

Community-Led Tourism RFP- Questions and Responses (updated 9/24/26)

Eligibility

- 1) Would a tour be considered eligible? **Yes.**
- 2) Can a statewide federation with multiple location member chapters apply? How many events can they hold? **Each entity that applies must have its own tax registration number. This could be a Unified Business Identifier (UBI) Number, an Employer Identification Number (EIN) or Federal Tax ID. If your chapters do not have separate registration numbers, one or more could collaborate through a joint application and using your tax registration number. All projects, be they for events or otherwise, must be focused on areas within King County. Projects can be for a single event or multiple.**
- 3) Can an individual who leads or owns two separately registered eligible entities submit one distinct application from each entity for separate projects, provided each entity and project independently meets the eligibility requirements? **Yes.**
- 4) Can a Chamber of Commerce apply for this RFP? **Yes.**
- 5) Can we submit more than one funding opportunity? **No. We can only accept a single application per entity.**
- 6) Would a college with a minority majority population that has advisory boards and special events/services for identity and geographically specific populations be eligible? **No, public entities are not eligible.**
- 7) We're located by a major transportation hub to make it easier for low-income BIPoC youth who've been displaced outside of Seattle to access our space. Do we have to be physically located in the neighborhoods where the communities we serve live to be eligible? **No, you do not need to be physically located in the neighborhood where the communities you serve live, but your application should describe your organization's relationship to the community you serve and if you are led by and for that community. If your project serves multiple locations, describe how you are designing your project to best serve your community.**
- 8) Are cities eligible? **No, public entities are not eligible.**
- 9) Is it possible to apply as a group (multiple organizations applying together in one application)? **Yes. The lead applicant would have to meet the eligibility criteria.**
- 10) My technical assistance provider and I working on this RFP and we are wondering if non profit 501c3 status will effect eligibility if the application is still being processed.

Could we still apply for this RFP with an LLC or a sponsor based on pending 501c3 status? **Yes, you could apply with an entity as your fiscal sponsor. Be sure that they meet the RFP criteria listed for Eligible Entities in that their registration/license is valid in the State of Washington.**

- 11) Can an entity apply for a project, and then an org they fiscally sponsor apply for a different project? **Yes. Please make it clear in each application what the relationship is with the sponsored-entity.**
- 12) My entity is a for-profit business. Can free public events be hosted inside our space? How will the public purpose review look at that? **Yes, so long as the events are free and open to the general public.**

Allowable Costs

- 1) Can we pay stipends for participants? **No. All payments to individuals must be either as hired staff or as independent contractors.**
- 2) What percentage of the grant can be spent on food and events? **Both are eligible expenses. We are not limiting the amount per category.**
- 3) Can a free, publicly accessible cultural exhibition and related programming held inside a privately operated nonprofit gallery qualify as an eligible event/activity, provided grant funds are used for programming rather than permanent improvements to the private property? **Yes, as long as the programming is related to the proposed grant project.**
- 4) Are there funding restrictions on food? **Yes, food cannot be purchased for staff. It must be for participants and align closely to the project scope of work.**
- 5) Can I use the funding to hire an event planner? **Yes. In your application you will have to explain why you will be requesting funding for this purpose.**
- 6) What percentage of funding can be used for admin costs? **Admin costs and overhead are not allowable. All expenses should be directly charged.**
- 7) Is transportation to an event an allowable cost? **It depends. You would have to make the case as to why the transportation is necessary for the event to take place and/or to bring community to the event.**
- 8) If an event is free to the public, can participating local restaurants, artisans, vendors, and other community businesses still sell their products or services during

the event? **Yes, and you would need to address how this is aligned with the intent of the RFP in your responses to the RFP questions.**

- 9) What about event space usage cost? **Yes, this is an eligible expense, so long as it is related to the project.**
- 10) If the project is a monthly networking event (for 12 months) where the general public is invited (and the event is free) would the County consider this an allowable activity? **Yes.**
- 11) The RFP allows staff time directly dedicated to the project but excludes administrative and indirect costs. Would project coordination, practitioner scheduling, contracting, implementation, and required grant reporting be considered eligible direct project labor? **Yes, if it is directly related to the project.**
- 12) If the project includes food served at the free community events, can my restaurant be paid as the provider, or should those costs go to outside vendors? **Your restaurant can be paid for these costs. They should be reasonable and similar to the cost of an outside provider and the food purchases would need to be reviewed for eligibility.**
- 13) Can equipment bought specifically for the project like a sound system for events or display cases for an exhibit be included in the budget? **Possibly; all expenses will be reviewed for allowability, applicability, and reasonableness for the approved scope of work. If there are lower cost options, such as renting, the proposal should be clear that those were considered.**
- 14) Do art activation/interactive exhibits need to be external and not inside a nonprofit arts organization? **To meet the grant's public purpose, the installation would need to be in an area of the building that is open to and accessible by the general public during normal business hours, such as a building lobby. Otherwise, it would need to be externally facing to meet the public purpose requirement.**

Project Focus

- 1) Can the primary community served be an identity-based or cultural community that is dispersed across King County rather than concentrated in one neighborhood? If so, how should applicants demonstrate community-rootedness? **Yes, communities do not have to be based in a single geographic area. Your application should clearly state your organization's relationship to**

the community you serve and if you are led by and for that community. If your community is located throughout King County please explain how you are designing your project to best serve your community.

- 2) The event should be free and accessible to community members. If there is an "add on" option for the event, let's say an experience or exhibit, will that be seen as allowable by the KC review team? **Possibly; though we need more information. Please email the RFP Lead Sean Power at spower@kingcounty.gov with additional details.**
- 3) For a strong proposal, what is the distinction you want reviewers to see between an ordinary cultural event and a true Community-Led Tourism project? **Reviewers will look at how strongly a proposal meets the scoring criteria.**
- 4) Are you looking for proposals focused on hotel stays? **No. The definition of Visitor in the RFP is “a person who travels from a place of residence to a different neighborhood, town, city, county, state, or country, for purposes of business, pleasure, recreation, education, arts, heritage, or culture.” Overnight or hotel stays are not required per this definition.**
- 5) Can you talk about what sort of services you're looking for? **Please refer to the Eligible Activities in the RFP document.**
- 6) Can I focus on an existing project? **Yes.**
- 7) When the RFP says events must be free and accessible to the general public, can a publicly advertised program still be limited to adults 18+ because of the nature of the programming? **Yes. In your application, please describe the reason for limiting the event to this age group.**
- 8) What distinguishes a strong community-led tourism project from a strong community cultural program that does not make the tourism connection clearly enough? **We are looking for projects that align with the focus on cultural vibrancy. If you are attracting outside visitors, you likely meet the criteria of promoting tourism.**
- 9) The RFP specifically mentions gamification or apps supporting local economic development, but it doesn't really sound like that is what you all are focused on. **Any of the eligible activities listed in the RFP can be proposed.**

Geographic Focus

- 1) Are you looking for organizations based in unincorporated [King County], or do you still meet the 1st priority if you're based in an incorporated area but the project is taking place in unincorporated? **We are accepting applications for projects anywhere in King County. We determine the location of a project based on where it is taking place and not where the entity is located.**
- 2) The RFP gives first priority to projects in unincorporated King County. If an organization centers its project in an unincorporated area such as White Center but attracts participants and visitors from across King County, would the project still receive the unincorporated King County geographic priority? **Yes.**
- 3) How is location tied into scoring? We aren't in Unincorporated King County. **No additional points are awarded based on the location of a project. Once all projects have been scored, then we will take into consideration the geographic priorities listed in the RFP. For instance, if all the top 10 applications have the same score, the ones we would choose first would be those in unincorporated King County, since it is the first geographic priority.**
- 4) How will the county determine whether a project is in unincorporated King County or an incorporated city? **We will use the following King County website-**
<https://kingcounty.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/lookup/index.html?appid=7b546aec2ae74dfcb46b6d2a12da6035>

Miscellaneous

- 1) I noticed that page 11 says the final report is due October 31, 2027, while the application timeline says the final report and final invoice are due January 15, 2028. Could you clarify which deadline awardees should plan around? **This was an error. The contract end date will be 12/31/27. Final invoices and a final report will be due by 1/15/28. We will update the RFP document on the website.**
- 2) The application doesn't give us a limit on answers? What are preferred lengths for responses? **We do not have a word count or character limit. Responses will be graded by their content and not their length.**
- 3) Because the County may partially fund proposals, would you recommend that applicants show how the project could be adjusted at different funding levels, for example such as \$60,000, \$80,000, \$125,000, and \$150,000? **No. Submit your**

budget for what you need for your project. If we are awarding partial awards, we will reach out to grantees to evaluate on a case-by-case basis.

- 4) What are the reporting requirements for these funds? **We will have you submit a one-page progress report on a quarterly basis. Where possible, we ask that you submit photos and qualitative and quantitative information with this report. We will not require demographic data about participants. The final report will be due on 1/15/28.**
- 5) You talk about prioritizing communities that have been impacted by housing displacement. What about communities that have seen immense (and impending) growth of housing, but with no commensurate cultural amenities developing alongside of that? In other words, lots of new folks coming in, with no “third places” or gathering spots to build community - does that figure into your thinking? **This RFP priorities the Impacted Communities as defined by the King County Equitable Development Initiative. Please refer to this definition on page 4 of the RFP.**
- 6) How many invoices do you require for a series of events for one entity? **During contract negotiations, the assigned Grant Manager will learn from the awardee about their timeline and invoicing plans. Generally, grantees invoice on a monthly or quarterly basis. In terms of backup documentation, we will need backup financial documentation for all expenses billed to the grant. For instance, if an agency received 10 separate invoices from vendors, we would need to receive all 10.**
- 7) Who reviews proposals and makes funding recommendations? **A review panel comprised of King County staff and community members will score proposals and make funding recommendations.**
- 8) Are there options for technical assistance? **No.**
- 9) What evidence would reviewers consider strongest to show that a project is genuinely community-led and that community members were meaningfully involved in planning and implementation? **We do not have specific criteria. Please review the RFP in detail and speak to how you meet the characteristics of a community-rooted entity, as well as the other priority areas of the RFP such as serving Impacted Communities.**
- 10) If the events are held on church properties which have to be appropriate to the religious organization's sensitivities, would it still be considered equally? **Yes. Please make sure it's open and accessible by all members of the public.**

- 11)** The application asks how community members helped identify the need for the project. Can applicants draw from existing participant and practitioner feedback, advisory input, ongoing community relationships, and experience from previous programs, or is a new formal engagement process expected? **Incorporated prior feedback is fine.**
- 12)** How should applicants demonstrate that tourism-related economic benefits stay within the community? Does directly paying local artists, culture bearers, practitioners, contractors, and vendors count toward that goal? **We do not have specific criteria for demonstrating that tourism related economic benefits stay within a particular community. Paying local artists, cultural bearers, etc., is worth mentioning though not a requirement.**
- 13)** If my entity applies using a fiscal sponsor, should my entity still be listed as the project/applicant organization, with the fiscal sponsor's legal name and EIN provided where required, or would the fiscal sponsor need to be listed as the official applicant? **Your entity should be listed as the official applicant. You will see a place in the application to list the name of your fiscal sponsor.**
- 14)** As a small business, cash flow on a reimbursement model is something we're planning around. What does the process look like to request advance payments during contract negotiation? **Once an award has been made to an entity, the assigned Grant Manager will meet with you to discuss your project and budget. The Grant Manager will understand the limitations due to cash flow and work with the grantee to establish a plan for possible advanced payments.**