



**Western Cape
Government**

Tourism Growth Fund

Call for proposals

1. Background and purpose of the Fund

The Western Cape Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDAT), through Sub-Programme 3.6: Tourism Growth and Development, invites proposals for co-funded grants under the Tourism Growth Fund (TGF).

The Fund aims to seize the catalytic opportunity presented by the strong recovery of domestic and international tourism by addressing key supply-side constraints such as ageing visitor infrastructure, product quality, limited market-responsive experiences, and uneven geographic spread of tourism activity across the province.

The TGF provides grant funding to unlock private investment, strengthen destination and product competitiveness, improve market access, support early-stage and growth-oriented tourism enterprises, and ultimately contribute to doubling international arrivals by 2030. As of 2026, the Fund also supports destination organisations (including municipalities, associations and local DMOs) to provide business development and market access support to their SMME members.

2. Strategic focus and thematic areas

Projects must align with the Tourism Growth Fund's strategic intent and, ideally, with at least one of the following high-growth, high-yield thematic areas:

- **Farm & food:** Gastronomy and agri tourism.
- **Village ways:** Khoe-San culture and heritage, historic fishing villages and mission stations.
- **Soul journeys and healing escapes:** Wellness and transformational travel.
- **Jewel towns and villages:** Deepening visitor offerings in boutique regional towns, dorpies and villages as anchors and staging posts to encourage visitor spread and counter seasonality.
- **Western Cape trails:** Infrastructure and ecosystem development to support hiking, cycling, walking, avitourism and other nature immersive experiences.

In addition, support will be prioritised for business development that supports women, youth and people with disabilities.

3. Objectives of this call

Through this call, the Tourism Growth Fund seeks to:

- Increase investment in visitor infrastructure, with an emphasis on non-Metro and underserved areas.
- Stimulate development, rehabilitation and upgrading of tourism products and experiences aligned to the thematic areas above.
- Improve business development, market readiness and market access support to tourism SMMEs via capable organisations, associations and municipalities.
- Unlock third-party and private sector co-funding and leverage public resources for greater economic impact.
- Enhance destination competitiveness, increase visitor arrivals and spend, and support sustained job creation in the Western Cape tourism sector.

4. Eligible applicants

The following types of entities are eligible to apply:

- Municipalities and municipal entities responsible for tourism, LED or destination development in the Western Cape.
- Tourism organisations, including local tourism offices, regional tourism organisations, tourism associations, destination management organisations (DMOs) and relevant NGOs/NPOs active in tourism.
- Registered tourism businesses and SMMEs operating in the Western Cape (including product owners, experience providers and operators) that can demonstrate market potential and the ability to implement the proposed project. (Applications from sole proprietors will be considered, provided the qualifying criteria are met).
- Applicants must be in good standing with SARS and must ideally be able to meet the Fund's co-funding requirements, where applicable.

5. Types of support and project categories

This call is structured around three main categories:

- A. Tourism infrastructure support
- B. Product development support

C. Business development and market readiness support

Projects may include one or more of the listed activities under a category, but the primary category must be clearly identified in the application.

A. Tourism infrastructure support

This category focuses on physical and digital visitor-facing infrastructure that enables, anchors, or significantly enhances tourism activity, especially in non-Metro and regional areas.

Examples of eligible projects:

1. Visitor infrastructure rehabilitation, development or expansion

- Upgrading or refurbishing existing tourism infrastructure (e.g. visitor centres, trail heads, viewing platforms, signage, ablution facilities, small-scale public amenities supporting tourism, etc).
- Development or expansion of new visitor infrastructure that unlocks or improves access to experiences in the thematic areas (e.g. trail infrastructure, wayfinding and interpretation, small-scale docking or access points for water-based experiences, basic facility upgrades to support agri-tourism or village heritage experiences).

2. Placemaking and beautification

- Public realm improvements in tourism nodes, village centres, waterfronts or trail towns etc. that enhance sense of place, visitor experience and safety (e.g. streetscaping, interpretation elements, public art linked to local heritage, rest points, lighting associated with tourism use, etc).

3. Tourism route or trail planning, development, expansion, accreditation or certification

- Planning, design and/or implementation of route and trail infrastructure and associated amenities.
- Work to meet route/trail accreditation or certification standards, including signage, safety infrastructure, information points and basic visitor facilities.

4. Destination universal accessibility and safety infrastructure

- Infrastructure adaptation to improve universal accessibility of visitor facilities and public tourism spaces.
- Occupational health and safety-related infrastructure improvements for tourism facilities (e.g. safety equipment, emergency access improvements) where these are clearly linked to visitor use.

B. Product development support

This category focuses on the development, upgrading and market-responsive repositioning of tourism products and experiences that align with the Fund's thematic focus areas.

Examples of eligible projects:

1. Investment in equipment, facilities, products or experiences

- Purchase or upgrading of essential equipment and minor facility adaptations needed to improve or diversify tourism products (e.g. gear for nature-based experiences, interpretive installations, small-scale infrastructure within a private product).

2. Destination and/or business sustainability audits and certification-related improvements

- Sustainability, environmental or climate responsive audits of tourism products or clusters, certification and/or implementation of priority adaptation or improvement measures that strengthen product competitiveness (excluding large-scale capital works).

3. Destination and/or business universal accessibility assessments and product adaptation

- Accessibility audits and modest adaptations of products and experiences to improve universal access (e.g. interpretive tools, adapted facilities, accessible information and booking processes) linked to a clear business case.

4. Accreditation, licensing and professional certification relating to products

- Costs associated with achieving recognised product, route, trail or professional certifications or licences that are necessary to launch or upgrade a product to market-ready status.

C. Business development and market readiness support

This category strengthens the capacity of tourism businesses and destination ecosystems to access markets, utilise data, and adopt new technologies, including AI-related transitions.

Note: Individual businesses cannot apply under this category.

Examples of eligible projects:

1. Market readiness and market access support packages

- Programmes led by municipalities, DMOs, associations or other organisations to support their SMME members with product and market readiness (e.g. product quality, packaging, pricing, distribution readiness, digital presence) and market access (e.g. participation in platforms, trade engagements, fam trips linked to routes or themes).

2. Exposure or awareness of market access opportunities

- Activities to increase exposure to domestic and international market channels for priority products, experiences and routes, including targeted buyer engagements and structured participation in key trade/consumer platforms, where these form part of a broader market readiness intervention.

3. Entrepreneurship promotion and business development support events

- Convening dialogues, workshops and member events that support tourism entrepreneurship and business development around the Fund's thematic priorities, with a clear link to subsequent product or market interventions.

4. Support to local tourism offices/associations with adapting/upgrading ICT systems to support AI transitions

- Upgrading ICT systems, CRM tools, data collection and digital platforms used by local tourism offices, DMOs or associations to improve visitor information services, data-driven decision making and AI-enabled functions.

5. Market, business and destination performance intelligence

- Development or enhancement of market, business and destination intelligence tools, including data collection, analysis, dashboards and reporting that support better tourism planning, product development and market decisions.

6. Business development support, training or mentoring

- Structured business development support, training or mentoring focused on improving the management, financial sustainability, HR practices and operational resilience of tourism SMMEs and organisations.

7. Professional membership, accreditation, certification or licensing

- Support for businesses, guides or organisations to secure essential professional memberships, accreditations or licences that unlock market access or credibility, where this forms part of a broader business development or market readiness package.

6. Ineligible activities (illustrative)

The Fund will not support:

- Activities not clearly linked to tourism or to the specified thematic areas.
- General operating expenditure or debt servicing.
- Large-scale infrastructure projects outside the scope and scale of the Fund.
- The purchase of property or motor vehicles (motorcars, minibuses, coaches, etc).
- Projects located outside the Western Cape.
- Event or festival sponsorships (excluding entrepreneurship promotion and business development support events as outlined in this document).

- Operational expenditure not directly associated with the proposed project (e.g., full-time salaries, office rent, insurance, accountant, or audit fees etc.).
- Project management fees or project administration fees.

7. Co-funding and leveraging of investment

The TGF operates on a co-funding basis and seeks to leverage third-party and private sector contributions to maximise impact. Applicants must clearly indicate confirmed or potential co-funders, the nature of contributions (cash or in-kind), and how the TGF grant will unlock or de-risk additional investment. In well-motivated cases, projects without co-funding will be considered.

Please note that there will be a requirement towards the end of the financial year to provide proof of co-funding leveraged.

8. Geographic focus

While projects from across the province are eligible, preference may be given to:

- Non-Metro destinations and underserved areas.
- Nodes, villages and routes that strengthen geographic spread, counter seasonality, and deepen the offering in “jewel towns and villages” and along priority corridors/ trails.

9. Expected results and impact

Applicants must demonstrate how their project will contribute to:

- Increased or improved tourism infrastructure.
- New or upgraded tourism products and experiences launched to market.
- Enhanced market readiness and business development support to SMMEs.
- Increased visitor arrivals, length of stay and/or spend.
- Unlocking of third-party and/ or private sector co-funding.
- Strengthened stakeholder relationships and ecosystem coordination.

10. Monitoring, reporting and compliance

Funded projects will be subject to monitoring, reporting and evaluation requirements. Evidence of delivery against agreed milestones, outputs and outcomes must be submitted as per the conditions in the funding agreement and may be verified through site visits and meetings.

11. Application process

Applicants will be required to complete the online application form on the Tourism Growth Fund portal, which can be accessed <https://wcfgfunding.westerncape.gov.za/fundingprogrammes>

12. Qualifying criteria and compulsory supporting documents

The qualifying criteria listed below will be strictly applied and compulsory documents must be submitted as part of the application process.

- 12.1 Only projects located in the Western Cape will be considered for funding. In the case of business development and market readiness support, only businesses based in the Western Cape can receive support via an intermediary. Applicants must submit documentary proof that the project and, where applicable, the business operate within the Western Cape (for example, CIPC registration reflecting a Western Cape address, a recent municipal account, signed lease agreement, or other acceptable proof of operating address). In the case of sole proprietorships, proof of the business operating address within the Western Cape must be submitted together with the Identity Document of the owner. The Department may request additional evidence to substantiate this during the evaluation and contracting phases.
- 12.2 The organisation applying for funding must have been trading for at least two years. Company registration documents or documents of incorporation (NPO/NPC Registration Certificate, etc) clearly identifying the Director(s) of the company or organisation must be submitted. Copies of the Identity Documents of all the Directors should be included. In the case of sole proprietorships, the Identity Document of the owner must be provided.
- 12.3 The organisation must be tax compliant at the time of application. A positive Tax Compliance Status verified by a valid Tax Compliance Pin (for a period not

less than 60 days) must be provided. Successful applicants must also be tax compliant at the time of signing an agreement with the Department.

- 12.4 The entity must have obtained an unqualified audit opinion during the most recent financial year period and audited financial statements must be submitted. Alternatively, independently reviewed or independently compiled financial statements for businesses not required to prepare audited financial statements in terms of the Companies Act must be provided. All statements must be signed. The financial statements will be assessed against the going concern principle and the opinion of the independent auditor or reviewer. In the case of sole proprietorships, a letter from a qualified accountant confirming the financial status of the business must be provided together with the latest signed Management Accounts.
- 12.5 It is advantageous for applicants to provide co-funding. A signed letter by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) / Chief Financial Officer (CFO) or similar executive authority confirming the value of their own funding committed to the implementation of the proposed project must be submitted.
- 12.6 In the case where infrastructure or site development is involved, applicants must provide the written approval of the landowner/ owner of the infrastructure for a project to be considered. In addition, all planning approvals (including environmental or heritage approvals) should be in place to ensure that the disbursement of funds is not delayed due to outstanding planning approvals.
- 12.7 In the case of applications from intermediaries providing business development or market readiness support, applicants must maintain and, on request, submit a signed beneficiary register indicating the name, registration number (where applicable) and physical location (town/municipality) of all businesses that will receive support. This register will be used to confirm that all beneficiaries are based within the Western Cape

13. Obligations on the beneficiary

The Department will exercise a strict and robust approach to monitoring the funds transferred to the successful organisations. The following will be required from the beneficiary:

- 13.1. The beneficiary must create a separate bank account for the Project that DEDAT is funding **OR** create a separate cost centre within their Financial Accounting system **OR** provide a formal (on a letterhead) expenditure report/management account signed by the Financial Accountant/Bookkeeper.
- 13.2. Provide the Department with a signed (by the CFO / Financial Director or equal) expenditure report, an extract from the accounting systems cost centre, together with the bank statement and source documents for all transactions as per the timelines agreed to in the signed agreement.
- 13.3. Regular project activity reports.
- 13.4. Grant DEDAT access to conduct physical site inspections.

The Department will enter into an agreement with the beneficiary to outline the terms and conditions.

14. Application process

Please follow the guidance and information provided below:

- 14.1. The application process entails the completion of the required online information and the uploading of the required supporting documents.
- 14.2. Only applications submitted via the online process will be considered. No emailed or hand-delivered applications will be considered.
- 14.3. Completion of the online form is mandatory, including the uploading of the requested documentation.
- 14.4. All **documents requested in section 12** of this Call for Proposals are **compulsory** and must be submitted in order to complete your application. Please ensure that all documents submitted are legible. Where documents are illegible, damaged, or corrupted, the application cannot be considered.

Enquiries can be directed to Mrs Lindy Cambouris at G4Jtourismfund@western-cape.gov.za or 021-483-6527.

Annexure A: Template for the preparation of project proposals

Please use the structure below when preparing your submission. Where annexures are attached (e.g. timelines, budgets, cash flows) please clearly indicate this in the file name.

1. BUSINESS/ ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE (no more than one page)

The business profile must contain the following information:

- Date of establishment
- Core activities/mandate of the organisation
- Number of employees
- Experience implementing similar projects

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT (no more than two pages)

Describe the project and highlight the key elements thereof:

- Describe the a) infrastructure, b) product or c) business development support for which funding is being applied for.
- What does the initiative seek to achieve?
- Who are the partners involved and what role will they play in the project?
- Describe the level of planning conducted to date e.g. market research, feasibility studies, business plans, impact assessments etc. (Please attach any documents in support of your application).
- Describe any market trends that the initiative responds to.
- What are the project timelines?
- How will the funding be used?
- Describe the nature of the matching funding in place.
- What key activities will be undertaken to ensure the success of the project?
- Does the project require any statutory approvals before implementation can commence? Please describe these.

3. PROJECT IMPACT (no more than two pages)

- In the case of infrastructure or product development projects, describe existing and potential visitor numbers.
- Has any market research been conducted? Please describe the findings.

- In the case of infrastructure, product or business development support initiatives, what markets or market trends does the initiative respond to?
- Who are the direct beneficiaries of this project (e.g, SMMEs, suppliers, communities, employees etc)?
- How many jobs have been created since the inception of the initiative?
- How many jobs will likely be created in the case of a new project?
- How many direct beneficiaries will be supported through the intervention?
- Indicate how these jobs will be created/sustained.

4.MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

- How will the project be monitored (meetings, site visits, financials etc)?
- What measurement metrics will be used? How will you determine that the project is on track? Key milestones should be noted.

5.IMPLEMENTATION PLAN WITH TIMELINES ([Annexure](#))

- Provide a project implementation plan detailing all project activities

6.CASH FLOW ([Annexure](#))

- Provide an activity-based cash flow detailing all activities (items) that will be funded by the Department through the fund.

7.DETAILED BUDGET BREAKDOWN ([Annexure](#))

- Provide a project budget which clearly shows own funding, Tourism Growth Fund funding, funding from other organisations as well as other contributions.