

TOURISM EVENT GROWTH & SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM FY26 PROGRAM GUIDELINES

I. PROGRAM PURPOSE & OVERVIEW

This program provides technical assistance, sponsorship, and marketing and advertising to events within New Mexico to support their growth and sustainability.

The program offers three options for support:

Event Accelerator

Builds and improves events to prepare them for marketing and sponsorship. Technical assistance may provide tools such as an Online Discoverability Audit of the event and a strategy for building/improving the event website, social media presence, and/or online ticketing. Onsite Assessments are another tool provided to awarded partners. A member of NMTD will attend the event as an attendee and provide suggestions for growth and improvement. Upon successful completion of the accelerator, the event may receive up to \$5,000 in *reimbursement-based* funding to execute the deliverables provided in the audit and/or assessment.

To participate, applicants must provide proof of event success/track record, local commitment, and a readiness to accelerate.

Event CoOp Marketing Program

This track secures marketing and advertising for awarded events through a 2:1* matching investment. Applying events will utilize a Smart Select Marketing™ Menu to choose initiatives they would like to request funding for up to a maximum award of \$15,000 (\$5,000 partner funds + \$10,000 NMTD match). The Smart Select Marketing™ Menu is <u>not</u> your application but will be uploaded with your application to inform the review panel of your selections.

The co-funded award is strictly cash-only payment to NMTD by the awarded partner. NMTD will then handle vendor payments and media placements in partnership with awarded events. To participate, applicants must have digital access to an event-focused website that shows conversion potential and social media accounts.

CoOp funds will ideally be used for advertising outside of New Mexico, but because the state is large funds may potentially be used for advertising within New Mexico as well. As a rule of thumb, advertising cannot be located within 60 miles of the event location and preferably

exceeds that range. All advertising must be co-branded with New Mexico True.

If you would like additional support to see which initiatives from our media menu would best suit your TEGS CoOp event's goals and objectives, there will be a pre-application survey on the <u>Tourism Event Growth & Sustainability Program (TEGS)</u> website to receive a tailored menu of options based on your responses. Once you have completed the survey, you will receive your custom Smart Select Marketing™ Menu via email within 2 business days. You will upload this completed menu with your application where indicated. *Please note, this survey is not required for program participation and its completion does not confirm your event's eligibility for the TEGS program or the CoOp track.*

*2:1 match contingent on outcome of 2025 Legislative Session

Event Sponsorship

Provides up to \$50,000 in sponsorship from NMTD and provides the opportunity to cobrand the event with New Mexico True. As a part of brand stewardship, all creative must meet New Mexico True brand standards and *must be reviewed and approved by NMTD* prior to trafficking.

To participate, applicants must upload (within the application) current letters of support from the event's Town/City, County, Chamber, and DMO); provide brand impressions equal to the contract amount; demonstrate advertising potential and ability to grow the event. Events must have a media/communications plan; a website and social media strategy; and a marketing budget. Applicants must also provide eventgoer numbers and demographics, as well as information about the event's economic impact on the community; data must indicate that the event has grown and is successful enough to attract sponsors.

II. ELIGIBILITY

Eligible events must be tourism related and **must do all** the following things:

- 1. Drive out-of-state travel.
- 2. Drive in-state travel resulting in overnight stays.
- 3. Provide an experience aligned with the New Mexico True brand.

The New Mexico True brand seeks to promote tourism products and experiences centered around adventure, culture, and a thirst for authenticity. Events reflecting the New Mexico True brand represent the people, landscape, and cultures of New Mexico as honestly and faithfully as possible, bringing tourists (from near and far) a new perspective though firsthand experience. The New Mexico True brand also seeks to dismiss misconceptions and misunderstandings of the state, encourage staycations, and promote "adventure steeped in culture."

Applicants must partner with an eligible fiscal agent (see III. FISCAL AGENT & CO-FUNDING REQUIREMENTS below) for all parts of this program.

Each part of the program has specific requirements for participation; see I. PROGRAM PURPOSE & OVERVIEW above for details.

Events may only participate in one track of the program per fiscal year but may apply for multiple tracks.

If an event takes place as a series, you may select one or two events (two is the maximum number) in the series to include in the application. Event means an annual event rather than a calendar of programming.

Non-ticketed (free) tourism events are eligible so long as they meet the eligibility requirements.

Generally, only events with a proven history of success are eligible to apply for this program; however certain young events may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Only New Mexico based/managed events taking place in New Mexico are eligible for program participation. The organization's W9 must have a New Mexico address and be signed within 9 months of the application being submitted.

Guided tours and tourism product development are not eligible for this program. One-time events such as conventions, conferences, etc. are not eligible for this program.

III. FISCAL AGENT & CO-FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

Fiscal Agent

An eligible fiscal agent is required for all parts of this program. Eligible fiscal agents include legal, nonprofit tourism-related organizations, as designated by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), municipalities, counties, and tribal governments within the State of New Mexico that promote New Mexico as a visitor destination.

Municipalities, counties, tribal governments, other state entities and nonprofit organizations may serve as their own fiscal agent. For-profit applicants must partner with a government entity to serve as a fiscal agent.

Nonprofit organizations – 501c3s - must be in good standing with the New Mexico Secretary of State and the New Mexico Department of Justice. Proof of good standing must be included in the application to be considered for the award.

Co-Funding

The TEGS Event Accelerator and Event Sponsorship tracks do not require a match or co-funding. The TEGS CoOp Events Marketing Program track is a 2:1* matching investment marketing program in which awarded entities choose from a media menu up to an award of \$10,000 with a maximum partner contribution of \$5,000, totaling \$15,000 to spend on menu options. The co-funded award is strictly cash-only paid to NMTD by the awarded partner. Through the application, awarded partners

select from a Smart Select Menu and co-fund and co-buy the selected media with NMTD.

*2:1 match contingent on outcome of 2025 Legislative Session.

IV. GENERAL APPLICATION GUIDELINES

TEGS is a co-branded program, allowing our partners access to the award-winning New Mexico True brand. The New Mexico True brand has reflected the authenticity of the Land of Enchantment since 2012 and has consistently shown year-over-year success. As a part of brand stewardship, *all creative must meet New Mexico True brand standards and must be reviewed and approved by NMTD prior to trafficking*.

One entity may apply for multiple annual events by completing an individual application for each event.

Applicants may use one application to express interest in more than one or all three tracks of the program and if eligible will be placed into the most appropriate track by NMTD. However, if an applicant is deemed ineligible for the track(s) selected, they will not be eligible for the remaining track(s) not selected in the application.

There is no requirement to begin in the Accelerator track. Events may pick the track(s) most appropriate to them.

All funds will be awarded for use in the fiscal year in which the application is awarded (July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026), but for events taking place in the summer, program participation may benefit the following year's edition of the event. May-August 2025 events may apply for the 2026 edition of the event.

Events may participate in the program for multiple years. The program is meant to foster growth and sustainability in tourism-driving events, and events may rise through the program as they become ready and eligible.

V. APPLICATION & AWARD PROCESS TIMELINE

Step 1: Determine Eligibility

Identify an event which will participate in the program and ensure it meets eligibility requirements as defined in II. ELIGIBILITY.

Step 2: Identify a Fiscal Agent

Identify an eligible fiscal agent as defined in III. FISCAL AGENT & CO- FUNDING REQUIREMENTS.

Step 3: Apply

Complete the online FY26 application between Wednesday, March 19, 2025, at 8:00am (MDT) and Thursday, April 17, 2025, at 5:00pm (MDT). Application will be completed in Submittable where applicants will need to create an account.

Step 4: Review Period & Decision Notification

Applications will be reviewed May 2025.

Decision notifications will be sent in June 2025.

Agreements will be signed within the month following the acceptance of the award notification.

VI. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The Tourism Event Growth & Sustainability Program application can be accessed beginning March 19, 2025. The link will be available on the program website page, <u>Tourism Event Growth & Sustainability Program (TEGS) (newmexico.org)</u>.

A sample application along with an accompanying definitions document will be provided on the website for your information and preparation.

VII. APPLICATION EVALUATION CONSIDERATIONS

Event Eligibility

Event meets all program eligibility requirements as defined in II. ELIGIBILITY.

Application Completeness

All sections of the application must be completed, with the exception of optional questions or upload sections.

Need for Technical Assistance

Events selected for participation in the TEGS Accelerator track will demonstrate a need for technical assistance provided by this program, such as online discoverability assessments, event on-site assessments, etc.

Sponsorship Readiness

Events selected for participation in the Event Sponsorship must demonstrate sponsorship readiness as defined in I. PROGRAM PURPOSE & OVERVIEW above.

Need for Marketing/Advertising Assistance

Events selected for participation in the CoOp Events Marketing Program will demonstrate a need for the marketing/advertising assistance provided by this program, as defined in I. PROGRAM PURPOSE & OVERVIEW above.

Awarded event partners must be able to meet the 2:1 match requirement. *

^{*2:1} match contingent on outcome of 2025 Legislative Session.

VIII. PROGRAM AGREEMENT

Awards will be officially executed upon receipt of the signed grant agreement.

IX. DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

Requirements for funding

- Scheduled calls and meetings have been attended.
- All required documentation and information have been provided.
- An eligible fiscal agent has been provided to administer funds provided through the program.

Event Accelerator Track

The event will receive technical assistance and up to \$5,000 in reimbursement-based funding to execute the deliverables provided in the accelerator program.

Deliverables for reimbursement:

- Pre-Approval: Provide scope of work with detailed deliverables that address the specific opportunities identified in the previously approved Plan for Funds which may be based on suggestions made in the Online Discoverability Audit and on-site assessment.
- Reimbursement request with proof of execution and proof of payment to vendor.

Event Sponsorship Track

Events may receive up to \$50,000 in sponsorship from NMTD. The amount may be based on event attendance and provides the co-brand with New Mexico True. Please see the attendance chart for further details.

Tier	Maximum Award	Typical Number of Attendees
1	\$5,000	Up to 4,999
2	\$10,000	5,000 – 9,999
3	\$20,000	10,000 – 24,999
4	\$30,000	25,000 – 49,999
5	\$50,000	50,000+

Events CoOp Track

Events will participate in a 2:1* matching investment marketing program in which awarded entities choose from a media menu up to an award of \$10,000. This co-funded award is strictly cash only. Awardees/partners select from a Smart Select Marketing menu and co-fund and co-buy the selected media with NMTD.

If you would like additional support to see which initiatives from our media menu would best suit your TEGS CoOp event's goals and objectives, take our pre-application survey located on the

grant website to receive a tailored menu of options based on your responses. Once you have completed the <u>survey</u>, you will receive your custom Smart Select Marketing™ Menu via email within 2 business days. You will upload this completed menu with your application where indicated. Please note, this survey is <u>not</u> required for program participation and its completion does <u>not</u> confirm your event's eligibility for the TEGS program or the CoOp tier.

Deliverables:

- Provide menu of marketing opportunities.
- Assist partner in making appropriate selections.
- Upon receipt of Partner funds, NMTD will:
 - Provide co-branded logo lockup;
 - Work with partner to produce creative and get approval per NM True specs;
 - Communicate with media vendors and secure ad placement and/or services as agreed upon;
 - o Provide documentation to Partner to verify agreed upon deliverables were made;
 - Pay media vendors for ad placement and/or services;
 - o Collect and share campaign performance measurement data with Partner.

X. ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES

Event Accelerator Track

Eligible expenditures include the deliverables necessary to execute the findings/strategy identified via technical assistance. Sample deliverables include website creation or improvement, social media content creation, online ticketing platform creation, etc., to include NM True Brand impressions and NMTD hashtags.

Event Sponsorship Track

Sponsorable items will be identified and discussed prior to the execution of the grant agreement and will be mutually agreed upon between the event/fiscal agent and NMTD.

Event CoOp Advertising Track

Expenditures include items featured on the proposed marketing menu as outlined in the application and ultimately in the grant agreement.

XI. PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

For further information or assistance, please contact NMTD at grantinfo@td.nm.gov.

^{*2:1} match contingent on outcome of 2025 Legislative Session.