

Federal Programs for Heritage and Cultural Tourism

The following is a general sampling of Federal programs that can help promote and support heritage tourism initiatives. In addition to these and the programs listed below, many Federal property-managing agencies (USDA Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of Defense, etc.) have tourism and/or recreation programs that can help support non-Federal heritage tourism initiatives through partnerships and co-promotion arrangements.

Department of Agriculture

- **Agritourism and Alternative Enterprises**
(Natural Resources Conservation Service)
This technical assistance program assists farmers and ranchers in exploring alternate economic enterprises, including heritage tourism.
(www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/RESS/altenterprise/)
- **Resource Conservation and Development Program**
(Natural Resources Conservation Service)
This program provides technical and limited financial assistance to assist more than 300 local RC&D Councils with development projects, including heritage tourism and related business development.
(www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/rcd/)
- **Rural Development Grant Programs**
(Rural Development)
These grant and loan programs promote rural community development projects and planning. Among the programs are: Rural Business Enterprise Grants; Rural Business Opportunity Grants; and Rural Economic Development Grants and Loans. (www.rurdev.usda.gov/)

Department of Commerce

- **Market Developer Cooperator Program**
(International Trade Administration)
This program is designed to build partnerships by providing Federal assistance to organizations involved in export promotion. The program can support tourism initiatives (and potentially heritage tourism) as demonstrated by a grant to the Western States Tourism Policy Council to work with gateway communities outside of Federal lands to increase international visitors.
(www.ita.doc.gov/td/mdcp/)

INVESTMENT PROGRAMS - Rehabilitation of historic properties is an eligible activity if there is significant job creation. Projects can support heritage tourism and EDA is participating as a partner in *Preserve America*. (www.eda.gov)

- **Public Works and Economic Development Program**

Public Works and Economic Development investments help support the construction or rehabilitation of essential public infrastructure and facilities necessary to generate or retain private sector jobs and investments, attract private sector capital, and promote regional competitiveness, including investments that expand and upgrade infrastructure to attract new industry, support technology-led development, redevelop brownfield sites and provide eco-industrial development. (CFDA No. 11.300).

- **Economic Adjustment Assistance Program**
The Economic Adjustment Assistance Program provides a wide range of technical, planning and infrastructure assistance in regions experiencing adverse economic changes that may occur suddenly or over time. This program is designed to respond flexibly to pressing economic recovery issues and is well suited to help address challenges faced by U.S. regions and communities. (CFDA No. 11.307)

- **Research and National Technical Assistance**
The Research and National Technical Assistance Program supports research of leading, world class economic development practices, and funds information dissemination efforts. (CFDA No. 11.303); (CFDA No. 11.312)

- **Local Technical Assistance**
The Local Technical Assistance Program helps fill the knowledge and information gaps that may prevent leaders in the public and nonprofit sectors in economically distressed regions from making optimal decisions on local economic development issues. (CFDA No. 11.303)

- **Planning Program**
The Planning Program helps support planning organizations, including District Organizations and Indian Tribes, in the development, implementation, revision or replacement of comprehensive economic development strategies (CEDS), and for related short-term planning investments and State plans designed to create and retain higher-skill, higher-wage jobs, particularly for the unemployed and underemployed in the nation's most economically distressed regions. (CFDA No. 11.302)

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Department of Housing and Urban Development

- **Community Development Block Grants**

Community Development Block Grant funds help communities carry out a wide range of community development activities directed toward revitalizing neighborhoods, economic development, and providing improved community facilities and services. Because they are block grants, communities have discretion in how they spend funds and can use them to support heritage tourism initiatives or related infrastructure.

(www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/index.cfm)

- **Rural Housing and Economic Development Grants**

These grants assist in capacity building at the State and local level for rural housing and economic development and support innovative housing and economic development activities in rural areas. They can fund projects involving heritage tourism and economic development through use of historic properties.

(www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/economicdevelopment/programs/rhed/index.cfm)

Department of the Interior

- **National Heritage Areas Program**

(National Park Service)

National Heritage Areas are individually authorized by Congress and receive funding, technical assistance, and management support from the National Park Service. The point of heritage area designation is to provide a vehicle for promoting local economic and cultural vitality by capitalizing on an area's heritage assets, particularly through heritage tourism.

(www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas/)

- **Save America's Treasures grants**- are available for preservation and/or conservation work on nationally significant intellectual and cultural artifacts and collections and on nationally significant historic properties. Grants are awarded through a competitive process and require a dollar-for-dollar, non-Federal match, which can be cash, donated services, or use of equipment. The grant and the non-Federal match must be expended during the grant period, generally 2 to 3 years, to execute the project. The minimum grant request for collections projects is \$25,000 Federal share; the minimum grant request for historic property projects is \$125,000 Federal share. The maximum grant request for all projects is \$700,000 Federal share. The Save America's Treasures Grants Selection Panel may, at its discretion, award less than the minimum grant request. Example of activities supported by these grants may be found at www.nps.gov/history/hps/treasures/search.htm, including a searchable list of projects funded in 2007.

- **National Trails System**
 (National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management [with USDA Forest Service])
 There currently are 23 National Scenic Trails and National Historic Trails. Although designated by Congress and administered by Federal agencies, ownership may be public or private. The trails are managed through partnerships between the Federal agency, State government, non-profit organizations, and private landowners. (www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/nts/)
- **Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program**
 (National Park Service)
 This program provides technical assistance to local and State agencies and private organizations working on river and trail corridor projects. No grant funding is currently available, but the program assists partners in planning and finding appropriate project funding. Specific assistance is given for river, trail, and greenway planning, regional assessments of potential trail corridors, conservation workshops, and expert consultations on related issues. The program publishes success stories and "best practices." (www.nps.gov/rtca/)

Department of Transportation

- **National Scenic Byways Program**
 (Federal Highway Administration)
 This program provides technical and financial assistance to help preserve America's scenic roads and promote tourism and economic development. Grants are available to assist States in implementing projects on National Scenic Byways and developing State scenic byways. The scenic byways system currently includes 96 nationally designated byways; approximately 400 additional scenic byways are recognized at the State level. (www.byways.org)
- **Recreational Trails Program Grants**
 (Federal Highway Administration)
 These grants can be used to maintain, restore, and rehabilitate trails, including National Historic Trails, and rehabilitate trailside facilities. They can also support acquisition of easements or title to property for trails, including acquisition of old road or railroad bridges to be used as recreational trail bridges. (www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/index.htm)
- **Transportation and Transit Enhancements Programs**
 (Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration)
 Ten percent of Federal Surface Transportation Program funds and 1 percent of Federal urban mass transit funds are set aside to fund transportation enhancements. Such funding can be used for historic preservation projects and programs related to historic transportation routes, systems, facilities, etc. Heritage tourism trails may be funded at State discretion. (www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te/index.htm)

Multi-Agency

- **American Heritage Rivers Initiative**

This umbrella initiative is designed to help communities along 12 designated American Heritage Rivers receive improved access to technical and financial assistance from Federal agencies. The overall goals of the program are to foster economic revitalization, natural resource and environmental protection, and historic and cultural preservation. Each river has a Federal single point-of-contact to assist communities, and Federal agencies make field staff available to each American Heritage River to help match community needs with available resources. (www.epa.gov/rivers/)

National Endowment for the Arts

- **Challenge America Fast-Track Review Grants**

These grants offer support to small and mid-sized organizations for projects that extend the reach of the arts to underserved populations. Eligible projects include those focusing on the development of cultural tourism and cultural districts, and assisting local economic development and cultural publicity efforts. (www.arts.endow.gov/grants/apply/GAP05/ChallengeAmerica.html)

National Endowment for the Humanities

- **America's Historic Places Grants**

Part of NEH's We the People Initiative, this program provides funding for public programs that use one or more historic sites to address themes and issues central to American history. Projects eligible for funding may interpret a single historic site, a series of sites, whole neighborhoods, communities or towns, or larger geographical regions. Fundable activities include docent tours, publications (e.g., brochures, guidebooks, etc.), driving or walking trails or tours, annotated itineraries, exhibition labeling or trail signs, films, and digital media. (www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/historicplaces.html)