

#ONLYINMN



2019 GRANT GUIDELINES

For Tourism Marketing



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2019 EXPLORE MINNESOTA GRANT GUIDELINES

Grants are designed to support the mission and goals of Explore Minnesota:

MISSION: Promote and facilitate increased travel to and within the state of Minnesota.

GOALS:

- Increase the number of resident and nonresident travelers to our state.
- Grow travel-related sales and employment in Minnesota.
- Generate increased sales tax revenue from travel-related industries.
- Develop industry partnerships to expand marketing reach.

GRANT PROJECTS

SPECIAL GRANTS: Marketing projects that have statewide impact and measurable outcomes (Pg. 11)

MARKETING & RESEARCH GRANTS: These grants fall into the following categories

- Advertising - Consumer, Travel Trade, Meetings & Sports (Page 8)
- Public Relations (Page 9)
- Trade Shows (Page 10)
- Direct Mail (Page 8)
- Research Projects (Page 9)

FUNDING LIMITS

- A maximum of \$7,000 is available through this grant program.
- A maximum of \$7,000 is also available for a multi-community grant and is considered separate from each individual grantee's maximum funding. Organizations are allowed to participate in only one multi-community grant.
- Final funding for all grants is dependent upon the number of requests received and amount of funding available.

ELIGIBILITY

ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS:

A private, non-profit Minnesota organization whose primary purpose is to promote its community or area as a tourism destination and/or has the promotion of its community or area as a tourism destination as a major part of its work, e.g.:

- Convention & Visitors Bureaus
- Tourism Bureaus
- Visitors Bureaus
- Chambers of Commerce
- Civic and Commerce Associations
- Other similar organizations dedicated specifically to the marketing of tourism

OTHER ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS:

- A non-profit statewide Minnesota organization representing one or more segments of the tourism industry.
- A scenic byway organization that is a non-profit Minnesota organization that includes as part of its work plan the promotion of the scenic byway corridor as a tourism destination.
- Native American tribes are eligible for projects focusing on Native American cultural heritage tourism.

If more than one eligible organization applies for the same community or area, requestors must work out which organization will be eligible for funding. There can be only one eligible organization for any community or area.

MULTI-COMMUNITY GRANTS:

Multi-community grants include three or more eligible organizations:

- One eligible organization submits the application on behalf of the other organizations, listing the other organizations and the matching grant contribution from each organization.
- Participating organizations must contribute to the match in an equitable manner. No one party to a multi-community grant may contribute more than 50% of the matching grant contribution.
- The applicant organization is responsible for executing the grant contract.
- The match requirement ratio for the entire grant will be based on the budget of the organization with the largest total budget.

MAXIMUM NUMBER OF GRANTS PER ORGANIZATION:

The maximum number of grants under this program awarded to any eligible organization is two. If an organization is party to two grants, one must be a multi-community grant.

INELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS:

Neither individual companies, for profit or otherwise, nor local units of government are eligible.

REQUIREMENTS

EXPLORE MINNESOTA LOGO REQUIREMENTS:

A current Explore Minnesota logo must be used in all grant projects. All grantees are required to add a current Explore Minnesota logo with a link to exploreminnesota.com on the homepage of their website, regardless of project category. Failure to include a current Explore Minnesota logo in grant projects will result in the cancellation of state funding.

The size of the logo must be legible and proportionate to the size of the ad, but no smaller than 1" wide. The current logos are available on the industry website, or contact your regional manager.

In all cases for internet marketing, including but not limited to display banner ads, advertorial content, search engine marketing (SEM) and search engine optimization (SEO), the grantee must include a link to exploreminnesota.com using a current Explore Minnesota logo on any web pages that the digital ads are driving to. *To ensure these requirements are met, it is recommended that the grantee place a current Explore Minnesota logo and link to exploreminnesota.com in the footer of their website.*

If hardship can be demonstrated for including the logo, approval may be given for a waiver from this policy by contacting the grantee's regional manager. Requests for a waiver from the logo requirement must reach the regional manager at least one week prior to the ad material deadline. Waivers will **not** be granted for placing the linkable Explore Minnesota logo on the homepage of the grantee's website, or from any page of the website where the logo is required for internet marketing.

MARKET REQUIREMENTS: Advertising and direct mail projects must demonstrate at least 50% of the total grant amount awarded was used for marketing outside the state; up to 50% of the grant amount awarded may be used for marketing to Minnesota residents. NOTE: The distribution of the project determines if the project is in-state or out-of-state. If more than 50% of the distribution is out-of-state, the entire project is considered out-of-state. If more than 50% of the distribution is within the state, the entire project is considered in-state. Trade shows must be held outside of Minnesota. Research projects and public relations plans do not have a market requirement.

Indicate whether a project is in-state or out-of-state on the request for reimbursement – distribution must be verifiable.

MATCH REQUIREMENTS: All projects are required to match state funds awarded under the grant program with their own funds using the following formula:

Organization Total Budget	Match Requirement	Total Grant All Projects Cost	Organization Match	Grant Reimbursement
\$100,000 or less	1:1	\$14,000	\$7,000	\$7,000
\$100,001-\$500,000	2:1	\$21,000	\$14,000	\$7,000
\$500,001+	3:1	\$28,000	\$21,000	\$7,000

BORDER COMMUNITIES: Incorporated convention and visitor bureaus/chambers with a Minnesota Tax ID that represent an area in Minnesota and another state are eligible to apply when they meet requirements. Explore Minnesota grant funds may only be used to promote Minnesota and its travel products.

RECORDS RETENTION: Under state law, grant records must be kept available for a period of six years. For consumer advertising, travel trade advertising and when requested by Explore Minnesota, grantee must provide inquiry or lead names, addresses and phone numbers.

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

The following expenses are **not eligible** for Explore Minnesota Marketing Grant funding:

- Purchase of alcoholic beverages.
- Printing of community brochures and/or response pieces.
- Website development or design.
- Literature distribution.
- Fulfillment and distribution of existing materials.
- Explore Minnesota Co-Opportunities programs.
- Advertising in any Explore Minnesota publications.
- Advertising on exploreminnesota.com.
- Internal staff costs.
- Advertising in materials that are used by the grantee's community for consumer inquiry response or ad fulfillment.
- Advertising in grantee's own community or area in publications or other media, including websites, newspapers, TV, radio, etc.
- Advertising in materials that are used by grantees for consumer inquiry response or ad fulfillment.
- Travel expenses.

GRANT PROCESS

All requirements from previous grants must be up-to-date to receive funding for the following calendar year.

1. Complete a Marketing Grant Request for Funding form. Maximum total request \$7,000; minimum total request \$500.
2. Marketing Grant Request for Funding forms must be emailed to your regional manager or postmarked by **October 1, 2018**. Grant request totals *cannot* be adjusted after the due date.
3. Requests are reviewed for compliance and accuracy by the Explore Minnesota regional manager. Once approved, available funds are allocated to eligible organizations.
4. Grant contracts are generated, funds are encumbered and required signatures secured. Projects may not begin until the contract is fully executed, the date the last signature is obtained. Commitments (i.e. ad space reservations or trade show registration) may be made prior to this date, but grantee's Request for Reimbursement will not be paid if attached vendor invoices are dated *prior* to the fully executed grant contract.
5. Regional manager sends grantee the following:
 - An award letter indicating projects may begin.
 - A fully executed grant contract.
 - A blank Request for Reimbursement Form.
 - A blank Project Summary and Evaluation Form.
6. Vendor provides services and invoices for work completed to grantee within the marketing grant contract effective dates.
7. Grantee must provide the Request for Reimbursement to the regional manager when all projects are completed but no later than **January 31, 2020**. **Only one submission per grant; no partial reimbursements will be accepted.**
8. For all projects, the following items are required for reimbursement depending on type of project:
 - Completed Request for Reimbursement form.
 - Completed Project Summary and Evaluation forms for each project type.
 - Copies of all vendor invoices and proof of payment.
 - Screenshot of grantee's website home page displaying EMT logo with link to exploreminnesota.com
 - For the below project types, you must also submit the following:
 - **Advertising** – Original copy/tear sheet or screenshot of the ad with Explore Minnesota logo
 - **Direct Mail** - Original copy of direct mail piece with Explore Minnesota logo
 - **Research** - Copy of research study
 - **Public Relations** – A copy of public relations campaign plan and deliverables
 - **Trade Show** – List of leads/contacts
9. A check from the State of Minnesota will be issued or an automatic deposit will be processed within 30 days following reimbursement request approval.
10. IRS rules require government entities to file 1099-G forms for certain government payments. Minnesota Management and Budget will be issuing 1099-G forms for these contracts. Please check with your organizations' tax expert to determine what affect this may have on your IRS filing.

ADVERTISING GRANTS

Consumer Advertising, Travel Trade Advertising, Meetings & Conventions, and Sports Advertising
January 1 – December 31, 2019

CONSUMER ADVERTISING: Projects targeted at the individual consumer.

TRAVEL TRADE, MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS AND SPORTS ADVERTISING: Projects with primary distribution to tour operators, tour planners and/or travel agents, advertising in meeting & convention media, and targeted sports media.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES FOR ALL ADVERTISING:

Media costs for broadcast, print, digital, outdoor space, television or radio advertising. Costs for ad creation are eligible as long as an outside professional vendor is used and there is documentation of ad placement. 50% of the project must be distributed out of state.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES FOR DIGITAL MARKETING:

- Search engine marketing (SEM), pay per click (PPC), or internet keyword buys
- Search engine optimization (SEO) is eligible if performed by an outside vendor
- Display banner ads and advertorial content are eligible
- Social media should include the #OnlyinMN hashtag and/or tag the appropriate @ Explore Minnesota handle in posts and ads

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

- Ads and content are not to be placed on political or unsavory websites
Refer to Page 6 for full ineligibility guidelines

DIRECT MAIL GRANTS

Direct Mail Projects to Consumers, Travel Trade or Meeting and Convention or Sports Marketing Media
January 1 – December 31, 2019

DIRECT MAIL PROJECTS FOR CONSUMERS, TRADE OR MEDIA:

The direct mail grant can cover design & distribution of *new* material used exclusively for direct mail or email marketing. 50% of the project must be distributed out of state.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Consumers, tour operators, travel agents, meeting planners, sport planners

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

- Costs incurred for acquiring, sorting or renting a database
- Design & creation costs as long as an outside professional vendor is used
- Production & print costs
- Distribution, shipping and/or postage costs including a central distribution or direct mail vendor

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

- Materials used in the direct mail project may be created for other uses; however, reimbursement must be prorated to include only costs associated with the direct mail project
- Internal staff time
- Existing promotional materials
- Refer to Page 6 for full ineligibility guidelines

PUBLIC RELATIONS GRANTS

January 1 – December 31, 2019

The public relations grant can cover costs incurred in the planning and implementation of an overall tourism-focused public relations plan. Project must be done by an outside vendor. Explore Minnesota must be recognized in all materials and press releases. The grantee's regional manager must approve the public relations plan in advance.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

Hiring a public relations firm to assist with the following duties:

- Identify media trends, consumer interests, target markets/media outlets
- Editorial calendar development and outreach
- Crafting and distribution of approved press releases and wire releases
- Development of long- and short-lead pitches

MEASUREMENTS REQUIRED:

- Copy of public relations campaign plan
- Copy of public relations deliverables

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

- Refer to Page 6

RESEARCH GRANTS

January 1 – December 31, 2019

The research grant can cover costs incurred in conducting tourism research projects such as market analysis. Project must be done by an outside vendor. Explore Minnesota must be identified as a sponsor on all materials. Projects may be conducted by a single community or a multi-community* group.

*For research grants only, two or more eligible Minnesota organizations partnering together can comprise a multi-community group. One community submits the request and lists each participating community with a breakdown of each organization's cash match percentage.

QUALIFICATIONS:

Explore Minnesota must approve study focus, methodology and budget in advance. Interested organizations are urged to contact their regional manager early in the planning process.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

- Survey collection costs (includes outgoing and reply postage, telephone solicitation and personal interview costs)
- Printing costs (for the research survey instruments and finished studies)
- Data entry costs
- Research analysis/final compilation costs performed by an outside vendor

NOTE: ***University of Minnesota Tourism Center.** For additional research funding, please consult with the University of Minnesota's Carlson Chair for Travel, Tourism & Hospitality: tourism.umn.edu/invest/carlson-chair.edu*

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

- Refer to Page 6

SPECIAL GRANTS

January 1 – December 31, 2019

Special grants are available to statewide organizations that are producing materials and/or conducting marketing projects that promote the entire state. The Special Grant project must have statewide impact and projected outcomes falling within one of the strategic objectives of Explore Minnesota. The organization must submit a proposal that includes stated objectives, responsibilities, funding and evaluation and should discuss the potential project with the appropriate regional manager as a first step. The maximum total request for special grants is \$7,000 per organization. Tourism Marketing Grant Request for Funding forms must be e-mailed or postmarked by **October 1, 2018**.

MATCH REQUIREMENTS:

All projects are required to match state funds awarded under the grant program with their own funds in the following formula:

Organization Total Budget	Match Requirement	Total Grant All Projects Cost	Organization Match	Grant Reimbursement
\$100,000 or less	1:1	\$14,000	\$7,000	\$7,000
\$100,001-\$500,000	2:1	\$21,000	\$14,000	\$7,000
\$500,001+	3:1	\$28,000	\$21,000	\$7,000

Project information needed (applicants must follow this format):

1. Summary of proposal: Be specific - include proposed project and timeline.
2. Indicate how the project has statewide economic impact and falls within Explore Minnesota's mission. The mission of Explore Minnesota is to promote and facilitate increased travel to and within the state of Minnesota.
3. Provide information on expected outcomes and proposed performance evaluation method (examples: total number of inquiries, names and addresses generated, sales tax generated).
4. Specify organization and state resources requested, including specific project budget. Provide a breakdown of amount and source of all income and resources committed to this project.
5. History, if this is not a new project.
NOTE: If the project is printing a statewide guide, organization must provide history of production and distribution, number recycled, and distribution plan for proposed guide – associations are responsible for distribution of their own guides. In addition, guides and the distribution plan of the guides cannot be duplicative of any other guide.
6. Relationship of project to your organization's overall marketing strategy. Include total tourism promotion budget for your organization.

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

- Refer to Page 6

TRADE SHOW GRANTS

U.S. & International Travel Trade, Sport & Travel Shows, Meetings & Conventions and Sports Marketing Shows
January 1 – December 31, 2019*

U.S. & International Travel Trade, Sports & Travel Shows, Meetings and Conventions and Sports Marketing Shows

U.S. and international trade shows held outside of Minnesota where attendees include individual consumers, travel trade representatives such as tour operators, tour planners, travel agents, meeting planners or sports event organizers and trade media.

*EXCEPTION: The American Bus Association and IPW Travel Trade Shows for 2020 may be included in this grant cycle.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- All shows must be pre-approved by your Explore Minnesota regional manager
- All shows must be located outside of Minnesota
- Commitments (i.e. trade show registration) may be made prior to contract date, but grantee's Request for Reimbursement will not be paid if attached vendor invoices are dated *prior* to the fully executed grant contract.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

- Registration fees (for up to two people)
- Rental of booth space
- Utilities, furniture rental, carpet and cleanup costs
- Shipping materials to the show
- Show sponsorship fees for additional visibility and recognition prior to/during/after the show so long as it is not tied to a cooperative effort or other EMT promotion. Grantee must use the Explore Minnesota logo on printed/digital materials as per the marketing grant requirements.

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

- Travel expenses (lodging, airfare, mileage, per diem, meals, parking). If lodging is included in the registration fee, the value of the lodging must be deducted from the registration cost
- Display materials
- Mall shows and other events where consumer attendance is coincidental to another activity
- Purchasing alcohol
- Booth sharing with Explore Minnesota
- Refer to Page 6 of these guidelines for other ineligible expenses

MEASUREMENTS REQUIRED:

- List of leads/contacts from show

EXPLORE MINNESOTA TOURISM REGIONAL MANAGERS

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