

**Bend Cultural Tourism Fund
Commission Meeting
Draft Minutes (for approval at next meeting)
November 15, 2021 - 12:00-2:00pm
ZOOM Meeting**

In Attendance: Sandy Anderson; Liora Sponko; Jenny Malone, arrived 12:30pm; Jenny Green; Michael Gesme; Miguel Edwards; Rika Ayotte; Valerie Warren, nonvoting member; Laurel MacMillan, Administrator; Shari Crandall, Minutes.

Absent: Mindy Aisling; Leah Rutz.

Guests: Kevney Dugan, Visit Bend, joined at 1:00pm.

The meeting was called to order at 12:04pm.

I. Welcome/Introductions

MacMillan opened the meeting and briefly reviewed the agenda topics, adding #7 Commission Covid Policy and Follow Up.

II. Updated 2022 BCTF Grant Timeline

Moving the timeline up a month, MacMillan completed the Commission's desired changes, beginning with November 15, 2021, they include:

Date	Activity	Outcome/Action
November 15, 2021 - 12-2 pm	BCTF Winter Commission Meeting	Vote to approve 2022 grant application; Laurel updates online application on web portal
By January 7, 2022	Application goes live on website, open for submission	Laurel open for technical assistance questions; Commission promotes grant actively within community
February 28, 2022, 1-3pm (Set at end of this meeting)	BCTF Commission Meeting and Panel Training	Prepare Commissioners and external reviewers to review 2022 grants through online portal and process for Grant Review meeting
Friday, March 25, 2022	Grant Deadline 5pm	
March 25 - April __, 2022	Grant Review period	Around three weeks to review
One Week before meeting	BCTF Commission Packets out	Laurel sends to Commissioners
April 21, 2022, 9am-5pm (Set at end of this meeting)	BCTF Grant Review Meeting	BCTF forwards recommended grants (and supporting info) after meeting to Visit Bend Board with 2 weeks to review
Before May 9, 2022	BCTF Executive Committee meets with Visit Bend Board for Q&A on Grant Recommendations	VB Board has clear understanding of how grant scoring and funding recommendations were reached.
By May 17, 2022	Visit Bend Board Email Approval	VB Board approves grant awards
May 18-20, 2022	Award Letters/Declined Letters available to go out	Laurel sends letters out

Warren noted the grant deadline on March 25, 2022 aligns with the scheduled Bend-La Pine School District spring break. MacMillan acknowledged this; the applicants should be able to complete the application in the allotted almost three-month time frame. It was noted another Oregon arts grant funder provides only two months to complete an application. The Commissioners agreed with this amended 2022 BCTF Grant Timeline.

III. BCTF 2022 Grant Application

To address the changes discussed at the October 14, 2021 BCTF meeting, Sponko, Ayotte, Edwards, Malone, and MacMillan (the Committee) revisited the Marketing and Catalyst Grant Guidelines and Questions and made the suggested changes, below.

As the Commission goes through the suggested changes, MacMillan encouraged the Commissioners to jump in with questions and/or concerns.

The full text of the BCTF 2022 Grant Guidelines and Application Questions is not recorded in these Minutes. Instead, the Committee's suggested amendments, by section, are itemized in blue; any changes recommended by the Commission to the suggested text are in red; and, the related Commission discussions follow each section.

CULTURAL TOURISM: MARKETING/PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT

A. GRANT GUIDELINES

Definitions

Culture is defined as "activities, projects or programs that are primarily organized for the purpose of producing, promoting or presenting the arts, heritage or humanities to the public."

The BCTF uses the following public agencies' definitions of Arts, Heritage and Humanities:

National Endowment for the Arts Definition of "Arts":

The term "the arts" includes, but is not limited to, music (instrumental and vocal), dance, drama, folk art, creative writing, architecture and allied fields, painting, sculpture, photography, graphic and craft arts, industrial design, costume and fashion design, motion pictures, television, radio, film, video, tape and sound recording, the arts related to the presentation, performance, execution, and exhibition of such major art forms, all those traditional arts practiced by the diverse peoples of this country[,] and the study and application of the arts to the human environment.

--National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act, 1965, as amended

The Oregon Arts Commission (OAC) identifies the following categories for "Art":

- Visual Arts (crafts, drawing, painting, photography, printmaking, sculpture, mixed media, new media)
- Literature (creative non-fiction, fiction, play writing, poetry)
- Dance (including choreography)
- Music (composition, performance)
- Theatre and Performance Art
- Design Arts
- Media Arts
- Folk and Traditional Arts

Oregon Administrative Rule definition for "Oregon Heritage":

Heritage is the array of significant things, thoughts, and activities associated with the human experience in Oregon. Oregon's heritage resources include artifacts and other manifestations of material culture, documents, publications, photographs and films, prehistoric and historic sites, historic buildings and other structures, cultural landscapes, heritage celebrations, festivals and fairs, and songs, stories, and recordings associated with the human experience in Oregon.

National Endowment for the Humanities Definition of "Humanities":

"The term 'humanities' includes, but is not limited to, the study and interpretation of the following: language, both modern and classical; linguistics; literature; history; jurisprudence; philosophy; archaeology; comparative religion; ethics; the history, criticism and theory of the arts; those aspects of the social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods; and the study and application of the humanities to the human environment with particular attention to reflecting our diverse heritage, traditions, and history and to the relevance of the humanities to the current conditions of national life."

--National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act, 1965, as amended.

Discussion

Many commissioners voiced a desire to create a more concise BCTF definition. While the above definitions are "a bit clunky" the state and federal definitions were a way to address the FY2021 issues and quickly move forward. The Commissioners concur this is a good starting point for this FY2022 grant cycle. They will observe what happens and readdress the definition, if necessary, at a future date.

Eligibility

For-profit businesses, not-for-profit organizations, government agencies, or individuals engaged in cultural tourism activities that physically occur in Bend may apply for BCTF funding. [If the activity takes place outside the city limits, applicant must demonstrate proof of visitors' lodging in Bend over other locations.](#)

Discussion

MacMillan queried whether the Commission wants to change the term "lodging" to "economic impact". She commented BCTF funding comes from the Transient Room Tax (TRT).

Discussion ensued. Because BCTF funding arises from TRT, the emphasis of Eligibility should be on lodging, rather than economic impact. But, how does applicant prove the lodging choices of its out-of-town visitors? "Proof" may not be the best word. For example, High Desert Museum supports its BCTF applications by tracking lodging data through visitor surveys.

Ayotte suggested changing the second sentence by removing "proof" to read: [If the activity takes place outside the city limits, applicant must demonstrate visitors' lodging in Bend over other locations.](#) Commissioners agreed to this change.

Action: MacMillan made the text change during the meeting.

Other Considerations

- All BCTF projects must have the ability to measure the project's economic impact in Bend.
- Projects must align [with the above arts, heritage and humanities definitions.](#)
- Recipients of BCTF grants should demonstrate a track record of responsible management and the resources and expertise to effectively execute the proposed program.
- [Priority will be given to projects, activities or events that align with BCTF's values of advancing the richness of Bend's arts and culture offerings, represent diversity, equity and inclusion, and have a plan to mitigate environmental impacts.](#)

Discussion

Commissioners agree with the gist of the statements made under this section; the statements are a way to express BCTF values. However, some Commissioners felt uncomfortable with "represent" diversity.

Ayotte suggested changing "represent" to "integrate" for the sentence to read: [Priority will be given to projects, activities or events that align with BCTF's values of advancing the richness of Bend's arts and culture offerings, integrate diversity, equity and inclusion, and have a plan to mitigate environmental impacts.](#) Commissioners agreed to this change.

Action: MacMillan made the text change during the meeting.

B. APPLICATION QUESTIONS

SEASONALITY OF PROPOSAL [20 points]

Question 1: One goal of this fund is to generate incremental tourism during the shoulder seasons and winter months.

Discussion

Gesme, self-identifying as "new on the bus", asked why BCTF awards "0" or "20" points for Seasonality when it appears an applicant with an event in July or August would in all likelihood not be able to achieve the requisite 80 out of the total 100 points to be considered.

MacMillan provided the historical context: Originally, applicants with an event in the first half of June or the last half of September could only receive 10 points. However in an effort to include more applicants, the Commission changed that 10-point allotment in 2019 to 20 points for events for the months in September and June. She noted Gesme raises a good question.

After discussing at some length, Commissioners agreed:

- Under **Guidelines** note BCTF funding is limited to activities/events that occur within the shoulder/winter seasons, from September through June; and,

- Delete Question 1/Seasonality of Proposal, in its entirety.

The next question arose: what does the Commission do with the available 20 points - distribute to the remaining questions to retain a total 100 points, or only have a total 80 points. Commissioners agreed to table the 20-point discussion to later in the meeting.

Action: MacMillan will: 1. amend the **Guidelines** to incorporate wording addressing BCTF funding is limited to events/activities that occur between September 1 through June 30; and, 2. delete Question 1/Seasonality from the application.

QUALITY OF CULTURAL PROGRAMMING [20 POINTS]

Question 2: Provide a summary, including the dates, of the proposed cultural tourism activity (include detail on how the activity will provide a COVID-19 appropriate visitor experience.) [Include how your project fits in to the definitions of arts and culture, above, and contributes to advancing the richness of Bend's arts and culture offerings. Please share any strategies for your project and/or organization related to diversity, equity and inclusion and mitigation of environmental impact.](#)

Discussion

MacMillan reported that while the Committee was discussing the potential additions to the application, Malone experienced an "a ha!" moment: the BCTF application is already cumbersome with numerous questions, adding more questions would only increase the applicant's burden; rather than add more questions, she suggested perhaps this would be a time to better tailor the grant's questions. The Committee amended the questions, accordingly.

This amendment to Question 2 reflects the richness and values of BCTF funding; these are articulated in one place - cultural programming. Malone recommended MacMillan break down the paragraph into bullet points for easier applicant response. Commissioners agreed with this direction.

Sponko identified the lack of character count number at the end of the question; MacMillan will include an allotted character count in the final copy. Given the expansion of Question #2, this question will require a large number of character spaces. Sponko then asked: will applicants be required to answer all questions? If they do not answer all the bullet points, will reviewers score down?

Because this question emphasizes the "meat and potatoes" of BCTF values, several suggested this question receive the full or partial distribution of the 20 points from the deleted Question #1/Seasonality.

Action: MacMillan will redraft Question 2 to include bullet points, include the character count number, and increase the total points allotted for this question from 20 to 35 (see Scoring below).

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY [15 points]

Budget.

Complete the online budget form for the project described under the TABLES tab. [Identify all media tactics and costs \(cash and in-kind\). Identify which you will use and the amount of money you have budgeted for each tactic.](#) There is a narrative field you should use to fully describe the revenue and expenses more fully than the budget form allows.

(See **QUALITY AND THOROUGHNESS OF BUSINESS AND MARKETING PLAN [20 points]** and Question 16, immediately below, for discussion.)

QUALITY AND THOROUGHNESS OF BUSINESS AND MARKETING PLAN [20 points]

Question 16. What will change with your [media](#) plan if your activity does not receive the full funding? (5000 points)

Discussion

MacMillan recalled past cycles in which applicants submitted two separate line item budget plans (See Budget, above): the overall budget and a separate budget for the media plan. The media plan budget has been rolled into the overall budget. In addition, a couple of questions such as who in the organization will do social media have been deleted. The Commissioners agreed with these changes.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI) MEASUREMENT/EVALUATION [20 points]

Question 17: Describe how the arts & culture-based activity has or will attract tourists and have measurable economic impact for Bend, e.g. visitors expected, rooms booked, off-season enhancement, etc. (5000 characters)

Question 18: Number of visitors expected X \$120 per night

Question 19: Additional comments on ROI (250 characters)

Question 20: Clearly identify how you will measure the tourist participation (visitors from outside a 50-mile radius). (5000 characters)

MacMillan asked whether Question 17 helps reviewers evaluate the applications - does the application collect enough information in other questions to make this one redundant?

Discussion encompassed Questions 17, 18 and 19

Some commissioners believe an applicant's response to Question 17 is helpful, others thought the response a rehash from previously asked questions. A query: what does BCTF really want to know with respect to Question 17/ROI?

One Commissioner voiced that this is a very important question due to the funding source - TRT. However, there is no context to what is a "good" or "adequate" ROI - is it 10 out-of-town visitors? 1000 visitors? MacMillan replied: given the differing organizations and events, BCTF cannot apply one formula to define ROI; the reviewer's responsibility is to evaluate the risk based on information/data provided by applicants to determine what to spend on smaller and larger organizations and their respective events.

Malone suggested Question 17 can be simplified or reworded to better reflect BCTF and the reviewers' need; perhaps, have applicant address why its activity is a compelling draw for visitors/why it is appealing to visitors.

Question 18 asks for a quantifiable number representing the number of heads-in-beds multiplied by \$120. Historically, applicants were all over the board in evaluating ROI. Based on Visit Bend's calculation from visitor impact statements, several years ago the Commission chose to standardize the room value to \$120, and then provided Question 19 as an opportunity for applicant to argue why its ROI deserves to be higher. Warren reported \$120 is still representational of overnight room costs.

Because Question 18 addresses a number based on best calculation by applicant for lodging, Green suggested the question might better represent lodging by multiplying: the number of visitors per night X the number of nights X \$120.

Gesme, looking at the big picture, noted the majority of BCTF questions are non-objective/subjective, the applicant's philosophy; these questions are data driven geared toward what makes applicant's event special enough to draw people here. It's important to tease out and talk about ROI and to talk numbers. The question is: how important is this information, what is its value, how many points should this subject receive? Ayotte agreed and suggested putting the onus on the applicant to make its argument through the numbers and the story.

Green surmised ROI is the most important section to Visit Bend; at end of the day, it's about heads-in-beds. Malone recommended: rewording Question 17 to tell why the event is a compelling draw to out of town visitors; keeping Question 18; and, increasing the point allotment from 20 to 25.

The Commissioners concurred with the following:

Question 17. Change the text, wordsmith the terms provided by Gesme in Chat that stated the following: **Make a compelling argument for why the BCTF should invest in your project . . . What is it about your event that will draw out-of-town visitors to Bend and will contribute to the economic impact to Bend?**

Question 18. Keep the number calculation for quantifiable impact.

Question 19. From the discussion, it was not clear whether the majority wanted to keep or delete this question.

Action: MacMillan will redraft Question 17 to reflect the above-terms highlighted in red, and increase the points allotted from 20 to 25, see Scoring below.

COLLABORATION, PARTNERSHIPS, AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT [5 points]

Question 21. Describe the resources, partnerships and collaborations that have been developed to support and complete the proposed activity. Clearly describe what the partners and collaborators will be doing to help the activity succeed. *If partnering with another BCTF grant applicant beyond venue rental, clearly explain roles and divisions of labor/proceeds.* [Upload no more than 3 letters of collaborative or partner support.](5000 characters)

Question 22. *If your project requires permits, identify and state where you are in the process of obtaining them.*

Discussion

Commissioners agreed applicants need to consider and address partnerships and permitting.

SCORING

Commissioners conversation returned to scoring the application. With the deletion of original Question 1/Seasonality, the Commission first addressed whether to redistribute the available 20 points for a total 100 points, or score to a total 80 points. For administrative ease, they determined redistribution of the 20 points, and retention of the 100-point total, was appropriate.

After considerable discussion regarding different point permutations, the Commission chose to emphasize the importance of **Quality of Cultural Programming** and **Return of Investment Measurement/Evaluation**. Therefore, the Commissioners agreed to the following changes in point distribution:

Application Section	Original Points	Points After Redistribution
Seasonality of Proposal	20	0
Quality of Cultural Programming	20	35
Organizational Capacity	15	15
Quality and Thoroughness of Business and Marketing Plan	20	20
Return on Investment (ROI) Measurement/Evaluation	20	25
Collaboration, Partnerships, and Resource Development	5	5
Total	100	100

Action: MacMillan will make the agreed upon changes discussed today and send the revised iteration to the Commissioners for their review.

CULTURAL TOURISM: CATALYST GRANTS - RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

MacMillan revised the Catalyst Grant Guidelines and Criteria to replicate the general overall changes made in Marketing/Program Enhancement. Those changes are itemized in blue, below.

A. GRANT GUIDELINES

Definitions

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--National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act, 1965, as amended.

Grant Objectives

Cultural tourism grants are intended to attract tourists to Bend-based arts and culture based projects, activities or events with a measurable and positive economic and cultural impact on the community.

Eligibility

- For-profit businesses, not-for-profit organizations, government agencies, or individuals engaged in cultural tourism activities that physically occur in Bend may apply for BCTF funding. If the activity takes place outside the city limits, applicant must demonstrate proof of visitors' lodging in Bend over other locations.

Other Considerations

- Projects must align with the above arts, heritage and culture definitions.
- Priority will be given to projects, activities or events that align with BCTF's values of advancing the richness of Bend's arts and culture offerings, represent diversity, equity and inclusion, and have a plan to mitigate environmental impacts.

B. CRITERIA

Quality and thoroughness of Business Plan (45 points): Does the quality and thoroughness of the applicant's proposal and plan instill a high degree of confidence it will be executed as promised, and achieve its intended results. Does the proposal account for a appropriate COVID-19 visitor experience, based on stated timeline (if applicable). Does the project fit into the definitions of arts and culture, listed above. Does the project align with the BCTF's values of advancing the richness of Bend's arts and culture offerings, represent diversity, equity and inclusion, and have a plan to mitigate environmental impacts.

QUALITY OF BUSINESS PLAN [45 points]

Question 1: Provide a brief summary of the proposed concept, and what makes it well suited to Bend during the shoulder season (include detail on how the activity will provide a COVID-19 appropriate visitor experience). Include how your project fits in to the definitions of arts and culture, above, and contributes to advancing the richness of Bend's arts and culture offerings. Please share any strategies for your project and/or organization related to diversity, equity and inclusion and mitigation of environmental impact. (3500 characters)

COLLABORATION, PARTNERSHIPS, AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT [15 points]

Question 11: [If your project requires permits, identify and state where you are in the process of obtaining them.](#)

Action: MacMillan will amend the Catalyst Grants application to reflect the thoughts and terms upon which the Commissioners agreed for the Marketing/Program Enhancement, above.

IV. Commissioner Recruitment

The current Commissioners as of September, 2021 include:

	Position	First Name	Last Name	Executive Committee	End of Term	Term Year
1	Visit Bend Board or Staff Member (nonvoting)	Valerie	Warren		2022	Second
2	At Large	Sandy	Anderson		2021	First
3	At Large	Mindy	Aisling		2022	Second
4	At Large	Jenny	Malone	Member	2021	Third
5	At Large	Rika	Ayotte	Member	2021	Second
6	At Large	Jenny	Green		2022	Second
7	At Large	Liora	Sponko		2022	Second
8	At Large	Leah	Rutz		2023	First
9	At Large	Michael	Gesme		2023	First
10	At Large	Miguel	Edwards		2023	First

MacMillan reiterated Malone, Green and Aisling will be leaving the Commission. BCTF policy states the Commission may have between 9-11 commissioners. Therefore, the Commissioners need to recruit two at the minimum, four at the maximum, by the next meeting in February. There is plenty of time to identify candidates but she would like to have a list of people to contact to provide information and determine fit for the commissioner position.

MacMillan does have a list of people to whom she previously spoke who demonstrated an interest at some later date. She also encouraged the Commissioners to consider potential recruits with different skills such as: tourism, hotel operator, advertising, marketing. She asked the Commissioners to send her names.

Ayotte suggested outreach outside the Commissioners' circle. Upon request, Warren will ask Visit Bend do a press release through Cascade A&E and Business News encouraging people interested to contact MacMillan. The press release will also be a good opportunity to further publicize BCTF.

Action: Visit Bend will issue a press release mid-December; Executive Committee will review interested persons mid-January.

V. Approve October 14, 2021 BCTF Minutes

Action: Ayotte moved, Edwards seconded, to approve the October 14, 2021 Minutes as written.

Vote: The Commission unanimously approved the minutes.

VI. BCTF Budget Report

MacMillan sent the current Budget Report, ending October 31, 2021, just before the meeting. The Commissioners asked questions regarding the report regarding funds paid/not paid, operating expenses, and the fund balance.

Action: MacMillan will ask Scott Greenstone to attend the next meeting to address the budget and potential available grant funds for FY2022.

VII. Commission COVID Policy and Follow Up

a. I agree that my organization will follow all current local, state, and federal recommendations, guidelines, and restrictions around COVID-19 for the proposed cultural tourism activity/project.

To qualify for BCTF funds, applicants must agree to this COVID-19 statement. With respect to the FY2022 application, questions arose: what is BCTF's policy if the Commission becomes aware grantee is not following the COVID-19 protocols? What are the criteria for follow up? What level defines violation of protocols? Does failure to comply require grantee to forfeit the remaining funds? Make grantee ineligible for funding next year?

Does BCTF want to add "BCTF reserves the right to withhold funding if guidelines are not followed"? There appeared to be considerable support for inclusion of this phrase.

Malone asked MacMillan whether the BCTF grant agreement sent to new grantees states the grantee is required to follow state/local laws and also affirms BCTF, as funder, is not legally responsible if grantee violates the laws. MacMillan is not certain of the specific legal terms.

Dugan asked MacMillan if she regularly communicates with grantees. For FY2021 grantees, he recommended MacMillan send a friendly note, a communication of good will in which she states she hopes the event season is going well, and includes a reminder of BCTF expectations regarding COVID-19.

Action: MacMillan will send the friendly follow-up to FY2021 grantees.

VIII. Commissioner Thank You

MacMillan thanked Malone and Green for their considerable help, to her personally and for BCTF overall. Green noted this program is phenomenal, it has helped grow Bend's arts and culture. She thanked Visit Bend and the Commission. Malone concurred and stated she is excited to see the new eyes/ears/heart and continued evolution of the program.

MacMillan again thanked the Commissioners for their contributions, discussion, and hard work.

IX. Set Next Meeting: Late February/March (week of Feb 28 or Week of March 21)

a. Welcome new Commissioners, Grant Review Training, Review last year's grants
The meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 28, 2022 from 1:00-3:00pm.

IX. Set Grant Review Meeting Date: Week of April 18, 9-5pm

The all-day meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 21, 2022 from 9:00am-5:00pm. The hope is this meeting will be held in person.

X. Adjourn

The Commission meeting adjourned at 2:00pm.