

City of Everett Lodging Tax Grants 2024

Information guide



How to use this document

This guide offers helpful information to assist you with the process of submitting a grant application for the City of Everett's LTAC (Lodging Tax Advisory Committee) grant program.



This document is not the official application.

What's new in 2024?

HERE'S A QUICK SNAPSHOT OF WHAT NEW IN 2024.

- Total funding for the 2024 City of Everett LTAC grant pool is \$560,000
- The 2024 LTAC grant application process has transitioned to Amplifund, a software solution designed to enhance the efficiency of the application, review, and funding processes while prioritizing data security. Further details are provided below.
- The designated LTAC staff liaison for 2024 is Tyler Chism. Tyler is a program manager in economic development with over a decade of expertise in events, tourism marketing and economic development. For any inquiries or communication with Tyler, you can reach out to him at tchism@everettwa.gov.

About the LTAC grant program

The Hotel/Motel Tax Fund Grants, commonly referred to as Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) grants, are financial resources allocated to non-profit organizations and public agencies for initiatives aimed at facilitating tourism development and promotion within the City of Everett. Typically, LTAC grant funds are utilized to bolster the marketing and operational aspects of special events, attractions, and festivals designed to attract tourists.

This grant program is funded by revenue generated from taxes paid by visitors who stay in paid lodging facilities within the City of Everett.

Grant application and review timeline

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- Applications will open Nov. 1, 2023
- Applications will close Dec 1., 2023 at 5 p.m.
- Applications will be reviewed, and awards will be announced by Dec. 31, 2023



Who can apply?

Non-profit organizations and public agencies are eligible to submit applications for an LTAC grant. For-profit event producers may also participate by collaborating with a non-profit or public agency in what is termed a "cooperative project." In this arrangement, the non-profit or public agency assumes the role of an event sponsor.

Eligible expenses

In accordance with Washington State law, hotel/motel tax grant funds are specifically designated to bolster efforts that stimulate tourism-related expenditures and contribute to the generation of paid overnight lodging within the City of Everett.

LTAC grants are allocated to projects aimed at advancing tourism development. These projects encompass a wide range of activities, such as special events and festivals, the enhancement of tourism attractions, support for film productions, facilitation of meetings and conventions, and the promotion of sporting events.

Additionally, grants can be utilized for marketing campaigns that target the attraction of visitors from areas beyond a 50-mile radius of Everett.



Eligible expenses often encompass a broad spectrum of costs, including those associated with marketing, promotion, and operational aspects of the supported initiative. Funds cannot be used toward wages or benefits for staff or principals.

How to apply using Amplifund

PLUS, HELPFUL TIPS!


To enhance both the simplicity and security of the application, review, and funding processes, LTAC applications will now be managed through the City's grant management software, Amplified. If you have previously applied for an LTAC grant, transitioning to Amplified and familiarizing yourself with its features may initially appear somewhat complex, but believe you will soon come to appreciate the centralized workflow provided by the Amplifund portal.

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Steps to apply

1. Gather necessary documentation

 You'll need to upload the following as part of your application. It's best to gather these before you apply.

- i. Two letters of endorsement, one from a hotel
- ii. A current W-9
- iii. For non-profits
 1. Incorporation letter
 2. Two most recent years financials

2. Register for a Amplifund account:

 There is no cost to use Amplifund. Skip this step if you already have an Amplifund account

If this is your organization's first time using Amplifund, you'll need to create an applicant portal account.


- 1) Visit the grant opportunity [AmpliFund webpage](#).
- 2) Click the login button in the top right of the screen. On the next page, click the "Register" button (it's just left of the "Login" button) to create an account, fill out the fields in the form and click "Register" in the bottom right corner.

Note: Create only one AmpliFund applicant portal account for the entire organization.

3. Login to Amplifund.

If you're not redirected to the LTAC grant application, click [here](#).

4. Click "Apply" button and Start the Application Process

 The Amplifund software will walk you through several steps to fill out your application. Notice the steps task bar at the top, you may click on any of the steps to visit that step's form fields.

Opportunity Details: This is an informational page; you may read and proceed.

Evaluation and Scoring: This is an informational page; you may read and proceed.

Project Information: Fill out all the fields on this page. You'll enter some budget and project information, but don't worry, you'll have a chance to expound on these later in the process.



Application Forms: There are two application documents that need to be completed:

- City of Everett LTAC Application
 - This is the main application where you'll submit complete details about your project.
- City of Everett LTAC Application Attachments
 - This is where you'll upload your attachments (see [step 1](#) above)

Budget: The next step is the budget template; it's the least intuitive step in the process.

- Click the plus sign (+) to add line items to your budget.
- Under each budget category, input the necessary line items.
- You can add multiple line items within each category.
- When entering information, specify a dollar value for each item, indicating whether it is grant funded (expenses you're requesting grant funding for) or non-grant funded (your own cash contribution).
- Your budget will automatically update as you add items. The grant funded column should reflect your total grant funding request, and the non-grant funded column should display your cash match.
- When you've finished, the bottom line of your budget should read \$0.00. This is the expected result.

Performance plan: In this section, you will provide information about the anticipated number of visitors and overnight stays your project is expected to generate.

To do this:

- 1) Click the "+add goal" button next to each metric.
- 2) Enter your projected performance metric. For instance, if you are setting a goal under "Estimated Total Visitors Drawn," follow these steps:
 - a. Type "total visitors" in the 'name' field.
 - b. Input the expected total number in the 'number to be achieved' field.
 - c. Click "save" to record the goal.

These goals will be revisited when you submit for reimbursement.

Review and submit your application: That's it' you're ready to submit! Go back and give it a quick review, then click "submit."



Need help? If you have any trouble with Amplifund, [click on this link](#) for a helpful ZenDesk directory full of support literature. You may also email questions to Tyler Chism at email tchism@everett.gov



Grant application considerations and tips for success

WHEN APPLYING, PLEASE CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

Eligibility: Every applicant must succinctly define their project and demonstrate that, if funded, it will adhere to state statutes and city ordinances governing the use of program funds. The relevant State of Washington RCW pertaining to LTAC [can be accessed here](#).

Scope of Work: Applicants are required to submit a comprehensive scope of work that breaks down the overall project into a logical sequence of steps.

Timeline: Elements and the scope of work must align with milestones, indicating when each step will be initiated and completed.

Endorsements: Each application should be accompanied by two endorsement letters, one of which must be from a hotel or motel. These letters should clarify the endorser's connection with the project proponent and briefly state their reasons for supporting the project.

Budget: In the budget narrative section of the application, please provide any additional figures or details that will enhance the clarity of the information supplied in the budget form. It's important to note that salaries, personnel expenses, travel, and administrative costs are ineligible for reimbursement but can count as sponsor match. Additionally, please specify any other City funding sought or received for the event.

Match Availability: Each application must confirm that their matching share will be available on the specified date of project commencement if the project is funded.

Proof of Nonprofit Status: Not-for-profit organizations must furnish evidence of their status, such as a copy of the federal Internal Revenue Service letter confirming 501(c)(3), (4), or (6) status, and/or a copy of the certificate of nonprofit incorporation signed by the Secretary of State for the State of Washington. You will be prompted to upload this documentation during the application process.

Reimbursement: If granted a grant, funding will be provided on a reimbursement basis, meaning that no funds can be advanced to support the project. Sponsors must initially incur expenses and then submit invoices to the city for reimbursement in accordance with contract guidelines.

Contract: Each project selected for funding will be required to enter into a contractual agreement with the city. The contract will encompass aspects like the definition of project goals, eligible costs, payment procedures, limits of city liability, and other standard requirements.

Monitoring and Reporting: As a contractual requirement, each funded project will undergo monitoring to assess progress and adherence to the original goals. Grantees will need to submit



a final report upon project completion and may also be obliged to provide periodic progress reports during the project's duration.

Contact Person: Each project must designate a primary individual as the contact person. Throughout the funded project's lifecycle, this individual will serve as the primary representative in all interactions with the city.

Scoring criteria



Applications that meet the threshold criteria will be presented to the review panel for evaluation and scoring based on the following criteria. A maximum of 100 points can be awarded in this area.

Project impact: How will the City of Everett and/or the community be impacted by this project? Will its impact be experienced by a broad spectrum of our community? Will it draw visitors from outside the City? 25 points

Clarity: Does the proposal clearly and concisely present a definite, well-described product for which the City's assistance is being sought? If appropriate to do so, does the proposal describe how the City-supported product will be integrated into a larger effort (e.g., a brochure that promotes a cultural event: does the proposal describe the brochure as well as summarizing the purpose and scope of the event and the role the brochure will play in its success)? 20 points

Cost-effectiveness: Does the project propose an efficient, economical use of the City's funds? 20 points

Degree of match: A match of at least 25% of the total project value (City funds plus sponsor's share) is required; a higher rate will improve a project's stature accordingly. 10 points

Marketing: How will the proposed project be marketed and how will that marketing recognize the City's participation? How broadly will marketing reach beyond the city limits? 10 points

Innovation: Does the project represent an unusual approach, does it promote a new venture or event, or does it move the City's Hotel/Motel program in a useful new direction? 10 points

Cooperative nature: What kind and degree of inter-organizational or inter-jurisdictional partnership does the project exhibit? 5 points

Earn bonus points!

The City has an interest in spreading the impacts of tourism more evenly over the entire year, expanding overnight stays, and acting as a partner with other jurisdictions that collect their own Hotel/Motel funds. Bonus points will be given to proposals that can convince the Lodging Tax



Advisory Committee that, if funded, the projects will advance these goals. A maximum of 20 additional points can be awarded in this area.

Off-season development: Will the project promote tourism development during the off-season (Sept. 1 through June 30)? 10 points

Overnight visitors: Has the project convincingly established that it will attract overnight visitors? If so, does it quantify the anticipated stays and offer a credible method for corroborating the projections? 10 points

Selection Process

AFTER THE APPLICATION PERIOD CLOSES, HERE'S HOW THE PROCESS UNFOLDS:

1. The Chair of the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee or their designated representative will conduct the initial review of the applications to ensure completeness and compliance with the eligibility criteria.
2. Subsequently, the City's Lodging Tax Advisory Committee will evaluate the applications and formulate recommendations for funding. These recommendations will then be presented to the Everett city council for consideration.
3. The final decision regarding project approval and funding levels will be made by the city council.
4. Following the approval, the staff will collaborate with the applicants of the endorsed projects to establish contracts and define the scopes of work.



LTAC grants operate on a reimbursement basis. This means that sponsors are required to expend funds on approved items before seeking reimbursement in accordance with the terms of the governing contract. Costs incurred for an approved project will not be eligible for reimbursement until all contracts have been signed by all involved parties, including the city.

QUESTIONS? CONTACT US.

If you have other questions or need help, please email Tyler Chism at tchism@everettwa.gov for assistance.

