



Tourism Promotion Program Application for Funding

Application must be complete in order to receive a tourism award. This application may be submitted electronically by attaching the completed file to an email addressed to clerk@langleywa.org or mail printed original application to the Finance Director, City of Langley, PO Box 366, Langley, WA98260 -- or hand deliver your original to Langley City Hall, 112 Second Street, Clerk Treasurer's Office. Telephone 360-221-4246 X 15.

Project Title: Langley Whale Center

Project Dates: Beginning: Ongoing Ending: Ongoing - funds for 2015

Contact Person: Susan Berta

(Person with most knowledge about this application) E-mail: susan@orcaneetwork.org

Company/Organization: Orca Network Phone: 360-331-3543

Address: (Administrative/ON: 485 Labella Vista Way, Freeland, 98249) LWC: 117 Anthes

City: Langley State: WA Zip: 98260

Project Sponsor: Orca Network

(Person representing agency or organization authorized to sign Memorandum of Understanding with the City)

Address: 485 Labella Vista Way

City: Freeland State: WA Zip: 98249

Signature: _____ Phone: _____

Sponsor is: Profit-making Non-profit 501-C Public Agency

Amount requested*: \$ 5,000

Other funding sources*: \$ 20,000 Total project budget*: \$ 25,000 +

**The maximum Tourism Fund Program share for any project will not generally exceed 50% of the cost of the activity/project. Minimum award is \$500. The award will be contingent upon the applicant's demonstration of other funding sources (matching funds). Expenditures are subject to audit.*

In the space below, provide a one-paragraph summary of your request and what you will accomplish. If your request is part of a larger project, you may briefly describe the overall project. However, please focus your answer on the specific element for which you are requesting funding.

The Langley Whale Center is now in its 2nd year, and has seen a very successful first year. With support from the City of Langley, Langley Main Street, and the Port of South Whidbey, along with Orca Network funds and staffing, we have developed displays about the whales and marine mammals of Puget Sound, and have provided a fun and educational facility for Langley residents and visitors.

We have already outgrown our current home, and are seeking a larger space to house the Whale Center before our current building is sold, and are seeking funds to support our continued existence in Langley, and hopefully a move to a larger building where we have sufficient classroom/presentation space.

SCOPE OF WORK

Fully describe the project. Expand your project summary to address such issues as: what it is you wish to do; the tangible and intangible benefits to the community; visitor impact; and how you will evaluate the success of the project. If you are requesting funds for a specific portion of a larger project, please indicate, but focus your response on the element for which you are requesting funding.

In our first year, the Langley Whale Center had an average of 50 visitors a day (year round/summer); but we have seen an increase in more recent months bringing the average up to 65/day for the year, with spring/summer visitation around 80 - 85/day. Many of our visitors come from off island, and a large portion of our off-island visitors come to Langley specifically to visit the Whale Center. These people also visit other Langley businesses such as restaurants, shops, and hotels. We have had many local residents comment they are very happy to have the Whale Center as an activity for their visiting family and friends, and visitors and locals alike have been pleased with our displays, videos, educational activities, and information from our volunteer docents.

Wendy Sines, LWC Manager, began Youth Activity Group at the Whale Center, which has been very popular for both on and off-island youth and their families. Activities include a lesson about a whale related topic, and then a hands on activity for the youth. This has been a great way to increase awareness, and to teach young people about volunteerism.

With a larger space for the Whale Center, Orca Network would be able to host more presentations and events in Langley at the Whale Center, and continue our work to expand existing events such as the Welcome the Whales Parade and Festival. A larger space would also provide room for a larger gift shop, which would help support our efforts and help pay the rent. We are working on a new exhibit in partnership with Cascadia Research, about the history of the North Puget Sound Gray Whales that visit Langley each spring. Along with the new exhibit, we have an agreement with Cascadia Research to update their NPS Gray Whale ID guides, and to laminate and sell them at the Center and on local Whale Watch boats. This would also bring in income to help support the Whale Center.

Describe how you will advertise, publicize or otherwise distribute information regarding your project.

The Langley Whale Center advertises through paid ads in local and regional news publications, outdoors magazines and publications, event listings, and rack cards on three Washington State Ferries runs. Orca Network also promotes the Whale Center to our members and followers - including the 12,000+ subscribers to our Whale Sighting Report e-list, and our Facebook page which currently is over 111,000 "Likes". Orca Network reaches a national and international audience through our Sighting Network, Free Lolita campaign, and orca and whale advocacy and education efforts.

We also work closely with Langley Main Street, the Chamber of Commerce, Port of South Whidbey, and Whale Watch companies, to help promote the Langley Whale Center, as well as through Orca Network events such as the Ways of Whales workshop (over 300 attendees), Welcome the Whales Parade and Festival, and other events throughout the year. We have incorporated activities, tours, and special events at the Whale Center to coincide with other Orca Network events, but are currently quite limited by the size of our space. Our hope was to hold presentations, movies and classes at the Whale Center (all of which would help promote the Center), but our current space is just too small to house more than a dozen people in the meeting room space.

In a larger venue, the increase in events held at the Whale Center would help promote the Whale Center itself, and bring more visitors to Langley. We are currently working on a fundraising campaign, which will include a membership drive, online/social-media campaign, and mailings or flyers to Langley area residents, promoting the Whale Center and asking for funding assistance to help us grow.

PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA

STATE LAW DEFINING THE USE OF SPECIAL LODGING TAX

State law defines promoting tourism as: "activities and expenditures designed to increase tourism, including but not limited to advertising, publicizing, or otherwise distributing information for the purpose of attracting and welcoming tourists; developing strategies to expand tourism; operating tourism promotion agencies; and funding marketing and operations of special events and festivals designed to attract tourists."

TOURISM PROMOTION FUND CRITERIA:

■ Tourism promotion

Does the project/event meet the basic state requirements for tourism promotion? Promote a positive image for the City? Does this project/event promote the City as a destination place? Attract visitors, build new audiences, and encourage tourist expansion? Increase awareness of the City's amenities, history, facilities, and natural environment? Does it support regional tourism planning?

■ Benefit to the community

How will this project/event benefit the citizens of Langley? Does this project benefit the overall community, rather than specific segment or interest?

■ Innovation

Is this project/event unusual or unique? Does it move an existing program in a new direction?

■ Community support

Does the project/event have broad-based community appeal or support? What is the evidence of need for this project/event in the City?

■ Evidence of partnerships

What kind and degree of partnership does the project/event exhibit? Volunteer involvement, inter-jurisdictional, corporate, business and/or civic organization support?

■ Other funding sources

What other revenue sources will be used to support this project/event?

■ Previous and replacement funding

Is this funding request for a new project/event or to continue or expand on-going project/event?

■ Scale of project

Is the project of a scale suitable for this funding program?

**Indicate here how your project meets the above Tourism Promotion Fund Criteria:
(Use an extra page if necessary.)**

The Langley Whale Center promotes tourism in Langley by building on the theme of Langley being a "Whale City". With Resident orcas visiting in the fall and early winter, and Gray whales in the spring, it provides a perfect "shoulder season" activity for Langley visitors. In the summer months, the Whale Center is a great stopover for families visiting Langley on vacation, and many people visit Langley specifically to come to the Whale Center.

Local residents visit the Whale Center often, for their own learning/enjoyment, or to bring visiting friends and family, and have expressed their happiness at have something new and different to do in Langley. We have had a lot of young families visit the Whale Center, both local and visiting, and it is a fun and unique place for young and old.

We have been very pleased with the wonderful partnerships we have had with the City of Langley, Port of Langley, Langley Main Street, and Whale Watch companies such as Mystic Sea Charters. We have provided many tours to Langley school students and also provided them with educational materials and in-classroom presentations. We also continue our partnerships with other whale organizations and researchers such as the Center for Whale Research, Cascadia Research and the Friday Harbor Whale Museum.

Other funding sources include support from Langley Main Street, the Port of South Whidbey, contributions from Orca Network members, fundraisers, gift shop sales and donation boxes at the Whale Center. Orca Network plans to dedicate funds raised from our annual San Ignacio Lagoon, Baja Gray whale trip to support the Whale Center, and will be holding fund raisers and conduct crowd-sourced funding campaigns via social media to help pay for a larger building. In addition, we are applying for grants from other funding sources such as Tulalip tribes and the Milgard Foundation.

The funding requested is to continue our on-going displays and Whale Center activities, and to help us grow and expand to meet the need we have found for a larger classroom/event space, which in turn will help us generate more revenues through events and classes.

TIMELINE

PROJECTS MUST BE COMPLETED BY DECEMBER 1, 2015.

If your project is to be completed in phases, please give breakdown of timelines.

Funds will first be used to renew advertising efforts such as rack cards, book marks, magnets, and other promotional materials, and to improve upon existing displays and finish the new Gray whale display that is in progress.
Should we find a new building before December 1st (which is our desire and hope!), funds will be used to help transition to the new space, and to promote our change of address.

Please use the space below to provide any necessary background on elements of your projected time line.

PROJECT BUDGET

Please list the amount requested, what it is to be used for, the amount and source of matching funding.

Total City Tourism Fund Amount requested:

\$ 5,000

Total value of the project

\$ 25,000 + (dependent on rent/lease cost for new bldg)

\$5,000 - Tourism Fund amount requested, for continued operation and expansion of the Langley Whale Center

\$2,200 - *Langley Main Street (Funds from April Whale Watch Fundraiser minus cost of whale themed flags for City of Langley)

-\$500 - *balance of funds awarded by Port of South Whidbey

~\$3,000+ Income from Whale Center Gift Shop (this would increase with larger shop area)

~\$3,000+ Income from Whale Center donation boxes

\$11,300 - LWC Memberships, grants, fund raisers and support from Orca Network general contributions

\$25,000 Total Budget

* We will also be approaching these groups to apply for future funding for the Whale Center as well

AWARD DETERMINATION

Awards are based on the extent to which the applicant project or activity meets the following criteria:

- Priority is given to Langley-based activities and projects.
- Priority is given to programs requesting seed money versus ongoing funding.
- The project or activity:
 - ❖ promotes tourism which benefits the overall community, rather than a specific segment or interest.
 - ❖ supports regional tourism planning/promotion.
 - ❖ promotes the unique attributes of Langley for tourists and the community.
 - ❖ promotes the city as a destination place.
 - ❖ encourages partnerships (public/private).
 - ❖ supports long-lasting assets, capital facilities/amenities.

The City reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to fund or not fund any particular project or program for which an application is submitted. The determination of whether to fund a particular project or program will be based upon a number of factors, including but not limited to: the ability of the program or project to promote tourism in the city, the relative merits of the project or program compared to the applications and the overall availability of funding. The City is the sole judge of its obligation to fund any particular project or program regardless of its merits under these factors.