NEW MEXICO ✦ TRUE

NEW MEXICO TOURISM DEPARTMENT
RURAL PATHWAY PROGRAM
FY23 TOURISM INCUBATOR GUIDELINES

I. TOURISM INCUBATOR PURPOSE

Provide technical assistance to tourism stakeholders within New Mexico for the development of viable tourism projects.

WHAT DOES "VIABLE" MEAN?

Viable means that demand can be sustained organically within the communities and/or organization and by the affected parties/stakeholders. It also means that benefits and impacts of the project (financial, socio-economic, access, quality of life, etc.) are experienced and managed equitably across the communities and stakeholders.

II. PROCESS OVERVIEW

STEP 1: CREATE & COLLABORATE

Identify a tourism project and bring together 5-7 stakeholders who have agreed to dedicate time to developing the project as part of a Steering Committee.

STEP 2: SHARE

As a Committee, complete the online Pre-Application at nmtourism.smapply.io. A member of the New Mexico Tourism Department team will confirm receipt of your application within 21 business days. If approved, you will be instructed to complete the full online Application as a Committee at nmtourism.smapply.io.

STEP 3: WORKSHOP

If your project is approved for participation in the program, NMTD will reach out to the Steering Committee to schedule a series of workshops. These workshops will be facilitated by the NMTD team and will provide you with best practices for

developing your tourism project concept and readying it to find funding. As you learn and plan, you will have access to resources which can be referenced outside of the workshops.

III. ELIGIBILITY

WHO MAY APPLY?

Entities eligible to apply include legal, nonprofit tourism related organizations, as designated by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS); and municipalities, counties, and tribal governments within the State of New Mexico that promote New Mexico as a visitor destination.

WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS QUALIFY?

Project types include but are not limited to: venues, experiences, services, tourism trails & interpretation, infrastructure, and tour development.
Examples of projects include:

VENUE	• Museum highlighting local/regional culture, history, art, traditions, etc. • Cooperative offering work by local/regional artists, possibly including classes, workshops, exhibits, etc. • Cooperative market offering local/regional specialty products
EXPERIENCE	Open workshop for local artists/artisans offering classes, workshops, educational programs, etc.
SERVICE	*Public entity preferred; if private, must demonstrate a comparable public benefit*
TOURISM TRAILS & INTERPRETATION	• Thematic trail connecting several towns, highlighting a shared regional tradition, history, product, practice, landscape, etc. • Farm/food trail highlighting local/regional foodscapes, food products, and cuisines • Regional road trip map • Historical trail with interpretive elements • Dark Skies interpretation • Archaeological site interpretation
INFRASTRUCTURE	Redevelopment of historic museum, building, or asset
TOUR DEVELOPMENT	• Themed regional tours (Northern/Southern New Mexico, etc.)

	• Outdoor physical experiences (whitewater rafting, paddle boarding, wildlife viewing, outfitters, etc.) • Agritourism

IV. PROGRAM AGREEMENT

The program award will be officially executed upon receipt by NMTD of the signed program agreement.

V. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The Rural Pathway Program application can be accessed at nmtourism.smapply.io.

PROGRAM GOALS, DEFINITIONS, AND ASSOCIATED STRATEGIES
GOAL 1
Develop authentic experiences that are aligned with the New Mexico True brand; a promise to deliver "adventure steeped in culture."

DEFINITIONS:

Authentic

The proposed tourism project must reflect the spirit of New Mexico in some aspect. This can take the form of a tangible product (for example, Hatch green chile) or an intangible experience (for example, traditional dances or cultural practices). The experience does not have to be unique to New Mexico (for instance, Dark Skies are not unique to New Mexico alone), but should represent an element comprising the identity and spirit of New Mexico. Examples from past program participants include: Española Low Rider Museum: a tangible product (museum) offering an experience (museum visit) highlighting a local/regional cultural practice (lowriders). Town of Silver City Main Street: a physical activity (walking tour) offering an experience (seeing/visiting local buildings) highlighting local history (buildings and their former residents).

Experiences

The tourism product should involve at a minimum certain elements of "experience." Experience can be considered in several ways: something a tourist lives physically, intellectually, emotionally, or psychologically; something outside of the tourist's everyday realm of experience; an interaction between the tourist and the tourism product (physical, intellectual, emotional, or psychological); etc.

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.
Projects reflecting the New Mexico True brand represent the people, landscapes, and cultures of New Mexico as honestly and faithfully as possible, bringing tourists (from near or 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 "adventures that feed the soul."

Adventure Steeped in Culture
The tourism product should engage the tourist in an "adventure" (an experience outside of the tourist's scope of daily activity, whether physical, intellectual, emotional, or psychological), and that adventure should be based in an element of New Mexican culture.

STRATEGIES:
- o Identify the specific tangible and intangible elements of the product which reflect New Mexico's spirit and identity.
- o Identify how these elements will be represented (communicated to tourists) through the product.
- o Identify how the product aligns with the New Mexico True Brand (described above).
- o Identify any elements of adventure in the product (communicated to tourists or experienced by them). Note that this does not have to be adventure of a physical nature, but can also include adventures of an emotional, psychological, spiritual, or intellectual nature.
- o Identify the tangible and intangible cultural elements of the product.

GOAL 2
Drive economic growth and create jobs through the development of strategic tourism projects.

DEFINITIONS:
Economic Growth & Job Creation
The project should drive economic growth which goes beyond the financial wellbeing of its immediate stakeholders. The project should have the potential to create positive direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts on the community/geographical area in which the project is implemented, and should have the potential to create jobs for locals, with the number of jobs increasing as the project expands. Wherever possible, the project should diversify the revenue streams available to or harnessed by the community involved. Local contractors should be used as much as possible in order to keep project dollars within the community.

STRATEGIES:

- o Identify current annual gross receipts tax and lodgers' tax in the proposed territory; identify the anticipated gross receipts tax and lodgers' tax that the project will generate on an annual basis.
- o Identify the current annual visitation in the proposed territory; identify the anticipated daily visitation that the project will generate on an annual basis.
- o Identify the current daily visitor spending in the proposed territory; identify the anticipated daily visitor spending the project will generate.
- o Identify the current number of tourism-related jobs in the proposed territory; identify the anticipated number of tourism-related jobs that the project will generate on an annual basis.
- o Identify or model the anticipated growth of the above factors over time, based on estimated factors impacting the project's scalability.
- o Identify the types of tourism-related jobs (current and anticipated): hourly vs. full-time, seasonal vs. year-round, skilled (and level of education required) vs. unskilled, etc.
- o Identify current revenue streams in the proposed territory; identify any new revenue streams which will be harnessed during the project.
- o Identify the location of contractors used on the project: local, regional, state, other.

GOAL 3

Engage stakeholders in constructive conversations regarding how best to capitalize on tourism trends and the New Mexico True brand.

EXPLANATION:

This program involves bringing together stakeholders who are committed to developing the project from inception to funding and implementation. These stakeholders form a Steering Committee of 5-7 people who guide the development of the project and collaborate with external parties and stakeholders. Stakeholders beyond the Committee may be public or private actors such as associations, government officials, community residents, and anyone impacted by tourism development efforts in the proposed location. A healthy dialogue among all of these stakeholders, as well as clear and timely communication, is an essential element of a successful project.

STRATEGIES:

- o Identify who will be impacted by the proposed tourism project, how they will be impacted, and measures taken/to take in order to mitigate any negative impacts.
- o Identify how all persons impacted by the tourism project have been involved in the development of said project.
- o Identify employed methods of and spaces for two-way communication around the project: Steering Committee to those impacted, and vice-versa. Examples include:
    - o Educational spaces/exhibits for those impacted to learn more about the project and its intended results.
    - o Participatory forums during which those impacted by the project may contribute ideas, support, objections, and opinions.
    - o Newsletters, website, email updates, etc. to communicate progress.

- o Include letters of support from stakeholders not on the Steering Committee.
- o Include any communications materials which have been created and/or distributed to those impacted by the proposed project.
- o Include notes from any participatory forums held.
- o Include images and/or content from educational exhibits created around the project.
- o Include a benchmark/SWOT study of similar projects in another region/state/country.
- o Include any news stories/media/branding/marketing of a similar project.

GOAL 4

Spark creativity and ownership for stakeholder successes and opportunities.

DEFINITIONS:

Spark Creativity

The project planning, implementation, and evaluation processes should allow for the maximum amount of creative expression from as many sources as possible.

Spark Ownership

Through the phases of project development, implementation, and evaluation, it is essential to grant responsibility and ownership of each project element to specific parties. This increases responsibility, as well as active and continued participation in ensuring the project's feasibility and wellbeing.

Successes

In order to measure the project's successes, metrics must be developed and applied rigorously throughout each stage of development, implementation, and evaluation. The results of these metrics must be able to be presented and communicated in a clear format and style which allows for understanding, appreciation, and participation by experts and nonexperts alike.

Opportunities

Opportunities take two forms: the opportunities available to the project itself, and the opportunities created by the project. Opportunities available to the project may include partnerships, funding, idea generators from external sources, etc. Opportunities created by the project may take various forms: economic, social, educational, professional, reputational, etc.

STRATEGIES:
- o Identify sources of creativity and creative expression within the project.
- o Identify methods of harnessing creativity from stakeholders and locals, and note whether they have been used or will be used, and in what capacity.
- o Identify the parties responsible for each element of project development, implementation, and evaluation.
- o Identify project milestones.
- o Detail the methodology used/to be used for tracking success of the project.

- o Identify the opportunities available to this project and note whether they have been used or will be used, and in what capacity (see above for examples).
- o Identify the opportunities created by this project (see above for examples), and whom they benefit (local residents, local businesses, project stakeholders, etc.).

GOAL 5
Connect and diversify the tourism industry.

DEFINITIONS:

Connect

Making connections among stakeholders is crucial to building a strong network of support for the project. Clear lines and methods of communication must be established, ensuring that experts and nonexperts alike are able to understand, appreciate, and contribute to the project.

Diversify

The greater the diversity of voices and expertise a project has, the greater its chances of success and of serving the widest possible population, maximizing positive impacts and minimizing negative ones. Diversity can take the form of underrepresented populations in a socio-economic sense, but also underrepresented populations in a larger sense, such as academics and individual experts in certain fields who may not otherwise be consulted or included in the project.

STRATEGIES:
- o Identify a strategy for communication among all stakeholders (public and private, at all levels, including individuals, experts, and non-experts), including the different methods used/to be used.
- o Identify existing collaborations or partnerships that may assist in project planning, implementation, and evaluation. In what ways will they assist?
- o Identify any new collaborations or partnerships which may assist in project planning, implementation, and evaluation. In what ways will they assist?
- o Identify any new or unique voices welcomed into the process and any adaptations that have been made in order to include them (pueblos, locals, marginalized communities, experts, nonexperts, etc.).

VI. APPLICATION EVALUATION CONSIDERATIONS

VIABILITY
- o Demand can be sustained organically within the communities/organization and by affected parties/stakeholders

- o Benefits and impacts are experienced equitably across community/stakeholders (financial, socio-economic, access, quality of life, etc.)

ALIGNEMENT WITH PROGRAM GOALS
(Strategies for Meeting Goals are Outlined in Goal Strategies, Above)
- o Project offers an experience aligned with the New Mexico True brand and the promise to deliver "adventure steeped in culture"
- o Project drives economic impact and creates jobs, stimulating local economies
- o Project engages stakeholders in constructive conversations around tourism trends and the New Mexico True brand
- o Project sparks creativity and ownership for stakeholder successes and opportunities
- o Project connects and diversifies the tourism industry

VII. PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

Tourism Development Coordinator Emily Bates will establish communication schedules and provide technical assistance for all awardees. She can be reached by e-mail at emily.bates@state.nm.us or by phone at 505-690-6167.