

**Bend Cultural Tourism Fund
Commission Meeting
Draft Minutes
April 3, 2024
9:00am-4:00pm
Waypoint Hotel Meeting Room
1415 NE 3rd Street, Bend OR**

Commission Attendance: Amy Reynolds; Eli Ashley; Leah Rutz; Michael Gesme; Sandy Anderson; Liora Sponko; Miguel Edwards; Rachel Alms; Adam Foster; Jeff Manning; Valerie Wilson, nonvoting Visit Bend Staff Member; Laurel MacMillan, Administrator; Shari Crandall, Minutes.

Absent: None

Guest Attendance: None

The meeting was called to order at 9:00am.

I. Welcome and Introductions

MacMillan opened the meeting and introductions were made, including the new Commissioners: Rachel Alms, The Oregon Community Foundation, Program Officer, Central and Eastern Oregon; Adam Foster, Marketing Director, Puffin; Jeff Manning, marketing/branding customer packaged goods (CPG).

The list of current Commissioners, March 2024:

	Position	First Name	Last Name	Executive Committee	End of Term*	Term Year
1	Visit Bend Board or Staff Member (Non Voting)	Valerie	Wilson			
2	At Large	Sandy	Anderson		2025	Third
3	At Large	Liora	Sponko		2024	Third
4	At Large	Leah	Rutz	Co-Chair	2025	Second
5	At Large	Michael	Gesme		2025	Second
6	At Large	Miguel	Edwards	Co-Chair	2025	Second
7	At Large	Eli	Ashley		2024	First
8	At Large	Amy	Renalds	Co-Chair	2024	First
9	At Large	Rachel	Alms		2025	First
10	At Large	Adam	Foster		2025	First
11	At Large	Jeff	Manning		2025	First

*Commissioner terms end in December

MacMillan then provided a brief overview of the agenda.

II. Approve November 29, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Action: Ashley moved, Edwards seconded, the Minutes dated November 29, 2023 to be approved as written.

Vote: The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

III. Budget for 2024-25 Grants

Wilson reported the City of Bend’s Transient Room Tax (TRT) for this fiscal year has been flat to down 2%, with projection 2% down for the remainder of the year. This softening of tourism is comparable with other small destination mountain towns, while large city markets are faring better. Smaller outdoor recreation-focused communities experienced an artificial tourism bump during Covid. Bend has returned to 2019 pre-Covid tourism status.

Last grant cycle, BCTF awarded \$400,000; this cycle BCTF may award \$300,000. Next year’s cycle is projected to remain static at \$300,000.

MacMillan noted this year's individual grant requests are higher than any previous grant cycle, while the fund's budget is \$100,000 lower than last grant cycle.

Wilson finished her report with the status of Visit Bend's search for CEO. The Board is executing a national search to replace Kevney Dugan, who left Visit Bend in mid-January 2024: this week the Board is doing virtual interviews of eight candidates and the week of April 15-19 the board will do personal interviews from a selection of the eight; the Board would like to have the new CEO in place by July, 2024.

IV. Grant Review Process Overview

A. Conflicts of Interest

Commissioners with conflicts of interest for particular grant applications will leave the room during discussion of the respective applications, and will they not participate at any time during the discussion for funding allocation.

Conflicts of Interest include:

- Economic Development for Central Oregon/High Desert Innovation Week: Renalds;
- 4 Peaks Presents/4 Peaks Music Festival: Sponko;
- Central Oregon Center for the Arts/Facility Modeling and Infrastructure Development Project: Gesme;
- Tower Theatre Foundation/Northwest Educational Programming Showcase: Gesme, Wilson.

B. No final decisions will be made until after the meeting is over.

C. Applications that score less than 80 will not qualify for funding.

Commissioners desire to focus discussion on quality applications. In the past Commissioners have at times bent the "80" rule to include applications scoring close to 80. Commissioners will have an opportunity to again look at the scores to determine whether applications may warrant similar treatment this cycle.

D. After Applications are scored, people with Conflicts of Interest will be excused.

E. Funding discussion and decisions made.

For the review process, Commissioners will address the applications in alphabetical order, beginning with Large Marketing and then Small Marketing/Research. For the award allocation discussion, Commissioners without conflicts of interest will first address Small Marketing/Research applicants, since these grants may receive up to 25% of total funds (up to \$75,000 this grant cycle). If the Commissioners do not allocate the full 25% to the Small Marketing/Research applications, the remainder after allocation will rollover to the Large Marketing funding amount. Commissioners will then address Large Marketing grant applications.

F. Minutes of the Meeting will be taken and posted online after Visit Bend Board approval.

Often applicants ask for feedback, including why their applications were not funded. MacMillan refers to the reviewers' comments from the grant portal and those captured in the Minutes. She requested Commissioners keep their comments constructive; and she also reminded Commissioners their comments pertaining to applications will remain anonymous.

G. 30-minute break for lunch around 12:00pm.

H. Any comments regarding BCTF policy, process, and other topics of interest will be recorded and placed in a Parking Lot for discussion at the Fall meeting.

BCTF is consistently evolving; MacMillan would like to hear how its policy and procedures may be improved. She encouraged the Commissioners to state their thoughts for discussion at the fall meeting, and then move on with the discussion of the particular application.

MacMillan further explained: to maintain transparency, BCTF originally did the grant review in a public meeting format; however, reviewers found it difficult to have open and truthful discussions with applicants present. Therefore, the

Commission voted to have closed-door meetings but to provide detailed minutes of the meeting. BCTF will make the Minutes available to the public after the Board approves the proposed awards.

I. Grant applications will be reviewed in the following order:

Large Marketing Applications

Organization Name	Proposal Title	Requested Amount (\$)
1988 Entertainment Volcanic Arts	1988 Entertainment – Volcanic Arts	45,000
African Music Library Organization	AfroFest	48,000
Bend Yoga Festival, LLC	Bend Yoga Festival 2024	37,500
BendFilm, Inc	BendFilm, Inc and BendFilm Festival, 2024	64,600
Cascades Theatrical Company	Cascades Theatrical Company	25,000
Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO)	High Desert Innovation Week	50,000
High Desert Makers	Central Oregon Maker Faire	45,900
High Desert Museum	Frank S Matsura: Portraits from the Borderlands	50,000
In the Pocket Artists, Inc	Parallel 44 Presents	25,000
Lay It Out Events	Art in Action Avenue	45,750
Old Mill District	2024 Hayden Homes Amphitheater September/October Concerts	50,000
OUT Central Oregon	OUT Central Oregon Winter PrideFest	30,000
SUS	BendiGras	32,500
The Father's Group	Juneteenth 2025	36,500
The Greenhouse Cabaret	The Greenhouse Cabaret 2025 Season	35,000
Total		620,750

Small Marketing/Research Grants:

4 Peaks Presents	4 Peaks Music Festival	10,000
Adventure The Arts, Inc	Bend Adventure the Arts Marketing	20,000
Bend Psychedelic Arts Foundation	Bend Psychedelic Arts and Science Conference	10,000
Central Oregon Center for the Arts	Facility Modeling and Infrastructure Development Project	15,000
Central Oregon Latin Festival	Central Oregon Taco Fest	9,000
Deschutes River Alliance	DRA 2024 Community Engagement Plan	7,500
Roundabout Books, LLC	Let Us Be Your Indie Bookstore!	10,000
So Much House LLC	So Much House	8,000
Tower Theatre Foundation	Northwest Educational Programming Showcase	12,500
Total		102,000

V. Review/Discussion Grant Applications

The 2024-25 grant amount requested for Large Marketing, \$620,750, and Small Marketing/Research, \$102,000, totals \$722,750; BCTF has \$300,000 to award.

A. Large Marketing Grant Applications, 15 original applicants – total amount originally requested \$620,750 1988 Entertainment Volcanic Arts/1988 Entertainment – Volcanic Arts (\$45,000)(September, 2024-June, 2025); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Final Average Score: 83; Recommended Amount: \$32,000; Percent of Request: 71%.

To help fund this nonprofit's strategic marketing campaigns in West Coast large-population cities for 300 planned, diverse cultural events held in Bend from September 1, 2024 – June 1, 2025. Number of visitors: 10,300; Number of nights: 2; ROI (number of visitors x nights) x \$120 = \$2,472,000; Percentage: 5493%.

Last year, BCTF funded Applicant \$35,000. MacMillan reported Applicant has submitted its final report for last cycle. Wilson noted Visit Bend had tried to find the locations of the numerous events to send a photographer out for pictures; they found only one location in January. On her query as to events' locations, some Commissioners said they were aware of several events, including those at Volcanic Pub. Applicant's website does not provide specific locations for all 400 events, but the final report submitted to MacMillan does have a map that tags ticket sales locations.

Applicant's concerts have been a tourism driver: last year they sold 27,100 tickets of which 8,000 were visitors.

With respect to this year's application, Commissioners had questions. Commissioners queried what exactly BCTF would be funding: Applicant addressed funding music promotion but also talked about films, classes, workshops. One reviewer tried to look at applicant's splash page, but that still did not provide clarification regarding applicant's request for funds. Commissioners also questioned the reason a for-profit organization created a new non-profit arm. Applicant owns 1988 for producing shows but also does marketing under Volcanic. The nonprofit arm of the company is not yet listed in the nonprofit governmental register; note, though, this does not mean the company has not yet submitted the requisite paperwork to the appropriate authorities.

Commissioners would have preferred more specific information regarding applicant's request for funds and they would have appreciated clarification as to Applicant's business regarding for-profit/nonprofit course. However, Commissioners agree: they would like to fund out-of-area marketing for concerts held during the shoulder/winter seasons but do not want to fund a larger amount than funded last cycle.

African Music Library Organization/AfroFest (\$48,000)(February-March, 2025); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Final Average Score: 33; Recommended Amount: \$0.

To fully fund this international organization's one-week Exhibition for African Music Genres and Music Festival scheduled for some time in February-March, 2025. Number of visitors: 750; Number of Nights: 5; ROI (Number of Visitor x Nights) x \$120 = \$450,000; Percentage: 938%.

MacMillan contacted the person who had written the letter of support for this event; that person is the founder of the African Music Library and wrote the letter of support for his own organization.

Commissioners would like a Bend event focused on African Music and Applicant's score for DEI was good; however, Commissioners had numerous concerns with this specific application. Applicant is from outside the US and does not have a solid local connection (See topic VII. Parking Lot, Out of Area Applicants, p17); Applicant requests funding for the entire event, the request amount is too high; Applicant does not provide clearly delineated specifics regarding the program; Applicant's request is too general even if Applicant had been local.

Commissioners unanimously agree to not fund this request.

Bend Yoga Festival LLC/Bend Yoga Festival 2025 (\$37,500)(6/6-9/2025); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Final Average Score: 80; Grant Recommendation: \$18,750; Percent of Request: 50%.

To fully fund marketing for this multi-day yoga and related modalities event to be held 6/6-9/2025. Number of visitors: 420; Number of Nights: 4; ROI (Number of Visitor x Nights) x \$120 = \$201,600; Percentage: 538%.

BCTF awarded Applicant \$37,000 last funding cycle. Upon query how this event fits Arts/Culture/Humanities, MacMillan explained: originally, BCTF had not provided definitions regarding Arts/Culture/Humanities; then, a few organizations with good ROI but with tenuous connections to arts/culture/humanities applied for funds. BCTF felt it could not deny funding for these events without first defining Arts/Culture/Humanities. With these definitions and related application questions now in place, reviewers are to take applicant's description into consideration when scoring and discussing funding.

With respect to this application, Commissioners addressed whether Applicant's event falls within the Arts/Culture/Humanities definitions. Some reviewers noted Applicant did a better job connecting the event to Arts/Culture/Humanities in its first application; last year, Applicant was not as clear. At least one reviewer felt this year's application does not adequately define how this event fits within the definitions; others noted Applicant provides quality programming that is less "traditional" Arts/Culture/Humanities but more an "alternative" form of cultural/historic/spiritual heritage.

A reviewer asked whether this Applicant has a knowledgeable connection, a cultural background, and/or has Applicant engaged consultants who have the cultural background, to promote this ancient Indian spiritual practice? This topic and the topic of cultural appropriation will be discussed in the Fall. (See VII Parking Lot, Cultural Appreciation/Appropriation, p17-18)

A concern was raised regarding DEI: the presenter and attendees appear to be white; what is Applicant doing to change this demographic? Marketing appears to target women, the query: can men attend? Yes, in fact, they do; the event is not exclusive. Commissioners would like Applicant to better address DEI in future applications.

During the 2023-2024 grant cycle, Visit Bend offered grantees five hours of free PR services through a person retained to do much of BCTF's press and media releases. Applicant utilized these services and has now budgeted retaining this person to do its PR, at a high dollar amount.

The event has been highly successful and has brought in many out-of-town participants. Some voiced the desire to partially fund Applicant's promotion to out-of-area markets but at an amount much less than last year.

BendFilm, Inc/BendFilm, Inc and BendFilm Festival 2024 (\$64,600)(10/10-13/2024); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Final Average Score: 88; Grant Recommendation: \$30,000; Percent of Request: 46%.

To help fund this organization's marketing initiative of West Coast's large cities for the 21st Annual Bend Film Festival during which 120+ independent films will be screened from 10/10-13/2024. Number of visitors: 2,000; Number of Nights: 3; ROI (Number of Visitor x Nights) x \$120 = \$720,000; Percentage: 1115%.

This is a very large request for funds. Last year, with more funds available, BCTF awarded Applicant \$47,000, the second highest award paid to date. Looking at this application, Applicant's Budget listed personnel, programming, guest hosting, and travel expenses. In addition to the Budget, Applicant also stated: "In 2023, BendFilm awarded a \$20,000 cash grant (a grant partially supported by the Bend Cultural Tourism Fund, a Visit Bend Project) to a BIPOC women [sic] filmmaker to make their first or next film." BCTF does not fund personnel, programming, guest hosting, travel expenses, BIPOC awards; BCTF only funds marketing expenses to attract out-of-town visitors.

One reviewer was concerned with the lack of Applicant's detail and after deducting unallowed expenses and after applying a flat 80% score, he scored the fund amount to be \$18,960. Another deducted \$7,500 plus additional unexplained expenses and scored the fund amount to be \$33,000.

Within the organization, changes are occurring. Former lead staff are gone and a new young green group is now in charge. They are doing an internal review. It is noted the new staff did not write the grant application, nor do they understand BCTF requirements. MacMillan will provide feedback to this new group of people.

The event has been highly successful. Reviewers liked Applicant's DEI explanations and related actions such as providing transportation between Warm Springs and the event.

In addition to High Desert Museum and Lay It Out Events, BendFilm is one of three signature Bend events that has brought in visitors and has consistently received BCTF funding. Commissioners would like to see BendFilm work through the changes and come out stronger.

A reviewer noted, however: Applicant is riding on what it has previously created and, unlike High Desert Museum and Lay It Out Events, it is not building upon that success to develop new exciting ideas. This reviewer and others asked to include a Fall topic of funding organizations who stay the course, those who build on previous success and develop new ideas; and, how BCTF is to balance these potentially competing issues (See VII. Parking Lot, New Ideas v Static Programming, p18)

Taking into consideration the total BCTF amount available and after deducting unallowed expenses, Commissioners agree they would like to support Applicant's marketing, but at an amount significantly less than originally requested.

Cascades Theatrical Company (\$25,000)(9/1/2024-6/30/2025); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Final Average Score: 75; Grant Recommendation: \$0.

To fund most of this well-established theater's marketing expenses of which CTC would target cities/towns throughout Oregon for live shows from 9/1/2024 – 6/30/2025. Number of visitors: 1,250; Number of Nights: 1; ROI (Number of Visitor x Nights) x \$120 = \$150,000; Percentage: 600%.

Commissioners voiced concern whether the same person is requesting BCTF funding for two different organizations and two different projects, Adventure the Arts and Cascades Theatrical Company (CTC), which is disallowed under BCTF policy. Is this person just a grant writer for CTC, while the CEO for Adventure the Arts? Commissioners were also confused with the request for funds: is the request for the full year or specific shows? They note ticket income should be higher when compared to the projected number of out-of-town visitors. They also desired Applicant provide better support for income and visitor projections. The projected \$8,000 for print costs seem high; related, what is the print product? Commissioners desired an explanation whether "visitor enhancements" and "perks" are the same or different. Others were confused with Applicant's total operating budget compared to the project budget. Finally, Applicant's request for funds seems too high.

Commissioners agree: Applicant needs to provide a clearer description and accounting in its request for funds.

Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO)/High Desert Innovation Week (\$50,000)(10/14-18/2024); Conflicts of Interest: Renalds; Final Average Score: 68; Grant Recommendation: \$0.

To fully fund the strategic planning and promotion of Bend Venture Conference's principal event to be held 10/14-18/2024; marketing would encompass cities of the West Coast, Reno, Boise, Denver. Number of visitors: 245; Number of Nights: 4; ROI (Number of Visitor x Nights) x \$120 = \$117,600; Percentage: 235%.

Reviewers' primary concerns included: Applicant's insufficient explanation how arts and culture intersect with this event; Applicant's income lists only BCTF; Applicant's actual need for funding (See VII. Parking Lot, Need for Funding, p18); the general broad-stroke or tone of the application, rather than providing specific plans to achieve its goals.

After Applicant's preapplication entry, MacMillan contacted Applicant to discuss the proposed event; Applicant felt the event fell within the Arts/Culture/Humanities definitions and applied for the Large Marketing Grant.

Commissioners appreciated the eco-friendly practices and liked the DEI/Warm Springs component. The Native component has value, the event could bring in Native tourists and highlight Native designers. However, the current application is too broad; Applicant needs to better explain the mechanisms for accomplishing stated goals and its need for BCTF funding. Applicant must make a good case for receiving BCTF funds, and many felt this application did not achieve that level. Some suggested this application would have possibly fit better under Small Marketing/Research; another suggested Applicant do the event this year, gather data, and submit a more quantifiable, comprehensive and descriptive application next funding cycle.

High Desert Makers/Central Oregon Maker Faire (\$45,900)(9/7-8/2024); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Final Average Score: 62; Grant Recommendation: \$0.

To fund, in large part, this organization's marketing expansion to include cities from Seattle to the Bay Area/east to Boise, for this 4th annual Maker Faire to be held 9/7-8/2024 at the Deschutes Corporate Campus located in the Old Mill. Number of visitors: 1500; Number of Nights: 3; ROI (Number of Visitor x Nights) x \$120 = \$360,000; Percentage: 784%.

BCTF policy requires compliance with the terms in the award contract. BCTF previously awarded \$26,500 to High Desert Makers. As per policy, BCTF paid 75% of the award (\$19,875) and, typically, would have paid the remaining 25% (\$6,125) upon receipt of the final accounting report outlining the expenditure of BCTF marketing funds. Makers submitted its final report last week in which it identified staffing changes, an all-volunteer board, and, while the event had a high ROI, Makers had spent only a small fraction of BCTF funds (\$1,250) on marketing. MacMillan spoke with the current board president to discuss the contractual violation and explained BCTF would not pay the final 25% outstanding balance. Until MacMillan's call, the Makers Board was unaware of, and subsequently dismayed with, their failure to comply; the Makers Board took this matter seriously and called an emergency meeting which occurred the day before this grant review meeting.

Wilson stated BCTF policy on grant application eligibility mandates Applicant's compliance with prior BCTF grants and that there are to be no outstanding grant agreements. The policy does not define how long the bar to eligibility is in effect; however, it is clear for the 2024-2025 funding cycle, Makers cannot apply for a BCTF funds for 2024-25 cycle.

BCTF and Visit Bend Board understands changes in circumstances and provides room for flexibility, as evidenced during the Covid-nonevents and Wanderlust, but this is public money; Visit Bend and BCTF must comply with state and local laws. With respect to events scheduled during Covid: BCTF provided extensions for events rescheduled another funding cycle. With respect to Wanderlust: a few years ago, BCTF awarded funds for an event and paid the initial 75% of the award amount. Before the event occurred, however, Wanderlust experienced a leadership change and that person was not aware of the proposed event or the awarded funds. After being given the option to extend the event and awarded marketing agreement to the next funding cycle, the organization eventually decided to not do the event and repaid the monies to BCTF.

A Commissioner reported OSU cancelled shortly before the slated event. Another asked what the repercussions are for non-compliance – in addition to not receiving the final 25% award amount and the inability to submit a new funding application, is grantee required to return the amount already paid? MacMillan explained, in this situation, grantee received the benefit of the doubt due to staffing changes which can occur within non-profit all-volunteer organizations. It is agreed, BCTF needs to spell out its policy regarding contractual noncompliance and terms limiting applicant eligibility. (See, VII. Parking Lot, Contract Noncompliance/Breach, p18)

Several Commissioners were disappointed because they like the event. It's a feel-good event that attracts people of all ages, different cultures and neurodiversity. The DIY Cave is the largest in the area and has great potential. Furthermore, it is well-positioned to become the NW Maker Faire.

Commissioners asked what Oregon Arts Commission/Oregon Community Foundation do in circumstances such as this. They were told these organizations fund projects, not marketing. These funders pay 100% of the award and have flexibility: they can extend the timeline, request return of the funds, or enter into a new agreement.

Commissioners noted the unfortunate circumstances, the new Maker's Board remorse and overall conduct, and, that the 2023-2024 event occurs in September. Commissioners discussed ways in which BCTF could be flexible, give support without changing policy. They queried whether BCTF could extend the remaining \$6,000 from the current 2023-2024 award contract for marketing the September 2024 event and then not fund the 2024-2025 event. Wilson agreed, this would not change existing policy.

Action: Edwards moved, Renalds seconded: BCTF disallows High Desert Makers/Central Oregon Makers Faire application request for the 2024-2025 funding cycle; MacMillan will request from High Desert Makers a specific out-of-town marketing budget for its September 2024 event; upon receipt of this marketing budget, BCTF will distribute the remaining \$6,000 from 2023-2024 award to be used only for marketing out-of-town visitors to the September 2024 event.

Vote: The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

High Desert Museum/Frank S. Matsura: Portraits from the Borderlands (\$50,000)(2/15-9/6/2025); Conflicts of Interest: 0 Final Average Score: 93; Grant Recommendation: \$42,000; Percent of Request: 84%.

To fund marketing for this organization's exhibition combining Matsura's photography of the Syilx tribal communities from early 1920s with Native cultural items and video to expand understanding of this region's Native and Japanese communities; the exhibit will run from 2/15/2025 -9/6/2025, but the Museum is specifically targeting demographic data collection for March, 2025. Number of visitors: 22,000; Number of Nights: 2; ROI (Number of Visitor x Nights) x \$120 = \$5,280,000; Percentage: 10,560%.

Last funding cycle, BCTF funded Applicant \$48,000 for its Sasquatch exhibit. Commissioners were once again impressed with this organization's new ideas, creative programming, and well-written application.

Commissioners would like to provide feedback to Applicant: The Commission is very pleased with the Native involvement in this programming and they would also like to see Japanese community involvement. With respect to Asian culture, there has been little programming and inclusion in Central Oregon. While the Asian community may be relatively small in Central Oregon, there is a sizeable community outside Bend who would travel to a Native/Asian arts/cultural/humanities event.

In the Pocket Artists, Inc/Parallet 44 Presents (\$25,000)(10/15/2024-5/15/2025); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Final Average Score: 83; Grant Recommendation: \$19,000; Percent of Request: 76%.

To partially fund promotion for all markets within a 400-mile radius for concerts with diverse selection of artists scheduled from 10/15/24 – 5/15/2025. Number of visitors: 1,000; Number of Nights: 1.25; ROI (Number of Visitor x Nights) x \$120 = \$150,000; Percentage: 600%.

This new applicant applied when it learned 1988 Entertainment had received BCTF funds to market its concerts. MacMillan reported Applicant initially requested more funds, but decreased the amount after speaking with her.

This promoter brings many high-quality concerts (similar quality compared to 1988) to Bend; the acts draw many out-of-town visitors. One Commissioner noted the Jam Band community travels from show to show. Commissioners felt DEI was pretty good but noted Applicant could improve future applications with documentation demonstrating diverse performers/ audiences.

The Commissioners were reminded: while this application is similar to other applicants' projects, the amount to be funded is not based upon a comparison of the amount awarded to another organization but instead it is based upon the reviewers' score; this is a first-time application and Applicant will have future opportunities to improve upon its application.

Lay It Out Events/Art in Action Avenue (\$45,750)(10/4-6/2024); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Final Average Score: 86; Grant Recommendation: \$32,000; Percent of Request: 70%.

To fully fund out-of-area marketing for this multi-media arts project that is to be held downtown Bend from 10/4-6/2024. Number of visitors: 20,000; Number of Nights: 2; ROI (Number of Visitor x Nights) x \$120 = \$4,800,000; Percentage: 10,492%.

BCTF funded applicant \$42,000 last year; this request is similar to last year.

Applicant did not provide a break out of what BCTF would cover as related to its Event Budget. MacMillan reminded reviewers that this is the first year BCTF asked for the break out of BCTF funds from Budget. On an aside, Commissioners like the BCTF break out from Budget; it has been helpful.

A Commissioner noted Applicant's request of \$9,000 for a drone is ridiculous; the cost to rent a drone is about \$1,000, and pay for the pilot is about \$100 per hour. Others were not impressed that the drone would be used, in part, to estimate attendance. Additional concerns with the application include: Applicant's DEI answers, they felt, were just blanket phrases; they would like to see a distinct DEI plan in future applications.

They do appreciate the event is well organized and brings in many out-of-town visitors. They felt the new curator is doing great work. Applicant continues to grow the event, the art focus has improved, and the event is family friendly.

Old Mill District/2024 Hayden Homes Amphitheater [September/October] Concerts (\$50,000)(May, 2025); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Final Average Score: 72; Grant Recommendation: \$0.

To partially fund out-of-town marketing expenses for more than four concerts to be held at the HH Amphitheater in May, 2025. Number of visitors: 12,500; Number of Nights: 3; ROI (Number of Visitor x Nights) x \$120 = \$4,500,000; Percentage: 9,000%.

Following submittal of its application, Applicant continues to add concerts to its September/October schedule.

While Commissioners acknowledge Applicant's events have great ROI and bring in many out-of-town visitors, the reviewers have several concerns regarding this request for BCTF funds. They feel this application is incomplete and opaque. Applicant does not provide the actual budget for presenting the events - what is the total project's income and cost? Unlike other Large Marketing applicants, Applicant does not provide ticket sales/admissions; rather, Applicant only provides income associated with BCTF funds and Hayden Homes Amphitheater (HHA) Marketing for September/October Shows.

OMD, HHA and Live Nation are highly successful and very profitable corporations. (For example: see Live Nation website - <https://www.livenationentertainment.com/2024/02/live-nation-entertainment-reports-full-year-and-fourth-quarter-2023-results/> which reports 2023 revenue is up 36% to \$22.7 Billion and operating income is up 46% to \$1.1 Billion:)

Of concern, Applicant appears to be requesting BCTF funds that, instead of staying in Bend, may go to the national for-profit corporation. Question: Are BCTF funds going to Live Nation? Commissioners would like Applicant to explain the fiscal relationship between OMD, Hayden Homes Amphitheater (HHA), and Live Nation.

Further, Commissioners believe OMD/HHA/Live Nation will advertise the shows and have about the same number of visitors attending the September/October, whether or not it receives BCTF funds.

Notably, reviewers have voiced concerns every year since OMD first applied for funds. Their concerns ultimately boil down to: Applicant's lack of transparency and need for BCTF funds. Commissioners wish to discuss future funding of highly profitable organizations that do not demonstrate a need; the discussion is to include, but not limited to, whether BCTF funds organizations with a net worth above a certain amount, etc. (See VII. Parking Lot, Need for Funding, p18)

OUT Central Oregon/OUT Central Oregon Winter PrideFest (\$30,000)(3/6-9/2025); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Final Average Score: 89; Grant Recommendation: \$28,000; Percent of Request: 93%.

To fully fund marketing of this non-profit's Bend/Mt Bachelor multi-day, 3/6-9/2025, Winter-Pride Fest; marketing to target cities from Seattle to Eugene, and states of Washington, California, Idaho, Nevada, Arizona, Colorado and Montana. Number of visitors: 1,300; Number of Nights: 3; ROI (Number of Visitor x Nights) x \$120 = \$468,000; Percentage: 1,560%.

Last year BCTF awarded Applicant \$30,000. At that time the organization was going through an organizational shift: original leaders left, a new board was elected, and the organization began doing an internal assessment of organizational values and what they wanted to achieve. Because the funded March 2024 event occurred after Applicant submitted this cycle's application, MacMillan contacted grantee: OUT is electing to become a more business-like organization and the March 2024 event was a success.

Commissioners felt Applicant wrote a strong application which reflected a solid ROI and great DEI. Several liked Applicant's desire to foster community and collaborative relationships. They particularly liked Applicant's "Linger Longer in Bend" strategy.

SUS/BendiGras (\$32,500)(2/28-3/2/2025); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Final Average Score: 80; Grant Recommendation: \$16,250; Percent of Request: 50%.

To fund advertising, publicity, marketing research, planning and development (for marketing purposes), and PR professional consulting to bring in tourists to attend a New Orleans-like MardiGras celebration in Bend from 2/8-3/2/2025. Number of visitors: 3, 500; Number of Nights: 2; ROI (Number of Visitor x Nights) x \$120 = \$840,000; Percentage: 2,585%.

This Applicant is new. A Commissioner reported seeing Applicant's magazine and feels Applicant appears to have the business skill and capacity to plan and execute an event from start to finish. Some thought this application would have better fit a Small Marketing/Research grant request.

Commissioners felt Applicant's vision is big and they could see the event grow in five to ten years; they voiced concern the projected number of out-of-town visitors and ROI are unrealistic. Applicant cited large markets like New York City and New Orleans. Query: Why would people come to Bend when they can experience a big city event?

Reviewers noted the fund request was large and included local marketing costs (e.g. KPTV). While it's okay to do local ads, BCTF funds may not be spent on local media partners. If this event is funded, the award agreement must state with specificity BCTF funds cannot be spent on local advertising. (See VII. Parking Lot, Local Advertising, p17)

Commissioners also noted the event is a week apart from the Winter PrideFest, and both are slated to occur, in part, at Mt. Bachelor.

After further discussion, Reviewers stated they would be willing to partially fund out-of-area marketing but at a significantly lesser amount than requested.

The Father's Group/Juneteenth 2024 (\$36,500)(Mid-June, 2025); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Final Average Score: 88; Grant Recommendation: \$28,000; Percent of Request: 77%.

To partially fund marketing of this 5th annual celebration in mid-June 2025 of Black, Afro, Caribbean Culture at Drake Park in commemoration of the federal emancipation of Black citizens in Texas on June 19, 1865; marketing to include drive-able markets including Oregon, Washington, California and Idaho; and, single-flight markets of LAX, SFO, PHX, Vegas, Denver, SLC, Sonoma, Palm Springs, Seattle, and Boise. Number of visitors: 18,000; Number of Nights: 3; ROI (Number of Visitor x Nights) x \$120 = \$6,480,000; Percentage: 17,753%.

MacMillan reported Applicant belatedly submitted its final report: there were no red flags other than being late.

Commissioners appreciated Applicants DEI and collaboration with other organizations. They acknowledge Applicant's significant growth since its first BCTF application; and, they recognize Applicant may be experiencing growing pains and will need to find ways to adjust to growing demands for their community participation. Reviewers did identify line-item budget expenses, in the amount of \$2,000, for which BCTF will not pay – such as: insurance and fees.

Overall, Reviewers like and want to fund out-of-area marketing of this event.

The Greenhouse Cabaret/The Greenhouse Cabaret 2025 Season (\$35,000)(October, 2024-June, 2025); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Final Average Score: 87; Grant Recommendation: \$20,000; Percent of Request: 57%.

To fund a new, paid marketing staff member and marketing promotions in Oregon cities and greater Central Oregon to promote this performing arts company's cabaret season from October 2024 through June 2025. Number of visitors: 500; Number of Nights: 2.5; ROI (Number of Visitor x Nights) x \$120 = \$150,000; Percentage: 429%.

Commissioners report Applicant's plays are high quality, "top drawer" productions. They note the Cabaret is constantly evolving. Reviewers did express concerns with respect to Applicant's local marketing budget. MacMillan previously advised Applicant BCTF is constrained by Oregon law and funds may only be allocated to "attract tourists." (See VII. Parking Lot, Local Advertising, p17)

Reviewers would like to support local theater and fund this application, but with a contractual caveat - BCTF will not fund local advertising.

B. Small Marketing/Research Grant Applications: 9 original applicants – total amount originally requested \$102,000

MacMillan briefly reminded reviewers Small Marketing/Research grants receive up to 25% of the total BCTF grant budget, but the entire 25% need not be allocated to these grants. If reviewers allocate less than 25%, the remainder will be rolled over to Large Marketing fund. These grants have higher risk and the funding, accordingly, is smaller than Large Marketing Grants. The Small Marketing/Research grant may fund: 1. Research of a potential event idea that could, if viable, eventually meet BCTF Large Marketing Grant criteria; and, 2. Small arts/culture event scheduled sometime from September through June. To allow grantee the ability to better develop its event, these grants have little, if any, ROI requirements.

4 Peaks Presents/4 Peaks Music Festival (\$10,000)(6/19-6/22/2025); Conflicts of Interest: Sponko; Final Average Score: 87; Grant Recommendation: \$10,000; Percent of Request: 100%.

To expand marketing to markets located in Washington, Northern California and Colorado in November, December, February, March and April for the 16th annual 4 Peaks Music Festival to be held from 6/19 through 6/22, 2025, at Stevenson Ranch in Southeast Bend.

Reviewers like this application. After reviewing applications associated with larger, often national, organizations, they note this Applicant is truly a grass roots organization. This long-standing event has great music, no lines, no trash and appeals to all ages. Reviewers feel Applicant is legitimate: it submitted its application under the correct category; and, reviewers appreciated Applicant's smaller request for funds.

Adventure the Arts, Inc/Bend Adventure the Arts (\$20,000)(9/1/24-6/30/2025); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Original Average Final Average Score: 66; Grant Recommendation: \$0.

To fund a marketing and advertising campaign done by this emerging arts/cultural tourism resource to cover cultural events sponsored by over 30 participating Bend art and theater venues during the 2024-25 shoulder/winter season.

Cascades Theatrical Company applied for BCTF funds last year for this marketing/advertising service; however, it was not funded given Commission's numerous concerns. It is unclear whether CTC is still involved. (See A. Large Marketing Grants, Cascades Theater Company, p6)

Commissioners voiced concern how BCTF funds would be used since the platform seemed to include more than just arts/culture events. A reviewer initially was excited that independent artists might be promoted on the site, but that appears to not be the case in the site's existing format. Another reviewer asked whether this site would provide more visibility if it focused only on the arts.

Reviewers discussed whether anyone would download this app when other apps/sites are already available, for example Visit Bend's free online event calendar. Visit Bend created its site for visitors and is highly trafficked. Query: would Applicant's site reach more out-of-town visitors than existing sites?

Creating a media platform is a large undertaking and requires much work, consistent vigilance and maintenance. Wilson reported upkeep of the Visit Bend site takes much work. MacMillan reported several years ago BCTF funded the creation of a centralized theater calendar website; that site was great but grantee found it too difficult to maintain and let the site go within six months; reportedly, a similar situation also occurred in Eugene.

Some felt Applicant's support letters were not as helpful as Commissioners desired; the letters left them wanting to know more.

Marketers on the Commission were asked how ROI would be measured: they stated, outside of downloads it would be hard to track/measure.

Bend Psychedelic Arts Foundation/Bend Psychedelic Arts & Science Conference (\$10,000)(11/6-8/2024); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Final Average Score: 69; Grant Recommendation: \$0.

To help fund online ads and print advertising in major US and international markets for the Psychedelic Arts and Science Expo (PASE) to be held at four Bend venues from 11/6-8/2024.

Reviewers questioned whether this event fits the definition of Arts/Culture/Humanities. When Applicant spoke with MacMillan regarding its idea, Applicant made the idea seem more related to Culture; however, the submitted application has to do less with culture and more to do with science. Others noted the application was "thin" – Applicant needed to provide more information than it did.

Central Oregon Center for the Arts (COCA)/Facility Modeling and Infrastructure Development Project (\$15,000) (March-December, 2024); Conflicts of Interest: Gesme; Final Average Score: 90; Grant Recommendation: \$15,000; Percent of Request: 100%.

To help fund COCA's next step which includes facility modeling and an infrastructure development project to facilitate the move to concept design of a new Center for the Arts

BCTF has funded Applicant twice in preceding cycles for different research and planning phases. Applicant seems to be tracking well with the timeline. When asked at what point this project would fit under Bend Sustainability Fund, Wilson reported the project would need to be shovel ready. Another asked: At what point would this project fall under capital funding rather than research? Several thought Applicant is still in the research/planning stage but feel Applicant is getting closer to making the decision whether to go forward with the project. Some expressed the desire this be the last year to fund a COCA research phase.

Commissioners like the letters of support and would like to see Applicant achieve success. They see this as an excellent long-term investment and good use of tax payers' money: this is the best shot Bend has to get a performing arts center

Lunch Break: 11:55am to 12:30pm.

Central Oregon Latin Festival/Central Oregon Taco Fest (\$9,000)(5/10/2025); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Final Average Score: 84; Grant Recommendation: \$9,000; Percent of Request: 100%.

To fund out-of-area marketing for this new one-day Latin cultural event that will include cuisine, dance, music and children activities held at the Old Mill District on 5/10/2025

Commissioners like the application centers on Latin culture. A reviewer had spoken with Applicant over the last few years regarding the need for someone put on a Latin event. The demographic could be intra-networked through food, Old Mill location, taco carts, music. The local Latin community travels to Portland and other venues for Latin festivals; some questioned whether out-of-town Latin visitors would travel to Bend for this event.

Commissioners were curious whether Applicant would be entering into Latin-based partnerships/collaborations. Some voiced the event doesn't feel authentic to the Latin culture which then led to a discussion regarding the name of the event: Central Oregon Taco Fest. Some reviewers felt "taco" no longer reflects the Latin community: "taco" has been coopted by non-Latin persons and companies like Taco Bell. MacMillan noted during the pre-application phase the event was called Central Oregon Latin Festival, for some reason Applicant changed the name to Central Oregon Taco Fest for the application.

Other reviewers countered it is not BCTF's responsibility to name the festival, if Applicant is comfortable with the name, why would BCTF question that? Rather, it is the Commission's job is to determine whether to propose funding an event while applying BCTF parameters.

Some noted this is a Small Marketing/Research grant request of only \$9,000. The underlying premise of the Small Marketing/Research grant is taking some risk, to provide seed money with the chance the project may develop into a viable event. If people come, great! If funded, the final report will provide whether: 1. There was Latin exposure-both in putting on the event and drawing Latin visitors; and, 2: The event could continue into future years as is or with some changes. If BCTF supports the idea and provides seed money, the event may grow and develop.

Reviewers desired to provide feedback to Applicant, Commissioners would like to see: 1. Applicant creating relationships/collaborations with other Latin groups/people; 2. Applicant develop an authentic Latin experience.

Deschutes River Alliance/DRA 2024 Community Engagement Plan (\$7,500)(11/2024 and 3/2025); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Final Average Score: 67; Grant Recommendation: \$0.

Funding request to support the strategic planning and advertising of a Bend-based screening of The Last 100 Miles and two related panel discussions held in November, 2024 and March, 2025, at Bend's Patagonia Store, with intent to inform and discuss the public and private mistreatment of the lower Deschutes River.

MacMillan had a conversation with Applicant in which she advised the event appears to be science-based and was a stretch as an Arts/Culture/Humanities event. Reviewers agree: the event does not meet the Arts/Culture requirement.

Roundabout Book, LLC/Let Us Be Your Indie Bookstore (\$10,000)(4/26/2025)); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Final Average Score: 67

To fund a marketing and promotional materials/digital content campaign targeting under-represented Oregon towns and promoting a connection with an independent bookstore on Indie Bookstore Day 2025, in coordination with Let Us Be Your Indie Bookstore, at Roundabout Books on 4/26/2025.

Reviewers voiced regret Applicant did not complete the application.

A reviewer stated Applicant has built a tremendous culture that goes beyond Bend. For example, Applicant put on an event the night before the review that had drawn hundreds of people. Some questioned whether visitors would travel to an independent bookstore to celebrate independent bookstores, but did agree that visitors may travel to interact with nationally known authors.

Applicant needs to better explain how the proposed event can draw out-of-town visitors and she needs to provide a budget. The budget tells the story and provides important information regarding organizational capacity. It was noted other Applicants have not provided sufficient budgets, the reviewers are to look at the merits of this application and score.

The Reviewers desired to provide Applicant feedback: a future event merits further development and consideration; the budget is critical for BCTF consideration.

So Much House, LLC/So Much House (\$8,000)(Monthly Events); Conflicts of Interest: 0; Final Average Score: 75; Grant Recommendation: \$0.

To fund increased advertising to out-of-town visitors for this 2½ year old grassroots monthly event which celebrates the culture of dance music, specifically house and techno genres.

Commissioners remarked on Applicant's failure to identify the location of the monthly events and also wondered about future ROI. Some reviewers reported Applicant's use of Volcanic; Domino Room, and Open Space. Other expressed concern regarding the vague one-sentence DEI statement.

A commissioner reported the group is hard-working and growing a different genre by bringing in traveling DJ's for the electronic dance music scene that particularly attracts young people; that reviewer felt the genre has artistic merit.

Applicant's challenge is writing the grant to better describe pertinent information. If Applicant is interested in applying next year for a BCTF Small Marketing grant, reviewers encourage Applicant to contact MacMillan for assistance and direction before writing the application. (See VII. Parking Lot, Resources to Applicants/Grantees, p19)

Tower Theatre Foundation/Northwest Educational Programming Showcase (\$12,500)(Target Event October, 2025); Conflicts of Interest: Gesme, Wilson; Final Average Score: 76; Grant Recommendation: \$0.

To help fund the research and completion of a survey of arts presenters, educators and performers across the Northwest on staging a one-of-a-kind, multi-day conference in Bend in October 2025 to showcase live theatrical programs designed to deepen elementary, middle and high school curriculums.

Many reviewers had concerns with this application. They understand this research is to help Applicant determine whether to go forward with a future event to showcase live theatrical programs to enhance school theater curriculums. On first glance this application seems to fit BCTF's traditional Research grant; however, several felt the application was premature. They suggest Applicant first complete a preliminary investigation by contacting arts presenters, educators and performers via phone, ZOOM meetings, email, and other written inquiries.

Commissioners discussed the past few funding cycles in which Applicant received BCTF funds for relatively unsuccessful ROI events related to children's education. Commissioners then wondered why Applicant is not requesting a Large Marketing grant funds for an event that expands upon previously successful programming.

Finally, Applicant's proposed budget appears to go beyond the scope of permitted under BCTF funding.

VI. Funding Allocation

- A. Reviewers with a conflict of interest for any application were excused from the meeting. Before those with conflicts of interest left, however, Wilson extended Visit Bend's appreciation for reviewers' time and thoughtful feedback.
- B. Any applicant with a score of 79 points or below will be unfunded due to the competitive nature of the grant.
- C. Final Funding decisions will be made based upon the average recommended scores entered by reviewers and the total funding available.
- D. Final scores and recommended funding will be forwarded, via email, to Visit Bend Board for approval.
- E. Wilson, MacMillan and the Executive Committee will meet, via ZOOM, with Visit Board members to provide information regarding Commission's grant recommendations and to answer any of the Board's questions. The five are available to meet with the Visit Bend Board at 11:00am on one of the following days: 5/11, 5/12, 5/15 or 5/17.

Commissioners without conflicts of interest first discussed funding for the Small Marketing/Research applications. To aid the reviewers MacMillan first sorted the applications in order of the Commissioners' initial average scores, highest to lowest.

The maximum allocation of funds for Small Marketing/Research Grants is 25% of the total available amount for the funding cycle. This year, the BCTF total amount equals \$300,000. Therefore, the maximum total for Small Marketing/Research allocation is \$75,000. As previously noted, if the allocated funds are less than \$75,000, the remainder will be applied to the amount available for allocation in the Large Marketing Grant.

SMALL MARKETING/RESEARCH GRANTS

I Applicant	II	III.	IV Recommended	V
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	Applicant Fund Request (\$)	Average Score (rounded), Highest to Lowest	For Funding Amount (\$)	Percentage of Original Ask (%)
Central Oregon Center for the Arts Facility Modeling and Infrastructure Development Project	15,000	90	15,000	100
4 Peaks Presents/4 Peaks Music Festival	10,000	87	10,000	100
Central Oregon Latin Festival/Central Oregon Taco Fest	9,000	84	9,000	100
Tower Theatre Foundation/Northwest Educational Programming Showcase	12,500	76	0	0
So Much House LLC/So Much House	8,000	75	0	0
Bend Psychedelic Arts Foundation/Bend Psychedelic Arts and Science Conference	10,000	69	0	0
Deschutes River Alliance/DRA 2024 Community Engagement Plan	7,500	67	0	0
Roundabout Books, LLC/Let Us Be Your Indie Bookstore!	10,000	67	0	0
Adventure the Arts, Inc./BEND ADVENTURE THE ARTS MARKETING	20,000	66	0	0
Small Marketing/Research Grant Total	102,000		34,000	
Variance (amount rolled to Marketing Grants)			41,000	

Given the funds available and consistent with their review and discussion of individual applicants' submittals, reviewers agreed the Small Marketing/Research Grant recommendations reflect the amounts listed in Column IV of the chart located immediately above, for a total of \$34,000. Of the \$75,000 available, \$41,000 will be rolled into the Large Marketing Grants.

Like Small Marketing/Research Grants, above, MacMillan first sorted the Large Marketing Grant applicants in order of the reviewers' initial average score, from highest to lowest.

LARGE MARKETING GRANTS

I Marketing Grant Applicant	II Applicant Fund Request (\$)	III Average Score (rounded), Highest to Lowest	IV Recommended Funding Amount (\$)	V Average Recommended Funding Amount to Fund Request, Percentage (%)
High Desert Museum/Frank S. Matsura: Portraits from the Borderlands	50,000	93	42,000	84
OUT Central Oregon/OUT Central Oregon Winter PrideFest	30,000	89	28,200	93
The Father's Group/Juneteenth 2024	36,500	88	28,000	77
BendFilm, inc/BendFilm, inc and BendFilm Festival 2024	64,600	88	30,000	46
The Greenhouse Cabaret/The Greenhouse Cabaret 2024 Season	35,000	87	20,000	57
Lay It Out Events/Art in Action Avenue	45,750	86	32,000	70
In the Pocket Artists, Inc./Parallel 44 Presents	25,000	83	19,000	76
1988 Entertainment Volcanic Arts/1988 Entertainment – Volcanic Arts	45,000	83	32,000	71
Bend Yoga Festival, LLC/Bend Yoga Festival 2025	37,500	80	18,750	50
SUS BendiGras	32,500	80	16,250	50
Cascades Theatrical Company/Cascades Theatrical Company	25,000	76	0	0
Old Mill District 2024 Hayden Homes Amphitheater September/October Concerts	50,000	72	0	0
Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO)/High Desert Innovation Week	50,000	68	0	0
High Desert Makers/Central Oregon Maker Faire	45,900	62	0	0
African Music Library Organization/AfroFest	48,000	31	0	0
Total Large Marketing Grant	620,750		266,000	
Total Small Marketing/Research Grant	102,000		34,000	
Total Amount	722,750		300,000	

Given the TRT funds available and consistent with their review and discussion of the applicant's submittals, Commissioners agree with the Large Marketing Grant recommendations reflected in the amounts listed in Column IV in the chart located immediately above, for a total amount of \$266,000.

BCTF Commissioners recommend to Visit Bend: Small Marketing/Research Grants at \$34,000 and Large Marketing Grants at \$266,000, for a total amount equal to \$300,000, as referenced in the Small Marketing/Research Grants and Large Marketing Grants charts, immediately above.

The Visit Bend Board will meet on May 21, 2024 to vote on the recommendations submitted by the BCTF Commissioners. Note: Visit Bend Board Member Heidi Hagemeyer of the High Desert Museum has a pending conflict of interest; she will be recused from voting on proposed BCTF funds.

VII. Parking Lot Topics for Discussion at the Fall 2024 Meeting

During the meeting, reviewers identified potential topics, policy and/or procedural issues they would like to discuss at the Fall meeting. To facilitate context in these Minutes: Applicants' names are cited, when applicable, and the topics/issues are then recorded.

A. Zoom Grant Portal Right Margin

The right margin in the Zoom Grant Portal is very narrow. Query: Is it possible for Zoom Grants to create a wider right margin to facilitate ease of reading the applications?

B. Budget Limits

This funding cycle, BCTF received one of the largest requests for funds since its inception: 15 Large Market Grants, \$620,750, plus 9 Small Market Grants, \$102,000, for a total funding request equal to \$722,750. Last cycle, BCTF awarded \$400,000. This cycle, due to a decrease up to 2% in TRT, BCTF was limited to funding \$300,000. Visit Bend is projecting a continued 2% trend down for next year and possibly beyond. The question raised was whether BCTF desires to implement a funding limit, or apply a maximum fund amount, applied to each application.

C. Local Advertising / Several Applicants

This is an issue that does not require discussion. Rather, it is a requirement that must be cited within BCTF's Application Directions/Questions/FAQs; and, restated within its Award Contract, worded something like: "BCTF funds cannot be used for local advertising; Grantee's use of allocated funds for local advertising may constitute a breach of the agreed-upon terms and conditions in the BCTF Award contract."

D. Out-of-Area Applicants / African Music Library Organization/AfroFest

This applicant is an international organization with limited, to no, ties in Central Oregon. Commissioners expressed concern funding international applicants, and also, possibly, applicants domiciled outside Central Oregon. Does BCTF wish to prevent international applicants from applying for funds? Does BCTF wish to prevent applicants domiciled outside Central Oregon from applying for funds? If BCTF allows out-of-area applicants, does BCTF require applicant to have a strong local presence/connection/agent?

E. Culture Appreciation - Appropriation / Bend Yoga Festival LLC/Bend Yoga Festival 2025

A concern was raised regarding Cultural Appropriation and the applicant's own knowledge/cultural background (or the retention of a qualified advisor) when applicant defines and promotes a culturally-based program.

In this instance, applicant promotes the ancient Indian spiritual practice of Yoga as a festival. What knowledge/cultural background does applicant have with regard to the ancient practice? Has applicant retained an advisor who has the requisite knowledge? Is this yoga festival in alignment with the ancient spiritual practice? Or, is it something else, falling under the guise of the ancient practice? Is the program, as promoted, in alignment with the definitions of art/culture/humanities? Does this festival fall within the definition of cultural appropriation? (For a comprehensive article on Cultural Appropriation in Yoga, See: Baitmangulkar, Arunhati, "How We Can Work Together to Avoid Cultural Appropriation in Yoga, Yoga International.com, <https://yogainternational.com/article/view/how-we-can-work-together-to-avoid-cultural-appropriation-in-yoga/>; Baitmangulkar defines Cultural Appropriation: "When a dominant culture takes from another culture—usually a minority or disadvantaged culture—without full regard for the context, respect or reverence, or even acknowledgment of the culture it's taking from, it is cultural appropriation. The things that are usually co-opted include images or symbols, scripts, practices, fashion, art, music, etc.")

Query: Does BCTF desire to provide guidelines explaining Cultural Appropriation? Does BCTF want to ask applicants to describe their knowledge/background/understanding/appreciation of the culture it is promoting and/or whether this cultural information is shared with its attendees?

F. Contract Noncompliance-Breach / High Desert Makers/Central Oregon Maker Faire

BCTF policy on grant application eligibility mandates applicant's compliance with the prior BCTF grants and that there be no outstanding grant agreements. If applicant does not comply with, and breaches, the award agreement, BCTF policy bars an applicant from submitting another application. The policy, however, does not define how long the bar to eligibility is in effect. Does BCTF need to provide clarity to the number of funding cycles the bar remains in effect? Does BCTF desire to provide some flexibility with respect to the length of the bar by evaluating circumstances attaching to the breach? What circumstances would require long term bar/no further funding? What circumstances would mitigate the bar to eligibility period? Does BCTF need to define circumstances under which grantee must repay funds? Are there other actions BCTF may wish/need to take?

G. Need for Funding / Old Mill District (OMD)/2024 Hayden Homes Amphitheater(HHA) (September/October) Concerts; Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO)/High Desert Innovation Week; Others

The question arose, particularly with respect to OMD/HHA/Live Nation, but also other applications: What is the need for funds? With respect to OMD/HHA/Live Nation: these are highly successful and profitable organizations: they will continue to make a large profit, whether or not they receive BCTF funding.

If a highly profitable entity does not receive BCTF funds, those funds can be directed to other organizations who are in need of marketing assistance. Commissioners appeared to want to take some action regarding the annual discussion whether an applicant actually needs BCTF funds: they desire to discuss future funding of highly profitable organizations that do not demonstrate a need. Does BCTF deny funding to for-profit entities? Does BCTF only fund entities with a net worth below a certain amount? Does BCTF require applicants to accurately/fully complete, and attest to, the budget listed in the application? Does BCTF ask applicants to explain, with some specificity, why/how it needs the funds?

H. DEI Question / Several Applicants

Several applicants are not sufficiently answering the application's DEI question. Does BCTF need to reframe/rephrase the question to elicit better responses?

Note, though: Visit Bend is working with Wendy Todd, who is doing an organizational DEI evaluation of Visit Bend, including BCTF. She will be speaking with BCTF stakeholders (Commission) on May 14-15, 2024. Upon completion of her report, BCTF may have a better understanding of what it can do to assure better DEI representation within the Commission, the applicants/grantees and related programming.

Does BCTF wish to discuss this topic at this time or table the discussion until after Todd submits her findings?

I. New Ideas v Static Programming / Several Applicants

Commissioners voiced some discomfort about continuing to fund former grantees who are reapplying for successful but static programs: example BendFilm. The reviewers particularly appreciate returning applicants who are expanding old programming or developing new ideas each funding cycle: good examples are High Desert Museum and Lay It Out Events.

Does BCTF want to request former grantees to expand its programming? Does BCTF desire to solely fund new ideas? Or, does BCTF implement a balance between funding old programs and expanding existing programming/new ideas? Is there a way BCTF can encourage former grantees to expand/incorporate new ideas (example: a higher score for new/expanded programming?)

J. Arts/Culture Component / Several Applicants

Rather than create an actual arts/culture/humanities event, to get BCTF funds some applicants apply for an event in which they've cosmetically included, or manipulated the description to include, the arts/culture/humanities requirement. Does BCTF wish address this issue? If yes, in what ways?

K. Resources to Applicants/Grantees

The topic of providing grant writing services to applicants resurfaced. Does BCTF want to provide a list of grant writers to applicants? Who would identify and vet grant writers' credentials, create a list of grant writers, pay the writers?

Commissioners voiced their appreciation for Visit Bend's services to aid grantees and connecting them with resources to improve success, such as: taking photos/videos/posting grantee events; and, offering five hours of free PR services. They also addressed their appreciation for all the work and time MacMillan provides applicants.

VIII. Commissioner Comments

Commissioners' duties include attending BCTF funded programs/events. Some voiced an idea of dividing the funded events among the Commissioners. To provide an avenue for Commissioners to sign-up and attend grantee events, MacMillan offered to develop a BCTF calendar of events and share, via Google Docs. Wilson reported the Visit Bend photographer has a calendar that MacMillan might want to use; she also noted the photographer is very busy. Edwards stated he might be available to photograph events for Visit Bend; Wilson asked him to contact her.

IX. Next Meeting Date

The Fall meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 2, 2024 from 12:00-2:00pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15pm.