

**Economic, Cultural, Tourism and Sustainability
Grants Policy**
Program Goals, Categories, Criteria, and Requirements

The City of Ashland collects a Transient Occupancy Tax, from people who stay in overnight lodging within the City limits. Over half (58%) of those funds are reserved for the City's General Fund and are used to support Police, Fire, Community Development, and Municipal Court. Slightly more than a quarter (26.67%) of those funds are used to support the tourism industry. The tourist funds are either allocated directly to groups that market Ashland to tourists or are spent on capital facilities that enhance the tourism experience within the community. The remaining funds are dedicated to the City's annual grant program. The amounts that go to each of these programs are allocated prior to the beginning of each fiscal year by the Ashland City Council, generally in February.

The City of Ashland reinvests a portion of the funds generated by the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) in community non-profits through an annual grant program. Through the grant program, the City is purchasing specific services from non-profits that it might otherwise provide directly. The grant program has four basic goals:

- **Economic Development.** The grant program will support the creation, retention, and expansion of businesses and other ventures that enrich our community by creating goods and services that provide employment opportunities while maintaining and enhancing the overall quality of life. The 2011 Economic Development Strategy provides both policy level and action level guidance for eligible grant application programs and activities.
- **Cultural Development.** The grant program will support increased diversity of and accessibility to the creative arts and cultural opportunities in Ashland for citizens and visitors and will support the visitor economy, maintain and promote job growth in this sector and enrich the overall quality of life in the community.
- **Tourism.** As a long standing pillar of Ashland's economy, tourism programs support programs, activities and events that act similarly to more traditional traded sector activity in that dollars from outside the community are brought in and circulated locally to the benefit of our local businesses.
- **Sustainability.** The grant program will create and support programs and activities to further support efforts to ensure Ashland is environmentally, economically and socially resilient as a community.

I. GRANT CATEGORIES

Non-profit organizations applying for grants must identify the category of funds that their application meets and will be evaluated and scored by the sub-committee using the attached scoring sheet.

Applicants may request funds from multiple categories, but the justification for applying in multiple categories needs to be clearly spelled out in the application.

A. Economic Development

Grant allocations in the Economic Development category will be made to support and implement the City's Economic Development Strategy.

Eligible activities include:

1. Specific implementing actions or programs identified in the economic development strategy.
Those activities can be found at

http://ashland.or.us/files/Ashland_EconomicDevelopmentStrategy_Final.pdf, on pages 8 through 22.

2. Programs and activities that foster and support the creation, expansion or retention of existing businesses in the community that
 - rely on and earn a competitive advantage from innovation, creativity, design, proto-typing and technology
 - produce specialty and value added goods or services with a market beyond our local economy
3. Programs and activities that improve the coordination, communication and collaboration among local and regional economic development partners.
4. Programs and activities that promote and/or provide and increased availability of investment capital for local business.
5. Programs and activities that improve local educational & technical skills to match local business workforce needs.

Criteria for evaluation

The City seeks to accomplish the desired outcomes from the economic development strategy (page 23) through the grants, and therefore these outcomes will be used to evaluate applications. Applications for the Economic Development Grants will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Likelihood that the proposed activity will increase or support an increase in total employment within Ashland.
- Likelihood that employment and businesses being served by the grant will be added in enterprises that rely on innovation, creativity (etc.) or produce a specialty good or service for export.
- Likelihood that the proposed activity will support and assist existing businesses within Ashland in expanding or remaining in the community.
- Likelihood that the proposed activity would support and foster an increase in jobs that are at or above the median income for Ashland.

B. Cultural Development

Cultural development grants are intended to support the retention and growth of Ashland's unique cultural offerings, both to residents and tourists alike. Leveraging and expanding Ashland's cultural assets such as creative, performing and visual arts, historic preservation and education, brings creative community prosperity and adds to the overall quality of life of the community. Ashland's visitor economy also thrives on the cultural and performing arts sector, so increasing the diversity of cultural opportunities for visitors strengthens the tourism economy overall. The City's grant program is designed to strengthen existing cultural activities, increase the number and diversity of cultural activities, maintain and expand job growth in this sector, and increase both resident and visitor access to these activities.

Eligible activities include:

1. Programs or activities that create cultural offerings unique from existing local offerings, activities or programs.
2. Programs or activities that ensure the long-term success of local cultural groups.
3. Expansion in size or scope of existing cultural offerings, activities or programs.
4. Expansion of audience access to those existing offerings, activities or programs.
5. Support services targeted to existing or proposed cultural offerings, activities or programs.

Criteria for Evaluation.

Grant applications for cultural development monies will be evaluated based on the following:

- Likelihood that the proposed activity will diversify the number, type, or availability to cultural service, activity or program proposed compared with existing local cultural opportunities.
- Likelihood that the proposed activity ensures long-term access to an important aspect of the visual or performing arts or other local cultural attraction.
- Degree to which the proposed activity will collaborate with an existing cultural program or will leverage another cultural opportunity.
- Likelihood that the proposed activity will increase access to cultural programs or activities, particularly by those who may not otherwise have access such as low income residents, children, or minority groups.

C. Tourism

As a long standing pillar of Ashland's economy, tourism programs support programs, activities and events that act similarly to more traditional traded sector activity in that dollars from outside the community are brought in and circulated locally to the benefit of our local businesses.

Criteria for Evaluation.

Grant applications for tourism monies will be evaluated and scored based on the following:

- Likelihood that the proposed activity or event will increase hotel/motel occupancy or increase local restaurant and retail business sales.
- Likelihood that the proposed activity will increase the total number of jobs in tourism, hotels, restaurants, and retail businesses in Ashland.
- Likelihood that the proposed activity will increase hotel/motel occupancy and restaurant/retail business in Ashland in the months of October through April.
- Likelihood that the proposed activity will create or support a new non-traditional tourism related event.

D. Sustainability

The goal of the sustainability grants process is to support the exploration and expansion of efforts to ensure that Ashland is an environmentally, economically, and socially resilient community now and into the future.

Eligible activities include:

1. Program development, education & training, and outreach related to: local renewable energy supply, production and use; energy efficiency and conservation; water use efficiency and conservation; local food supply; local natural resource or ecology; resource reclamation, reuse and recycling.
2. Programs and activities that assist local businesses in energy, water, waste reductions, and supply chain efficiencies.
3. Programs and activities that support and increase local to local purchasing either by businesses or by retail consumers.

Criteria for Evaluation.

Grant applications for sustainability monies will be evaluated based on the following:

- Likelihood that the proposed activity will contribute to reduced consumption of a critical resource by citizens or businesses in the community. Resources include fuel, electricity, water, land, air, or other natural resources.

- Likelihood that the proposed activity will be “transferable.” That is, the lessons and experiences gained through the program or activities can be transferred to another resource, organization, or community.
- Likelihood that the proposed activity will reduce citizen or business dependence on food, goods or services shipped in from outside the Rogue Valley, i.e. “buy local” efforts.
- Degree to which the proposed activity provides quality sustainability related educational opportunities to the community.

II. GRANT APPLICATION AND AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Grant applicants and corresponding grant applications must adhere to the following program requirements:

1. Grantee shall be registered as a 501(c) non-profit*
 - * If your organization is being sponsored by or legally affiliated with a registered non-profit, a letter from that organizations Board of Directors recognizing the affiliation and a copy of the 501 (c) verification of the sponsoring non-profit
2. Grantee shall be a non-government entity.
3. Minimum grant award will be **\$1,000** per grant category and **\$5,000** per grant application.
4. Grant award shall be utilized consistent with the associated applicant proposal and shall be primarily oriented to the grantee’s Ashland activities and programs. Grant funds may also be utilized for a proportionate share of Grantee’s administrative expenses associated with the Ashland activities and programs proposed.
5. An applicant can apply for grant funds from more than one category, however, it is the responsibility of the applicant to specify the categories and funds requested for each category and clearly describe how the proposal meets the criteria for each category.
6. Grantees must submit the application to the City prior to the deadline, which is established each year by the City’s Administrative Service Department. **Absolutely no late applications will be accepted.** The City is aware that sometimes “life” intervenes, therefore, applicants are advised to have a backup plan to ensure that the application is not late.
7. Incomplete applications (see application cover page) will not be forwarded to the grant review committee for consideration
8. Materials submitted beyond those required and listed on the application cover page and application form will not be forwarded to the grant review committee as part of the application packet.

III. GRANT REPORTING

Grant award recipients shall submit a written report to the City of Ashland at the end of grant period. Report requirements include:

Report Content

1. Financial summary of the utilization of grant funds towards the objectives set forth in the grant award application.
2. Statistical summary of the positive economic, cultural or sustainability impacts associated with the utilization of grant funds based on the scoring categories used to make the grant award. Applicants should provide actual data on one or more of the following outcomes:
 - Number of actual jobs created as a direct result of the City grant.
 - Number of new business licenses issued as a direct result of the City grant.
 - Median wage of actual jobs created as a direct result of the City grant.
 - Number of people who travelled to Ashland from over 50 miles away as a direct result of activities funded by the City’s grant.

- Number of additional overnight stays in Ashland transient lodging businesses as a direct result of the City's grant.
- Number of additional events offered in Ashland as a direct result of the City's grant.
- Number of additional people who attended a cultural event in Ashland as a direct result of the City's grant.
- Number of additional children, seniors, or low income residents who attended a cultural event in Ashland as a direct result of the City's grant.
- Amount of conservation or reduction in use of a critical natural resource by Ashland residents, businesses or visitors that is directly attributable to the grant. Document the resource and the evidence that the grant activity resulted in its conservation.

3. Any other program or activity specific data associated with the grant award.

Report Submittal

1. End of Grant report shall be submitted to the City Administrator's Office by October 1st following the end of the grant award period (July 1-June 30).
2. Failure to submit an acceptable End of Grant report by the required due date disqualifies the grantee from future grant application eligibility.