

Travel South Dakota Destination Development Program



International Institute
of Tourism Studies

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



Overview

- Introduction to Destination Development
- Overview of South Dakota's Destination Development Program
 - What is it?
 - How will it be implemented?
 - What type of projects can you do?
 - Who's eligible to apply?
- Discussion & Next Steps



What Is Destination Development?

A **community-driven, collaborative process** aimed at enhancing a destination's appeal, infrastructure, and offerings to attract visitors and provide meaningful, high-quality experiences.

It involves **planning, investment, and collaboration among stakeholders** to create and improve tourism products, services, and amenities that **preserve the community's unique character and ensure the well-being of residents.**



So much South Dakota, so little time...

Why a Destination Development Program?

Ideas Into Action



Communities across South Dakota have great ideas and strong aspirations to develop tourism as they see fit

Overcome Challenges



Challenges like limited time and funding often prevent these ideas from becoming reality

Partnerships



Opportunity for Travel South Dakota serving as a secondary partner

BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES



**Strengthen local
economies**



**Enhance
residents'
quality of life**



**Protect the destination's
unique character and
natural areas**

Empowering Communities

The South Dakota
Destination Development
Program aims to empower
rural communities and
businesses statewide to
grow, manage, and
promote tourism
effectively.



Trusted Partners in Building Trust and Supporting Local Growth

Destination Stewardship



- *Jackson Hole Sustainable Destination Management Plan*
- *Taos Destination Stewardship Plan*
- *Ketchikan, Alaska Destination Tourism Strategy*

Product Development



- *South Dakota Native Tourism Alliance*
- *Maine Wabanaki Cultural Tourism Plan*
- *Jamaica's National Destination Assurance Framework & Strategy*

Professional Development & Applied Research



- *Professional Certificate Programs*
- *Travel Oregon - Analysis of Destination Management Networks*
- *Adventure Travel Destination Index*

Travel Oregon Rural Tourism Studios

OREGON'S RURAL TOURISM STUDIO

Travel Oregon, in partnership with a local steering committee, will host a series of workshops in the Southern Oregon Coast region — including Reedsport, Winchester Bay, North Bend, Coos Bay, Charleston, Bandon and the communities of the Coquille River Valley.

This professional development program is designed to bolster your community's tourism economy and offers hands-on planning and product development workshops rich in information and networking opportunities.

The program opens with an overview of the tourism industry, important trends, and sustainable tourism best practices to stimulate new thinking about your destination. The core of the program will guide participants in developing strategies for culinary and agritourism and world-class outdoor recreation experiences. The program concludes with specific training on collaborative destination marketing for businesses and communities, and developing action teams for project implementation.

Sustainable tourism can stimulate the local economy, protect and enhance local resources, and foster community pride. Community leaders, tourism entrepreneurs, tour operators, lodging property owners, outdoor recreation enthusiasts, restaurateurs and anyone with an interest in strengthening the local economy through tourism are invited to participate in the program.

Expert Trainers and Workshop Topics Include:

Creating a powerful vision for
your community's future in
tourism with **David Beurle**
of Future iQ Partners



Developing world-class
adventure travel outdoor
recreation with
Kristin Dahl and
Scott Bricker
of Travel Oregon



Growing culinary and



agritourism experiences for
visitors and igniting teams for
action with **Alexa Carey** of
Travel Oregon

Planning collaborative tourism
marketing strategies with **Katy
Clair** and **Kelda Schmidt**
of Travel Oregon



The following workshops and events will be offered
as part of the program:

Jan 24
4 p.m.-8 p.m.
North Bend
Community Tourism Visioning Event
Determine the essence of this destination, create the future and galvanize community members in working toward the fulfillment of this common purpose

Jan 25
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
North Bend
Community Tourism Planning Workshop
Set a path for sustainable tourism based on current trends and local assets

Feb 21
5 p.m.-8 p.m.
Charleston
**Adventure Travel & Outdoor Recreation
Networking Event**
Learn about key tourism projects in the area related to this sector and network with your peers

Feb 22
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Charleston
**Adventure Travel & Outdoor Recreation
Workshop**
Work collaboratively to design strategies and business opportunities to develop the outdoor recreation and adventure travel market for this region

Mar 21
5 p.m.-8 p.m.
Bandon
Culinary & Agritourism Networking Event
Learn about key tourism projects in the area related to this sector and network with your peers

Mar 22
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Bandon
Culinary & Agritourism Workshop
Create ways for better connecting your local agricultural markets with the visitor industry to strengthen your local economy

Apr 18
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
North Bend
**Tourism Marketing & Communications
Workshop**
Learn tourism marketing best practices, how to plug into existing marketing efforts and how to develop a tourism marketing plan for your region and business

Apr 19
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
North Bend
**Teaming for Impact & Action Planning
Workshop**
Establish powerful local action teams in order to bring ideas developed during the program to fruition

Apr 19
5 p.m.-8 p.m.
Coos Bay
Community Celebration Event
Participants share their vision of tourism for the region and celebrate program completion

Program venues and registration available at:
Industry.TravelOregon.com/SouthernOregonCoast



John Day River Territory Bicycle Tourism

- **33 local tourism stakeholders and residents** participated in 7 development workshops
- 50 local stakeholders participated in a **one-day Bicycle Tourism Studio** to help promote the 174.4-mile Old West Scenic Bikeway
- Creation of the “Two Wheels Spoken Here;” now the statewide **“Bike-friendly Business” program**
- Developed **Bicycle brochure** showing side routes off the main Scenic Bikeway



John Day River Territory

Bicycle Tourism

- **Increased sales** reported by businesses along the route from new visitors to the area
- Development of **new bicycle-related businesses**
- Hosted the popular **Cycle Oregon** event
- **Increased local representation** at the Seattle Bicycle Expo trade show



An aerial photograph of a South Dakota landscape during the golden hour of sunset. The scene features a patchwork of agricultural fields in various shades of brown and green, interspersed with clusters of trees. A winding river or stream is visible in the lower-left corner, reflecting the warm light. The overall atmosphere is serene and expansive.

The South Dakota Destination Development Program

Leading the Way in Destination Development

At the Forefront



Travel South Dakota is among the first states to develop a destination development program tailored to its communities.

Community-Led



Prioritizing input from South Dakota's rural communities to ensure the program reflects their needs and aspirations.

Designed for South Dakota



Inspired by other programs but custom-tailored to meet the specific needs and opportunities of South Dakota's communities.

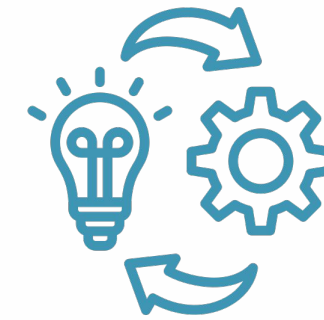
KEY ELEMENTS OF THE PROGRAM



**Tourism product
assessment and
strategy development**



**Stakeholder
engagement
and capacity
building**



**Product development
implementation
support**

PHASE 1: PROJECT PLANNING

This phase focuses on preparing for and participating in an action-planning workshop.

Communities collaborate with Travel South Dakota to validate research, engage stakeholders, and identify tourism priorities.

The in-person workshop and post-workshop report provide a roadmap for the next steps, including the option to pursue funding for project implementation.

October - November 2025



**DESTINATION
ASSESSMENT**



**STAKEHOLDER
ENGAGEMENT**



**ACTION PLANNING
WORKSHOPS**

PHASE 2: PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

This phase focuses on securing funding and implementing priority tourism projects.

Communities submit applications, receive grant funds, and work with expert facilitators to complete 1–2 key initiatives.

Emphasis is placed on building an effective implementation team and ensuring projects align with goals and timelines for successful outcomes.

December 2025 - May 2026



**APPLY FOR
FUNDING**



**CONFIRM PLANNING
TEAM & DETAILS**



**IMPLEMENT
PRIORITY PROJECTS**

REFLECTIONS & CONTINUED COMMUNICATION

In this phase, communities evaluate the pilot program's impact by completing an assessment and submitting a final report.

The report highlights project results and outlines future destination development plans, ensuring continued growth and progress.

June - July 2026



**SUBMIT PROGRAM
EVALUATION**



**FINALIZE PROJECT
REPORT**

WHAT CAN YOUR COMMUNITIES CREATE OR ENHANCE?



**OUTDOOR REC &
TRAIL
DEVELOPMENT**



**WAYFINDING
SIGNAGE**



**ITINERARY
DEVELOPMENT**



**THEMED
EXPERIENCES**

Why Participate in the Program?

Guidance



Expert guidance on developing authentic tourism products and experiences

Training



Training on working together to manage tourism in a responsible way

Seed Funding



Small grants for tourism product development projects

Promotion



Marketing opportunities through Travel South Dakota and partners

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?



**Rural Communities
with strong
resident support
for tourism**

- **Local/regional governments, DMOs/CVBs, and Chambers of Commerce**
- **Business owners/operators (lodging, retail, guiding, dining, arts/museums)**
- **Tribal Organizations**
- **Nonprofits**
- **Managers of attractions/sites**

Applications can come from individual communities or regional collaborations.

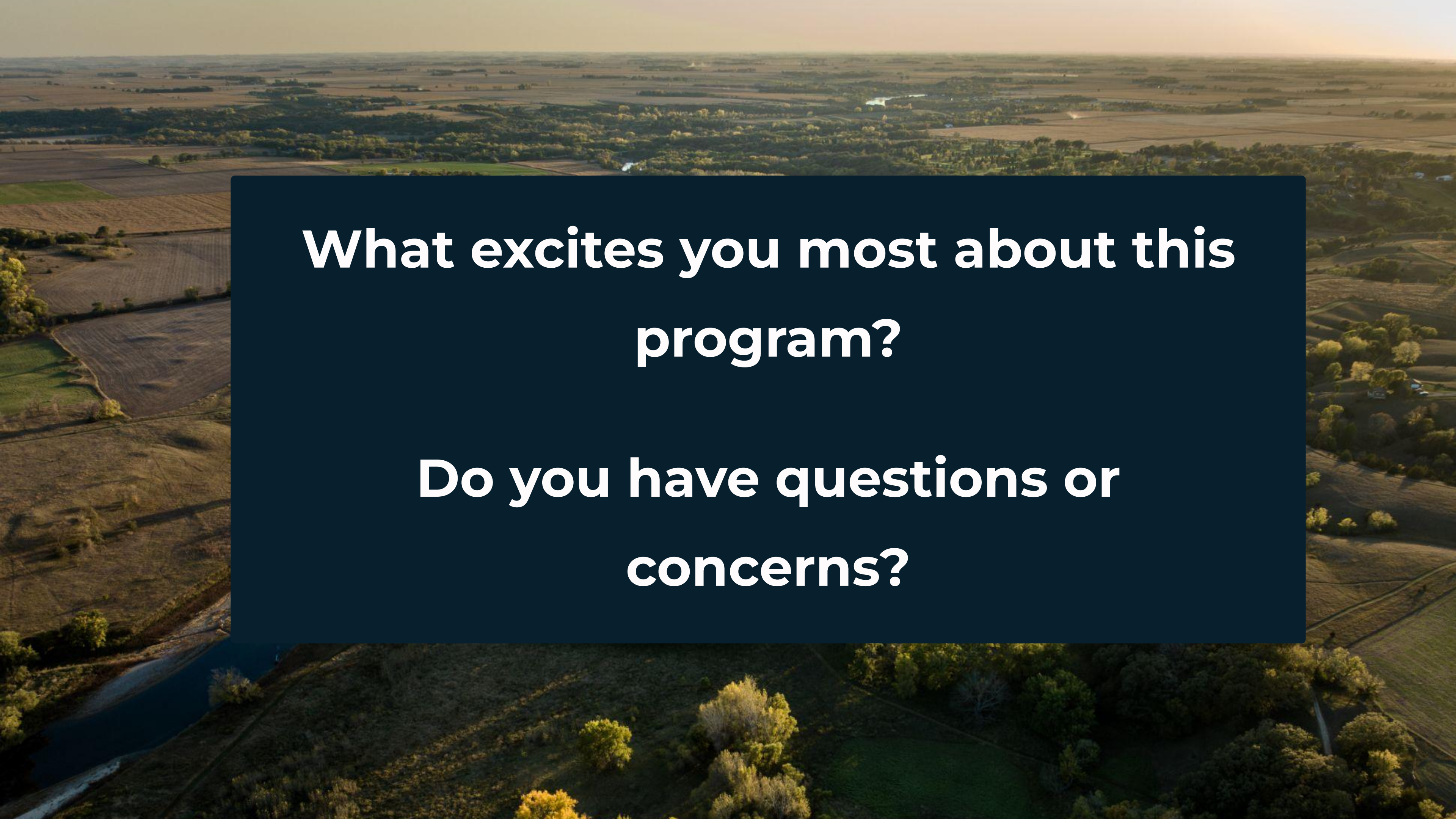
Important Dates

- **January-February:** Survey
- **July:** Webinar and Info Sessions
- **Early August:** Applications Open
- **Late August:** Application Deadline
- **September:** Selected Communities Announced

What's Next?

- Spread the word
- Take the survey
- Sign up for updates



An aerial photograph of a vast rural landscape during the golden hour of sunset. The scene features a patchwork of agricultural fields in various shades of brown and green, interspersed with clusters of trees. A winding river or stream is visible in the lower-left corner, reflecting the warm light. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and expansive.

**What excites you most about this
program?**

**Do you have questions or
concerns?**

Thank you!

*For questions, please visit the
[Destination Development Program](#)
[website](#) or contact Ciara Forest,
Destination Development Manager, at
Ciara.Forest@travelsouthdakota.com*

Take the survey before
February 28 ↓

