



Clackamas County Office of Tourism

2025-2026

Strategic Investment Program Guidelines



The Clackamas County Office of Tourism (Tourism), branded as Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory, is the destination management and marketing organization for Clackamas County. It works under the direction of the County's [Tourism Development Council](#) Council), the members of which are appointed by the Board of County Commissioner. Funding for Tourism's programs comes from the County's 6% Transient Lodging Tax that was approved by voters in May of 1991.

Mission

The Mission of the Council and Tourism is to enhance the quality of life for residents by optimizing the economic impacts of the tourism industry derived by the County's Transient Room Tax and to support the Clackamas County Board of Commissioner's [2025-2030 Strategic Plan](#).

Strategic Priorities

Our [five-year strategic priorities](#) support the implementation of our mission and the [Tourism Master Plan](#). They are:

- **Building Value:** Building local tourism value through relevant tourism resources and awareness.
- **Thriving Economy:** Enhance authentic experiences so businesses, communities and the economy thrive.
- **Environment:** Encourage behaviors and practices that benefit the natural environment.
- **Access & Inclusion:** Improve the awareness and experience of Mt. Hood Territory as an inclusive and accessible destination.
- **Flow:** Drive visitation that aligns with the specific needs of a place including regional and seasonal needs.

These Strategic Priorities also provide guidance in support the Three Pillars contained within our [Tourism Master Plan](#). Those being:

- Outdoor Recreation
- Agritourism
- Cultural & Heritage Tourism

Strategic Investment Fund Program

The Strategic Investment Program invests in the development of new or existing tourism-related projects and experiences from a visitor perspective (e.g., activities, attractions and public spaces). Visitors are defined as those coming from greater than fifty miles away.

For this 2025-2026 Strategic Investment Program cycle, \$500,000 is available for eligible projects.

- The maximum request that will be considered is \$500,000
- The minimum request that will be considered is \$25,000
- No matching funds are required, but additional consideration is given for projects that have a 10% or greater documented cash match.

NOTE: If you are seeking funding for a tourism-related project below \$25,000, please email funding@amthoodterritory with a description of your project. Staff will follow-up with you for more details.

Projects must support at least one of Tourism's five-year strategic priorities and be substantiated in submitted applications. Examples of eligible projects include:

- **Building Value**
 - Rebuilding campgrounds or day-use areas destroyed by wildfires.
 - Adding additional parking spaces to a popular trailhead.
- **Thriving Economy**
 - Installation of infrastructure that allows water trail users or cyclists to secure craft/bicycles and equipment while they explore local communities.
 - Community wayfinding to help direct visitors from an attraction to a downtown area.
- **Environment**
 - Completion of a multi-modal path that links to existing trails so visitors have non-motorized access to multiple communities and points of interest.
 - Installation of EV charging stations at a popular point of interest.
- **Access and Inclusion**
 - Adding ADA accessibility improvements to campgrounds, sites or amenities.
 - Creation of an exhibit at a local museum that highlights the experiences and contributions of under-represented groups.
- **Flow**
 - Making improvements to a boat ramp or landing located along a water trail that creates dedicated loading/unloading areas for non-motorized watercraft that will alleviate conflicts with motorized-water craft users.
 - Projects that support congestion mitigation.

For more project ideas, read about our prior grant awardees on [Tourism's Funding Opportunities page](#).

Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include those listed below whose project benefits the greater public interests of tourism development within Clackamas County. Eligible applicants include:

- Non-profit organizations (with evidence of IRS tax-exempt status and current registration with the [Oregon Corporation Division](#).)
- Federally recognized tribal entities
- Cities, counties and special districts
- State and federal agencies

Ineligible Applicants

- Private, for-profit entities
- Organizations that received a Strategic Investment Program award from Tourism in the last two consecutive funding cycles
- Organizations that have a bankruptcy or other financial discrepancies within the past five years
- Organizations that failed to fulfill or reconcile past grant award requirements within the past three years (includes: project completion, submission of required grant reports, proper use of grant funds)

Eligible Projects

Projects must meet the criteria below:

- Align with at least one of the three tourism pillars
- Align with at least one of the five -year strategic priorities
- Project or a key phase of a project can be completed within 18 months of funding
- Has clear and detailed budget specific to proposed project (scope of work)
- Demonstrates long-term sustainability
- Includes Letter(s) of Partnership from partners if named in application
- Includes Letter(s) of Partnership from relevant cultural or accessibility organizations if content is being created or site improvements are to be made on their behalf.
- Includes documentation of approval from land management agencies or other jurisdictions that have authority over project site, and/or permits needed to execute project, if applicable.

Ineligible Projects and Project Costs

The following types of projects are ineligible for consideration, and their applications will not be processed for review:

- Requests for events or entertainment at events (click [here](#) for information about our Event Sponsorships)
- Requests for research, studies or master planning
- Requests for capital fundraising campaigns
- Requests for marketing or advertising
- Requests for deferred or regular/ongoing maintenance of existing facilities, assets or attractions
- Existing staff, consultants, contractors (capacity) already doing work relevant to a project
- Costs associated with a project incurred prior to application approval

Indirect Costs

Tourism may allow for up to 15 percent (15%) indirect costs for projects if included in total ask on application form and as a line item on budget form. If requesting indirect costs, do not also include general overhead (non-direct project costs for organizational management/admin, insurance, utilities, travel, grant management, etc.) to any other project budget category on the budget form.

How to Apply

Applications are accepted via Tourism's online Foundant grant portal. Users must set up an account to apply. Applicants can access the portal here - <https://omht.us/StratInvestAp>.

The grant application period opens on October 27, 2025 and will close on December 4, 2025 at 5pm PT.

Application requirements:

- Completed online application
- Completed Project Budget Form
- Proof of eligible entity (tax-exempt letter, EIN, OR Corp Filing)
- Letters of Partnership (if applicable)
- Documentation of approval from land management agencies (if applicable)
- Permits and planning documents (if applicable)

Incomplete applications will not be processed for review.

Application Information & Webinars

Two informational webinars will be held for parties interested in applying. Registration is required. Dates of webinars and links for registration are below:

- Wednesday, October 22, 2025 from 9am-10am: [Register](#)
- Wednesday, November 5, 2025 from 12pm-1pm: [Register](#)

Additional information and materials, including a recording of one of the informational webinars, will be posted on Tourism's Funding Opportunities [webpage](#).

Review & Awarding

Award recommendations will be made based on scoring applications against standardized review criteria. All eligible applications will be reviewed by a Grant Review Committee comprised of partners from within Clackamas County's tourism ecosystem. The committee will make funding recommendations to the Tourism Development Council for consideration and approval.

Applicants approved for funding are required to attend the scheduled Grantee Orientation before entering into contract with Clackamas County. Contracts will include an agreed upon Scope of Work consistent with what was submitted in the application, including identified deliverables, agreed upon timelines; program terms, conditions, and guidelines, and additional standard County required contract provisions. The approximate timeline for initial award distribution, upon awardees submittal of all required documents and materials, is two (2) months after being awarded. Awards of \$150,000 or more will need to go before the Board of County Commissioners for processing. This will result in a slightly longer distribution timeline. Awards will be distributed as follows: 50% as advance, 25% as advance upon Tourism's receipt of 2nd disbursement request and review of submitted expenditure report, and the final 25% as reimbursement upon Tourism's review of final reporting/expenditure documentation submitted by awardee.

Awardees must adhere to the project scope of work and deliverables contained in award agreements (contract). Awardees must request and receive approval from Tourism prior to making any changes to the project scope of work and deliverables.

Reporting

- Awardees will be required to submit quarterly status reports.
- Grant recipients shall maintain accurate records and will use provided report templates for submission of all required information.

- Grant recipients will be required to keep an ongoing, updated timeline and budget throughout the lifetime of the grant. Tourism reserves the right to request copies of the working budget throughout the lifetime of the grant. Tourism will provide all forms required.
- A final report will be due within 3 months of project completion. The final report shall include an accounting of how funds were expended.
- All required reports will be submitted through the grant management system.
- Any funds not used as approved shall be returned to Clackamas County.
- Failure to submit reports, reply to communications from Tourism staff, or return unused or inappropriately expended funds, may result in ineligibility to apply for future grant programs.

Grant Timeline

Online grant webinar 1	October 22, 2025 9am-10am
SIP Program cycle opens	October 27, 2025
Online grant webinar 2	November 5, 2025 12pm-1pm
Online application closes	December 4, 2025 at 5pm PT
Decision notifications	Week of February 16, 2026
Grantee Orientation	February 25, 2026 1pm-2pm
Initial disbursement of funds (50%)	Mid-April, 2026 (dependent on awardees submission of required funding documents.)

For more information about the Strategic Investment Program and to register for online grant webinars to learn more, visit [Tourism's Funding Opportunities page](#).

Application Scoring

Each application is scored on set criteria outlined in a standardized rubric. Applications can earn a maximum of 100 points in each of the following categories.

Categories	(Pts)
Clackamas County Tourism Alignment	8
Program Strategic Priorities Alignment	8
Project Need	3
Project Timeliness	6
Project Plan	16
Project Evaluation	3
Visitation Driver	8
Overnight Stays	8
Benefit to Visitors	8
Visitor Access	8
Budget	4
Cash Match of 10% or Greater	4
Project Sustainability	4
Impacts more than one community	4
Located in an unincorporated area	4
Collaboration with Partners	4

Contact Information

For questions about the Strategic Investment Program please email Funding@amthoodterritory.com.

Program Terminology

Accessibility – this refers to the capacity to ensure that tourism/visitor products/services and environments are easily and equally usable and enjoyable by all people regardless of their physical, cognitive, sensory, or other abilities.

Assets – tangible or intangible resources that attract visitors to a destination and contribute to the overall experience.

Community – includes incorporated communities within Clackamas County (cities), as well as unincorporated “urbanized” areas of Clackamas County such as North Clackamas, Welches and Government Camp.

Foundant – Foundant is the grant software system used for accepting and managing applications.

Letter of Partnership – an endorsement letter, on organizational/company letterhead, that outlines support of and role and responsibility in project or program that is applying for grant funding. For the purposes of this grant program, any entity from underserved audiences that are included as a programmatic element in the proposal must provide written endorsement of the projects in the form of a letter of partnership.

Partner – a public, private, or nonprofit entity that commits to supporting project activities and outcomes.

Scope of Work – a description of work to be performed and/or /items to be purchased with funds if awarded. This will be incorporated into a funding contract if approved.

Tourism-Project – this refers to the development or enhancement of a place, item, or experience that enhances the visitor’s experience.

Underserved Audiences – specific groups of people who have historically had fewer opportunities or face barriers in accessing and enjoying tourism experiences.

Visitor-Facing – any function, service, or feature that directly interacts with the tourist or visitor. This may include, but not be limited to, physical amenities, information services, signage and wayfinding, and interactive elements regularly or consistently accessible to the public.