STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PROGRAM:

FOUNDATION AWARD

(PROJECTS UP TO $20K)

EXPLORE TUALATIN VALLEY

ABOUT EXPLORE TUALATIN VALLEY

Established in 1983 as “Washington County Visitors Association”, Explore Tualatin Valley (ETV) is a non-profit destination marketing and destination development organization, funded by 26% of the transient lodging tax (TLT) via county contract agreement. ETV’s role is to identify and market to out-of-area-visitors, with the mission to increase overnight visitation in Washington County, (known as “Tualatin Valley” to consumers).

VISION

Tualatin Valley is known as a diverse and inspiring Oregon destination where urban sophistication and rural authenticity meet.

MISSION

Explore Tualatin Valley cultivates a thriving destination through approachable and inclusive visitor experiences, sustainable economic impact, and exceptional quality of life.

CORE VALUES

Foundation
We serve as a platform for cultural and economic growth

Inspiration
We spark big ideas and big experiences

Relevance
We focus on what truly matters to our visitors and our communities

Tomorrow
We propel our destination forward with vision and agility

Heart
We are rooted in—and connected to—our place

ELIGIBLE FOUNDATION AWARD PROJECTS

Explore Tualatin Valley’s (ETV) Strategic Investment Grant Program is a competitive award program offered to Washington County, Oregon, based non-profit 501(c) organizations and confederated tribes. ETV is seeking engaged, enthusiastic, collaborative partners in tourism who are rooted in—and connected to— Tualatin Valley, as we are.

We seek projects that will generate overnight visitation to Washington County, Oregon, and that serve as a platform for cultural and economic growth.

Organizations that have an inspirational project that will collaboratively propel Explore Tualatin Valley forward in our efforts to promote the destination to overnight visitors and enhance the quality of life of our residents are encouraged to apply.

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

1. Project can prove it will generate overnight stays in paid accommodations (e.g. hotels, motels, B&B, RV parks, camping)
2. A minimum of 25% covered by the applicant and/or other funding sources
3. Detailed project budget

PRIORITY GIVEN TO PROJECTS ALSO ALIGNING WITH THE FOLLOWING:

1. Supports off-season and lower demand visitation periods
2. Organization(s) lacks access to existing taxing or community-funded mechanisms
3. Projects exceeding the minimum 25% matching funds
4. Project Feasibility/Eligibility
    a. Creates, inspires, and/or improves a tourism-facing business activity
    b. Has clear objectives, timelines, resources, deliverables
    c. Serves unmet visitor needs
5. Social Impact
    a. Fosters the areas of sustainability and accessibility
6. Community Engagement and Support
    a. Leverages support from other sources
    b. Is collaborative in nature and/or linked with or supported by local community or regional efforts
    c. Provides evidence of support and endorsement by the communities or constituencies the project is proposed to serve

OUR PRIORITIZED AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT

Tualatin Valley as a Wine and Craft Beverage Destination

Tualatin Valley is the closest wine destination to Portland and PDX. ETV supports and promotes wine tourism, and is working to increase visibility and accessibility to our unique wine region. Similarly, ETV recognizes the abundance of craft breweries and cideries, and aims to explore opportunities to showcase the craft beverage segment in Washington County.

Tualatin Valley as an Arts & Culture Destination

ETV supports the creativity and diversity of our local arts and cultural assets. We recognise Washington County's unique positioning as a wine destination with access to a variety of arts and cultural experiences. ETV supports the enrichment of our arts and culture organizations.

Tualatin Valley as a Recreational Destination

ETV is a proactive partner with local and state parks, refuges, riverkeepers, and other organizations to work towards conserving and developing recreation options. ETV is looking to further support and promote the outdoor and indoor recreation sector in Washington County.

Tualatin Valley as an Agritourism and Culinary Destination

Washington County offers diverse agricultural offerings, including vineyards, orchards, farms, artisanal producers, and a thriving culinary scene. By highlighting the connection between local agriculture, farm-to-table dining, and the region's natural beauty, Explore Tualatin Valley (ETV) aims to position Tualatin Valley as a premier agritourism and culinary destination while preserving agricultural heritage, supporting local producers, and creating memorable visitor experiences.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Explore Tualatin Valley's Strategic Investment competitive **Foundation Award** may support **up to $20,000** of funding. Eligible projects include any project that will generate overnight stays to Washington County. All projects must be compliant with the Americans With Disabilities Act.

Consideration for the strategic investment grant is given to activities that may include (but are not limited to)**:**

- Small capital projects
- Development of bookable guided and/or hands-on experiences
- Culinary Tourism
- Public Art
- Historic Preservation Projects
- Indigenous and Cultural Heritage Projects
- Recreation and Trail projects
- Beautification, Wayfinding, and Signage

Eligible projects are also **required to have a minimum 25% covered by the applicant or other funding sources alongside a detailed operations budget for the project that includes funding sources and detail of expenses** that will be incurred from this grant.

Foundation Grant Funds **will not be provided** for **routine operational expenses** such as regular salaries, business operating costs, travel and mileage. See FAQs for other restrictions.

THE APPLICATION & EVALUATION PROCESS

Explore Tualatin Valley's competitive Strategic Investment Foundation Grant Program applications will be accepted during the following periods:

Fiscal Year 2027 Awards

- ➔ **December 2026 awards:** July 21 - September 30, 2026 submissions. **Applications due by September 30, 2026**. Strategic Investment Grants will be awarded by **December 15, 2026**.

All applications are due and considered final after September 30, 2026 and cannot be amended.

The Strategic Investment Grant Foundation Award application can be found at https://tualatinvalley.org. Please fill out the online form. If you need a hard copy or require additional assistance, please email engage@tualatinvalley.org. You may also **Download the application questions here.**

Applications will be presented to the Executive Committee and then approved by the Board of Directors.

THE FOUNDATION AWARD PROCESS

Strategic Investment Grant Agreements

Successful applicants will enter into an award agreement with ETV. The agreement will specify the scope of work, allocation of funds, terms of the project, reporting, project performance and expectations. Signed agreements **must be returned no more than 30 days from the date of award.**

Once the award agreement is signed, the project will need to be completed by December 31, 2027.

The ETV staff will check in quarterly.

Award Funds Disbursement

Awarded funds will be dispersed via check upon receipt of the signed award agreement, invoice and W-9. These funds may only be used for costs related to the project and clearly identified in the award budget.

Unused Funds and Non-Compliant Fund Usage

Any award funds not used by the one year contract anniversary shall be returned to Explore Tualatin Valley in accordance with the award agreement.

Any award funds **not used in compliance** with the signed award agreement shall be returned to Explore Tualatin Valley.

Summary Report

A **final summary report** must be submitted **one year from the date of the fully-executed award agreement**. The report template will be sent separately after the grant agreement is signed. Summary will include:

- Summary of project
- Project budget
- Summary listing of all expenses incurred with a description of the purpose of the expense
- Project impact and challenges encountered
- ETV Recognition
- Copy of invoices
- Copy of checks or other proof of payment

EXPLORE TUALATIN VALLEY RECOGNITION

As your partner in tourism, ETV requires recognition in the promotion of projects and recognition of the financial contribution and support provided by ETV. Where possible, credit should say: **"This project is funded in part using strategic investment funds from Explore Tualatin Valley,"** to and will include the Explore Tualatin Valley logo, provided by ETV.

Please review Explore Tualatin Valley's Style Guide and approved logos here.

FAQs:

1. **Question:** Can I preview the application questions before filling out the official application?

   Answer: Yes. We encourage you to download the application questions before filling out the application.

2. **Question:** Where can I access the application and what are the methods of submission?

   Answer: You can find the application on ETV's website. You can fill out the application online, or you can submit your completed application to Engage@TualatinValley.org.

3. **Question:** If we received a strategic investment grant award in a prior cycle, does that make us eligible for the current cycle?

   Answer: Yes. If your organization has previously been awarded a tourism award by ETV, it will be considered for foundation grant funding if all previously awarded funds complied with agreement requirements and procedures.

4. **Question:** Can our organization submit more than one application in this cycle?

   Answer: Only one foundation grant project per organization per cycle will be awarded. We recommend that organizations submit an application for the project that aligns most closely with the guidelines.

5. **Question:** Are there restrictions to what the strategic investment grant awards can support ?

   Answer: Yes. Some of these restrictions include, (but are not limited to): Administrative or membership fees, regular salaries, business operating costs, travel and mileage, apparel for volunteers and/or staff, non-visitor events (examples include, but are not limited to: dinners, auctions, fund-raisers, galas, school events, classes/workshops, clinics, camps, etc.) Projects focused solely on marketing asset development or promotions will not be considered.

6. **Question:** Does Explore Tualatin Valley require recognition for funds awarded?

   Answer: Yes. ETV requires recognition in the promotion of projects recognizing the financial contribution and support provided by ETV. Where possible, credit should say: “This project is funded in part using strategic investment grant funds from Explore Tualatin Valley,” and will include the Explore Tualatin Valley logo, provided by ETV.

7. **Question:** Are there legal compliance guidelines that I need to be aware of?

   Answer: Yes. Legal requirements/compliance/guidelines: Recipient hereby certifies that it has complied, and agrees that it shall comply, with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, executive orders and ordinances related to expenditure of the Strategic Investment grant moneys and the activities financed with the Strategic Investment grant moneys. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, Recipient expressly agrees to comply with (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, (b) Section V of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, (c) the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and ORS 659A.142, (d) all regulations and administrative rules established pursuant to the foregoing laws, and (e) all other application requirements of federal and state civil rights and rehabilitation statutes, rules and regulations.

8. **Question: Are government agencies eligible to apply for the Foundation Award?**

   Answer: No. The program is intended to support eligible nonprofit and community-based organizations leading tourism-related destination development projects.