

Think Vermont GROW Program

Grants for Relocation Outreach Work (GROW)

Grant funding to enable local, regional, or state-wide organizations to conduct relocation, recruitment, and retention activities to encourage and support new residents relocating to Vermont.

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About the Program

The Think Vermont Grants for Relocation Outreach Work (GROW) Program will have two funding tracks:

- 1) Regional Relocation Network Track
- 2) Outreach Track

Eligible Applicants: Chambers of Commerce, Regional Development Corporations, Downtown Organizations, Resident Retention Networks, LGBTQ+ and/or BIPOC affinity groups, or other similar groups.

Application Process: Application, Work Plan and Budget, Letters of Support

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Regional Relocation Network Track

Activities must complement and support the State's lead distribution system via the Connect with a Vermonter form on ThinkVermont.com.

Applicants will be expected to have in place or develop a formal process to track all leads received and report on the status of all leads and support activities provided (calls, referrals, emails, etc.).

- Number of individuals contacted and the manner (phone, email, etc.) of contact.
- Number of individuals who have relocated and to which communities.
- Number of community connections (e.g., to schools, realtors, community groups).
- Number of candidates connected to employers
- Number and sector of employers sent referrals.

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Eligible Relocation Network Track Activities

- Building a 1:1 “concierge-level” program to provide personalized relocation and retention support to individuals.
- Building partnerships with employers and/or the Department of Labor regional field offices to help match potential residents with current job openings.
- Building collaborations with the Vermont Welcome Wagon, Young Professionals networks, or other similar relocation organizations.
- Developing tools to manage, track and report on the status of individual leads and employer or community referrals.
- Creating a central resource of relocation information which highlights common services, employers, and other regional assets.

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Connect with a Vermonter

Applicants for the Relocation Network Track must be committed to receiving and nurturing leads received through the Connect with a Vermonter program.

Form questions include:

- Employment Info
- Home state
- Region of interest
- Reasons for moving
- How committed to VT are they
- Household info and age

All those who are eligible to work in the US receive an automated email with an introduction to the regional contact.

Most regions also offer a personal phone or video call as the first step in nurturing the leads.

Our current regions are:

Addison County

Washington County

Windham County

Lamoille County

Chittenden County

Northeast Kingdom

Rutland County

Bennington County

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Outreach Track

Activities for the Outreach Track can complement the Regional Relocation Network Track activities or be stand-alone activities that support the program goals.

Applicants must be committed to organizing events and/or conducting activities that promote the region to new residents and help new residents feel welcome in their new community.

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Eligible Outreach Track Activities

- Events that aim to welcome and support recently relocated families, such as events that pair new residents with established residents.
- Events for potential residents to support their relocation to Vermont such as, providing opportunities to meet community members and/or employers.
- The creation of marketing assets (e.g., photography, videos and/or printed collateral) that will be used to promote the region.
- Investments into the digital presence of a region, including websites or other owned channels (social media, email marketing, etc.) that support outreach and provide information about the relocation and retention activities.

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Key Details

- Grant applications are due November 3, 2023, and applicants will be notified by November 20, 2023
 - Minimum grant: \$50,000. Maximum: \$150,000 (for one or both tracks).
 - The grant funding period is for two years, beginning January 1, 2024.
 - No matching funds required. Staff time is an eligible expense.
- Monthly reporting will be required, plus a check-in at year-end with invoices and/or other documentation to show how grant funds were expended.
- Applicants will be asked to specifically define the geographic area they will service.
 - For Regional Relocation Network Track, max of one organization per county.
 - For the Outreach Track, overlap OK if organizations represent different and distinct affinity groups.

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Application Details

Proposals for both tracks should include:

- Amount of funding requested.
- Project Details: In addition to details on proposed activities, proposals must note if the activities are designed for recently relocated residents or for not yet relocated potential Vermonters.
- Community Partnerships: Proposals must detail how grant applicants will collaborate with community partners to strengthen the proposed activities.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Proposals must describe actions that will be taken to make a diverse group of prospective (or recently re-located) residents feel welcomed and wanted in your community.
- Tracking: Proposals must provide a detailed description of how outcomes for the project will be tracked.

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Application Details

All applicants must submit an application as well as:

- **Work Plan and Budget.** If applying for both tracks, please include a Work Plan and Budget form for each track.

The Work Plan and Budget Template should show how the grantee will use funding for either one-time projects or events, or for monthly expenses associated with their proposed activities. Even if costs are estimates, please be as detailed as possible when completing this form.

- A minimum of one, maximum of four, **Letters of Support** from partner organizations.

Letters of Support are expected to articulate general support for the grant request. Support letters should demonstrate the nature of involvement with applicants and/or the community, and/or explain how the funding will help address a need or solve a problem.

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Questions?

<https://accd.vermont.gov/tourism/funding-and-incentives>

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