



**VIRGINIA
IS FOR
LOVERS®**

**VTC
PARTNERSHIP
MARKETING
Microbusiness
Marketing
Leverage
Program**

**Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Program
Summer 2024**

VTC's Annual Grant Programs

- Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Program
- Special Events & Festivals Sponsorship Program
- VA250 Marketing Leverage Program
- Marketing Leverage Program
- DMO Marketing Program

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Changes to Grant Programs

- Streamlined Application
- Reminders of Terms/Requirements
- Three Sections: Goals, Research, Marketing

- 75% Spend out of region (50 miles)

- Revised eligible items list
- Revised scoring protocol
- Streamlined Terms and Conditions
- 1,000-2,000 character limit on questions

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OPENING July 16, 2024
CLOSING August 22, 2024

MICROBUSINESS MARKETING LEVERAGE PROGRAM GRANT

- ALWAYS IN SUMMER GOING FORWARD
- ENCOURAGES SMALL BUSINESS TO STAY OPEN DURING SLOW SEASON
- HUB & SPOKE PARTNERSHIP MODEL (**ITINERARIES**)
- ONLY ELIGIBLE MARKETING EXPENSES

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What is a Marketing Leverage Program?

Virginia Tourism provides **MATCHING** grant funding to drive overnight and **out-of-state** visitation and encouraging visitors to **stay longer and spend more** to increase revenue and jobs in Virginia.

1:1 MATCH IS REQUIRED, BUT CAN BE **CASH OR IN-KIND** EARNED OR OWNED MEDIA VALUES.

Reimbursement program (no money granted up front) after providing proof of ads, invoices, and use of Virginia is for Lovers logo.

Your marketing initiative helps carry the **Virginia is for Lovers** brand.



VTC Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Program

- Funding pool: **\$500,000**
- Expected # of proposals to be awarded: **60 proposals**
- Match: **1:1** in-kind or cash
- Award tiers: **\$5,000** for **tourism-oriented small businesses** with fewer than 20 full-time employees
\$10,000 for **tourism marketing-oriented organizations**
- Objective: **Increase out-of-region and overnight travel** during the off-season (September 2024 to May 2025.)
- Awards: **October 2024**

OFF-SEASON IDEAS

- Holiday shopping getaway weekends
- Shop Local/Shop Small initiatives
- Fall/Winter/Spring Restaurant Week events
- Holiday Lights/Winter Wonderland events
- Fall Festivals
- Valentine's Day events/weekends
- MLK Weekend travel/cultural history events
- Winter/Spring wildlife watching/bird migration
- Leaf peeping getaways
- Long weekend Thurs – Tuesday getaways
- Fall/Winter/Spring Break music tourism
- Spring Break travel
- Holiday travel (Friends and Family)
- Black History Month
- Historic Garden Week (April 2025)
- President's weekend travel (Feb 2025)
- Indigenous People's Day/Columbus Day travel (October 2024)

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How Does Tourism Marketing Work?



LAYER YOUR MARKETING

- Research **VTC's Welcome Center/PMAP** programs on how to advertise/marketing inside Virginia Welcome Centers and Safety Rest Areas
- Research **VTC channels, Industry Co-ops,** and **Leisure 360 buy ups** for layered marketing initiatives.
- Monitor your **regional partners** and layer in with their initiatives
- Carry that **Virginia is for Lovers** message into **your marketing** to promote your region and your business.
- Start a Virginia is for Lovers **merchandise** program

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2024 MICRO BUSINESS GRANT—HOW TO PREPARE

- TALK TO YOUR LOCAL OR REGIONAL DMO. YOU’LL NEED A LETTER OF SUPPORT TO UPLOAD INTO THE ONLINE APPLICATION.
- LOOK AT RESEARCH/SALES DATA. WHERE ARE PEOPLE COMING FROM? WHAT ARE THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS?
- EVALUATE YOUR RESEARCH WHICH MARKETS HAVE POTENTIAL TO BE NEW VISITORS OR REPEAT VISITORS?

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LINE-ITEM MARKETING PLANS

- IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET MARKET AND DEMOGRAPHICS
- IDENTIFY MARKETING CHANNEL, WHAT MARKETS THIS CHANNEL TARGETS, VENDOR, PLACEMENT DATES, AND ESTIMATED COST
- EXAMPLE:

SOCIAL MEDIA—FACEBOOK AD—CHARLOTTE, NC—INCOMES OVER \$100K—FAMILIES
NOVEMBER 2024—\$1,000

PRINT MEDIA—CHARLOTTE OBSERVER
CHARLOTTE NC INCOMES OVER 100k
COUPLES/HOLIDAY SHOPPING—DECEMBER
2024 \$1,000 VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS



Tourism Economics at the Local Level

- **Tourism revenue supports** locality services
- Locally owned businesses keep profits in the **local community**
- Tourism product helps lead to traditional **economic development**
 - Our funding programs help **leverage** your dollars
- As a tourism-oriented business or organization, get a seat at the table and attend planning meetings, DMO meetings, and EDA meetings so you can **leverage partnerships** in our programs

Finding Match

- Tourism Investment District
- Locality contribution to DMO
- Your existing marketing budget (add that VIFL logo)
- Partnerships to create a pool of funds
- 501c organization with funding mechanism

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POINTS TO REMEMBER

- **PARTNERSHIPS ARE KEY**
- **LEVERAGING PUBLIC TO PRIVATE DOLLARS IS CRITICAL**
- **USE THE VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS LOGO ON YOUR MARKETING & ADS**
 - **ALL ARE REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAMS**
 - **ELIGIBILITY VARIES BY PROGRAM TYPE**
- **ECONOMIC IMPACT & RESEARCH ARE IMPORTANT FACTORS**
- **READ INSTRUCTIONS, Ts & Cs, AND LIST OF ELIGIBLE EXPENSES BEFORE APPLYING**



VATC.ORG/GRANTS

Virginia Tourism Corporation

Information for Virginia's Travel Industry

SEARCH THIS WEBSITE

[about](#) [operations](#) [marketing](#) [grants](#) [partnership marketing](#) [research](#) [essentials](#)



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**FOR VIRGINIA TOURISM
PARTNERS:**

Welcome to VTC's home for the Commonwealth's tourism industry. This site contains a wealth of information and assistance for the full spectrum of Virginia's travel businesses. Let us know what we can do to help you.

[Sign Up for VTC Grant Updates](#)

[VTC Marketing Leverage Program](#)

[Virginia DMO Marketing Grants](#)

[Virginia Special Events & Festivals Program](#)

[VTC VA250 Tourism Marketing Program](#)

[\(VTC\) Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Program](#)

[Tourism Development Financing Program](#)

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VATC.ORG/GRANTS

VTC Microbusiness MLP

- › [Summer 2024
Microbusiness MLP](#)
- › [Summer 2024
Microbusiness MLP
Application Instructions](#)
 - › [Sample Application](#)
- › [Summer 2024 MLP
Application](#)
- › [Summer 2024
Microbusiness MLP
Eligible Items](#)
- › [Summer 2024
Microbusiness MLP
Glossary](#)
- › [Summer 2024
Microbusiness MLP FAQ's](#)
- › [Summer 2024 Terms and
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BEFORE APPLYING

- RESEARCH **WELCOME CENTER/PMAP OPPORTUNITES** AT **WELCOMEVA.COM**
- RESEARCH **INDUSTRY ADVERTISING CO-OPS** ON **VATC.ORG**
- READ OVER **PROGRAM TERMS AND CONDITIONS** AND **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**
- REVIEW LIST OF **ELIGIBLE/INELIGIBLE EXPENSES** FOR THE PROGRAM
- BUILD OUT YOUR MARKETING PLAN BASED ON YOUR **MATCH** AND WHAT YOU WILL SEEK **REIMBURSEMENT** FOR IF YOU GET AN AWARD.
- REVIEW **10% FUNDING LIMITS** FOR CERTAIN EXPENSES
- **DRAFT YOUR APPLICATION** IN WORD AND THEN COPY TO THE APPLICATION PORTAL
- IDENTIFY AND GATHER DMO **LETTER OF SUPPORT**

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LET'S WORK TOGETHER!

REACH OUT TO THE DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT TEAM

REACH OUT TO THE GRANTS TEAM

FUNDING PROGRAMS OVERVIEW: VATC.ORG/GRANTS
QUESTIONS?

MARKETING LEVERAGE PROGRAM, VA250 PROGRAM, MICROBUSINESS PROGRAM

VTCMLPGRANT@VIRGINIA.ORG

SPECIAL EVENT & FESTIVALS PROGRAM

VTCSEFGRANT@VIRGINIA.ORG

DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATION PROGRAM

VTCDMOGRANT@VIRGINIA.ORG

