

International Tourism Grants

NOFO ID: 524-369

Agency-specific Content for the Notice of Funding Opportunity

A. Program Description

Section 605-707 of the Civil Administrative Code of Illinois (International Tourism Program) [20 ILCS 605/605-707] authorizes the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to award grants to and work in cooperation with certified local tourism and convention bureaus and regional tourism development organizations to develop, coordinate and promote international tourism efforts.

The International tourism program is important to the State of Illinois' tourism industry to match/leverage local funds with State funds to promote destination drivers, to market and promote city attractions and events throughout the State to international travelers. The goal of the program is to increase international travel to Illinois by our target markets.

Priority funding will be given to those areas with an extensive international product including bookable product with both receptive tour operators and international tour operators. Those destinations targeting the same international markets as the Illinois Office of Tourism will also be given a stronger priority for funding.

The areas requesting funding should have an International Marketing Plan with measurable performance outcomes and needs to be provided with the grant application.

Applicant must identify performance measurements they will use to identify successful marketing outcomes. Such as:

1. Hosting international media and trade familiarization tours
2. Number of international media placements as a result of public relations efforts including the number of impressions and media value.
3. Number of international advertisements placed and results
4. Number of product with international tour operators.
5. Number of international partner promotions

B. Funding Information

This grant program is utilizing state funds. A minimum of \$1 million for downstate Convention and Visitors Bureaus (CVBs) will be awarded to increase international travel to these destinations. Expenditures and activities for which grant funds can be utilized by Grantees include, but are not limited to, the following:

International Tourism Grants

NOFO ID: 524-369

Brochures that target international travelers; advertising in countries marketed by the state; in-country trade representations for trade promotions; familiarization tours for international trade and media; translation services, trade shows and sales missions and related travel; related memberships; and salary/fringe benefits for one international program staff performing duties set forth in the Grant Agreement's scope of work. Attendance and travel to trade shows is limited to only those destinations with current product being sold by tour operators. Attendance at receptive tour operator shows held in the U.S. will be allowed if past attendance has produced results.

Grants will be awarded for July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018.

The areas requesting funding should have an International Marketing Plan with measurable performance outcomes and needs to be provided with the grant application.

The release of this NOFO does not obligate the Department to make an award.

C. Eligibility Information

An entity may apply for a grant but will not be eligible for a grant award until the entity has pre-qualified through the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal, www.grants.illinois.gov. Registration and pre-qualification are required annually. During pre-qualification, verifications are performed including a check of the federal Debarred and Suspended list and status on the Illinois Stop Payment List. An automated email notification to the entity alerts them of “qualified” status or informs how to remediate a negative verification (e.g., inactive DUNS, not in good standing with the Secretary of State). A federal Debarred and Suspended status cannot be remediated.

1. Eligible Applicants include:

Only certified Local Tourism and Convention Bureaus or Regional Tourism Development Organizations with an international product sold by tour operators and listed with receptive operators may apply for Program funding.

The Department complies with all applicable provisions of state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment and equal employment opportunity including, but not limited to: The Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/1-101 et seq.), The Public Works Employment Discrimination Act (775 ILCS 10/1 et seq.), The United States Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) (42 USC 2000a-and 2000H-6), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 794), The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12101 et seq.), and The Age Discrimination Act (42 USC 6101 et seq.).

2. Cost Sharing or Matching.

Each grantee shall provide matching funds equal to no less than 50% of the Grant Amount. If grantee fails to match any portion of the grant award in a given Fiscal Year,

International Tourism Grants

NOFO ID: 524-369

that portion of the grant shall be refunded to the Department in accordance with the terms of the Grant Agreement. In-kind contributions shall not exceed 25% of matching funds.

3. Indirect Cost Rate.

Indirect costs are not applicable for the Tourism International Grant Program. However, the grantee is still required to make an election in the CARS system. This election should be made while considering the indirect cost requirements of any other grants the grantee receives.

In order to charge indirect costs to a grant, the applicant organization must have an annually negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA). There are three types of NICRAs: a) Federally Negotiated Rate. Organizations that receive direct federal funding, may have an indirect cost rate that was negotiated with the Federal Cognizant Agency. Illinois will accept the federally negotiated rate. The organization must provide a copy of the federally NICRA. b) State Negotiated Rate. The organization must negotiate an indirect cost rate with the State of Illinois if they do not have a Federally Negotiated Rate. Or the organization may elect to use the De Minimis Rate. If an organization has not previously established an indirect cost rate, an indirect cost rate proposal must be submitted to the State of Illinois through the indirect cost rate system, CARS, no later than three months after the effective date of the award. If an organization previously established an indirect cost rate, the organization must annually submit a new indirect cost proposal through CARS within six months after the close of the grantee's fiscal year. All grantees must complete an indirect cost rate negotiation or elect the De Minimis Rate in CARS to claim indirect costs. Indirect costs claimed without an established negotiated rate or a De Minimis Rate election in CARS may be subject to disallowance. c) De Minimis Rate. An organization that has never received a Federally Negotiated Rate may elect a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct cost (MTDC). Once established, the de minimis rate may be used indefinitely. The State of Illinois must verify the calculation of the MTDC annually in order to accept the de minimis rate. Grantees have discretion not to claim payment for indirect costs. Grantees that elect not to claim indirect costs cannot be reimbursed for indirect costs. The organization must record an election of "No Indirect Costs" into CARS.

4. Other, if applicable.

Only one application will be accepted be entity.

D. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package.

Grant application forms are available at the web link provided in the "Grant Application Link" field of this announcement or by contacting the Program Manager:

International Tourism Grants

NOFO ID: 524-369

Michelle Stanton
Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
Illinois Office of Tourism
100 W. Randolph Street – Ste 3-400
Chicago, IL 60601
Tele: 312-814-2637
Email: Michelle.stanton@illinois.gov

2. Content and Form of Application Submission.

All grant application should be submitted in the word and excel formats as provided. The responses to the Program Specific Criteria should be submitted in a word document and fully address each criteria. The entity marketing plan can be submitted as a word document.

The applicant must submit to the Department:

1. Uniform Grant Application
2. Uniform Budget
3. Conflict of Interest Disclosure and Mandatory Disclosures
4. Program Application and Marketing Plan

3. Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management (SAM).

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal or State awarding agency that is exempt from those requirements under 2 CFR § 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal or State awarding agency under 2 CFR § 25.110(d)) is required to:

- (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. To establish a SAM registration, go to www.SAM.gov and/or utilize this instructional link: [How to Register in SAM from the www.grants.illinois.gov Resource Links tab](#).
- (ii) Provide a valid DUNS number in its application; and
- (iii) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal, Federal pass-through or State award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal or State awarding agency. It also must state that the State awarding agency may not make a Federal pass-through or State award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the State awarding agency is ready to make a Federal pass-through or State award, the State awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal pass-through or State award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal pass-through or State award to another applicant.

International Tourism Grants

NOFO ID: 524-369

4. Submission Dates and Times.

All completed Grant Applications and other required forms must be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 27, 2017 to be considered for funding in FY '18. The agency will determine if applicant meets the deadline by the date and time of the electronic submittal.

Late applications will not be reviewed and considered upon Department discretion.

5. Intergovernmental Review, if applicable.

This funding opportunity is not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

6. Funding Restrictions.

This grant will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs.

7. Other Submission Requirements.

Application materials must be submitted to the Department via electronically to the Program Manager:

Michelle Stanton

Email: Michelle.stanton@illinois.gov

E. Application Review Information

1. Criteria.

The Department's internal review committee shall evaluate each application. The criteria used in determining whether an application will be considered for a grant award includes, but is not limited to, the potential to increase overnight stays in Illinois and/or demonstrate the potential to develop international marketing materials or efforts. Each question will be scored using a rating system of 1 – 10, with 10 being the highest possible score per question, and a maximum possible score of 100. The criteria used in determining whether an Application will be considered for funding include, but are:

1. To what extent does the Project support and augment the international tourism efforts of the Illinois Office of Tourism?
2. To what extent is the Project part of a marketing plan based upon research to increase international visitors to the area?
3. To what extent does the Project have for potential interest or show existing interest for the chosen international market?
4. To what extent does the Project include repeat marketing efforts and to what extent do the results from those efforts justify repeat funding?

International Tourism Grants

NOFO ID: 524-369

5. To what extent does the Project include adequate tracking and evaluation measures?
6. To what extent are there measurable ways to evaluate the projects effectiveness and return on investment?
7. To what extent will the Project have a significant impact on the area's overall tourism efforts?
8. To what extent will the Project have a significant impact on the State's overall tourism efforts?
9. To what extent is the destination visitor ready for international visitors?
10. The effectiveness of the applicant's overall international efforts.

2. Review and Selection Process.

The Department's internal review committee's scores are averaged to obtain the Application's final score. An Application's final score must be at least 50 of 100 possible points to be considered eligible for funding. The internal review committee shall forward all eligible Applications, together with its recommendations, to the Director for final review and determination. During the final review process, the Director will determine whether an eligible Application is awarded a grant.

3. Anticipated Announcement and State Award Dates, if applicable.

The Department anticipates sending Notices of State Award by approximately October 18, 2017, but reserves the right to issue a reduced award, or not to issue any award. The tentative grant award date is November 30, 2017.

F. Award Administration Information

1. State Award Notices.

The Notice of State Award (NOSA) will specify the funding terms and specific conditions resulting from the pre-award risk assessments. The NOSA must be signed and returned by an authorized representative of the grantee organization. The NOSA is not an authorization to begin performance or incur costs.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements. Code of Federal Regulations / Title 2 - Grants and Agreements / Vol. 1 / 2014-01-01194

The NOSA will specify the terms and conditions of the award.

3. Reporting.

Financial and Programmatic Reporting are due 30 days after each quarter ends.

G. State Awarding Agency Contact(s)

International Tourism Grants

NOFO ID: 524-369

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Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
Illinois Office of Tourism
100 W. Randolph Street – Ste 3-400
Chicago, IL 60601
Tele: 312-814-2637
Email: michelle.stanton@illinois.gov

H. Other Information, if applicable

None

Mandatory Forms -- Required for All Agencies

1. Uniform Grant Application
2. Uniform Budget
3. Conflict of Interest Disclosure and Mandatory Disclosures