

FY26 DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT MENTOR PROGRAM

Program Overview

The [Destination Development Mentor Program](#) seeks to match destination marketing organizations (DMOs) and industry association partners with experienced tourism consultants to provide expertise, resources, mentorship, and capacity building. The program provides an opportunity for destinations and industry associations to advance priority tourism projects.

Up to eight Colorado destinations or industry partners will be selected to participate in the Destination Development Mentor program. Successful applicants will receive 100 hours of consulting to advance priority projects.

Program Timeline:

- Application Open - Tuesday, September 16, 2025
- Application Close - Thursday, October 16, 2025 at 4:00 pm (MT)
- Award Notifications - November 6, 2025
- Mentors Assigned, Projects Scoped, and Work Begins - November-December 2025
- Program Completed - June 2026

Destination and Industry Association Application Letter of Interest (LOI):

Although not required, we encourage interested applicants to submit a brief LOI prior to completing a full application, so the Colorado Tourism Office can learn more about what you hope to achieve through participation in this program.

[Submit an LOI here](#). A representative from the Colorado Tourism Office will respond to your LOI within five business days.

Selection Process

A panel of industry partners and Colorado Tourism Office staff reviews applications and recommends awards based on demonstrated need, capacity to participate, strength of the proposed project(s), and potential industry impact.

A representative from the Colorado Tourism Office will respond to your application within one month of the application deadline.

Questions?

For questions about the Destination Development Mentor Program, contact Faith Overall, Destination Stewardship Manager, faith.overall@state.co.us.

For technical questions about the application (login/registration on OEDIT portal), contact Sami Wells at sami.wells@state.co.us.

Applicant Information

Please provide all the requested contact information below. The organization name listed must be an eligible applicant.

Eligible applicants include Colorado destination marketing organizations (DMO) and Colorado regional and statewide tourism industry associations:

The Colorado Tourism Office defines a DMO as a not-for-profit organization or governmental unit that typically is the recipient of jurisdictional lodging tax revenue and serves as the lead for year-round tourism promotion and development efforts in a destination.

Example DMOs may include:

- Destination marketing organizations (e.g. Convention & Visitors Bureau)
- Lodging tax boards, committees, or panels
- Chambers of commerce or chamber resort associations
- Government entities in Colorado (federally recognized tribes and local governments)

The Colorado Tourism Office defines a Colorado regional tourism industry association as a registered nonprofit trade organization that represents one or more tourism-related business sectors and represents a collection of tourism businesses within those sectors. Associations must represent a market-ready product or experience, and be regional in approach.

The Colorado Tourism Office defines a Colorado statewide tourism industry association as a registered nonprofit trade organization that represents a collection of tourism businesses statewide within a tourism-related business sector. Associations must represent a market-ready product or experience, and be statewide (where it exists) in approach.

Other considerations:

- Only one application can be submitted for an individual destination.
- Multiple organizations within a single destination should collaborate on a single program application.
- Participation in previous Colorado Tourism Office programming does not impact eligibility or competitiveness.
- Participants in previous Destination Development programs are encouraged to apply to advance the action plans that were created and/or update the existing

action plan.

The applicant contact must be an employee or board member of the applying organization.

QUESTION: First Name

QUESTION: Last Name

QUESTION: Organization

QUESTION: Street Address

QUESTION: City

QUESTION: State

QUESTION: ZIP Code

QUESTION: Organization County

QUESTION: Phone

QUESTION: Email Address

QUESTION: Organization website

QUESTION: Type of Applicant

- Destination Organization
- Government Entity

QUESTION: Describe the purpose of your DMO or industry association.

QUESTION: Share the geographic area covered by your DMO or industry association.
(250 character limit)

Proposed Project(s)

The Colorado Tourism Office seeks to use this program to provide capacity to implement one or more innovative tourism projects and develop replicable tools that can be shared with Colorado tourism industry partners. The Destination Development Mentor program also allows destinations and industry organizations the opportunity to advance Shared Industry Priorities or specific strategies outlined in the Destination Stewardship Strategic Plan.

Use this section to inform the Colorado Tourism Office about how your DMO or industry association would like to utilize the 100 hours of consulting awarded through the program.

Narrative questions have a 5,000 character limit unless otherwise noted.

QUESTION: Does your proposed project(s) interface with Colorado public lands in Colorado?

QUESTION: Describe how your proposed project(s) will utilize the 100 hours of consulting, and how successful implementation will help advance the goals of your organization.

QUESTION: Describe how your proposed project(s) relate to up to three of the Shared Industry Priorities.

- Advance off-peak tourism opportunities: Identify opportunities to extend the benefits of tourism outside of existing busy seasons
- Advance tourism workforce: Provide professional development opportunities for tourism-related staff and foster a stronger community of workforce
- Champion the value of tourism: Build awareness of the value that tourism and destination organizations provide to your community
- Develop and enhance visitor experience: Diversify tourism offerings that showcase the unique potential of your destination
- Encourage responsible and respectful use: Develop and distribute information that sets expectations on public lands and within communities
- Foster inclusive travel opportunities: Develop strategies and resources to ensure your destination is welcoming and accessible to everyone
- Promote local businesses and experiences: Enhance promotional efforts through strategic marketing and storytelling tactics
- Specific strategy outlined in the Statewide or Regional Destination Stewardship Strategic Plan

QUESTION: Describe how the selected Shared Industry Priorities or Destination Stewardship Strategic Plan strategies relate to your proposed project(s).

QUESTION: Describe how implementation of the proposed project(s) will benefit the mission of your organization and/or the tourism businesses located within your destination or industry sector.

QUESTION: Describe any previous work your organization has conducted related to your proposed project(s) (e.g. initial research, prior milestones, or related efforts).

QUESTION: What type of consulting support is needed to achieve a successful outcome at the end of this program?

Organizational Capacity & Need

QUESTION: Has your organization experienced any internal or external challenges (e.g. capacity, budget, consumer demand, or resident sentiment) that have impacted the ability to advance its mission?

QUESTION: Describe why receiving the 100 hours of consulting provided through this program is currently important for your organization.

QUESTION: Describe how you will plan to continue the momentum of your proposed projects after the completion of the Destination Development Mentor Program.

Supporting Documents

A Colorado Certificate of Good Standing is required for nonprofit entities and must be in PDF format. The required form is available on the [Colorado Secretary of State's website](#). Government entities are exempt.

Note: If you are encountering problems uploading a file, shorten the file name and/or remove spaces in the file name.

QUESTION: Certificate of Good Standing. Local municipalities, and city and county governments are exempt.

QUESTION: *Optional:* A Letter of Support is encouraged from Colorado public land managers if your proposed project(s) interface with Colorado public lands in Colorado, but is not a requirement for the application.

QUESTION: *Optional:* A Letter of Support is encouraged from within your destination or industry sector, but this is not a requirement for the application. *Combine support letters into one PDF.*