



CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF TOURISM GRANT OVERVIEW GUIDELINES

Please read these guidelines thoroughly. Failing to comply with the rules and procedures set forth could result in ineligibility for funding. Please be sure to refer to specific grant guidelines for detailed requirements and instructions.

ABOUT THE CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF TOURISM (COT)

The Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) Office of Tourism (COT) develops and implements a tourism statewide Strategic Marketing Plan (SMP) to be used as a marketing roadmap for promoting Connecticut as a tourism destination to visitors and residents leveraging tourism as a significant contributor to the vitality, quality of life, job development and economic health of the State.

Through its grant programs, the office invests in Connecticut tourism entities in their efforts to enhance the tourism statewide Strategic Marketing Plan by developing and promoting attractions and events that are open to the public and creating partnerships with the industry.

PREFACE

These guidelines outline what is required of applicants by law and by the Connecticut Office of Tourism (COT), Department of Economic and Community Development. This section will help applicants understand the requirements before entering the COT funding process. Because all COT programs are competitive, however, meeting these requirements does not ensure activities will be funded. All applications are objectively reviewed according to how well they meet the criteria stated in the guidelines under each program area. Should you have any questions regarding any of the guidelines or applications, please call the appropriate program manager.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND NON - DISCRIMINATION

Applicants receiving COT funds must comply with all governmental regulations concerning nondiscrimination. Grantees are prohibited from discrimination in employment and the provision of services because of race, color, religious creed, age, sex, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, ancestry, learning disability, physical disability or blindness, present or past history of mental disability, mental retardation, genetic history or criminal record.

ADA COMPLIANCE

Applicants receiving COT funds must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 by making appropriate and reasonable accommodations to ensure that people with disabilities have equal physical and communications access to services and programs, as defined by federal law. If an applicant's facilities or activities do not meet the standards of the ADA, the applicant may be ineligible for COT funding.

OWNERSHIP

COT does not own, collect royalties on or hold copyrights to artistic products resulting from its grants nor will it take any action on behalf of the grantee to protect the grantee's intellectual property rights. COT does, however, have legal authority to reproduce and use documentation of such products for educational, promotional, official or noncommercial purposes, both electronically and in print. COT will retain possession of all materials submitted in support of a grant application or a final report except:

FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

The COT does not fund the following: (*Applies to grant funds and matching funds*)

- Organizations whose membership and participation policies do not comply with non-discrimination laws
- Organizations acting solely as fiscal agents for individuals or groups
- State or federal agencies
- Brick and mortar and capital improvements
- Specific activities or projects that are already funded by another COT program during the same fiscal year
- Activities that have already been completed
- Activities to eliminate or reduce existing deficits
- Activities funded by or which generate revenue for COT
- Religious programming and activities
- Benefits, fundraisers, social events
- Interest expenses paid on loans or debts
- Scholarship assistance for academic or non-academic programs
- Lobbying activities
- Political contributions
- Legal fees
- Individuals
- Service organizations and/or clubs
- For-profit applicants
- Saleable items: production of sale items or production of items to be sold for profit or fundraising purposes:
- Materials or staff funded by state tax dollars as part of their in-kind services.
- Administrative Expenses: Salaries, rent, phone, supplies, postage, photocopying or other overhead associated with the on going normal administrative function(s) of any organization and partners.

Exception:

- *Matching Funds - Tourism Product Development* - up to a total of twenty (20) percent of matching funds can be used for grant related product
- Entertainment, honoraria, scholarships, artists fees, tournament awards or grants, prizes or gifts for participants or volunteers.

Exception:

- *Matching Funds - Marketing Challenge Grant* - Up to a total of twenty (20) percent of matching funds can be used for grant program related Entertainment and Artists Fees.
- Equipment purchases and equipment rentals

Exception:

- *Grant Funds - Marketing Challenge:* Grant related trade shows or exhibits.

**FUNDING
RESTRICTIONS
CONT'D**

- Food and Beverages:
Exceptions:
 - *Grant Funds - Marketing Challenge:* Direct expenses relating to hosting tour operators and/or travel writers on familiarization tours or media events.

Alcoholic beverages cannot be funded.

- Travel Expenses (including lodging for salaried personnel or volunteers of applicant)
Exceptions:
 - Grant Funds**
 - *Grant Funds - Marketing Challenge:* Direct Sales expenses relating to trade shows to include transportation and hotel accommodations for one person.
 - *Matching Funds - Tourism Product Development:* Up to a total of twenty (20) percent of matching funds can be used for grant program related travel expenses (transportation and hotel accommodations only) for one person.

**APPLYING
TO MULTIPLE
PROGRAMS**

Applicants should consult the appropriate program manager when applying to multiple programs within a fiscal year. COT does not accept applications to multiple grant programs for the same project and activity.

Applicants must follow all instructions and provide accurate and complete information in all sections and supporting materials as stated in each program's guidelines. Failure to do so will render the application ineligible for review.

**GRANT
SUBMISSIONS**

All COT applications must be received (not postmarked) on the due date. No application or parts thereof will be accepted after the deadline. E-mail or fax submissions will not be accepted.

If hand-delivered, applications must be received by 4:00 pm on the due date. Applicants must request and retain a receipt from the staff person accepting the hand-delivered application, regardless of delivery date.

**FREEDOM OF
INFORMATION ACT**

Applications and all information submitted will become public records under the Freedom of Information Act, C.G.S. §1-200, et. seq. unless specifically exempted by the Act. Applicants may request that information contained in the application which are not exempt by the Act, C.G.S. §1-210, be exempt from public disclosure. Such requests will be taken under consideration by the Department of Economic and Community Development.

**AWARD
NOTIFICATION/
GRANT PAYMENT**

COT will notify all applicants of funding decisions via email. Successful applicants will receive award notification and grant contracts which must be signed and returned within 30 days before grant payments will be processed, unless noted otherwise in the contract package.

**AWARD
NOTIFICATION/
GRANT PAYMENT
CONT'D**

Every COT grant contract issued to an organization shall be accompanied by a certification (a.k.a. “certified resolution”) indicating that the grantee has passed a resolution authorizing the named individual to sign the contracts on behalf of the organization and that the resolution is in effect as of the date of the contract signing.

After the signed contract and certification is returned to COT, contingent upon availability of funds, payments will be authorized in one or more installments as indicated on the contract.

Grant funds, however, will not be disbursed if the grantee has an overdue final report from any prior COT grant program.

**GRANTEE
RESPONSIBILITIES**

Grant recipients are required to expend all grant funds within the specified funding period for the purposes indicated in Section 1 of the contract.

Any request for changes or modifications to a contract, including a request for an extension of the funding period, shall be made in writing to the Director of the Office of Tourism of such a request does not authorize the change or modification. All requests for extension of time shall be made no later than 90 days prior to the expiration of the contract.

Grantees shall honor all legal requirements as specified in the contract.

MATCHING FUNDS

Grantees shall adhere to the matching requirements of the particular grant program. State funds cannot be used as match. Refer to individual grant programs for details.

Source of Matching Funds

Eligible Sources :

- Direct grants
- Monies raised through memberships
- Sales of promotional items
- Fund drives
- Corporate sponsorships
- Money raised through ticket/admission sales
- Registrations or admission fees directly associated to the grant program
- Private donations
- Net profits

Ineligible Source:

- State Funds

**CREDIT AND
PUBLICITY
RESPONSIBILITIES**

Grant recipients shall credit the Department of Economic and Community Development’s Office of Tourism in print, A/V and electronic materials and publicity materials (such as press releases, brochures, posters, advertisements and web sites) related to the funded project or activities or comparable credit approved by COT. Please consult the Connecticut Office of Tourism Credit & Publicity Kit, which will be sent to grant recipients at the time of award notification. This document is also available online at www.cultureandtourism.org.

**REPORTING
REQUIREMENTS**

COT grant recipients shall submit a final report within 60 days of completion of the grant period specified on the contract. COT will send an e-mail reminder 30 days prior to the end of the funding period. Future COT funding is contingent upon submission of final reports. Forms and instructions are available on COT's industry web site at www.cultureandtourism.org.

COT grant recipients shall submit Status Reports and a Final report.

Status Report(s): Status Reports are required by the grandee every six months a grant file is open. Status Reports are available on COT's industry website www.cultureandtourism.org.

Final Report: A Final Report is required and must be completed within 60 days of completion of the grant period specified on the contract. COT will send an e-mail reminder 30 days prior to the end of the funding period. Future COT funding is contingent upon submission of final reports. Forms and instructions are available on COT's industry website www.cultureandtourism.org.

**GRANT
CANCELLATIONS**

COT has the right to withhold, reduce or cancel grants if a grantee:

- cancels, suspends or significantly changes the scope and activities of a funded project
- fails to comply with the terms of the grant contract
- owes a final report (past due) for a previously received COT grant
- is unable to raise the required match
- demonstrates inadequate financial management or oversight