



**COMMISSION
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

Item No. 8d

ACTION ITEM

Date of Meeting December 11, 2018

DATE: November 16, 2018
TO: Stephen P. Metruck, Executive Director
FROM: Dave McFadden, Managing Director, Economic Development Division
Ron Peck, Director, Tourism Development Department
SUBJECT: 2019 Tourism Marketing Support Program

Amount of this request: \$200,000
Total annual program cost: \$200,000

ACTION REQUEST

Request Commission authorization for the 2019 Tourism Marketing grant Program and authority for the Executive Director to approve execution for all related contract agreements for the 2019 selected Tourism Marketing Support Program recipients in an amount not to exceed \$200,000.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2019 Tourism Marketing Support Program will be in its fourth year. It has been a well received, collaborative, and mutually beneficial program for the Port of Seattle, destination marketing organizations and nonprofit alike. For 2019, \$200,000 has been approved for the program. The source of funds is the King County tax levy. Steps will be initiated to improve the program based on lessons learned and experiences from the past three years. Specific strategies include a continued strong outreach to cultural, historical, tribal, eco/sustainable and adventure/nature travel related organizations, initiating a hiatus on organizations that have been recipients of the program for three straight years and releasing the 2019 program earlier allowing the recipients additional time to complete their projects.

Marketing, promotion and outreach plans include:

- Distribution of a press release statewide announcing the program.
- Announcing of the program on Compass.
- Communicating to a data base of over 140 different organizations via email. The data base includes a roster of 73 destinations, 24 cultural attractions, 17 outdoor recreational organizations and 42 tribal contacts.
- Prominent positioning of the grant program on the Tourism Development section of the POS website. All information regarding the program (actual application, instructions for applying, a frequently asked or FAQ information document, application deadline date, details about an information session, and promotion to participate in the Washington

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Tourism Alliance match funding program) will be on the Tourism site. The website also includes video testimonials speaking to the successes of the program by previous recipients.

- Conduct an “FAQ” session on January 11th. The session is open to all interested parties. Potential applicants may attend in person or via teleconference.
- Speaking at various organizations meetings, conferences or seminars. Presentations about the grant program have or will occur at the Olympic Peninsula Tourism Summit in Port Angeles, The Woodinville Wine Association annual meeting, Washington Tourism Alliance board meetings, Washington Tourism Marketing Authority board meeting, the Washington Public Port Authority Economic Development round table summit, and Cascade Loop Annual meeting.
- One on One meetings with the potential applicants’ organizations. Meetings that have occurred include Enumclaw Chamber of Commerce, Cities of Kent and Auburn, Highline Botanical Garden, Seattle Southside Regional Tourism Authority, the Suquamish and Makah Tribal organizations.
- Direct contact via phone. Drawing from past emails and our data base of contacts over the course of the year, calls will continue to be made to potential applicants encouraging their participation.

As a result of the passage of SB5251 (the State Tourism Marketing bill) a requirement for visitor industry matching funds exists and Tourism Development is working collaboratively with the Washington Tourism Alliance to engage and encourage 2019 tourism grant recipients to participate. Our grant program can make a significant contribution toward reaching the goal of making the \$3M in industry match contribution. Plans are in place during the marketing and outreach efforts to encourage the recipients’ participation.

Proposed Implementation Timeline

- December 12- Launch program and announce program via press release, website and email contacts
- December 12 – January 31
 - Continue marketing and promotional communication efforts to obtain applicants
 - January 11 conduct the FAQ – information session. Participation may be either in person or via teleconference
- February 01 - Deadline for application submittals
- February 11 - Review committee meets and identifies awardees
- Week of February 11 - Tourism Development notifies 2019 recipients
- February through March - Work to complete 2019 agreements
- March 01 – December 31 - Recipients initiate and complete Tourism marketing projects

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Tourism Marketing Support Recipients

The Port of Seattle is advancing tourism in Washington State by implementing an annual partnership program with local destination marketing organizations. In the first three years of the program 119 applications have been received and 57 projects awarded, netting approximately \$700,000 in additional marketing promotion efforts for Washington. The matching funds program promotes use of Port facilities, and tourism growth throughout the state.

In 2018, \$200,000 was authorized for the program. 45 applications were obtained. Staff reviewed the applications and recommended 26 to receive funding. The overall intent of the program is to provide matching funds support of up to \$10,000 each to local communities, destination marketing organizations, ports, chambers of commerce, and attractions to promote their destinations or activities. The funds must be used for advertising, publicizing, promoting or distributing information to attract visitors to the destination. The program requires a two to one match (for every POS dollar invested, the organization must contribute fifty cents).

The projects (and the results / benefits) are summarized in the following tourism categories:

- Trade Shows / Sales Efforts: – Travel trade shows and exhibitions in which travel businesses and destination marketing organizations work to obtain additional product sales by promoting to retailers, tour operators, travel writers and social media influencers. Result / Benefit: Additional tour programs and visitor attraction sales in Seattle and the Pacific Northwest by non-residents.
- Familiarization Tours: Familiarization tours (FAMs) are specific events and activities where travel retailers, tour operators, cruise lines, airlines or travel media are invited to the destination to learn and experience first-hand what a destination or product has to uniquely offer potential travelers. Result / Benefit: Increase in published tour products and programs generating additional air travel and economic spend in Washington.
- Event Attractions Promotion: Marketing and advertising efforts to increase attendance or participation to an attraction, event or activity. Result / Benefit: Increases in visitation, arrivals and visitor expenditures as a result of additional marketing efforts to non-residents.
- Digital Marketing: Encompasses a number of online marketing efforts that include establishing a visitor focused travel website, targeted banner website or social media advertising, international language website translations, and online travel marketing research efforts. Result / Benefit: Generating additional awareness, interest and ultimately positively impacting travel to Washington.
- Travel Articles / Public Relations – Specifically geared to generate additional awareness and interest in the destination by impacting travel, food and beverage writers and media influencers (bloggers and online travel website founders) to author stories about

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a destination. The efforts to influence the writers and influencers include one on one meetings, deskside visits, arranged appointments at travel trade shows, and travel FAMs. Result / Benefit: Increases in earned media value coverage, exposure and interest in traveling to Seattle and Washington State.

Statewide Participation in 2018



Projects and program are located throughout the state:

King County – 11

Eastern Washington – 6

Olympic Peninsula - 4

Western Washington – 5

List of 2018 Awarded Recipients

Organization Name	POS Awarded Amount	Tourism Initiatives	Summary of Proposed Project
Whidbey & Camano Islands Tourism	\$10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trade show/sales trip <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Familiarization tour <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Event promotion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International marketing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Travel Articles/PR 	As host to the International Food, Wine, and Travel Writers Association conference, the project will include media familiarization tours, including nature/adventure activities

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Cascade Loop Association	\$10,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International marketing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Travel Articles/PR	The Great American Adventure Road Trip is a promotion for outdoor adventure thru UK travel trade and media professionals
Olympic Peninsula Visitor Bureau	\$9,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Travel Articles/PR	New website, digital advertising and social media campaign focusing on out-of-state fly-in markets (CA, TX, AZ)
San Juan Islands Visitors Bureau	\$9,250	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trade show/sales trip <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Familiarization tour <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International marketing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Travel Articles/PR	Host media tours to highlight adventure/nature tourism and environmental stewardship
George Weyerhaeuser Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection (Pacific Bonsai Museum)	\$5,332	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International marketing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism	Marketing and production of a promotional video and special tour for Chinese tour groups of Museum, which is open year-round
Experience Learning Community dba Museum of Pop Culture (MoPOP)	\$6,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International marketing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism	Marketing campaign to target out-of-state pre/post cruise visitors
Shoreline-Lake Forest Park Arts Council	\$6,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Event promotion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism	New and expanded webpage marketing visual art event to artists and attendees at a regional and national level (including CA, AZ)
Greater Seattle Business Association / Travel Out Seattle	\$9,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trade show/sales trip <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International marketing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism	Focused international outreach efforts (website, printed materials, and attending three international and national conferences) to LGBTQ travelers via GSBA's Travel Out Seattle program
Discover Lewis County/Lewis County	\$10,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism	Campaign to produce video and online advertisements targeting out-of-state (San Francisco Bay area) outdoor/adventure visitors to Lewis County
Puget Sound Attractions Council (DBA Seattle Premier Attractions)	\$8,500	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trade show/sales trip <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International marketing	Market Seattle tourism travel to national and international tour operators at IPW international trade show, as vendor/presenter
Long Beach Peninsula Visitors Bureau	\$7,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International marketing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism	Create, translate and localize websites (as marketing tools) in 17 international markets to increase visitor travel and expenditures
Wing Luke Memorial Foundation dba Wing Luke Museum of the	\$9,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International marketing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism	New website (device-responsive and able to handle translation/language needs) and digital campaign to out-of-state and international Asian market visitors and media

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Asian Pacific American Experience			
Ballard Chamber of Commerce dba Ballard Alliance	\$9,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Event promotion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism	Target two specific flight markets in the implementation of a culturally-focused marketing campaign to attract out-of-state visitors
Historical Society of Seattle & King County (dba MOHAI)	\$7,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism	Digital and print advertising geotargeted (including Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Alaska Beyond Magazine and Delta Sky Magazine) to attract potential visitors
Greater Grays Harbor	\$3,350	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Travel Articles/PR	Produce two national audience focused podcasts highlighting sports fishing, local seafood and recreational coastal outdoor activities
Leavenworth Chamber of Commerce	\$6,606	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trade show/sales trip <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International marketing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Travel Articles/PR	Extend national reach by networking with media and travel influencers at a North America travel trade conference
Visit Walla Walla and Port of Walla Walla	\$9,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media	Targeted digital advertising campaign in key markets of Sacramento, Phoenix and Denver
Yakima Valley Tourism	\$7,500	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trade show/sales trip <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fam tour <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International marketing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Travel Articles/PR	Host travel industry influencers (media & tour operators) on a fam tour after attending major tourism travel trade conference to promote pre and post cruise itineraries for out-of-state visitors
Forks Chamber of Commerce	\$6,856	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fam tour <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Event Promotion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International marketing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Travel Articles/PR	Refresh website to include multilingual and mobile-friendly elements. Host Fam Tour for media and travel influencers
Visit Tri-Cities	\$8,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trade show/sales trip <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fam tour <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Travel Articles/PR	Participate in travel media show and sponsor post conference media tour
Cascade Bicycle Club	\$7,606	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Travel Articles/PR	Expand national PR efforts and media ad buys to reach a broader audience for ride events
Fort Worden Public Development Authority (PDA)	\$5,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media (marketing research study) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism	Conduct marketing research to define profile of key national geographic markets from which to develop a strategic out-of-state tourism marketing plan
Visit Tri-Cities	\$9,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International marketing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Travel Articles/PR	Develop a website dedicated solely to tourism (including national and international reach) and the promotion of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park at Hanford

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Chinatown- International District Business Improvement Area	\$10,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism	Video-based, social media campaign, targeting millennials on the west coast (including Los Angeles and San Francisco)
Starfire Sports	\$6,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trade show/sales trip <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Event promotion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media	Event advertising campaign targeting California, Hawaii and Alaska youth soccer teams and Exhibitor at national soccer coaches convention targeting out-of-state teams
Port of Friday Harbor	\$6,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Event promotion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Digital media <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eco/culture/nature tourism	Targeted website and social media marketing of destination attractions and events to out-of-state visitors
TOTALS	\$200,000		

For 2019 tourism development is requesting \$200,000 for the program. Tourism development recognizes the value to tourism in our state of our history culture, lands, waters and the environment. Tourism has developed a data base of 40 tribal, 24 cultural and 17 outdoor recreation oriented organizations. We will work diligently to effectively communicate the program and its benefits to these entities with the express goal of increasing involvement.

The following strategies or actions are planned and requested with the objectives of continuing improving the process, ensure the program is available to a diverse group of tourism related organizations and allow for a more timely implementation of projects, thereby maximizing effectiveness of the programs. Specifically:

- Organizations that have been awarded funds for three years running will be placed on a two year respite. The rationale is to allow other tourism organizations an opportunity to participate and to reinforce that the funds should be perceived as seed or new project dollars and not considered as permanent funds to be obtained every year.
- Participating organizations have expressed their sincere appreciation and gratitude for the program. We have repeatedly heard that without this program they could not have initiated the marketing effort to increase out of state visitors and travel throughout Washington. The one constructive comment made repeatedly by a number of participants has been to consider allowing for the initiation of agreements sooner. Doing so will allow the projects to be implemented in a more timely fashion.

ATTACHMENTS TO THIS BRIEFING

Presentation slides

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PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS

October 12, 2018 – Update on the 2018 program, results and recommendations for improving the program in 2019.

April 10, 2018 – Marketing support program awardees were announced.

January 30, 2018 – The Commission was briefed on the results of the 2017 program.

April 11, 2017 – 2017 Marketing support program awardees were announced.

January 17, 2017 – The Commission was briefed on the results of the 2016 program.

November 22, 2016 – The Commission approved the final 2017 budget, including \$150,000 for the Tourism Marketing Support program.