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**Travel Oregon Bolsters Tourism Efforts in Local Communities Across the State Through  
\$1.4 Million in Capacity and Small Project Grants**

*45 organizations awarded grants for projects ranging from internal capacity building, increasing accessibility for travelers with disabilities to expanding diversity, equity and inclusion*

**Portland, Ore. (Jan. 23, 2023)** - The Oregon Tourism Commission, dba [Travel Oregon](#), has awarded more than \$1.4 million through its Capacity and Small Project Grant Program to help destination marketing/management organizations and federally-recognized tribes with capacity building and targeted projects to enhance and expand economic impact through travel and tourism. Funds were awarded to develop and refine skills, systems, structures and strategies to help the awardee successfully fulfill its mission and achieve outcomes that are more impactful. All projects being funded by this program must be completed by December 31, 2023.

“These grants directly support destination marketing and management organizations and tribal entities who are working every day on a range of improvements from enhanced accessibility and inclusion for all travelers to fostering sustainable travel that can even enhance the geographical character of a place, from its environment and culture to its heritage and the well-being of residents,” said Todd Davidson, CEO of Travel Oregon. “We’re excited to see what our awardees are able to accomplish collectively to help inspire travel and uplift Oregon communities in the year ahead.”

Preference for Travel Oregon's Capacity and Small Project Grants was given to proposals that focused on capacity building as Travel Oregon believes capacity building funds provide an opportunity for awardees to set the organizational foundation to successfully move future projects forward.

The Capacity and Small Grant Project awardees are listed below in alphabetical order. For complete details on projects/awardees see below:

**A Greater Applegate Community Development Corporation, dba A Greater Applegate (\$15,600)** to hire a marketing consultant and part-time coordinator to provide expertise for the Destination Applegate Working Group in its efforts to promote the Applegate Valley.

**Albany Visitors Association (\$27,950)** for undertaking a strategic planning assessment to guide future decisions and areas of emphasis for best supporting the community and tourism industry.

**Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce (\$35,000)** to partner with Wheel the World to conduct an accessibility assessment of local tourism businesses, receive accessibility training through Wheel the World Academy and have viable tourism businesses listed on WheeltheWorld.com.

**Burns Paiute Tribe (\$50,000)** to hire a marketing consultant to create a strategic marketing plan around the destination's assets and to support staff capacity for the Tribe to focus on tourism efforts.

**Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce (\$50,000)** to add technical expertise to the Chamber with the hiring of a full-time marketing manager.

**Central Oregon Visitors Association (\$50,000)** for workforce development by supporting the Sunriver Resort Culinary Apprenticeship Program.

**City of Lincoln City (\$20,000)** to partner with Wheel the World to conduct an accessibility assessment of local tourism businesses, receive accessibility training through Wheel the World Academy and have viable tourism businesses listed on WheeltheWorld.com.

**City of Troutdale (\$43,500)** to support destination management efforts by undertaking a destination strategic planning process and formulating a strategic roadmap to guide Troutdale's development, marketing and stewardship as a destination.

**City of Woodburn (\$25,000)** to hire a consultant to provide leadership development, board development and strategic planning guidance for the volunteer-based North Marion Tourism Collaborative.

**Clackamas County Tourism and Cultural Affairs (\$24,000)** to continue an additional year of staff capacity support through the RARE (Resource Assistance for Rural Environments) AmeriCorps Program.

**Columbia County Economic Team (\$38,217)** to conduct a professional branding exercise that will result in a branding strategy, style guide, artwork and toolkits/templates.

**Coos Bay-North Bend-Charleston VCB/Oregon's Adventure Coast (\$25,000)** to partner with Wheel the World to conduct an accessibility assessment of local tourism businesses, receive accessibility training through Wheel the World Academy and have viable tourism businesses listed on WheeltheWorld.com. In addition, professional development will continue through attendance at the 2023 TravelAbility Conference.

**Depoe Bay Chamber of Commerce (\$20,000)** to partner with Wheel the World to conduct an accessibility assessment of local tourism businesses, receive accessibility training through Wheel the World Academy and have viable tourism businesses listed on WheeltheWorld.com. In addition, professional development will continue through attendance at the 2023 TravelAbility Conference.

**Discover Klamath VCB (\$50,000)** for capacity to facilitate and lead a new branding strategy and to deliver a 3-5-year marketing strategy.

**Eastern Oregon Visitors Association (\$48,406)** for professional development to support staff participation in the Oregon Tourism Leadership Academy and in Cornell's Sustainable Tourism Development Management Online course. Additionally, technical assistance to improve organizational effectiveness by updating the organization's bylaws; hosting a Board retreat; and implementing a software platform to enhance management of its regional grant program.

**Florence Area Chamber of Commerce (\$30,500)** to partner with Wheel the World to conduct an accessibility assessment of local tourism businesses, receive accessibility training through Wheel the World Academy and have viable tourism businesses listed on WheeltheWorld.com. In addition, professional development will continue through attendance at the 2023 TravelAbility Conference.

**Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce (\$33,190)** to partner with Wheel the World to conduct an accessibility assessment of local tourism businesses, receive accessibility training through Wheel the World Academy and have viable tourism businesses listed on WheeltheWorld.com. In addition, professional development will continue through attendance at the 2023 TravelAbility Conference.

**Harney County Chamber of Commerce (\$10,025)** for tourism leadership professional development training and technical assistance support.

**Hood River County Chamber of Commerce (\$50,000)** for staff and board training in diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging to better incorporate the voices and perspectives of others in unique and impactful ways. In addition to equity and bias coaching, a language, culture and representation educator will support staff, board and member businesses to be inclusive of cultures of the community, specifically the primary Spanish language speaking population.

**Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce (\$2,788)** to support capacity by increasing staff hours to work on tourism projects and in developing greater Chamber membership.

**Josephine County Visitors Association, dba Visit Grants Pass (\$50,000)** for capacity to support technical assistance on the creation of a Grants Pass Main Street organization and assistance in Cave Junction Main Street strategic planning.

**Lake County Chamber of Commerce (\$13,234.80)** for a new staff position at the Chamber to help work on Dark Sky tourism efforts.

**Maupin Area Chamber of Commerce (\$3,150)** to support staff professional development by attending a grant writing course.

**Ontario Chamber of Commerce (\$17,000)** for professional development of Malheur County tourism stakeholders to attend the Oregon Governor's Conference on Tourism and to convene county-wide tourism planning workshops to develop a shared understanding and vision for tourism in the region.

**Oregon Coast Visitors Association (\$7,200)** to ensure capacity needs are met and training is available upon the hiring of a new South Coast Agritourism Coordinator.

**Pendleton Chamber of Commerce, dba Travel Pendleton (\$12,000)** to support a shoulder season (winter) marketing campaign targeted at the Portland area.

**Prineville-Crook County Chamber of Commerce (\$42,340)** to provide staff development in sustainable tourism, increase organizational capacity with the addition of an intern position to support rural destination development and marketing. Additional capacity support would occur through hiring a part-time position devoted to the Prineville Downtown Association that is currently operated by volunteers.

**Sutherlin Area Chamber of Commerce (\$12,000)** for increased staff capacity with the hiring of a 12-month Project Coordinator to develop a membership benefit program to support small business development and tourism education.

**The Dalles Area Chamber of Commerce (\$50,000)** for systemic support with diversity, equity and inclusion training opportunities, translation and messaging and communications with an emphasis and focus upon the local Latinx business community.

**The Museum at Warm Springs (\$35,000)** to support the development of a marketing and community development plan as well as support staff capacity with the addition of a communications and marketing contractor.

**Tillamook Area Chamber of Commerce (\$47,680)** to support staff capacity to move forward fundraising efforts of the newly formed 501(c)3 Tillamook Chamber Community Foundation.

**Tillamook Coast Visitors Association, dba Visit Tillamook Coast (\$20,000)** to contract with Empowering Access to conduct an accessibility audit to identify gaps and shortcomings for accessibility for county recreation users with mobility challenges.

**Travel Ashland/ Ashland Chamber of Commerce (\$35,000)** for staff training to conduct Strategic Doing Workshops and other components to implement an economic diversification strategy of tourism as well as training and additional labor for the management of supporting social channels.

**Travel Lane County (\$50,000)** to better serve visitors experiencing hearing loss by expanding the number of Hearing Loops in Lane County lodging properties, performing arts venues and other attractions.

**Travel Medford (\$50,000)** to build operational capacity and bandwidth by hiring a full-time graphic designer.

**Travel Salem (\$50,000)** for continued work to occur on the Resilient Headwaters project to help communities throughout the Santiam Canyon recover from fire by producing a regional suite of recreational assets.

**Travel Southern Oregon (\$40,000)** for a project manager to lead efforts in creating a Dark Sky Place nomination application with the International Dark-Sky Association.

**Visit Bend (\$50,000)** to conduct a resident sentiment study in partnership with Oregon State University and provide the capacity and technical assistance to create a data collection process that can be used by Destination Management Organizations across Oregon.

**Visit Corvallis (\$33,192)** for professional development for their board and staff to more effectively implement their strategic plan and work in destination development as well as training for staff to achieve the Sports Tourism Strategist designation.

**Visit McMinnville (\$10,000)** for a trip generation and site access study that will assist with assessing parking, accessibility, and traffic flow for Quarry Park.

**Waldport Chamber of Commerce (\$17,550)** to partner with Wheel the World to conduct an accessibility assessment of local tourism businesses, receive accessibility training through Wheel the World Academy and have viable tourism businesses listed on WheeltheWorld.com. In addition, professional development will continue through attendance at the 2023 TravelAbility Conference.

**Wallowa County Chamber of Commerce (\$3,600)** for review of personnel and compliance policies and a final formatted updated employee handbook.

**Warm Springs Community Action Team (\$37,500)** to support grant writing/fundraising professionals as they work to raise \$2M in funds to continue the Warm Springs Commissary capital project to further small business growth.

**Willamette Valley Visitors Association (\$50,000)** for professional development including: Board training and the updating of organization bylaws; staff participation in the Oregon Tourism Leadership Academy and George Washington's Professional Certificate in Sustainable Tourism Development. In addition, adding technical assistance support with a grant writer, retaining contractors to work on sports and regenerative travel and expanding diversity, equity and inclusion efforts as an organization.

**Yachats Chamber of Commerce (\$20,000)** to partner with Wheel the World to conduct an accessibility assessment of local tourism businesses, receive accessibility training through Wheel the World Academy and have viable tourism businesses listed on WheeltheWorld.com. In addition, professional development will continue through attendance at the 2023 TravelAbility Conference and a trail wheelchair will be purchased for free rentals.

For media images, see [here](#).

#### **About Travel Oregon**

The Oregon Tourism Commission, dba [Travel Oregon](#), is a semi-independent state agency whose mission is to inspire travel that uplifts Oregon communities. Collaborating with stakeholders to align as stewards of Oregon, we work to optimize economic opportunity, advance equity and respect the ecosystems, cultures and places that make Oregon... Oregon. Travel Oregon aims to improve Oregonians' quality of life by strengthening the economic impacts of the state's \$10.9 billion tourism industry, which employs more than 100,000 Oregonians.

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