

City of Spokane Valley

Request for Proposal

2024 Lodging Tax Grants

This Request for Proposal offered by the City of Spokane Valley is to solicit proposals from those agencies and groups which encourage tourism in Spokane Valley. The source of funds is a 2.0 percent tax (RCW 67.28.180) and a 1.3 percent tax (RCW 67.28.181) on all charges for furnishing lodging at hotels, motels, and similar establishments (including bed and breakfasts and RV parks) for a continuous period of less than one month. Funds from the 1.3 percent tax may only be allocated for capital purposes for tourism-related facilities and are only available to municipalities and public facilities districts. State law allows the use of lodging tax revenues for the following categories:

- Tourism marketing
- The marketing and operations of special events and festivals
- The operation and capital expenditures of tourism related facilities owned or operated by a municipality or public facility district
- The operation (but not capital expenditures) of tourism related facilities owned or operated by non-profit organizations

The expected outcome of such activity is to increase economic activity in the City of Spokane Valley during 2024 through a variety of activities, such as overnight lodging of tourists ("heads in beds"), restaurant sales, and retail activity.

The Spokane Valley Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) was established by the Spokane Valley City Council in accordance with state law to advise and recommend to the Council how excise taxes on lodging collected in Spokane Valley should be allocated to best increase tourism in the City.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Only online submissions will be accepted (see pages 3-5 for details). All required sections and attachments must be completed to be considered for funding. Proposals are due by **Friday, September 29, by 4 p.m.**

Funding is open to both for-profit and non-profit organizations, and municipal agencies. See specific details in the categories listed in the section above for uses restricted to non-profits or municipalities.

Funding is generally distributed on a reimbursement basis. Reimbursements will be distributed for documented costs, as outlined in the proposal, up to the amount awarded.

All applicants will be required to deliver an in-person presentation highlighting their proposal to the LTAC on October 26, 2023 at a meeting beginning at 8:30 a.m.

A project/program budget is required to be considered for funding. An overall organizational budget is an optional, but highly recommended submission. This allows for an overall review of the organizational financial stability, credibility, and where the dollars will be directed. Additionally, financial review also factors in the total budget for the organization in relation to how much is being requested for funding.

SCHEDULE OF GRANT CYCLE

Project/Program Management and Grant Administration:

The City of Spokane Valley Finance Department will oversee and manage the grant program, approve, and reimburse expenses, and monitor contract compliance and post grant reporting.

Selection Process:

Each application will be reviewed by the Finance department for completion and eligibility. Then, eligible proposals will be reviewed by the LTAC as to the effectiveness of its proposed project in meeting the expected outcomes, need, and funding requirements. Additionally, all applicants are expected to make an oral presentation to the LTAC for the committee to completely understand the proposed project and have an opportunity to ask any questions. The LTAC will create a list of candidates and recommended award amounts for City Council approval. The LTAC recommendations will not be subject to review or challenge by the applicants. The City Council may only approve candidates and the recommended amounts from the list provided by the LTAC in such manner as provided by law. Council may choose to make awards to all, some, or none of the recommended candidates in the amounts recommended by the LTAC. Staff will then consult with applicants of approved projects to develop contracts for the allocated amounts based on the original proposal.

The following is the anticipated schedule for the 2024 grant cycle:

Notice placed in newspaper, website, and grant package available	September 1, 2023
Application must be submitted online no later than 4:00pm	September 29, 2023
Application materials available for Lodging Tax Advisory Committee	October 18, 2023
Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) meets, hears presentations, and makes award recommendation that will be forwarded to the City Council	October 26, 2023
Administrative Report to City Council regarding LTAC recommendation	November 14, 2023
City Council motion consideration for 2024 awards	December 12, 2023
Contracts between City and grant recipients to be completed	January 2024
Date by which grant awarded programs must be completed	December 31, 2024
Post event reporting due to the City	March 1, 2025

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Insurance Requirement: As part of its contract for performance, the City typically requires contractors to maintain commercial general liability insurance in the amount of \$2,000,000 General Aggregate and per occurrence, automobile insurance, and Worker’s Compensation insurance for Washington State as required. An ACORD certificate and Additional Insured Endorsement showing the City as additionally insured on the policy must be submitted with the contract after the grant award.

Contract: The City will utilize a standard or modified grant agreement for City-funded grant activities or services.

Payment: Funding is distributed on a reimbursement basis. Grant recipients shall be reimbursed for documented costs, as outlined in the proposal, up to the amount awarded. Funds are provided periodically, typically as monthly or quarterly reimbursement of expenses. Reimbursement requests must include appropriate documentation and backup for the expenses that were incurred by the grantee, including invoices and proof of payment.

Equal Opportunity: No individual shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in the administration of or in connection with a City Agreement in violation of local, state, or federal law.

Reporting Requirements: As required by RCW 67.28, grantees are required to report the following post-event/activity information to the City of Spokane Valley:

- Total amount spent on the event.
- The amount of lodging tax funds expended.
- The number of participants who attended the event/activity in each of the following categories:
 - Staying overnight in paid accommodations away from their place of residence or business.
 - Staying overnight in unpaid accommodations (e.g., with friends and family) *and* traveling 50 miles or more one way from their place of residence or business.
 - Staying for the day only *and* traveling more than 50 miles or more one way from their place of residence or business.
 - Attending but not included in one of the three categories above.
- The estimated number of participants in any of the above categories that attended from out-of-state (includes other countries).
- A description of methods used to determine attendance and distinguish among the visitor categories at the event/activity (methods include a head count, car count, survey, or other with explanation).

The report will be provided to City Council and the public and will be furnished to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) and the LTAC. The JLARC will provide biennial reports to the Washington State Legislature.

Proposals and any attachments, report, and supplemental information may be subject to disclosure pursuant to Washington State’s Public Record Act, chapter 42.56 RCW.

Additional Information: Additional information, which may be required by a change or interpretation in state law, may also be required from the applicant.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

If an applicant is applying for funding for more than one project under this RFP, separate applications are required. All **required** Sections **(1-8)** must be submitted to be considered for funding. Proposals are due by **Friday, September 29, 2023, by 4 p.m.**

To apply, complete the information form and upload the required documentation listed below at <https://spokanevalleywa.gov/190/Grant-Funding-Opportunities>. Please name the attachments to match the numbers and titles listed below in bold, and upload each as a separate PDF attachment. **Please have all information and documents ready when you begin. Partial applications can NOT be saved to complete later.**

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

1. **Business Statement** – 1 page. Suggested format:
 - a) Organization name, key personnel, and contact information;
 - b) Brief description or overview of organization;
 - c) Mission statement;
 - d) Primary function and purpose of organization.

2. **Project Summary** – Provide a concise summary of your request and what the project will accomplish. If it is part of a larger project, you may briefly describe the over-all project. Provide additional information such as:
 - a) Has your organization applied for or received grant funding for this project from other sources?
 - b) What plans does the organization have to become self-sustainable?
 - c) Does your organization have partnerships, or collaborate project efforts with other organizations to cross promote to encourage tourism? If so, please explain.
 - d) Any additional information to help the LTAC and City Council in evaluating the project.

3. **Detailed Project Budget** – 1 page. Description and itemized budget for the income and expenses of the project. It is common for awarded amounts to be less than the amount requested. Please provide a plan for flexibility in your request to address how the proposed project may be adjusted to account for this.

4. **Scope of Work** – Fully describe the scope of the project. This should address the specifics of:
 - a. What you wish to do; expand on your project summary
 - b. How will you increase tourism in the City of Spokane Valley?
 - c. Beginning and ending dates, location of event/activity
 - d. Whether the project is seasonal; plans to address weather constraints
 - e. Any other specific scope related information

5. **Impact on Tourism** – using the outline below, answer each of the following with estimates or projected number of visitors who are expected to be attending and attracted due to the proposal:
 - a) Total Overall Attendance
 - b) Attendees who traveled 50 miles or more to attend
 - Of those, attendees traveling from another state or country
 - c) Attendees who stayed overnight in:
 - Paid accommodations
 - Unpaid accommodations
 - d) Total Paid Lodging Nights (one lodging night=one or more persons occupying one room for one night)

6. **Goals and Metrics** – List specific goals and how your organization will measure the successful use of any awarded grant funding and increase in tourism. Strategies should be specific to the metrics outlined in the reporting. Describe the methodology used to determine if goals are met. What specific impact would the grant funding have on the project?

7. **Project Authorization** - Meeting minutes or signed resolution approving project or authorizing application

8. **Board of Directors/Principal Staff** – 1 page. List of organization’s Board of Directors and principal staff

OPTIONAL MATERIALS:

9. **Annual Operational Budget** – Optional, but highly recommended. Most recently adopted overall organizational budget.

10. Additional Presentation Materials – Optional. Used for presentation to LTAC in October. This may include a PowerPoint presentation.

The Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) will meet, hear presentations, and make award recommendations that will be forwarded to the City Council. Presentations to the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee highlighting the submitted proposal will be limited to 10 minutes. If an applicant wishes to use a presentation program such as PowerPoint, all files must also be submitted as supplemental presentation material or handouts before the application deadline of September 29, 2023.

For additional assistance, please contact Sarah Farr in the City's Finance Department at sfarr@spokanevalleywa.gov or 509-720-5041.