



Office of Tourism

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CO-OP PROGRAM

GUIDELINES

I. CO-OP PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The mission of the Wyoming Office of Tourism (WOT) is to promote and facilitate increased travel to and within the State of Wyoming. The Technical Assistance Co-op Program (TACP) has been designed to support and facilitate projects that contribute to the development of the tourism industry statewide. WOT will award up to \$5,000 per project based on eligibility. This document outlines the process for applying and the criteria WOT will use in deciding to award projects. All applicants will be required to contact their local tourism authority with their project ideas, review the application checklist, and then complete their application.

This Co-op requires a 50% cash match on behalf of the applicant and will be awarded on a reimbursable basis. Applications are accepted between August 1, 2016 and April 1, 2017 and projects are evaluated upon receipt and awarded until program funds are expended.

A. Wyoming Office of Tourism Strategic Areas of Focus

Applicants will need to describe how their project compliments WOT's strategic areas of focus to:

- Grow Wyoming's Visitor Economy
- Maximize the Impact of Partnerships
- Champion the Destination and the Brand

For more information on WOT's mission and strategic areas of focus, please visit www.travelwyoming.com/industry

B. Wyoming Office of Tourism's Industry Program Catalog

Applicants will need to be familiar with WOT's Industry Partnership Guide that has been developed as a resource to help partners leverage and maximize the impact of WOT's programs through a progressive development approach. The Industry Program Catalog provides a complete explanation of the five sections of the guide.

For more information about WOT's Industry Program Catalog, please visit:

www.travelwyoming.com/industry/resources

C. Local Tourism Authority Support

Applicants will need to consult with their local tourism authority to discuss the project and get input and suggestions before completing the application. Applicants will need to find out how the project fits into their community and/or region's current strategic/marketing plan and will be required to submit a letter of recommendation from the DMO or local tourism authority that shows their support of the project idea.

II. ELIGIBILITY

A. Funding Eligibility

WOT will award up to \$5,000 based on eligibility per project. Eligibility for funding will be determined by the applicant's stage of development, as guided by the WOT Industry Partnership Guide. **This Co-op requires a 50% cash match on behalf of the applicant, and will be awarded on a reimbursable basis.**

PLEASE NOTE- If applicants are interested in applying for more than one project, it is recommended that applicants prioritize the submitted applications, due to funding availability.

EX: Smithville CVB is determined to be positioned at the "Growing" stage in the Industry Partnership Guide, and they could apply for up to \$5,000 per project. Smithville may choose to pursue 2 projects that total \$7,500 in Co-op funding throughout the year and use a 50% cash match of \$5,000 towards one project, and another 50% cash match of \$2,500 towards another project.

B. Eligible Applicants

Eligible organizations include local municipalities, county governments, tribal governments, state and federal agencies, and non-profit organizations involved with tourism promotion and development. Private industry partners may be considered on a case by case basis. All applicants must be registered with the Wyoming Secretary of State to conduct business in the State of Wyoming, and all applications must be signed by an official authorized to legally bind the applicant to perform the project.

C. Eligible Projects and Activities

Eligible projects include those that provide for the enhancement or expansion of the tourism economy in Wyoming. Projects should target the development of tourism infrastructure or strategic collaborative marketing initiatives that align with the WOT brand that enhance the visitor experience in Wyoming and increase the likelihood of visitation from outside the local area. Partnerships with local, regional and statewide tourism organizations, economic development and/or government organizations and tourism-related businesses are looked upon favorably.

Preference will be given to projects that enhance your community, region or WOT's existing tourism development efforts or marketing initiatives.

Funding will only be awarded to projects that can be COMPLETED within one year from the start of the contract.

The following projects and activities may include, but are not limited to, any of the following to execute **NEW** efforts, initiatives or offerings, domestically and/or internationally (not in any particular order):

1. Visitor way-finding signage plans or the implementation of an existing plan for signage production and/or installation
2. Seeking professional assistance to improve your local tourism industry. (EX. If a DMO/CVB is interested in bringing in a consultant to facilitate a planning session to discuss local tourism assets and the next action steps).
3. Marketing research initiatives to drive tourism development strategies
4. Implementing technology to capture visitor feedback
5. Development or implementation of visitor service or customer service training

D. Ineligible Projects and Activities

Projects that include the following activities are **NOT** eligible for Co-op funding:

1. Projects that involve modifications of eligible historic structures or items.
2. Activities that are not **NEW** efforts, initiatives or offerings. Examples of activities that are not new efforts, initiatives or offerings include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Reprints or second editions of any kind
 - Updates to websites including structural changes and/or design changes
 - Annual event production and/or promotion
 - Ongoing visitor service or customer service training programs
 - Participation at industry or consumer related tradeshow
3. Co-op funds cannot be used to cover the costs of staff or consultant salaries, mileage or associated fees that are **already** budgeted to execute a particular area of work within an organization. Budget line items will however be considered to provide capacity for project coordination and/or project management when necessary in order for an organization to undertake an eligible project. (Ex. If a DMO/CVB seeks to bring a consultant in to facilitate a planning session to discuss local tourism assets and the next action steps; the Co-op funds can be used to cover the cost of the consultant's travel.
4. This Co-op will not be awarded to a project that emphasizes private profitability and/or where the investment could be considered a regular cost of doing business.

III. APPLICATIONS

Applications are accepted between August 1, 2016 and April 1, 2017 and projects are evaluated upon receipt and awarded until program funds are expended. Applications may be submitted via email, mail, or hand delivered. (Faxed copies will not be accepted). Each entity is allowed to request funding for more than one project, however, you must fill out a form for each request if the proposed projects differ from one another, i.e. location, type of project, etc. It may take up to 4-6 weeks to complete the review process and to formally approve selected projects. WOT will send each applicant a notification letter upon approval or disapproval of their project(s).

PLEASE NOTE- If applicants are interested in applying for more than one project, it is recommended that applicants prioritize the submitted applications, due to funding availability.

All media and public relations efforts associated with funded projects must credit the Wyoming Office of Tourism.

IV. EVALUATION CRITERIA; AWARD OF CO-OPS

A. Co-op applications must be complete and include the following:

- Authorizations from the applicant's Board Chair, Executive Director/CEO and Co-op project manager (or equivalent is acceptable)
- Detailed budget clearly indicating how the applicant will meet the match requirement (50% cash)
- Description of the applicant's marketing budget
- Description of how the project is focused on improvement or expansion of tourism marketing programs, or tourism infrastructure development or products designed to increase tourism from outside the area for greater economic impact to an area or community
- Description of the long-term benefits, and measurements of success for the project
- Demonstration that the project complements and is consistent with existing local, regional or WOT's existing tourism development efforts or marketing initiatives. [NOTE: WOT staff can, at the applicant's request, work with the applicant to assist with introductions to local, regional or other organizations as needed for your Co-op project]

B. Review of applications; decision to award

The Technical Assistance Co-op Program Review Committee will evaluate all applications for the following:

- Financial need of the applying organization
- Degree to which the project furthers WOT's strategic initiatives, supports the applicant's goals and objectives, and degree of coordination with the applicable local tourism authority
- Potential for positive economic impact on community/region as a direct result of the project
- Potential for the project to stimulate and generate tourism economic development
- Viability, integrity and long-term sustainability of the project
- Demonstration that the applicant and project meet the eligibility requirements, and that the application is complete and contains all information required by the Co-op Guidelines

WOT reserves the right to award Co-ops in amounts totaling less than all funds that are available under the Technical Assistance Co-op Program, to waive minor irregularities in Co-op applications, to award a different amount than is provided in a Co-op application (subject to the overall limitation that Co-ops be for not more than \$5,000), to make changes to the Co-op Guidelines or to cancel the Technical Assistance Co-op Program in its entirety if it is determined by WOT, in its sole discretion, that it is in its best interest to do so.

WOT will assess the Technical Assistance Co-op Program on an annual basis.

V. CO-OP CONTRACTS

Applicants who are awarded a Co-op over \$2,500 by WOT shall enter into a Co-op contract with WOT.

A. Prior to the establishment of the contract, awardees will be required to submit the following to:

Amanda Roberts, WOT Accounting Manager, 307-777-2944, amanda.roberts@wyo.gov

- ✓ Proof of registration with the Wyoming Secretary of State's Office
- ✓ Certificates of Good Standing from the Department of Workforce Services verifying compliance with unemployment insurance and workers compensations programs
<https://doe.state.wy.us/cert/> (unemployment)
<https://wconline.wyo.gov/web/#> (workers compensation)
- ✓ WOT Vendor Contact Form <http://www.travelwyoming.com/industry/accounting-resources>
- ✓ State of Wyoming Vendor Management Form <https://drive.google.com/a/wyo.gov/file/d/0B78Yf4yTSYVYY1IOMkJWbFZyeUU/view>
- ✓ IRS Form W-9 <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>

B. The Co-op contract will include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Purpose of the contract
- Timelines
- Disbursement of funds
- Responsibilities of each party
- WOT recognition
- General provisions

C. For projects under \$2,500, the following will be required to be submitted to:

Amanda Roberts, WOT Accounting Manager, 307-777-2944, amanda.roberts@wyo.gov

- ✓ State of Wyoming Vendor Management Form
<https://drive.google.com/a/wyo.gov/file/d/0B78Yf4yTSYVYY1IOMkJWbFZyeUU/view>
- ✓ IRS Form W-9 <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>

D. Co-op funds disbursement

Awardees will be reimbursed up to 50%, but not more than \$5,000 of the total eligible project costs upon completion of their project. To request reimbursement, the grantee will be required to submit:

- A final invoice, invoicing WOT for up to 50% of eligible project costs. Invoices must include an itemized breakdown of project expenses and payments
- Copies of all paid itemized invoices or receipts for eligible project costs
- Photos of completed projects (if applicable)
- A final summary of the project, initial analysis of Return on Investment, and methods of measuring success going forward

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CO-OP PROGRAM APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Application Check List (You must follow these 3 steps for a successful Co-op application).

1. Review the **TACP Co-op Guidelines** to make sure your organization and your proposed Co-op project fit within the application guidelines and start gathering all the information needed for the Co-op application.
2. Consult with your local **Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) or local tourism authority** regarding your project idea to get their input and suggestions. You are required to submit a letter of recommendation from them that shows their support of the project idea.
3. After you have received input and suggestions from your local tourism authority, the next step is to submit your Co-op Application (separate document) via email, mail, or deliver by hand to WOT for review. WOT will email you a confirmation upon receiving your application within 7-working days. The application will then be passed along to the review committee for evaluation. It may take up to 4-6 weeks to complete the review process. WOT will send each applicant a notification letter upon approval or disapproval of their project(s).

QUESTIONS

All questions pertaining to the WOT Technical Assistance Co-op Program guidelines and application process should be directed to:

Britney Butler, Industry Relations Manager, Wyoming Office of Tourism
Britney.butler@wyo.gov /307-777-6706/5611 High Plains Road, Cheyenne, WY 82007