

**CITY OF BANBRIDGE ISLAND  
2017 LODGING/TOURISM FUND PROPOSAL  
COVER SHEET**

Project Name:

**Destination Tourism Marketing at Bloedel Reserve**

Name of Applicant Organization:

**Bloedel Reserve**

Applicant Organization IRS Chapter 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) status and Tax ID Number:

**501(c)(3), 91-6182786**

Date of Incorporation as a Washington State Corporation and UBI Number:

**1974, 601130563**

Primary Contact:

**Sue Andresen, Director of Philanthropy**

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**Please indicate the type of project described in your proposal:**

<b>v</b>	<b>Project Type</b>
<b>x</b>	Tourism marketing
	Marketing and operations of special events and festivals designed to attract tourists
	Supporting the operations of a tourism-related facility owned or operated by a nonprofit organization*
	Supporting the operations and/or capital expenditures of a tourism-related facility owned or operated by a municipality or a public facilities district*

\*If the proposal requests funds for a tourism-related facility, please indicate the legal owner of that facility:

**N/A**

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### Applicant Information

Please respond to each of these questions in the order listed. If the proposal includes multiple partners, please include the requested information for each organization.

1. Describe the applicant organization's mission, history and areas of expertise. Describe the applicant's experience in tourism promotion on Bainbridge Island and its demonstrated ability to complete the proposed project.

**The mission of the Bloedel Reserve is "to enrich people's lives through a premier public garden of natural and designed Pacific Northwest landscapes."**

**The Reserve's 150 acres are a unique blend of natural woodlands and beautifully landscaped gardens, including a Japanese Garden, a Moss Garden, Reflection Pool, and the Bloedel's former Residence. The Reserve has received recognition from national and international gardening experts as being one of the "Top Ten" gardens in the United States (e.g. *U.S.A. Today* rated the Reserve as such in May 2010).**

**The Bloedel Reserve has been cited as the top tourist attraction on Bainbridge Island for seven years in a row (*Bainbridge Review*, 2010 to 2016). The Reserve was awarded the 2010 Tourism Promoter of the Year Award by the Kitsap Peninsula Visitor and Convention Bureau, recognizing both our current efforts and future potential to attract more visitors and tourists to Kitsap County.**

**In 2009, attendance was 25,000 and reached over 50,000 in 2015. Attendance is projected to reach 55,000 in 2016. This increase has come about through strategies designed to increase visitation and make the Reserve a more open and welcoming facility. We have reached out to build partnerships on Bainbridge and within the wider Kitsap and Puget Sound communities through new programs and events. We have provided several free or discounted days to ensure all segments of the community can visit.**

**Extensive anecdotal feedback indicates that our new philosophy and attitude of openness and ease of accessibility is working, improving the reputation of the Reserve, and attracting more visitors. In 2013, with the help of LTAC and Kitsap Bank, the Reserve hosted its first ever temporary sculpture exhibit, which drew record attendance and extensive media coverage. The summer of 2014 saw record single-day attendance at our new Out(side)rageous Family Day (911 visitors) funded by Bainbridge Community Foundation and Fletcher Bay Foundation. The 2015 Out(side)rageous Family Day broke the previous year's number by 26%!**

**In 2016, for the third consecutive year, LTAC funds helped the Reserve create, print and distribute an 8-panel brochure that was distributed to tourist locations throughout Puget Sound, including Washington State Ferries, Seattle hotels and Sea-Tac Airport. The brochures were a tremendous success. According to Certified Folded (brochure distribution company) the Reserve's brochure has been picked up by more than 55,000 potential visitors since the beginning of 2016, with a total of 86,000 expected to be picked up the end of the year. Certified Folder and Washington State Ferries estimates that more than 9 million people see our brochure on the ferries annually. The \$2-off coupon in the brochure was redeemed 773 times between January and September 2016, compared to 553 total in 2015. Our attendance record shows that between May and August 2016, we**

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welcomed visitors from all 50 states and 57 different countries!

**Kitsap Transit’s B.I. Ride has been a tremendous asset by providing economical transportation to and from the Bainbridge Island Ferry Terminal, as well as other locations, to the Reserve. Between January 1 and October 5, 2016, 2,678 visitors arrived via B.I. Ride. This number will soon surpass 2015’s total of 2,810 visitors arriving via B.I. Ride. Bloedel’s website, brochures and staff encourage visitors to travel to and from the Reserve using B.I. Ride.**

Alternate question for event or facility funding:

Describe the event or facility proposed including its purpose, history, and budget. Include past attendance history if applicable, and estimate the number of tourists drawn to the event or facility/year. Please estimate total attendance and number of tourists estimated to attend for 2017. How has the activity been promoted in the past (if applicable) and what promotion is planned for 2017?

**N/A**

2. If appropriate, please identify the project partner(s) and briefly describe the involvement of each. Please note that the maximum award of \$100,000 will apply to any single project, even if proposed by a team of partners.

**The brochure has a panel dedicated to promoting Island eateries and provides a link to Bainbridge Island lodging options. The updated 2017 brochure will more prominently highlight B.I. Ride.**

3. If appropriate, please list each project and amount of funding awarded and utilized from the Lodging Tax (Civic Improvement) Fund within the last five years (2011-2016).

**2011: Expanded general marketing: \$8,000  
2012: Japanese Guest House restoration: \$57,500  
2013: Marketing for Sculpture in the Landscape Exhibit: \$2,500  
2014: Destination tourism marketing at Bloedel Reserve: \$11,496  
2015: Destination tourism marketing at Bloedel Reserve: \$12,526  
2016: Destination tourism marketing at Bloedel Reserve: \$14,632**

4. If any projects previously funded through the Lodging Tax (Civic Improvement) Fund were not completed and/or if reports were not submitted to the City as requested, please explain:

**N/A**

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**Project Information**

**1. Describe the proposed project.**

The Bloedel Reserve proposes to produce and distribute approximately 100,000 8-panel brochures which will encourage regional residents and out-of-town tourists to visit Bloedel Reserve, and, in the process, take advantage of all Bainbridge Island has to offer. One of the panels of the brochure is dedicated to promoting Island restaurants and lodging. As in previous years, the 2017 brochure includes a \$2-off admission coupon.

To broaden the impact of the 2017 brochure, Bloedel will again host a day for Seattle-area concierges and cruise line providers. The day would include riding the ferry over from Seattle, taking B.I. Ride to and from Bloedel, experiencing Bloedel, having lunch, and attending a presentation on Bloedel and Bainbridge Island offerings. We will also provide concierges with a unique discount card they can offer to their hotel guests. The first concierge visit in June 2016 was successful and met with positive feedback; concierges felt better prepared to promote Bloedel and Bainbridge, including the nuances of using B.I. Ride.

These brochures and the concierge visit are part of a larger, comprehensive marketing plan. Bloedel also markets to tourists and off-Island residents through ferry screen advertisements, Seattle and Kitsap transit advertisements, and print advertisements.

**a. Identify the Project's main objectives and how each will be achieved.**

- 1. Continue to reach regional, national, and international tourist markets. Achieved through an updated 8-panel brochure with wide distribution, and many off-Island advertisements. Further achieved by hosting a group of Seattle hotel concierges and cruise line providers.**
- 2. Use Bloedel Reserve as an attraction to draw people to Bainbridge Island for a full-day experience. Achieved by dedicating one panel of the brochure to promoting local eateries and lodging opportunities. Further achieved by verbal communication from Bloedel staff to visitors.**
- 3. Promote Bloedel Reserve and Bainbridge Island as a destination in all four seasons. Achieved by including a calendar of seasonal events and highlights in the brochure.**
- 4. Continue promoting the use of B.I. Ride for transportation to and from the Reserve. Achieved by updating the brochure design to more prominently feature the section about travel to Bloedel and B.I. Ride.**
- 5. Reinforce Bloedel's recently updated brand identity, reflected in the brochure design and newly refreshed website. Achieved by widely distributing the brochure to the public, and by print, transit, and ferry screen advertisements.**

**b. Be as specific as possible about the proposed services, measurable impacts, distribution method and costs.**

**The project calls for the distribution of approximately 100,000 8-panel promotional brochures in several regional areas, including the following:**

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Distribution Area	# of Sites	Distribution Cost
WSF Seattle/Bainbridge	1	\$807.97
WSF South Sound	2	\$1,436.40
WSF Seattle Terminal	1	\$299.25
Seattle and the Eastside	258	\$2,817.60
Olympic/Kitsap Peninsulas	135	\$1,291.33
Seattle Corporate	80	\$1,342.45
Seattle Airport	7	\$840

We have a distribution service agreement with Certified Folder Display Service. Graphic design and printing are handled by local providers.

Project impacts are measured by: brochure pick-up rate; an estimation of impressions, provided by Certified Folder and Washington State Ferries; tracking \$2-off admission coupon (included in brochure) redemptions; tracking redemption of discount provided to a group of Seattle concierges to give to their hotel guests; tracking number of visitors arriving via B.I. Ride.

- c. If appropriate, provide details about the facility operating costs to be funded.  
N/A
- 2. Provide a brief narrative statement to address each of the stated selection criteria. Describe outcomes anticipated from each criterion, as well as the overall project.**
- a. Expected impact on increased tourism in 2017. Please provide specific estimates of how the project will impact the number of people traveling to Bainbridge Island from fifty miles or more one way from their place of residence, or travelling from another country or state outside of Washington State. If appropriate, compare/contrast this impact to actual or estimated number of tourists at your event/facility in 2015 and estimates for 2016.
 

**Bloedel Reserve set a new attendance record of 50,000 in 2015. At the current rate, it is estimated that 55,000 guests will have visited by the end of 2016. Based on demographic sampling gathered throughout the year, the Reserve welcomes 75% of guests from off-Island, including 30% from Seattle and surrounding environs, 12% from Washington State, and 33% from out of state. This is an impressive statistic that is strengthened by this focused marketing campaign. The continuation of B.I. Ride will help drive these numbers even further.**
  - b. Expected impact on or increase in overnight stays on the island. Please include actual or estimated numbers of tourists who will stay overnight in paid accommodations in Bainbridge lodging establishments in 2017 as a result of proposed activities. Please include the basis for any estimates.
 

**Attendance at the Reserve for 2016 is once again reaching record-breaking numbers, with the number of visitors expected to reach 55,000. We estimate that of those visitors, 33% (18,150) were from out of state and 12% (6,600) were from Washington State outside the**

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**Seattle-metropolitan area. Those two groups total 24,750 people who potentially needed overnight accommodations. Our attendance continues to increase, and we estimate similar – or even higher – numbers for 2017. With this proposed marketing strategy and partnerships with local hotels, motels, and bed and breakfasts, our guests could be converted into weekend visitors instead of day trippers.**

- c. Projected economic impact on Bainbridge Island businesses, facilities, events and amenities, including sales of overnight lodging, meals, tours, gifts, and souvenirs (helpful data may be found on the Washington State Department of Commerce website).**

**A recurring theme when people come to visit the Reserve is that they make a day-trip out of their visit. Our guests enjoy taking advantage of the fine restaurants, coffee shops, and boutiques that Bainbridge Island has to offer. More than 75% of our visitors do not live on Bainbridge Island. As a result, potentially 41,250 people need a meal, a cup of coffee or a treat. The economic impact our visitors have to Bainbridge Island is substantial.**

**To further increase this impact, one panel of Bloedel’s brochure is dedicated to Island eateries and lodging. Furthermore, Bloedel’s staff frequently recommends other Island attractions, restaurants, boutiques, and activities to Reserve visitors.**

- d. The project’s potential to draw visitors to the Island and increase overnight stays during the off-season, i.e. October 1 until Memorial Day.**

**Bloedel’s brochure includes information on how to make a memorable trip to Bainbridge Island and encourages visitors to “linger longer” on the Island. The brochure also highlights seasonal events at Bloedel Reserve, such as the Super Squash Scavenger Hunt in October, the Holiday Village in December, a special Valentine’s Day walk in February, peak floral season in the Spring, and ongoing concerts and lectures.**

- e. The applicants’ demonstrated history of organizational and project success.**

**The Reserve has been fortunate to receive LTAC funding in each of the last six years and has demonstrated success with each project undertaken. In 2011, funds helped expand the Reserve’s marketing budget. In 2012, a significant LTAC grant helped restore the renowned Japanese Guest House. This investment was leveraged into an additional \$190,000 of donations for the Guest House and Garden restoration. In 2013, LTAC funds supported the Reserve’s “Sculpture in the Landscape” exhibit, which drew record attendance and media attention. In 2014, LTAC funds helped the Reserve create, print and distribute an 8-panel brochure that was distributed at tourist locations throughout Puget Sound, including Washington State Ferries and Seattle hotels. In 2015, LTAC funds helped us build on the great success of the brochure by incorporating our new graphic identity and broadening distribution channels. In 2016, LTAC funds helped us more widely distribute a higher quantity of brochures, and helped us to host a group of 15 concierges from Seattle hotels. Feedback from the concierge visit was overwhelmingly positive. Participating concierges said it was very helpful to make the journey out to Bloedel themselves via B.I. Ride and**

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that they were subsequently better equipped to promote a trip to Bloedel and Bainbridge to their hotel guests.

- f. Describe any partnerships with other organizations and businesses in the proposed project – including efforts to minimize duplication of services where appropriate and encourage cooperative marketing.

**The project will promote Bainbridge Island businesses, including hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, and restaurants. A panel of the brochure is dedicated to promoting these Island businesses.**

- g. Describe the degree to which the project goals and/or results can be objectively assessed.

**The project’s goals will be measured by tracking the rate of brochure pick-up and by tracking how often the \$2 coupon (included in the brochure) is redeemed. Results are also measured by an estimation of impressions (number provided by Certified Folder and Washington State Ferries), by tracking redemption of discount provided to a group of Seattle concierges to give to their hotel guests, and by tracking the number of visitors arriving at Bloedel via B.I. Ride (this is tracked by both the Reserve and Kitsap Transit).**

- h. Describe the degree to which the project will leverage award funds with additional matching funds or donated in-kind goods or services.

**LTAC funds will be matched more than 1:1 by Bloedel Reserve funds which result from various philanthropic and revenue-generating endeavors.**

**Supporting Documentation**

- 1. Provide a project timeline that identifies major milestones.

<b>Visitor guide ads placed</b>	<b>January 2017</b>
<b>Brochure design updated</b>	<b>January 2017</b>
<b>Brochure printed</b>	<b>February 2017</b>
<b>Updated brochure distributed</b>	<b>March 2017 (2016 brochure in circulation prior to new brochure distribution)</b>
<b>Concierge visit</b>	<b>Spring 2017</b>

- 2. Include a detailed budget for the proposed project itemizing expenses and income. Include the amount requested from the Lodging Tax Fund and identify other sources of funding anticipated or obtained, including matching funds, as well as any in-kind contributions necessary to complete the project.

