



## Partners in Marketing Guidelines

**Overview:** Since 2001, the North Dakota Department of Commerce has awarded more than \$1 million through the Partners in Marketing program for a wide variety of projects impacting counties and cities across North Dakota. In partnership with local professional economic developers, these projects have supported web site development, promotional and marketing materials, business visits, regional specialty events and more.

The goal of this program is to build partnerships between Commerce and local developers through successful marketing efforts that nurture or secure primary sector business start-up, relocation or expansion. In addition, workforce recruitment activities are also considered.

**Process:** Commerce will award grants to local economic developers during the 2015-2017 biennium in the following activity areas of business or workforce recruitment:

1. Collateral Materials (to include print and electronic)
2. Trade Missions (in-state, out-of-state and international)
3. Partner Advertising
4. Specialty Events

In addition, funds are available for local economic development organizations to create marketing plans or strategic plans that will guide business and/or workforce recruitment efforts for the community or region. (Note: the funds may not be used for specific community events or for specific businesses.)

**Involvement:** The Department of Commerce maintains the right to be involved in the previously mentioned activities. This involvement includes the following:

1. **Collateral Materials:** Commerce reserves the right for editorial comment on all aspects of the materials. At a minimum, the following statement needs to be included on collateral materials produced with Partners in Marketing funds: Produced in partnership with the North Dakota Department of Commerce. We also request placement of the Commerce logo on materials or as a link on web sites.
2. **Trade Missions:** Commerce will support your efforts to meet with business leaders to discuss startup, relocation or expansion opportunities in your community or to promote workforce recruitment to your area. Commerce reserves the right to participate in the trade mission and represent the Commissioner of Commerce at all trade mission functions, including follow up.
3. **Partner Advertising:** Commerce reserves the right for editorial comment on all aspects of advertising materials.

4. Specialty Events: Commerce encourages communities to develop unique specialty events as the basis for establishing and growing client relationships. We reserve the right to participate in the specialty event and represent the Commissioner of Commerce at all event functions, including planning and follow up.

**Application Turnaround:** Once you submit your application for Partners in Marketing funds, you may anticipate these estimates for turnaround times:

- 1-3 days: You will receive notice of receipt of Partners in Marketing application.
- 3-5 days: You will receive any follow-up contact necessary to receive additional information or ask questions regarding the application.
- 7-10 business days: Once all information is received, you will receive notification of final approval or denial.

**Guidelines:**

- Any North Dakota community or region with a recognized economic development organization is eligible to apply for the Partners in Marketing grant.
- Activities must focus on primary sector business (whether business or workforce recruitment) for approval. “Primary sector business” means an individual, limited liability company, partnership, or association which through the employment of knowledge or labor adds value to a product, process, or service that results in the creation of new wealth. The term includes tourism but does not include production agriculture.
- A Partners in Marketing grant application for the same event or activity will be considered for funding for a maximum of three years.
- Funds are available to pay for approved activities up to 90 percent of the activity budget. In the case of marketing plans or strategic plans, funds are available to pay for 50 percent of the approved activity budget.
- The maximum funds available for a second- or third-year request for specialty events will be:
  - First year: up to 90 percent of the activity budget
  - Second year: up to 60 percent of the activity budget
  - Third year: up to 30 percent of the activity budget
- The community or region must contribute at least 10 percent of the total activity budget for grant requests directed toward primary sector business or workforce recruitment. The community or region must contribute at least 50 percent of the total activity budget for grant requests directed toward marketing plans or strategic plans. In other words, the community or region must have an investment in the activity. This contribution must be in cash. In-kind services are not eligible for consideration as the match.
- Two or more economic development organizations may partner on an activity and, when approved, the total amount requested for the Partners in Marketing grant will be divided equally among the partners. This divided amount (not the full amount) will count toward each partner’s maximum grant amount during the biennium of \$25,000.
- Economic development organizations may submit as many requests throughout the biennium as they desire.

- A local development organization is limited to a total of \$25,000 in grants, per biennium. The total grant amount per community, per biennium that is available for marketing plans or strategic plans is \$5,000. This amount is included in the total of \$25,000, not in addition to it.
- Applications for Partners in Marketing funds must be received at least two weeks prior to the start date for the activity to be considered.
- For approval, each activity must be presented through the Partners in Marketing application. All outlined materials on the application must be submitted. There is no application deadline; grants will be reviewed and awarded until all funds are disbursed or the end of the biennium is reached.
- Funds are disbursed upon successful completion of the approved activity or upon delivery of results and evaluation to the North Dakota Department of Commerce. Grantees will be required to **submit a completed Final Evaluation Form and written narrative** describing the work performed and the results obtained, samples of activity materials (or agenda), and progress toward the three measurable objectives, prior to final release of grant funds. This report must be supplemented by a **financial report** of all expenses actually incurred and documentation detailing the purposes of the grant expenditures (e.g. **copy of itemized invoice or receipt and proof of payment to include: canceled check, credit card statement, or confirmation number**).
- **Results and evaluation of activities approved for Partners in Marketing funds must be received at the Department of Commerce one-year after the award date of the grant project, but not later than June 1, 2017, to ensure disbursement of funds. If additional time is required to complete the project, a contract extension request must be submitted and approved prior to the due date of the final evaluation.**
- When hosting specialty events, a minimum 50 percent participation rate for business or workforce prospects is encouraged. For example, if 100 people attend the event, 50 of them should be prospects.

Questions on the Partners in Marketing program should be directed to:

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