

## TOURISM EVENT GROWTH & SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM

### *FY27 PROGRAM GUIDELINES*

#### I. PROGRAM PURPOSE & OVERVIEW

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 through 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.”

The Tourism Event Growth & Sustainability (“TEGS”) program provides technical assistance, sponsorship, and marketing and advertising to events within New Mexico to support their growth and sustainability.

The program offers three (3) options for support:

##### A. **Event Accelerator**

This program is designed to build and improve 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 either a department coordinated event photo shoot or \$5,000 in **reimbursement-based** funding to execute the deliverables provided in the audit and/or assessment.

Deliverables for reimbursement funding:

1. 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.
2. Reimbursement: Provide request with proof of execution and proof of payment to vendor.

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

The Accelerator program funding is intended to provide time-limited support to help events build capacity, expand visitation, and achieve financial sustainability. Events may be awarded Accelerator funding for up to three (3) years. After three years, events are expected to demonstrate sustainability and may pursue other eligible funding opportunities, if applicable.

## **B. Event Marketing & Promotion (EMP) (formerly TEGS Co-Op)**

This program is designed to support eligible events in expanding their audience research and driving visitation through strategic, coordinated advertising efforts with a 2:1 advertising match\*. For FY27, the program has been streamlined to offer a simplified selection model focused on four pre-designed advertising plans. Applicants can select one of four (4) structured tiers:

1. Starter (requiring a \$667 partner match);
2. Foundational (\$1,000 partner match);
3. Digital Essential (\$2,500 partner match); or
4. Digital Essential Plus (a \$5,000 partner match).

Each tier is designed to provide a strategic, scalable level of marketing support aligned with event growth goals, target markets, and audience reach. Applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with Amanda Crocker, Account Manager & Special Programs Lead, at [amanda@nmtruecoop.org](mailto:amanda@nmtruecoop.org), prior to submitting their application to ensure selection of the most appropriate plan and to receive technical assistance in aligning their marketing objectives with the available advertising plans.

This co-funded award is strictly limited and requires a cash-only payment to NMTD by the awarded partner. Upon receipt of the funds, NMTD will proceed to 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. Applicants with limited or no digital footprint are encouraged to apply to the Accelerator track.

EMP funds will ideally be used for advertising outside of New Mexico, but in-state advertising will be considered on an event-by-event basis. As a general rule, 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.

## **C. Event Sponsorship**

Award amounts for sponsorship requests are typically up to \$50,000 and provides the event the opportunity to co-brand the event with New Mexico True. Sponsorship funding levels are guided by projected event attendance to ensure proportional investment. These attendance tiers serve as a framework for recommended funding ranges based on the scale and reach of an event.

*\* 2:1 match contingent on funding outcomes of the 2026 Legislative Session.*

<b>Tier</b>	<b>Maximum Award</b>	<b>Typical Number of Attendees</b>
1	\$5,000	100 – 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+

In limited circumstances, and at the discretion of the Department, funding requests exceeding \$50,000 may be considered for projects that demonstrate exceptional statewide impact, significant return on investment, or strategic alignment with Department priorities. 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:

1. upload (within the application) current letters of support from the event’s Town/City, County, Chamber, and DMO;
2. provide brand impressions equal to the contract amount; and
3. 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

- A. 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.**
- B. Applicants must partner with an eligible fiscal agent. See III. FISCAL AGENT & CO-FUNDING REQUIREMENTS below for all parts of this program.
- C. Each part of the program has specific requirements for participation. See I. PROGRAM PURPOSE & OVERVIEW above for details.
- D. Events may only participate in one track of the program per fiscal year but may apply for multiple tracks.

\*\* Tourism-related meaning the primary focus of the event is to draw visitation from attendees to stay in a location different from where they usually reside.

- E. If an event takes place as a series, you may select one or two events (two being the maximum) in the series to include in the application. Event means an annual event rather than a calendar of programming.
- F. Non-ticketed (free) tourism events are eligible so long as they meet the eligibility requirements.
- G. 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.
- H. 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 nine (9) months of the application being submitted.
- I. Guided tours and tourism product development are not eligible for this program.
- J. One-time events, such as conventions, conferences, etc., are not eligible for this program.

### III. FISCAL AGENT

- A. 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.
- B. 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.
- C. Nonprofit organizations – 501(c)(3)s – 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.

### IV. GENERAL APPLICATION GUIDELINES

- A. 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 works must meet New Mexico True brand standards and must be reviewed and approved by NMTD prior to trafficking.***
- B. One entity may apply for multiple annual events by completing an individual application for each

event. We ask that you do not submit multiple applications from different partners for the same event in an attempt to increase the odds of it being funded.

- C. Applicants interested in multiple tracks may apply for multiple tracks within one application. If an applicant is deemed ineligible for the track(s) selected by the applicant, they will not be eligible for the remaining track(s) not selected in the application.
- D. There is no requirement to begin in the Accelerator track. Events may pick the track(s) most appropriate to them.
- E. All funds will be awarded for use in the fiscal year in which the application is awarded (July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027), but for events taking place in the summer, program participation may benefit the following year's edition of the event. May–August 2026 events may apply for the 2027 edition of the event.
- F. Events may participate in the program for multiple years, except for the Accelerator track which has a three-year limit. The TEGS 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.

### **Step 3: Apply**

Complete the online FY27 application between Monday, March 9, 2026, at 8:00am (MDT) and Tuesday, April 7, 2026, at 11:59pm (MDT). Applications must be completed in Submittable where applicants will need to create an account.

### **Step 4: Review Period & Decision Notification**

Applications will be reviewed in May 2026.  
Decision notifications will be sent in June 2026.  
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 9, 2026. The link will be available on the program website page, [Tourism Event Growth & Sustainability Program \(TEGS\) \(newmexico.org\)](https://newmexico.org/tegs).

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

## VII. APPLICATION EVALUATION CONSIDERATIONS

- A. **Event Eligibility.** Event meets all program eligibility requirements as defined in the ELIGIBILITY section.
- B. **Application Completeness.** All sections of the application must be completed, with the exception of optional questions or upload sections.
- C. **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.
- D. **Need for Marketing/Advertising Assistance.** Events selected for participation in the EMP track will demonstrate a need for the marketing/advertising assistance provided by this program, as defined in I. PROGRAM PURPOSE & OVERVIEW above.
- E. **Sponsorship Readiness.** Events selected for participation in the Event Sponsorship must demonstrate sponsorship readiness as defined in I. PROGRAM PURPOSE & OVERVIEW above.

## VIII. PROGRAM AGREEMENT

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

## IX. DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

### A. Requirements for funding

1. Scheduled calls and meetings must have been attended;

2. All required documentation and information must have been provided; and
3. An eligible fiscal agent has been provided to administer funds provided through the program.

## X. ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES

### A. **Event Accelerator Track**

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

### B. **Event EMP Track**

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

### C. **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.

## XI. PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

For further information or assistance, please contact NMTD at [grantinfo@td.nm.gov](mailto:grantinfo@td.nm.gov).