after March 31, 2023**, are subject to future reductions as outlined below. The penalty for future funding will equal the percentage of unspent funds in this grant cycle. Organizations who are penalized will be restored to maximum award amount following a cycle where the grant funds are all consumed.

- Example 1: If \$10,000 is requested but only \$9,000 is used, the grantee will be eligible for up to \$9,000 in the next grant cycle.
- Example 2: If \$10,000 is requested and \$0 is used, the grantee will not be eligible for funds from the next grant cycle.

RECONCILIATION AND REIMBURSEMENT

The grantee will receive reconciliation and reimbursement information with their executed contract. The grantee's reconciliation documentation and reimbursement request can be submitted at any time during the program cycle, but no later than **Aug. 15, 2023**.

A fully reconciled grant is one in which: the grantee has submitted all of the necessary documentation required for reimbursement; documents are approved and payment has been determined; and, regional representative has notified grantee that their current grant is now satisfied/closed. Notification will be made to 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.

GRANT PERIOD

Eligible grant expenses must incur on or after **Jan. 3, 2023**, or the date the State obtains all required contract signatures under Minn. Stat. §16C.05, Subd. 2, whichever is later. Encumbered grant funding is available through **June 30, 2023**, for all eligible grant expenses.

PUBLIC DATA

Per Minn. Stat. §13.599:

1. Names and addresses of grant applicants will be public data once proposal responses are opened.
2. 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).
3. 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.

RECORDS RETENTION AND 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. If you have any questions about whether your project expenses qualify for this grant program, please contact your [industry relations representative](#) before incurring expenses.

INDUSTRY RELATIONS CONTACTS

Central and Northwest Regions

Nicole Lalum | 218-316-3330 | nicole.lalum@state.mn.us

Metro Region

Michael Hernandez | 651-757-1876 | michael.hernandez@state.mn.us

Northeast Region

Derek Ramthun | 612-231-3889 | derek.ramthun@state.mn.us

Southern Region

Lisa Havelka | 507-389-2683 | lisa.havelka@state.mn.us

Support

Dawn Bushman | 218-316-3333 | dawn.bushman@state.mn.us

Senior Manager Industry Relations

Beth Helle | 651-757-1872 | beth.helle@state.mn.us



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