

FAQ Heritage Grant

What is the Heritage Grant?

The Heritage Grant serves to promote tourism through the preservation of historic buildings, sites or districts. In accordance with state statute, the grant funds, which are hotel occupancy taxes, must be used only to promote tourism and the convention and hotel industry and be used for historical restoration and preservation projects or activities or advertising and conducting solicitations and promotional programs to encourage tourists and convention delegates to visit preserved historic sites or museums. Also, the project must be at, or in the vicinity of, convention center facilities or visitor information centers, or located in the areas that are reasonably likely to be frequented by tourists or convention delegates.

What is the maximum award under the Heritage Grant?

The maximum grant award is \$250,000.

Has the City awarded Heritage Grants before?

The Heritage Grant is a program newly administered by the City of Austin's Heritage Tourism Division, within the Economic Development Department as of July 2019. In previous years, Visit Austin administered a similar grant program.

How do I know if my property is eligible?

A property can be designated historic at three levels: local, state, and national. Locally designated historic properties are historic landmarks and historic districts, state-designated historic properties are Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks (RTHLs) and State Antiquities Landmarks (SALs), and nationally designated historic properties can be individually listed in the National Register or located in a National Register historic district. The [Historic Property Verification Guide](#) has further links, but applicants for the Heritage Grant should also confirm the status of their proposed project with the Historic Preservation Office at (512) 974-1686.

Can partner organizations apply for the Heritage Grant?

Yes, partner organizations working collaboratively with the corresponding historic building, site, or district may apply. Partner organizations must ensure that the owners of the property that is the subject of the project have consented to the project and agreed to the terms of the grant prior to submitting a request. For parkland proposals, a Community Activated Park Project Form should



be submitted and reviewed ahead of the grant deadline so PARD staff can understand scope and research proposed projects for feasibility. For more information, visit this [link](#).

Historic District applicants need to comply with the requirements of the City Code relating to Historic Districts and need to document that the District project they are proposing promotes tourism and the convention and hotel industry and is at, or in the vicinity of convention center facilities or visitor information centers; or is located elsewhere in Austin in an area that would be frequented by tourists and convention delegates.

How many recipients will be awarded grants?

The number of grant awards will depend on the number of eligible applicants, final scoring, and available funds.

What is the Review Process?

After the application deadline, interdepartmental staff will evaluate applications to ensure that each proposed project meets the state statute eligibility criteria. Applications that meet the criteria will be evaluated by a Heritage Grant Review Panel. A majority vote of a quorum of the Heritage Grant Review Panel is required to recommend a Heritage Grant award. Recommendations will then be reviewed by the Historic Landmark and the Tourism Commissions who will make recommendations to City Council. The City Council will approve funding in excess of the City Manager's authority (at or below \$61,500 for Fiscal Year 2019-20); the City Manager will approve funding within the Manager's authority.

Will funding for projects continue?

The Heritage Grants will be reviewed and awarded annually. Program fund availability is subject to Council approving and appropriating funding on an annual basis. The Economic Development Department reserves the right to fund projects at a lower amount than requested, and the right to deny applications that do not meet the Texas Tax Code, or Austin City Code, or other grant criteria as set forth in the grant application.

Can recipients of other HOT-Funded grants apply?

Yes, organizations that currently receive Cultural Funding awards through the City of Austin Cultural Arts Division may apply. HOT-Funded awards cannot be used as the cash match for either application. The scope of the Heritage Tourism project must be different from the Cultural Arts Division project. If awarded, prior to the commencement of work or project, applicants and the City of Austin must execute a Preservation Agreement setting out terms and conditions of the grant. In addition, all grantees must attend a mandatory meeting to discuss the reporting and compliance process including distinct visitor counts, programs and financials related to the two separate Hotel Occupancy Tax funds. All grants will be made on a competitive basis.

