

# 2023-2024 TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The City of Seaside Visitors Bureau invites funding requests from businesses and organizations that produce tourism projects, programs or events designed to increase overnight visits to the area, especially in the shoulder and winter months.

Up to \$25,000 is anticipated to be available for tourism development in Seaside through this program in fiscal year 2023-2024. Should they occur in 2023, an additional \$25,000 has been earmarked toward the annual 4th of July fireworks celebration, which is a signature event that city leaders have historically seen as a vital economic driver for Seaside.

All program funds are generated from transient room tax (TRT) collected from overnight lodging facilities in Seaside, and are administrated by the Director of Tourism Marketing, who is the fiscal administrator of these funds on behalf of the City with the assistance of the Tourism Advisory Committee. For this round, we are accepting applications for projects or events to be completed between July 1, 2023 and December 31, 2024. See below for details on timing and requirements.

## WHO MAY APPLY

Non-profit organizations and businesses with a project or event that promotes local tourism attractions and has a strong potential to create overnight stays for commercial lodging properties in Seaside are eligible to apply.

## GRANT PROGRAM GOALS & RESTRICTIONS

The goal of this program is to coordinate attraction and event development needed to ensure that Seaside can exceed visitor expectations as a destination and derive the greatest possible economic impact from visitor spending. Priority will be given to projects and events that occur during the shoulder seasons and winter months with a strong potential of generating local room nights. No more than \$3,000 (excluding the annual fireworks program, outline above) will be awarded to events or projects happening between May 27 and September 4.

In most cases, grant funds are intended to be “seed money” or start-up funds with an upper limit of \$5,000 awarded to each individual project and carrying a five-year limit on receiving funds. Based on the scope of the project and the scale of the non-profit, grant funds may be awarded beyond the five years to projects that generate



consistent overnight stays and remarkable experiences for visitors. All applicants must include a written financial plan that outlines income sources such as vendors, sponsors, admission, parking, etc.

Parties may apply for multiple grants in a given cycle. In such cases, however, applicants must identify their priority project or projects accounting for up to \$5,000 in requested funding. Competing projects will be considered before non-priority funding requests from parties making multiple applications.

These funds cannot be used as the match for any other City of Seaside funding program; however, it is strongly encouraged to use the funds as leverage with non-City of Seaside funds whenever possible.

The City of Seaside Visitors Bureau funds an extensive marketing program to promote the entire city. This overall destination-marketing plan is in addition to the projects funded under the grant program. Applications that duplicate parts of our destination-marketing program will not be funded.

## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The City of Seaside Visitors Bureau reserves a portion of the funds collected from the Transient Room Tax (TRT) to partner in the delivery of local visitor services and development of tourism attractions, activities and events through the implementation of this grant program. Successful applications will promote the local destination to potential visitors with an emphasis on creating (or the strong potential for creating in the future) overnight stays in commercial lodging facilities, especially in the shoulder and winter months. The level of funding from the grant program is intended to be start-up funds helping to implement projects and not as the sole source of funding received for projects. This grant program may not be used as a match for other City of Seaside Awards.

It is the Visitors Bureau's intention that this annual grant program remain in place with funding from room tax. However, we may evaluate and adjust as necessary.

## **GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS**

In order to be considered for grant funds from the City of Seaside Visitors Bureau:

**A complete application must be submitted by Friday, May 5, 2023** for events completed between July 1, 2023 and December 31, 2024. Application forms are available at [SeasideOR.com/tourism-grant-program](https://SeasideOR.com/tourism-grant-program). If you have multiple projects or events, you will need to submit separate applications (unless one event has multiple dates over the course of the fiscal year). Supporting documents should be sent as an attachment to the Director of Tourism Marketing at [jheineman@cityofseaside.us](mailto:jheineman@cityofseaside.us).

All applicants will be notified of their funding decisions no later than June 1, 2023.

Approved funding will be disbursed no later than July 31, 2023.

NOTE: Funded projects that will occur between July 1, 2024 and December 31, 2024, will receive 50% of grant funding by July 31, 2023 and the remaining 50% by May 31, 2024. A mid-term status report MUST be received by May 1, 2024 in order to receive the final 50% of funding. Failure to submit report by deadline will mean forfeiture of final funds and trigger a return of prior funds.

Reports (either mid-term or final) are to be submitted to the Director of Tourism Marketing on December 15 and May 1 in each year funding is received. Release of funding for future years is dependent on receiving these reports.

### **GRANT PROJECTS**

Below is a sample list of grant projects. Actual projects are not limited to only what is listed below. All projects must generate overnight stays in Seaside or have the potential to generate overnight stays.

- Events, festivals or activities that accentuate and/or complement Seaside.
- Development assistance to non-profit or government-owned visitor attractions.
- Development projects by “for profit” businesses and organizations may be considered, but not for brick-and-mortar types of projects or any programs that duplicate City marketing efforts.

### **PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS**

All funded projects involving promotional materials and websites must be reviewed by the Director of Tourism Marketing at the draft stage and will need to include the Visitors Bureau’s web address and a link to seasideOR.com, where possible.

All grant support should be referenced as:

*A portion of this project was made possible through a grant from the City of Seaside Tourism Advisory Committee, funded by room tax dollars.*

**Note:** Grant-support statements must mirror exactly the above in all instances. This review process and the statements and links are required.

### **ACTIVITIES NOT ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING**

The following is a partial list of activities that are not eligible for consideration.

- \* Grant funds to cover general administrative costs.
- \* Grant funds to cover operational expenses.
- \* Commercial or for-profit orgs seeking funds for capital improvements or projects.
- \* Projects promoting tourism outside the Seaside area.

- \* Applicants who did not complete the required reports in previous year.
- \* Award requests for more than \$5,000.00 (or \$3,000 in the high tourism season.).
- \* Used as a match for other City of Seaside funding awards.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

Proposals received in approved form by May 5, 2023 will be reviewed by the Tourism Advisory Committee at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

Organizations will be notified of the status of their funding request no later than Thursday, June 1, 2023. The Tourism Advisory Committee reserves the right to not award promotion funds. In such instances, funds not awarded will be returned to the general advertising budget of the City of Seaside Visitors Bureau. The Committee also reserves the right to award grants to projects that have received funds for more than five years if monies are warranted and will result in overnight room stays in the city of Seaside.

## **REQUIRED REPORTING PROCESS**

Applicants that are awarded grant funding must submit reports to the Director of Tourism Marketing detailing activity, spending and results on Dec. 15 and, if applicable, on May 1 in each year funding is received. If the awarded grant project has not yet occurred on either of those dates, a mid-term status report is due. If the grant project has occurred, a final report is due to close out the grant. Release of funding for future grant requests is dependent on receiving these reports on time.

## **UNUSED FUNDS**

On the occasion that an event or project occurred but awarded funds remain and were not completely used, it is at the discretion of the Director of Tourism Marketing and the Tourism Advisory Committee to request the funds be returned to the City of Seaside Visitors Bureau department or allocated to be used for the following year's project, if applicable.

## **RECORD KEEPING**

It is requested that all grantees maintain records for the minimum required amount of time set forth by the IRS including receipts and make the records available to the City of Seaside upon request for audit purposes.

## **PERMITTING AND LICENSING**

The award of grant money through this program does not supersede the need for proper permitting and licensing with the City of Seaside, Oregon State Parks and / or other governing agents. Proof of all necessary permits and licenses is required before grant funds can be dispersed.

*(GUIDELINES ADOPTED / FEB 2022)*