



Willamette Valley Visitors Association 2025-26 Strategic Investment Fund

ABOUT WVVA

The Willamette Valley Visitors Association (WVVA) is a Regional Destination Management Organization (RDMO) focused on promoting responsible tourism and regional economic well-being that benefits residents and visitors alike.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to enhance the region's vitality by cultivating authentic experiences to support local communities, ensuring the Willamette Valley's long-term resilience. We are dedicated to fostering the prosperity of the Willamette Valley as a welcoming and inclusive year-round destination.

OUR FUNDING

Our funding comes from Oregon's Regional Cooperative Tourism Program, which requires Travel Oregon to pay 20% of the statewide lodging tax back to the regions where it is collected. As the manager of the Willamette Valley regional resources, WVVA is required to spend 10% of our annual RCTP budget via a Strategic Investment Fund.

WHAT IS THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY REGION?

WVVA represents the region from Wilsonville to Cottage Grove and the crest of the Coast range to the crest of the Cascade mountains. Our service area includes Southwest Clackamas, Yamhill, Marion, Polk, Linn, Benton, and East Lane counties.

ABOUT THE STRATEGIC INVESTMENT FUND

The annual Willamette Valley Visitors Association Strategic Investment Fund focuses on direct investment with partners within the Willamette Valley to fuel community-driven work in support of destination marketing and development.



AVAILABLE FUNDING

Projects can be applied for in the range of \$5K to \$50K. Meeting/event sponsorships can be applied for in the range of \$1K to \$3K. Total funds available to be awarded: \$85,276.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

DESTINATION MARKETING

- Familiarization trips for social influencers and travel-focused media creators
- Marketing materials and campaigns for shoulder and off-season, niche and secondary visitor experiences, and emerging markets
- Marketing asset acquisition (photography, videography)

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

- Niche and secondary visitor experience development
- Venue accessibility improvements (hearing loops, multilingual signage, etc.)
- Trail stewardship investments (wayfinding, accessibility improvements, volunteer skill development, etc.)
- Organizational development (board development, strategic planning, etc.)

MEETINGS, EVENTS, & SPORTS

- Bid fee support for new/expanded multi-day sports and meeting tourism events
- Sponsorships for multi-day sports, meetings, and events in the Willamette Valley
- Scholarships to attend B2B conferences (Go West Summit, NTA, ABA, IPW, etc.)

ELIGIBILITY

- Non-profit organizations, for-profit visitor facing businesses, federally recognized Tribes, and local governments serving or providing a visitor experience in the Willamette Valley
- Applicants must serve the Willamette Valley and be located in the following counties: Southwest Clackamas, Yamhill, Marion, Polk, Linn, Benton, and East Lane
- DMOs may apply as a fiscal agent for a project without an official organization sponsor
- Entities may submit multiple projects, but only one project per entity may be awarded
- Ineligible projects include fundraising campaigns and app development



APPLICATION

Applicants must submit a project pitch form to describe the scope of the proposed project and how the Strategic Investment Fund dollars will be spent. All projects (excluding sponsorship requests) must submit a grant budget using their own budget or [WVVA's budget template](#).

PROCESS

- **Step 1:** Complete WVVA SIF project pitch form.
- **Step 2:** WVVA will review and score the pitch and may request a collaborative meeting with the applicant. Applications will be reviewed the first of each month.
- **Step 3:** If approved and selected to move forward, WVVA will create a MOU for the project, including reporting and budget tracking requirements.
- **Step 4:** WVVA will disburse 90% of funds for marketing and development projects once MOU is signed. Event bid fees will be earmarked and 100% of funds disbursed upon a successful event bid.
- **Step 5:** WVVA will disburse remaining 10% of funds when the project is complete and receipts, report, and assets are submitted.

TIMELINE

- **October 1, 2025.** WVVA SIF project pitch form opens. The fund is open through May 31, 2026 or until all available funds are allocated.
- **November 1, 2025 and following.** First round of application review by WVVA staff. Applications will be reviewed the first of each month and funds awarded on a rolling basis. All funds must be awarded and allocated by June 30, 2026.
- **April 1, 2026 and following.** Projects awarded submit project receipts, project recap, and any deliverables (photo/video assets, etc.). Projects awarded will receive 90 percent of funds upon initial selection, and the remaining 10 percent upon project completion and submission of receipts/recap/assets.
- **December 31, 2026.** All awarded funds must be spent, projects completed, and final receipts, recaps, and deliverables submitted.



PROJECT CRITERIA

REQUIRED

The project pitch form will ask about these criteria.

- Does the project attract visitors to your community from 50 miles away or more?
- Does the project align with WVVA priorities in destination marketing or development?
- Does the project demonstrate clear benefit to the visitor industry in the Willamette Valley region?
- Does the project introduce a new idea, enhance existing offerings, or fill a gap in the regional tourism landscape?
- Does the project support long-term regional economic sustainability?
- Can the awarded funds be spent and projects accomplished by Dec. 31, 2026?

ENHANCED CONSIDERATION

These criteria can elevate your project pitch but are not required.

- Does the project incorporate sustainable tourism practices?
- Does the project contribute to accessibility, diversity, equity, and inclusion in tourism?
- Does the project leverage partnerships and collaboration within the Valley?
- Does the project benefit more than one Willamette Valley county?

WILLAMETTE VALLEY DESTINATION PRIORITIES

- Sustainable visitation
- Inclusive and accessible travel
- Outdoor recreation
- Culinary & agritourism
- Arts, culture, & heritage
- Lesser-known destinations
- Shoulder and off-season visitation
- Multi-day meetings & events that draw visitors from outside 50 miles
- Amateur, collegiate, & professional athletic games, competitions, & races
- FAMs for meetings, events & sports planners

QUESTIONS?

Please contact Karen Olson, Destination Development Manager, at karen@willamettevalley.org.