

**VIRGINIA
IS FOR
LOVERS®**

**VTC
PARTNERSHIP
MARKETING
Grant Funding
Programs**

VTC Grants Presentation

OVERALL PROGRAM FOCUS:

- Overnight travel
- Out of state visitation
- Economic Impact
- Tracked by region; some of our programs have regional limits
- All programs are reimbursement only; no funds are granted up front
- Jobs, employment & entrepreneurship

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OPEN NOW!

CLOSES SEPT 28

MICRO BUSINESS GRANT

- \$5,000 to microbusinesses with less than 20 full-time employees
- 1:1 in-kind match
- Drive overnight off-season travel
- Awards announced mid to late October
- \$10,000 award tier for organizations that market tourism-oriented businesses (i.e. Main Street, Downtown Business Associations, Chambers of Commerce)



About the Program

- Opened August 22, 2023
- Closes on September 28, 2023
- Must apply in the online portal
- No mailed applications will be accepted
- Research focused application
- Must justify target markets and marketing channels/demographics
- \$500,000 available in round pool

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Who Can **NOT** Apply?

- No cannabis events or retailers.
- No personal wellness unless part of a resort complex.
- No online only businesses; must have brick & mortar location or guiding tours to brick & mortar locations. Food trucks that drive visitation to a brewery/winery/destination are eligible.
- Businesses with more than 21 full-time employees. This is tracked by EIN.
- Email VTCMLPGrant@virginia.org with eligibility questions.
- VTC is the final arbiter of eligibility. Applicants must be tourism-oriented and drive visitation to Virginia to generate occupancy tax, meals tax, and sales tax and to generate employment to retain and create jobs.



Requirements

- 1:1 in-kind match.
- Earned, owned, and paid media can count as match, including # of social media followers and web clicks.
- Follow instructions carefully on how to value owned and earned media.
- This is reimbursement only; no funds up front. Manage cash flow wisely.
- Proof of spending must be included for reimbursement including invoices, proofs of payment, and screenshots/collateral with Virginia is for Lovers logo.
- Final report is required with final reimbursement request.

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How to Apply

- www.vatc.org/grants
- Click Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Grant
- Read the instructions, T&Cs, and other documents
- Gather data and info
- Use the instructions template
- Read the Terms & Conditions
- Read the FAQs
- Use the linked calendars to brainstorm long weekend marketing

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Important Dates

- Application closes **September 28, 2023 at 5 p.m.**
- Marketing plan expenditures must fall between **July 1, 2023, and May 31, 2024** but must drive visitation after September 1, 2023.
- Award notification will be late October.
- Final reimbursements and reports due within 60 days of last expenditure and no later than **August 31, 2024.**
- Final reports are required; failure to submit may impact future eligibility.

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CRITICAL INFO

- Only one application per EIN/SS#
- Applicants may be the hub/lure on their own application, but a spoke in another businesses or organization's application.
- Awards may be reduced if high scoring applications exceed available funding pool.
- Failure to complete final reports may impact future eligibility.
- VTC is the final arbiter of applicant eligibility, applicant awards, and eligible expenses.

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Application Portal

- The Instructions document contains detailed information about each section.
- Please answer all questions clearly and concisely.
- Your EIN# or SS# if a sole proprietorship is required.
- Businesses and organizations must be based in Virginia.

Virginia Tourism Corporation

about marketing grants

Virginia Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Program

Applicant Information

BUSINESS NAME*

EIN # (IF A SOLE PROPRIETORSHIP, SS # IS ALLOWED.)*

BUSINESS MAILING ADDRESS*

STREET ADDRESS

ADDRESS LINE 2

Business Type & Employee Info

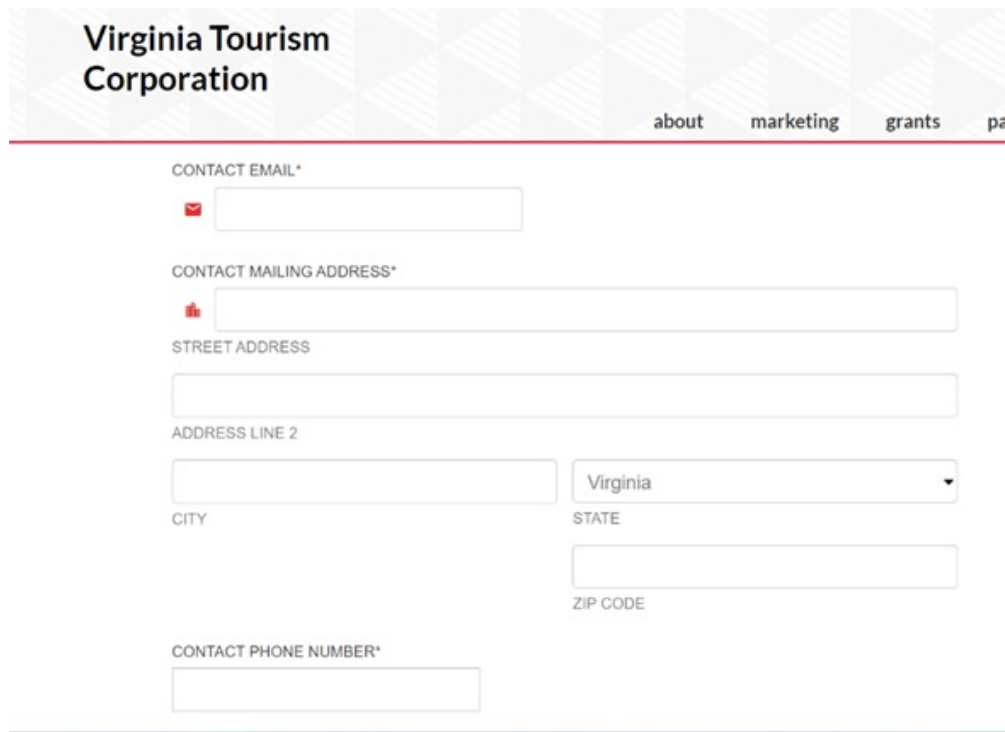
- Select the choice that best fits the main aspect of your business or entity. Wineries are considered craft beverage entities.
- Enter the number of full-time employees you have and enter the number of part-time employees you have.
- Detailed information on how to count full and part-time employees is in the instructions document.

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The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL `vatc.org/vtc-microbusiness-marketing-leverage-program-application/`. The page header includes the Virginia Tourism Corporation logo and navigation links for 'about', 'marketing', and 'grants'. A dropdown menu is open, listing various business types such as 'Small Business (Retail)', 'Small Business (Outfitter/Tour Guide)', 'Small Business (Lodging)', 'Small Business (Craft Beverage)', 'Small Business (Venue)', 'Small Business (Restaurant/Food Truck)', 'Small Business (Other)', 'Small Museum/Gallery', 'Officially Recognized DMO', 'Planning District Commission', 'Virginia Main Street Org', 'National Main Street Org', 'Other Organization', and 'Local Government'. The 'Small Business (Retail)' option is selected. Below the dropdown, there are input fields for 'STATE' (set to Virginia), 'ZIP CODE', 'HOW MANY FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES DO YOU HAVE?*', and 'HOW MANY PART-TIME EMPLOYEES DO YOU HAVE?*'.

Contact Info

- Identify the contact point for this program and a back up contact for this program.
- VTC can not speak with anyone other than these contacts about your application
- If phone numbers or addresses change, you must notify VTC in writing.



The screenshot shows the contact form for the Virginia Tourism Corporation. The header features the company name and navigation links for 'about', 'marketing', 'grants', and 'pa'. The form includes several input fields: 'CONTACT EMAIL*' with an envelope icon, 'CONTACT MAILING ADDRESS*' with a house icon, 'STREET ADDRESS', 'ADDRESS LINE 2', 'CITY', 'STATE' (a dropdown menu currently showing 'Virginia'), 'ZIP CODE', and 'CONTACT PHONE NUMBER*'. Each field is represented by a white rectangular box with a thin border.

Funding Amount, Virginia.org, Social Media

- List the amount of funding you're requesting from VTC.
- Max award is \$5,000 for eligible tourism-oriented businesses
- Max award is \$10,000 for eligible organizations.
- List your Virginia.org listing URL. It is OK if you don't have this finalized yet.
- List your social media handles.

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The screenshot shows a web browser window with three tabs: 'Industry Advertising Co-Op Prog', 'VTC x CrowdRiff Localhood - Viri', and '(VTC) Microbusiness Marketing L'. The address bar shows 'vatc.org/vtc-microbusiness-marketing-leverage-program-application/'. The page header features the 'Virginia Tourism Corporation' logo and navigation links for 'about', 'marketing', and 'grants'. The main form area contains the following sections:

- HOW MUCH FUNDING ARE YOU REQUESTING FROM VTC?*** with a text input field.
- Please list your business/organization's web & social media info:**
- VIRGINIA.ORG URL*** with a text input field.
- TWITTER**, **FACEBOOK**, and **INSTAGRAM** with text input fields.
- TIKTOK**, **WEBSITE**, and **HASHTAGS** with text input fields.

Program Focus

- Select from the drop down the main focus of your marketing program.
- Select the dates of your program this can be as short as two weeks or as long as 12 months (July 1, 2023 to May 31, 2024).
- We allow the lookback period since some folks are already placing fall advertising.
- Provide a detailed description of your marketing program.

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The screenshot shows the Virginia Tourism Corporation website header with navigation links for 'about', 'marketing', 'grants', and 'partner'. Below the header is a section titled 'Program Focus (10 Points)'. The form includes a 'PROGRAM FOCUS' dropdown menu with options: 'Arts & Culture' (highlighted), 'Culinary', 'History', 'Music', 'Outdoor Recreation', 'Holidays/Spring Break', and 'Other'. Below the dropdown are two date input fields labeled 'PROGRAM END DATE*' with a placeholder 'mm/dd/yyyy'. At the bottom is a 'PROGRAM DESCRIPTION' text area.

Target Market: Out-of-State

- Select from the drop-down list ONE out-of-state target market.
- It must be from this list.
- You must allocate **at least 25%** (you can allocate more) of your request award to this marketing in your marketing plan.
- You can NOT select Washington D.C. as both your in-state and out-of-state market.

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Target Markets (20 Points)

You must choose one out of state market and one in

OUT OF STATE TARGET MARKET

Baltimore, MD

Baltimore, MD

New York, NY

Philadelphia, PA

Raleigh, NC

Boston, MA

Cleveland, OH

Columbus, OH

Harrisburg, PA

Nashville, TN

Pittsburgh, PA

Atlanta, GA

Washington DC Metro Area

Charlotte, NC

Chicago, IL

Target Market: In-State

- Select ONE in-state target market from the drop-down box.
- These are major metro areas within Virginia, and you must select one of these to target.
- The goal of this program is to help you hyperfocus on marketing in very specific markets.

IN-STATE LARGE METRO TARGET MARKET

Washington D.C. Metro Area ▾

Washington D.C. Metro Area

Hampton Roads

Richmond

Roanoke-Salem

Bristol

Charlottesville

Harrisonburg

Winchester

Fredericksburg

Danville

Lynchburg

Partnerships Hub & Spoke

- Be sure to review your region's Drive Tourism plan and the State Drive Tourism plan for information on the Hub & Spoke model.
- List your business as the Lure. If an organization, list a major attraction or destination as the lure. This is the hub of your hub & spoke.
- Then list four other businesses that you can partner with on marketing. **One must be a lodging partner.**

Virginia Tourism Corporation

[about](#) [marketing](#) [grants](#)

Partnerships/Hub & Spoke (25 Points)

If your business is the hub, what other businesses or attractions will folks visit. Who can you partner with on marketing? These are your spokes.

LURE*

Your business/destination/attraction

SPOKE #1* SPOKE #2* SPOKE #3*

In-Kind Marketing Match Plan

- This is the section where you will list your in-kind match.
- This program requires a 1:1 match; we can only award up to the amount of your match.
- Be sure to reach the Terms and Conditions on what counts as eligible marketing items as match and how to value any earned and owned media.

In-Kind Marketing Plan (10 Points)

In-Kind Marketing Plan (This is your match. This grant requires a 1:1 match. Be sure to read instructions on eligible items, how to value followers, and how to value earned media like magazine articles.)

SELECT MEDIA TYPE	PLACEMENT DATES (MONTH/YEAR)	AMOUNT
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">InstagramFacebookGoogle AdsBlue Ridge OutdoorsLeisure DigitalTrip AdvisorWelcome Centers/PMAPOther (Print)Other (Digital)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

GRAND TOTAL IN-KIND MARKETING MATCH

Marketing Plan

- This is the most important section of your application.
- You have 7 lines to list your planned marketing expenditures.
- These must total at least the amount of funding you are request from VTC. You may list more.
- Select media outlets from the drop-down box, list dates, amount, and description.

Marketing Plan (25 Points)

SELECT MEDIA TYPE

- Instagram
- Facebook
- Google Ads
- Blue Ridge Outdoors
- Leisure Digital
- Trip Advisor
- Welcome Centers/PMAP
- Other (Print)
- Other (Digital)

PLACEMENT DATES

(MONTH/YEAR)

AMOUNT

Performance Measures

- Performance measures will help you track the effectiveness of your marketing efforts.
- Make sure you select measures that you can easily look up and report out in your final report
- You will select a performance measure. List where you are today and then list where you want to be in May 2024.

Performance Measures (10 Points)

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME #1

Select Outcomes from Drop Down Box

of Room Nights

of Room Nights

Meals Tax Revenue

of Customers

of Tickets Sold

Annual Sales

Sales Tax Revenue

of Visitors

of Event Attendees

Occupancy Tax Revenue

of Room Nights

PERFORMANCE GOAL (MAY 2023)

Performance Measures: Business Impacts

- Answer the two questions related to job creation, job retention, operating hours, and seasonal operations.
- These are important so we know what kind of impact these funds will have in the small business ecosystem.

WILL RECEIVING THESE FUNDS ALLOW BUSINESSES TO STAY OPEN MORE DAYS IN THE OFF-SEASON?
IF THE APPLICANT IS A SMALL BUSINESS, HOW WILL HOURS OR DAYS OPEN BE EXTENDED TO STAY
OPEN LONGER OR MORE OFTEN FROM SEPTEMBER 2022 THROUGH MAY 2023?

HOW WILL THESE FUNDS HELP YOU RETAIN OR ADD ANY EMPLOYEES AT YOUR BUSINESS OR
BUSINESSES IN THE COMMUNITY?

Bonus Section

- Applicants can earn up to 5 bonus points by listing how they are or will engage with VTC.
- The application instructions have descriptions of each of these line items.

Virginia Tourism Corporation

about marketing grants

Bonus - VIFL Activation (5 Bonus Points)

How will you integrate the Virginia is for Lovers brand in your marketing and advertising materials? (Refer to grant instructions and Select from Drop Down Box)

VIFLACTIVATION

- VTC Staff Content Acquisition Opportunity
- Virginia is for Lovers merchandise for sale on-site
- Virginia is for Lovers logo on rack cards
- Signed up for PR Leads
- Photography
- Liked & Followed VisitVirginia on Social Media
- Business Listed on Virginia.org
- Other

VIFLACTIVATION

AFTER YOU SUBMIT

- Once you have completed your application and are ready to submit, you must accept the Terms and Conditions.
- You will be emailed a .pdf version of your application.
- Once you submit, you can not make changes to your application.
- Scoring will occur after September 21.
- Awards will be made in late October.

ACCEPTANCE OF TERMS*

By clicking this checkbox and submitting this form, you are confirming that all information is final.

I have read and agree to the terms and conditions of the Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Program. I understand that failure to meet the requirements in the Terms and Conditions could result in forfeiture of the award and denial of reimbursements.

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**MORE
PROGRAMS
OPENING
LATE 2023-
EARLY 2024**



Re-opens Oct. 17, 2023

VA250 GRANTS

- **America's 250th 2026-2031**
- **Marketing program and destinations against the backdrop of our nation's history.**
- **Connecting to any period of our history or various themes such as foodways, lifeways, artisanship, tribal entities, etc.**
- **VA250 certified committees, historic attractions, DMOs. Very strict rules.**
- **OPEN 2X PER YEAR THROUGH 2026**
- **POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL ROUNDS 2027-2031.**

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OPENING EARLY 2024

SPECIAL EVENTS & FESTIVALS PROGRAM

- Lodging/Culinary/Craft Beverage/Artisanship are key components.
- Expand footprint, accessibility, or event experience; Events are incubators for small businesses—think through that lens.
- More days/more stays.
- Must be ESTABLISHED event and have two years of prior event history since 2017.
- In-kind match allowed.

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OPENING EARLY 2024

MARKETING LEVERAGE PROGRAM GRANT

- Partnership Focus—robust hub and spoke, packages, itineraries, focused marketing
- Max Award: \$20,000 in 2024
- 1:1 Cash Match; Must expend \$40,000 in eligible items to get a \$20,000 rebate
- Open to DMOs, tourism-oriented small businesses, organizations, PDCs, and some NGOs like Main Streets.
- The Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Program is a gateway to this program.

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OPENING EARLY 2024 DMO MARKETING GRANTS

- Partnership focused; itineraries, new markets, new campaigns, new demographics
- Research based targeting
- Creative destination wide campaigns
- Must be official DMO to apply
- In-Kind match allowed

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POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Partnerships are key.
- Leveraging private dollars to public dollars is key—go above and beyond the match when possible.
- Use Virginia is for Lovers logo on all marketing collateral.
- Eligibility varies by program type.
- Economic impact and research are critical components of the application.
- Regional limits by Go Virginia region for some programs.
- Read all terms and conditions before applying. These are reimbursement programs.

Helpful Links

- Funding Summary of all programs: <https://www.vatc.org/grants/>
- Tourism Research & Economic Impact: <https://www.vatc.org/research/>
- Logo use request form: <https://www.vatc.org/marketing/advertising/vifl-logo-request/>
- VTC Orientation registration: <https://www.vatc.org/partnershipmarketing/orientations/>
- VA-1 Governor's Tourism Summit: <https://vatc.org/va1/>
- Virginia Tourism Corporation Industry Newsletter Sign Up: <https://vatc.org/about/newsletter-signup/>
- Virginia.org Listings Management Portal: <https://www.vatc.org/marketing/digital-marketing/webmarketing/>

Grants Update Email Sign Up: <https://www.vatc.org/about/sign-up-for-vtc-grant-updates/>

Helpful Links

- Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Program Application portal: <https://www.vatc.org/vtc-microbusiness-marketing-leverage-program-application/>
- Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Program Instructions and Application Template: <https://www.vatc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Fall-2023-MMLP-Application-Instructions.docx>
- Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Program Terms and Conditions: <https://www.vatc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/VTCMMLPFall2023TermsandConditions-8-23-23-Final.docx>
- Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Program Sample app: <https://www.vatc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Virginia-Microbusiness-Marketing-Leverage-Program-Sample-App.pdf>
- Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Program FAQ: <https://www.vatc.org/vtc-microbusiness-mlp-faqs/>
- VA250 Marketing Leverage Grant: <https://www.vatc.org/vtc-va250-tourism-marketing-program/>

LET'S WORK TOGETHER!

REACH OUT TO THE DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT TEAM
REACH OUT TO THE GRANTS TEAM

FUNDING PROGRAMS OVERVIEW: [VATC.ORG/GRANTS](https://vatc.org/grants)

QUESTIONS?

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