TIER I + ZOOLOGICAL GRANT APPLICATION MANUAL

2026

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ZAP PROGRAM MISSION / HISTORY

Mission

The mission of the Zoo, Arts & Parks (ZAP) program is to enhance Salt Lake County resident and visitor experiences through art, cultural, historical, and recreational offerings. The program fulfills its purpose by:

Grantmaking: Providing fair access to ZAP funding and education resources by making grants to qualified nonprofit organizations in the categories of Tier I, Tier II & Zoological.

Promotion: Increasing public awareness of the value of ZAP.

Capacity Building: Providing adequate predictable support for organizations within the Zoological and Tier I categories and providing enhanced support for the organizations within the Tier II category.

History

The Salt Lake County (SLCo) Zoo, Arts & Parks (ZAP) program was first voted on and passed by SLCo residents in 1996, awarding its first grants in 1997. Every 10 years, the ZAP program is placed on the ballot for County residents to vote for the program's renewal.

For each purchase in SLCo that includes sales tax, one (1) penny of every $10 spent goes to ZAP, and all those pennies add up! ZAP provides grants to over 230 nonprofit organizations in the community, supporting a wide array of programming including events, classes, festivals, museums, and more. Funding also supports SLCo Parks & Recreation including recreation centers, parks, and open spaces.

For complete details of the ZAP program, process, and information, please refer to **Countywide Code 1031** (linked here and in the Appendix).

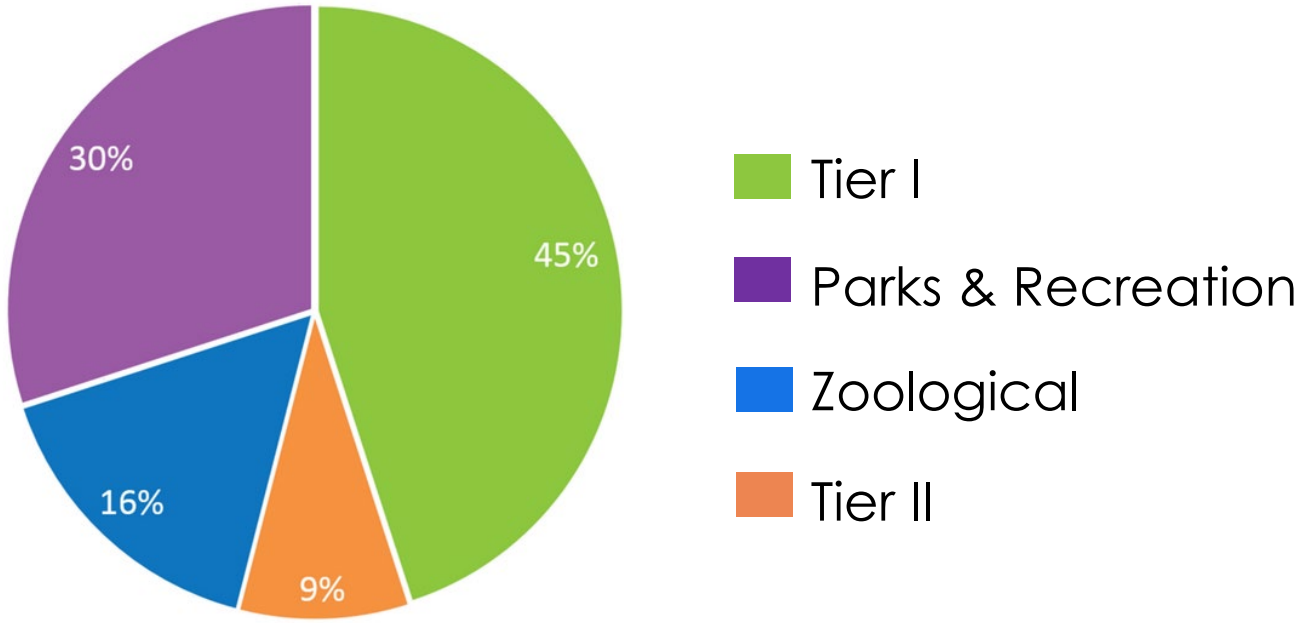
Grantmaking

ZAP is a publicly funded program that annually supports over 230 arts and cultural nonprofit organizations through grant funding. These grantees serve over 8 million visitors a year with nearly half attending free of charge. This funding goes to support programming including cultural events, educational programs, performances, festivals, museums, botanical gardens, and more.

ZAP offers three categories of grant funding including **Tier I**, **Tier II,** and **Zoological**. Grants are competitive and not guaranteed year-to-year and each category has its own eligibility requirements.

All eligible applications are reviewed by the ZAP Advisory Boards, which are composed of qualified volunteer community members. These members dedicate hundreds of hours to the process of reviewing each application submitted.

ZAP Funding Breakout



Grant Categories

Tier I

Provides funding for twenty-two (22) large cultural organizations.

- This funding is available to organizations with three-year average annual Qualifying Operating Expenditures (QEs) of $390,000, based upon certified audited financials.
- Organizations that receive Zoo, Arts & Parks funding in Tier I enhance economic development for the entire state, have professional staff, and often serve as ambassadors to Utah.
- Their activities are available to all SLCo and Utah residents and visitors.

Tier II

Not limited to a set number of awardees but annually receives over 200 applications.

- Tier II provides funding for diverse arts, cultural, historical, and botanical organizations not funded in Tier I, including the local arts and cultural councils in SLCo.
- Tier II organizations are instrumental in providing affordable access to arts and cultural opportunities in the community, are typically smaller in size, range from volunteer-led to paid staff, and represent all areas of the County.
- Tier II funded organizations have programs available to all SLCo and Utah residents and visitors.

Zoological

Provides funding for three (3) zoological organizations.

- This funding is available to organizations with three-year average annual Qualifying Operating Expenditures (QEs) of $390,000, based upon certified audited financials.
- This funding should be used to build organizational capacity, fund zoological facilities, to create stability and to provide adequate predictable support.
- Organizations that qualify for Zoological funding have headquarters and a significant presence in SLCo and serves an audience of 75,000 or more persons annually.

For complete details of the ZAP program, process, and information, please refer to **Countywide Code 1031** (linked here and in the Appendix).

TIER I+Z GRANT PROCESS & TIMELINE

In its entirety, the ZAP Tier I + Zoological (TI+Z) grant process takes approximately ten (10) months to complete from application opening to signed contracts. There are **six phases** in the process which include:

1. **Eligibility**
   - Before beginning a ZAP grant application, be sure to thoroughly review eligibility criteria, what ZAP funds can and cannot support, and to determine your organization's discipline.
2. **Application Workshop Webinar**
   - Attend or watch the recording of the TI+Z Grant Application Workshop Webinar prior to beginning a grant application. Many frequently asked questions are answered during the Webinar.
3. **Application**
   - Complete all components of the online application including narrative responses, QE worksheet, additional documentation upload, and Smartsheet Additional Data metrics.
4. **Review Process**
   - The review process includes an internal Administrative Staff assessment of eligibility and completeness; Advisory Board site-visit, application review, and funding recommendations; and SLCo Council review and approval.
5. **Contract and Payment Process**
   - Upon award notification, grantee will be required to sign a contract and update or register in PaymentWorks for receiving payments.
6. **Contractual Obligations**
   - Part of receiving ZAP grant funds includes requirements for ZAP recognition and possible site visits from Administrative Staff or Advisory Board members.

Each year the ZAP Tier I + Zoological Grant Application opens first business day of April and closes last business day of May.

2026 TIER I + ZOOLOGICAL APPLICATION DATES

Application opens Tuesday, April 1, 2025

Application deadline is Friday, May 30, 2025, 11:59PM

NO LATE APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED

1. ELIGIBILITY

TI+Z categories of applicants must meet these eligibility requirements:

- Must be a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization
- In order to be eligible for TI+Z funding, applicant must have either received Tier II funding for the previous 3 consecutive years or be a current Tier I or Zoological grant recipient.
- Must have a three-year average budget size of at least $390,000 Qualifying Operating Expenditures (QEs)
- Must have main office and manage and present activities within SLCo
    - A main office must be physical space available to the public.
- Three (3) years of audited financial statements
- Only activities held within SLCo may be funded
    - While applicant can have programming and activities which occur outside of SLCo, funds may only go toward those activities, events, and programming which occurs within SLCo.
- ALL activities for which applicant requests funding, must be publicly available and not restricted. Charging admission is ok of course, but the activity cannot be limited to certain segments of the population, (e.g., 21+ only events).
- Applicant's mission and primary focus must be arts, cultural, botanical or zoological in nature.
    - Applicant must have a preponderance of activities that are within their eligible disciplines and not just have some element of cultural, or botanical activities.
    - Zoological Only: Applicant definition of purpose of operation must mean the same as term is defined in the Statutory Act: Definitions of Zoological Organizations, Utah State Code 59-12-702 and, must be nationally or internationally accredited organization.
- Must fall within one of the established ZAP disciplines (see below).
- ZAP is not the sole or major source of funding for applicant.

Grants are competitive and NOT guaranteed year-to-year and applicants must apply annually. TI+Z funding awards are based on QEs after Advisory Board review and recommendation.

Eligible Disciplines

Architecture
- Historical preservation, service, and education

Arts and Cultural Festivals
- Festivals with a primary focus of curated arts and cultural disciplines and activities.
- This does not include state, local, or community fairs, or farmers markets.

Arts Education
- Performances for children/students
- Classroom or after-school instruction
- Teacher and artist training
- Service/information, and referrals

Botanical
- Study, research, and fostering the appreciation of plant life, including gardens, flowers, ornamental shrubs, trees, and horticulture

Must fulfill all three of the following activities:
  - Horticultural display
  - Botanical research
  - Community education

Dance
- Ballet, jazz, world (ethnic), modern, tap
- Dance service organization
- Dance training
- Historical/traditional
- Interdisciplinary

Folk Arts
- Defined as homegrown traditional artistic activities of groups sharing ethnic heritage, language, occupation, religion, or geographic area
- Community and/or family-based arts enduring through generations, showcasing community aesthetics and artistic excellence

  Includes:
  - Crafts
  - Stories/oral history
  - Traditional performing arts

Humanities
- Promotion and public education of philosophy, literature, languages, and art criticism (excluding theology, natural sciences, and social sciences)

  Includes:
  - Lecture series
  - Symposiums
  - Conferences

Interdisciplinary/ Performance Art
- An artistic hybrid, combining two or more disciplines within a single artwork or performance piece.

Literature
- Literary service organization
- Press, prose, poetry, fiction, or nonfiction.
- Magazines and Newspapers are ineligible.

Local Arts Agency
Arts/Cultural Council
- Municipal designated agencies or non-profit corporations responsible for supporting local arts and culture activities, including:
  - Presenting
  - Grant making
  - Planning
  - Placemaking activities
  - Community development through arts and culture
  - Marketing and public relations
  - Exhibitions and other artist programs

Media Arts
- Includes animation, digital media, graphic design, independent film, and multidisciplinary work within media arts
- Excludes radio, television broadcasting networks/stations, and cable communication systems

Disciplines Continued:

Multi-Disciplinary
Arts and Culture
- Organizations whose activities encompass two or more distinct disciplines (e.g. music and visual arts)

Music
- Blues, classical, contemporary/new music, historical/traditional, jazz, opera, world music, choral and other.

Natural History
- Plant and animal life
- Dinosaurs and fossils
- Rare gems, minerals, and meteorites
- Human evolution and cultures
- Origin of life
- Includes exhibitions about human beings, the earth, and the environment (excluding aeronautics, space exploration, and science/technology)
- Focus on public programs rather than academic research

Presenting Organizations
Arts and Culture
- Curate programs and arrange public performances to expand appreciation of diverse art forms and community interests
- Responsible for: Financial risk of performances, production, marketing, box office, venue, and house management tasks
- May commission new work and support artists
- Excludes farmers markets, local/regional/state fairs, and community celebrations

Theatre
- Classical/revival theater
- Contemporary/new work
- Musical theater

Visual Arts
Includes:
- Ceramics
- Digital art
- Gallery/exhibition spaces
- Mixed media
- Museums
- Painting/drawing
- Photography
- Printmaking
- Sculpture/three-dimensional art

Zoological
Facility/Park/Organization
- Primary purpose operation of: 1) a zoological park; 2) an aquarium; or 3) an aviary. Or a zoological facility/ park that is part of or integrated with a zoological park, aquarium facility or aviary.
- Must either be accredited by a national or international independent accrediting organization for zoos and/or aquariums.

Restrictions

State Statute, County Ordinance, and Countywide Policy outline specific restrictions on how ZAP funds can and cannot be used.

ZAP CANNOT Fund:

- Expenses NOT related to cultural, botanical, or zoological activities
- Performances, events, and activities that take place OUTSIDE SLCo
- Activities not available to the general public (e.g. university or college program organized primarily for student populations)
- Endowments, cash reserves, or saving account funds
- Accumulated deficits or debt retirement
- Capital improvements
- Fundraising expenses related to capital or endowment campaign.
- Lobbying expenses
- Scholarships, purchase of awards, cash, or prizes
- Public schools &/or school programs (K-12) or hiring of temporary or permanent staff in any school or school system
- Non-cultural celebratory activities (no parties)
- Re-granting, sub-granting, fellowships, and fiscal sponsorship
- Educational institution whose annual revenues are directly derived more than 50% from state funds
- Activities that are primarily religious in purpose or promote a religious viewpoint
- Magazines or newspapers
- Radio or television broadcasting network or stations, or cable communications systems
- Recreational, rehabilitative or therapeutic programs
- Social service programs
- Fireworks, Sister-city programs, rodeos, pageants, farmers markets
- Religious Proselytizing and non-cultural celebratory activities
- SLCo agencies (departments, offices or divisions). The ZAP program encourages County agencies and other ineligible organizations to collaborate with ZAP funded organizations (grantees) in supporting their mission.

Important: If your organization funds ANY of these activities, they CANNOT be funded by ZAP funds and cannot be included in your request. If your organization funds ANY of these activities, they MUST be backed out on your QE Worksheet. For more information on items that cannot be funded, please see the Non-Qualifying Definitions Tab in the QE Worksheet.

Eligible Expenses

ZAP DOES fund:

- General operating support
- Rent and utilities
- Staff salaries and artist fees
- Program supplies
- Equipment rentals (sound/lighting/set/etc.)
- Marketing expenses
- Script royalties
- Website maintenance
- Office supplies
- Equipment that is not capitalized

2. APPLICATION WORKSHOP WEBINAR

Prior to beginning a grant application, applicants must attend the virtual workshop or watch the recording of the TI+Z Grant Application Workshop Webinar. Updates from year-to-year will be covered in this workshop, as well as a review of the application questions and process. Many frequently asked questions are answered during the webinar.

This workshop is offered each year and applicants should plan to attend regardless of how many years they have received ZAP funding.

2026 Grant Application Workshop Webinar

This year the virtual workshop will be held on Thursday, April 3, 2025, 12:00 – 1:30PM

Visit **THIS LINK** to RSVP and receive the meeting link.
(https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/2586233cfc82420e98271252734d3b43)

A recording of the virtual workshop will be posted **HERE**:
https://www.saltlakecounty.gov/zap/apply-for-funds/tier-i-or-zoological-funding/

3. APPLICATION PROCESS

The TI+Z grant application process includes the submission of the Notice of Intent to Apply form, application narrative responses, QE Worksheet, as well as supplemental information. The application process is completed through two platforms, ZoomGrants (ZAP's online grant management software), and Smartsheet.

1. **Submit Notice of Intent to Apply form**
   - The Notice of Intent to Apply form will allow Applicant/Lead Reviewer pairing to occur as early as April instead of beginning in June, yielding more time for site visit and performance attendance opportunities.
2. **Update your ZoomGrants account**
3. **Complete the online application**
   I. Narrative responses
   II. Upload supplementary materials
   III. QE Worksheet
   IV. Additional Data Smartsheet metrics

Important Dates

Intent to Apply Opens: **Monday, March 3, 2025, 9:00AM**

Intent to Apply Closes: **Tuesday, April 1, 2025, 5:00PM**

Application Opens: **Tuesday, April 1, 2025, 9:00AM**

Application Webinar: **Thursday, April 3, 2025, 12:00-1:30PM**

Application Deadline: **Friday, May 30, 11:59PM**

1. Submit Notice of Intent to Apply Form

During each grantmaking cycle's review period, Lead Reviewers are assigned to get to know applicants and their offerings to the community. However, it has been a window of only about three-months time, over the summer months for such connecting. For the purpose of extending that timeframe, ZAP has created a new, very simple Intent to Apply form for the Tier I and Zoological categories.

Upon completing the Intent to Apply form, applicant will be notified of assigned Lead Reviewer in an introductory email. An April-September review period should increase opportunities for connection between the Lead Reviewer and applicant. The TI+Z Advisory Board's All-Day Review meeting will be held on September 25, 2025. This will allow nearly five-months review period.

To access the NOTICE OF INTENT TO APPLY FORM, visit:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XXBQKTM

If you have questions or would like to discuss your organization's funding eligibility with staff, please schedule a 30-minute technical support meeting with Samantha Thermos at: https://calendly.com/sthermos-slco/30min

2. ZoomGrants

1. Login into your account in ZoomGrants
    a. Link to ZoomGrants login: www.zoomgrants.com/login/
    b. It is recommended that you use an email that is not specific to a person, but to the position such as development@organization.org. This will keep your ZoomGrants account accessible to your organization in the case of staff turnover.
        i. While ZAP staff can link previous accounts to a new ZoomGrant account, it is a process that must go through ZoomGrants support and will take a few days to complete.
2. After you have logged in, start the new application.
    a. Click on the link below to create the application (This is a new link each year.) **https://bit.ly/4I36DPI**
3. Once you have created the new application, it can be found in your ZoomGrants dashboard. It will remain there even if you log out of ZoomGrants and is accessible to edit and make changes to up until the deadline.

ZoomGrants Terminology and Tips

Application Contact/ Account

- "Owns" the application
- Can view and edit every section
- Is the only account holder that can invite Collaborators to participate in the application's completion.

Collaborators

- Must be invited to the application by the "Owner/Application Contact"
- Can only view and/or edit the tabs Application Contact has given them permission
- Once invited and given viewing/editing privileges, the application will show up on the Collaborator's application list at login.
- Viewing and editing access for Collaborators can be found under the Summary tab

Video Clip (Optional)

- For a video window to appear in ZoomGrants, you can paste embedded code in the Optional Video box at the top of the Application Questions page.
    - This is not a URL, it is a specific code that creates the video window.
- To paste an embedded code, your video first must be uploaded to a video streaming service (Youtube or Vimeo are easiest).
- For most videos, embedded codes are under a "Share" button on your video's page.

Troubleshooting

- "White List" (or add as a safe sender) Notices@Zoomgrants.com

- It is recommended that you work on your responses on an outside document, such as Word or Pages, and then copy and paste your answers into ZoomGrants once you have finished the narrative responses.
- You should have access to previous years' applications. Contact ZAP if you do not.
- Chrome seems to be the best browser for this platform, and we recommend using it.
- Be sure to save a PDF of the application – outside ZoomGrants to avoid losing info.

3. Complete the Online Application

Completing and submitting a ZAP TI+Z grant application consists of four steps:

I. **Narrative responses**
II. **Upload supplementary materials**
III. **QE Worksheet**
IV. **Additional Data Smartsheet metrics**

I. Narrative Responses

A COPY OF THE APPLICATION QUESTIONS IS INCLUDED IN THE APPENDIX.

- Each question on the application is accompanied by help language as well as the character count for that response.

II. Upload Supplementary Materials

Required for All Applicants

- Microsoft Excel QE Worksheet
- 2024 Audit
- 2023 Audit
- 2022 Audit
- Auditor's Peer Review Letter:
    - This is a letter from the reviewer of your auditor. Your auditor will have a copy of this letter on file.
- Organization Chart
- Board List
    - The board list should denote members who are executive board members, include names, term expiration, SLCo Council District they reside in, and what skills/expertise that the member brings to your board.
    - **SAMPLE BOARD ROSTER IN APPENDIX**
- Current Season Brochure
- Verification of Use: NowPlayingUtah (NPU) for promotion of events.
    - Please LINK to your past events page on NPU.
- Verification of Acknowledgement:
    - Samples on how you acknowledge/use the ZAP logo.
- One-page executive summary of your organization.
    - Think of this as a one-page resume for your organization highlighting major programs.

Strongly Encouraged

- Visual documentation that will enhance your application.
    - Maximum of 3, two-minute videos or audio clips. Up to 8 images.

- May upload more than one link or document in this section. These may be submitted after the deadline.

Optional

- Annual report, annual POPS or iSee report, etc.
- List of partners

III. Qualifying Expenditures (QE) Worksheet

The purpose of the QE Worksheet is for ZAP's CPA to perform Financial Health Tests against the organization's financials and to calculate final QEs amounts for each organization. The QE Worksheet includes 12 tabs, four for providing instructions and definitions for completing the worksheets, four for entering your organization's necessary financial information and two optional tabs for explaining, if applicable, additional information requiring further details.

QE WORKSHEET CAN BE DOWNLOADED FROM RESOUCRES TAB IN ZOOMGRANTS APPLICATION

Helpful Instructions & Definitions

1. **2026 Instructions:** Qualifying Expenditures Excel Worksheet Instructions
   - Please complete the Qualifying Expenditure Excel Worksheets and include clarifying notes. Your QE Worksheet should reconcile to your audited financial statements; if not, you must clearly explain.
   - If expenditures or revenues rise or fall more than 20% from one year to another, provide a detailed explanation on the QE Worksheet. Use the additional explanation sheet in the QE Worksheet if your explanation will not fit in the space provided.
2. **Definitions:** Definitions and Instructions for Completing the Qualifying Expenditure & Summary Worksheets
3. **Non-Qualifying Definitions:** Definitions for Non-Qualifying Expenditures
   - SLCo has deemed certain expenses as non-qualifying for purposes of determining minimum QEs and ZAP fund allocation. It is not the intent that amounts for Non-Qualifying Operating Expenses will zero out your Total Operating Expense.
4. **Summary Page Definitions:** Revenue Summary and QEs Summary Page
   - Revenue Summary: ZAP seeks to gain a better understanding of your organization through a review of your revenue. Please follow the definitions. Total revenue should agree to total revenue on the statement of activities in the applicant's audited financial statements. If it does not, then reconciling schedule should be presented in the Reconciliations Tab.
   - Summary of Qualifying Expenditures: Some items on the summary page are automatically placed in this page, calculating your average qualifying expenditures for three years. This formula is protected and you are not able to alter the formula.

Needed Financial Information

1. **2024-2022 Fiscal Years:** Each of the three most recent consecutive Fiscal Year's Expenses
   - If you are a current grantee and received a CPA REVISED QE Worksheet for last year, you'll need to use the CPA REVISED QE Worksheet as your starting point for this year's 2026 QE Worksheet.

2. **Summary: Revenue Summary and Summary of QEs**
    - Revenue Summary: Should match total revenue in financial statements. If not, present a reconciling schedule.
    - Summary of QEs: If your total expenditures or revenues have increased or decreased by 20% from last year, explain why.
3. **Actual-Use:** This information indicates how your organization utilized your ZAP 2023 funding. This number should be the amount documented in your April 2024 letter with the final reconciled funding amount.
    - It is acceptable for ZAP funds to be used for general operating expenditures.
    - In this sheet, there is a column that allows to show how ZAP funds were spent by your organization.
4. **Cap Calculations:** Expect to provided Salary, Rent, GiftShop/Concessions, Royalties and Commissions calculations.
    - You can use your own format if you have one in place.

Needed Financial Information (If Applicable)

1. **Reconciliations:** Use this sheet to reconcile your financial statements with the amounts listed on your 2024 Worksheet Tab ONLY IF THE TWO DON'T AGREE.
2. **Explanations:** Providing explanations for any miscellaneous expenditures/income is greatly appreciated and incredibly helpful to the review process.

IV. Additional Data Smartsheet Metrics

Part of the ZAP TI+Z application asks you to submit additional data on an external platform.

To access the Smartsheet Form, visit: https://bit.ly/3Rpv9No

You will need the following data from your MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED FISCAL YEAR. Number of:

- Full and part-time employees
- Contractors
- Volunteers (all of which cannot overlap)
- Events in SLCo
- Audience numbers (in SLCo) and which were free
- Governing Board geographic representation, terms and meeting cadence

THIS ONLINE FORM CANNOT BE SAVED: Unfortunately, you cannot save this form and return later to complete it. If you are working on this form over time, we recommend saving your answers in an outside document and returning to this form when you are able to provide all information.

To help with this, you can find the **ADDITIONAL DATA WORKSHEET QUESTIONS IN THE APPENDIX** as well as a link to SLCo's Council District Interactive Map.

AFTER SUBMITTING THIS FORM: Please return to your ZAP 2026 TI+Z application in ZoomGrants and click the "I certify I have submitted the Additional Data form via Smartsheet," checkbox (Question #15) before continuing with your application.

4. REVIEW PROCESS

Annually, the Tier I category receives 45% of the overall ZAP tax revenues for twenty-two (22) Tier I organizations and 16% for the Zoological category with three (3) zoological organizations. As of 2025, this amount was approximately $20.1 million for the 25 approved grant awards. TI+Z grants are by nature competitive and awarded primarily based upon:

I. Funding availability
II. Merit of the application:
    - Five weighted scoring criteria categories (outlined below in Advisory Board Review section)
III. Applicant's funding history with ZAP

Funding is not guaranteed year-to-year. ZAP prioritizes funding for organizations who: have diversified funding, can demonstrate strong connection and commitment to the community and exhibit a substantial, proven track record and a stable history.

All applications submitted by the deadline will go through a three-step process.

1. **ZAP Administrative Staff Review**
2. **Tier I (+Zoological) Advisory Board Review**

(Tier I Advisory Board oversees the Zoological category as well as TI category.)

a. Lead Reviewer Scoring
b. Site-Visit by Lead Reviewer(s)
c. All-Day Review: Final Deliberations – Financial Reviews, Application Scoring & Funding Recommendations Finalized
    - TI+Z Advisory Board does not make funding amount recommendations. Funding Amounts are determined by formula based on QEs.

3. **SLCo Council Review and Approval**

1. ZAP Administrative Staff Review

Every application submitted by the deadline will be reviewed by ZAP Administrative Staff (ZAP staff) to ensure that the application is eligible and complete. Missing or inaccurate information or documentation provided by applicant in the ZoomGrants ZAP TI+Z Grant Application, can be grounds for ineligible or decline status. Ineligible and declined applicants will be notified by ZAP staff.

2. Tier I (+Zoological) Advisory Board Review

Review of Application

The review of an application includes Lead Reviewer scores and notes as well as all other Advisory Board member scores. An independent CPA firm reviews financial statements, peer review letters and performs a **Financial Health Test (a copy can be found in the Appendix).** The CPA firm will provide financial observations, notes and requested fixes to ZAP staff, the Advisory Board, and applicants. Applicants will receive CPA notes and fixes through a ZoomGrants email after County Council has approved funding recommendations.

Lead Reviewers
The TI+Z Advisory Board will review applications and accompanying materials. All eligible TI+Z grant applications will be reviewed and scored by all TI+Z Advisory Board members. Additionally, all eligible applications are assigned an Advisory Board member who serves as Lead Reviewer. Board members are assigned as Lead Reviewers to focus on each application deliberately and specifically.

Site Visits
Site Visits are opportunities for Advisory Board members to engage with applicants on a deeper level of learning and understanding of how each organization fulfills their purpose, communities served, recent changes, and areas of growth or concern. Visiting Advisory Board Lead Reviewers are ambassadors of the ZAP program during this time. Their visit is an opportunity to experience services provided to the community, and in particular should be used to assess consistency between the application and the Lead Reviewer's own observations and experiences.

These are on-site meetings between the applicant's assigned Lead Reviewer and several organizational representatives.

What to expect from a Site Visit?

- Site visits should be viewed as a fact-finding mission and a chance to observe the organization, their board, and their events as a resident of SLCo.
- Providing a guided tours of applicant venues, offices, facilities and/or parks are highly recommended.
- Questions by Lead Reviewers range in scope to identify how the organization is complying with the five weighted scoring categories of: Artistic/Cultural/Zoological Vibrancy, Governing Board, Public Benefit/Outreach, Management & Organizational Capacity/Stability, and Financial Health.
    - Advisory Board Lead Reviewer may ask questions about responses submitted in the ZAP TI+Z grant application. This is an opportunity to provide additional detail or clarity to narrative questions in the application.

Who should participate in Site Visits?

- The Advisory Board Lead Reviewer will be the sole ZAP representative. However, on occasion, Lead Reviewers may bring a fellow Advisory Board member with them for training purposes.
- Applicant's Executive Director
- Applicant's Development Director, grant manage or equivalent staff member as someone who can speak to the contents of the submitted application.
- Financial and/or marketing/communications representatives depending on what your organization plans to share with the Lead Reviewer.

Tier I + Zoological All-Day Review Deliberations

Utah Open Meetings Act
All ZAP Advisory Board meetings are open meetings and therefore a matter of public record. The purpose of the Utah Open Meetings Act is to ensure public bodies conduct business, take actions, and conduct deliberations openly. The TI+Z Advisory Board is considered a public body and must comply with the Act. All Advisory Board meetings must be open to the public unless they are closed for an allowable reason. Business conducted by the ZAP program

generally does not meet the criteria to close meetings. Meeting minutes and recorded audio can be Government Records Access and Management Act (GRAMA) requested by the media and public.

Synthesis And Sharing
Lead Reviewers present their overview of the applicant in a manner that allows other Board members to review their score objectively. We ask Lead Reviewer Advisory Board members to approach this as a mini-SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats). After the Lead Reviewer provides their mini-SWOT analysis, other Board members provide their input and experience (if any) with the applicant organization.

Relevance of Information During Review
If an Advisory Board member has information regarding an applicant that is not public knowledge, it will not be shared in the ZAP application review process. The scoring of ZAP applications must be completed based on application materials, event attendance, online presence, and public knowledge.

Board Roles and Responsibilities

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. The Advisory Board relies upon the experience, knowledge, and expertise of its fellow members.
2. The Advisory Board provides an equitable, unbiased review for each applicant based on scoring criteria and program data.
3. The Advisory Board does not interfere with the content of applicant programming.
4. The Advisory Board remains objective when making funding decisions and is active in identifying and correcting potential biases.
5. From Countywide Policy 1031: "The ZAP program does not deal in hearsay."
6. The Advisory Board discloses conflicts of interest and refrains from acts prohibited by County conflict of interest policy.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- Application information is not public until the SLCo Council finalizes the Advisory Board recommendations.
- ZAP staff inform all organizations of their funding decisions at the same time.
- Board members must protect the confidentiality of applications, Board discussions, and funding decisions.
- Board members may not share protected information from an application (board contact information, financial health analysis, etc.).

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Score and Funding Recommendations

Scoring Review Criteria
The TI+Z Advisory Board review applications based on five weighted categories:

1. **Artistic/Cultural/Zoological Vibrancy - 30%**
    a. This includes review of:
        i. Eligibility Q1, Q7
        ii. Application Q2

iii. Optional documents and videos

2. **Governing Board - 20%**
    a. This includes the review of:
        i. Eligibility Q3
        ii. Application Q6, Q7
        iii. Additional Data Metrics form
        iv. Optional documents
3. **Public Benefit & Outreach - 20%**
    a. This includes the review of:
        i. Application Q3, Q4, Q5
        ii. Additional Data Metrics form
        iii. Optional documents
4. **Management & Organizational Capacity/Stability - 15%**
    a. This includes the review of:
        i. Eligibility Q3
        ii. Application Q8, Q9, Q12, Q13, Q14
        iii. Optional documents
5. **Financial Health - 15%**
    a. This includes the review of:
        i. Application Q10, Q11
        ii. Financials + QE = Financial Health Tests

Each category is scored. Scores can range from 0 (low score) to 7 (high score). Scores for each assessment category are collected from individual Board members. Each organization's category scores and cumulative total are reported back to them during the award notification process after County Council approval.

Artistic / Cultural / Zoological Vibrancy (30%)

- Engages qualified and diverse arts/cultural professionals
- Inspires and contributes to vibrant/energetic cultural community in SLCo
- Supports work that has high merit and connects with the audience

Note: What constitutes artistic vibrancy may vary in relation to the organization's mission, audience, and community

Governing Board (20%)

- Clearly demonstrates the organization is well managed and stable
- Has an engaged, active, and qualified staff and volunteers
- Demonstrates diverse funding sources
- Sets clear, realistic goals and measures progress
- Clearly demonstrates the ability to implement programs and operations

Public Benefit & Outreach (20%)

- Clearly demonstrates the organization understands and serves its community
- Identifies and engages with underserved populations
- Demonstrates meaningful relationships with other stakeholders
- Demonstrates strong partnerships with other art and cultural agencies
- Is open to the public and welcomes all

Management & Organizational Capacity / Stability (15%)

- Has an engaged, active, and qualified Board based on Lead Reviewer's site visit/attendance at board meeting as well as responses in the application
- Demonstrates diversity (ethnic, socio-economic, gender, geography, etc.)
- Ensures organization has the resources necessary for its operations

Financial Health (15%)

- Based on the ZAP CPA's assessment of applicant financials
- An applicant with exceptional Financial Health has passed all the Financial Health Test Criteria in the last three years
- A Financial Health Test score below a 5 is considered a failure (scale of 0-7). Organizations should pass the ZAP program's minimum financial health criteria on a regular basis.

Score	Rank	Rank description
7	Exceptional	• The applicant provides *overwhelming* evidence throughout the application that demonstrates *all* funding criteria are met. • The application is clear, well-articulated, and appropriate. • The financial statements pass all the FH criteria • Goals and plans are realistic, and comprehensive. • The applicant documents their activities are of the highest quality, highly relevant, and lead to a deeper understanding of the organization and its operations.
6	Strong	• The applicant provides *clear* evidence throughout the application that demonstrates funding criteria are met. • The application is clear, well-articulated and appropriate. • The applicant documents their activities are of high quality, relevant, and lead to a deeper understanding of the organization and its organization.
5	Good	• The applicant provides *sufficient* evidence throughout the application that demonstrates funding criteria are met. • The application is clear and appropriate. • The applicant documents their activities are of good quality, relevant, and lead to a deeper understanding of the organization and its operations.
4	Adequate	• The applicant provides *adequate* evidence throughout the application that demonstrates funding criteria are met. • The application is modest. • The applicant documents their activities are of average quality, somewhat relevant, and lead to a an adequate understanding of the organization and its operations.
3	Fair	• The applicant provides *limited* evidence throughout the application that demonstrates funding criteria are met. • The application is appropriate but with limited detail. • The applicant provides limited documentation of the quality of activities and operations.

2	Weak	• The applicant provides *weak* evidence throughout the application that demonstrates funding criteria are met. • The application is appropriate but with limited detail. • The applicant provides *poor* documentation of the quality of activities.
1	Meager	• The applicant provides *very limited* evidence in the application that demonstrates funding criteria are met. • The plans lack detail and are hard to understand. • Information documenting the quality of activities is insufficient and/or of poor quality.
0	Non-competitive	The applicant provides *insufficient* information and does not meet the minimum criteria for review.

What makes an application exceptional? An application which demonstrates exceptional Artistic/Cultural/Zoological Vibrancy:

- Engages qualified and diverse arts/cultural professionals
- Inspires and contributes to vibrant/energetic cultural community in SLCo
- Provides unique, impressive, and noteworthy contributions to its field
- Supports work that has high merit

An application which demonstrates an exceptional Governing Board:

- Has an engaged, active, and qualified Board
- Demonstrates diversity (ethnic, socio-economic, gender, geography, etc.)
- Evaluates the performance of executive staff
- Ensures organization has the resources necessary for its operations

An application which demonstrates an exceptional Public Benefit/Outreach:

- Clearly demonstrates the organization understands, works with, and serves its community
- Connects with target audience
- Makes an effort to also reach out to underserved populations
- Demonstrates meaningful relationships with other stakeholders
- Demonstrates strong partnerships with other art & cultural agencies
- Is open to the public and welcomes all

An application which demonstrates exceptional Management & Organizational Capacity/Stability:

- Clearly demonstrates the organization is well managed and stable
- Has an engaged, active, and qualified staff and volunteers
- Demonstrates diverse funding sources
- Sets clear, realistic goals and measures progress
- Clearly demonstrates the ability to implement programs and operations

An application which demonstrates an exceptional Financial Health:

- Has passed all the Financial Health Criteria in the last three years
- Financial Health will be scored as follows:

Financial Health Scoring

Description	Score	Current	Last Year	Previous Year
Exceptional	7	Passed all tests	Passed all tests	Passed all tests
Strong	6	Passed all tests	Passed the FHT	Failed one or more
Good	5	Failed one test	Passed	
Adequate	4	Failed one test	Failed the FHT	
Fair	3	Failed two tests wo/Going Concern		
Weak	2	Going Concern language		
Insufficient	1	Going Concern language and failed 3		
Non-competitive	0	Going Concern language and failed 4 or more		

Funding Recommendations

At the end of the All-Day Review meeting, the TI+Z Advisory Board will make recommendations on which twenty-two (22) organizations and three (3) zoological organizations will receive funding. Funding award amounts are calculated based on a formula of each organization's qualifying expenses. Grantees will be notified of the projected award amount in June of the following year.

3. SLCo Council Review and Approval

Formal County Approval Process

- The TI+Z Advisory Board shall review all eligible applications and accompanying materials. After careful review and deliberation, and based upon the submitted application and accompanying information, the Advisory Board shall submit a written recommendation to the County Council identifying the organizations selected by the Advisory Board to receive ZAP funding and the recommended amount and/or percentage of ZAP funds to be distributed to each.
- ZAP Administrative Staff and TI+Z Advisory Board Chair or Vice Chair present the Advisory Board's final funding recommendations to County Council for final approval at a public meeting in approximately October of each year.

Notification Process

- Preliminary approval notifications will be sent out to applicants after the TI+Z Advisory Board has made its final funding recommendations. These notifications are courtesy, they are not final grant award approvals.
- Upon approval from County Council, the ZAP team will send a second notification of final funding status to all applicants. Approved applicants will receive information on how to accept their funding award through an annual contracting process and how to receive award payments through the County's third-party payment system, PaymentWorks.
    - Ineligible and declined applicants, if determined disqualified or denied funding, information will be provided as to why the disqualification or denial occurred.

Appeal Process
TI+Z funds are not an entitlement, and the filing of an application for TI+Z funds, no matter how complete or comprehensive, is not a guarantee that funds will be awarded. TI+Z funds are awarded as competitive grants, based on merit and the availability of funds, which may vary from year to year.

Denial of funding or funding at a lower level than anticipated or desired is not a justification for an appeal, nor should it be construed as a judgment on the particular merits of a specific organization or applicant. Applicants are encouraged to consult ZAP staff if they have questions about completing the application or the application procedure.

The recommendations of the TI+Z Advisory Board is not subject to appeal or reconsideration by the TI+Z Advisory Board. However, TI+Z organizations may appeal the TI+Z Advisory Board recommendation to the County Council by submitting a written statement directly to the County Council no later than ten (10) business days after notification of the TI+Z Advisory Board's decision. The written statement shall specify the grounds for appeal and be accompanied by evidence supporting the grounds for appeal.

For complete details on the ZAP program, process, and information, please refer to **Countywide Code 1031** (linked here and in the Appendix).

5. CONTRACT AND PAYMENT PROCESS

If your organization is approved for funding, your organization must

1. **Sign Funding Contract with SLCo through ZoomGrants**
2. **Enter or update information for payment processing through PaymentWorks**

Each year ZAP staff will host a TI+Z Contract Workshop Webinar. This virtual workshop will walk grantees through the contract signing process and payment processing portal. The workshop recording will also be made available on ZAP's website.

1. Sign Funding Contract with SLCo through ZoomGrants

Funding contracts will be made available in ZoomGrants to sign. The signing deadline each year will be prior to the Thanksgiving holiday. All award contracts are signed through ZoomGrants unless your organization is part of a municipality.

A SAMPLE CONTRACT CAN BE FOUND IN THE APPENDIX.

Use of Funds:

- If you cannot use your funds the way you detailed in your application, you must contact ZAP staff.
    - The numbers/explanations should support the figures provided in the "Actual-Use" Tab in the 2026 QE Worksheet.
- Funds given in the year you applied must be expended by December 31 of the following year or returned to SLCo.
    - ZAP funding awards are expected to be spent within the 12-month period you indicated in your application. If this changes, please contact ZAP staff.

2. Enter or update information for payment processing through PaymentWorks

PaymentWorks is SLCo's Vendor Management System. In order to receive ZAP award payments, all organizations must be registered in this system. Registering in PaymentWorks only needs to occur once, not annually. If you are a new grantee, you will be sent an invitation link to register after TI+Z funding recommendations have been approved by County Council. If you are a returning grantee, you will not need to complete this step. **However, if you change billing addresses, banking institutions, account numbers, etc. you will need to make those updates in PaymentWorks**.

PaymentWorks is a third-party operator. The County does not provide technical assistance for the registration process nor for updating your account information. Simply click on the invitation link and follow the instructions to register your organization's financial institution and contact person information. At each step in the registration process, PaymentWorks provides a status email of what they have received and what they are working on. For assistance with these processes, organizations can turn in a service order ticket through PaymentWorks website. There is not a customer service phone number available.

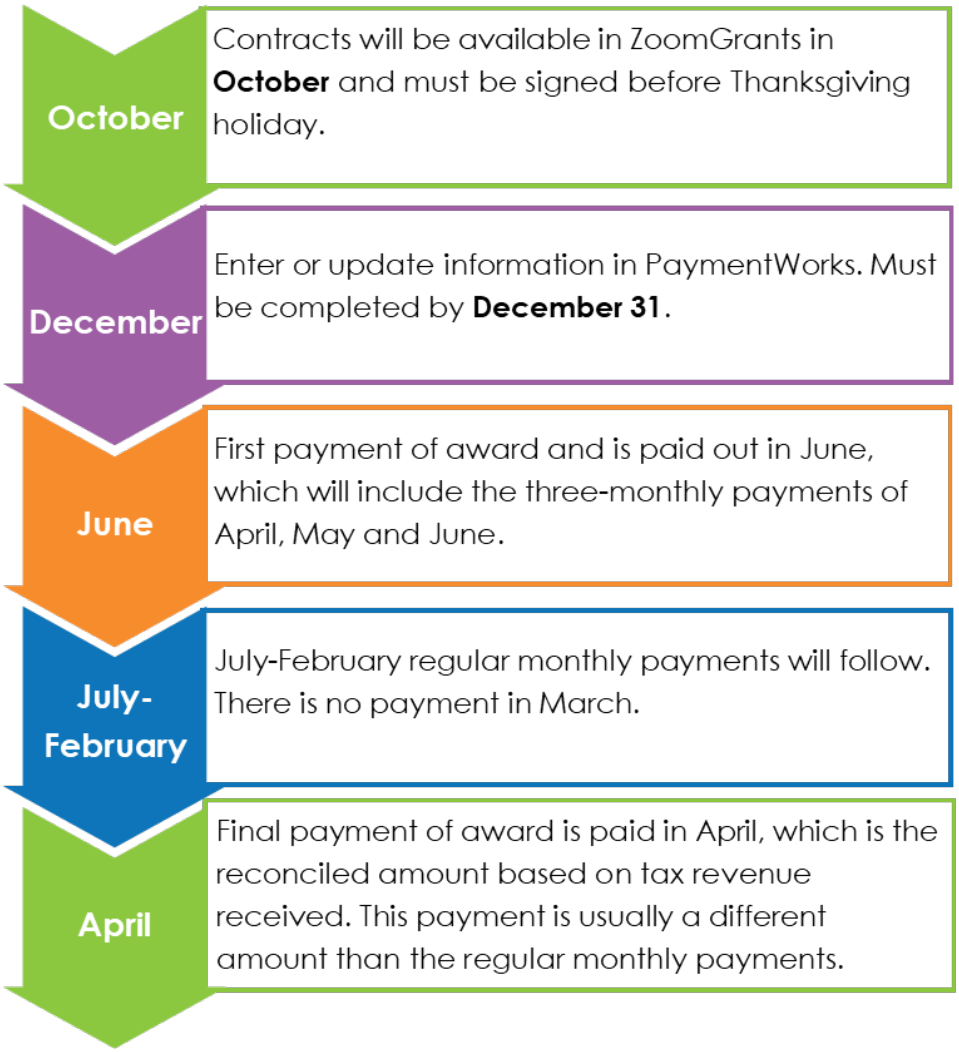
Public Funding:
ZAP grant funds are considered public funds. You must maintain records of how these funds are used. The County may audit your use of funds as necessary.

Additionally, your submitted application form is considered public record. You will be notified if someone requests a copy of your application materials ZAP staff will let you know.

Insurance:
As a recipient of ZAP funds, it is expected that you maintain reasonable and appropriate insurance in accordance with industry standards. The ZAP program does not dictate what this might be, you should know what this is and to have the appropriate level of insurance required for your organization or event.

Distribution of Grant Funds
Grantee must complete the two steps above (sign contract and register in PaymentWorks) before grant funds can be disbursed. Grant funds are disbursed in monthly payments:

- First payment of award is paid in June, which will include the three-monthly payments of April, May and June.
- July-February regular monthly payments will follow. There is no payment in March.
- Final payment of award is paid in April, which is the reconciled amount based on tax revenue received. This payment is usually a different amount than the regular monthly payments.



6. CONTRACTAL OBLIGATIONS

If awarded funds, grantee must follow contractual obligations, which each grantee must review before signing. This section is not a comprehensive list of agreements (recipient required responsibilities) within the ZAP Funding Contract, but some we wish to highlight as important aspects of acknowledgement and appreciation of the ZAP program.

1. ZAP Acknowledgement and Thank You

ZAP grantees are contractually obligated to acknowledge ZAP in promotion of the activities/programs that ZAP funds support.

This should be done:

- On your organization's website
- On written and printed assets, such as playbills, brochures, appropriate advertisements, flyers, banners, websites, and newsletters
- As an announcement from a stage, in media releases, on supertitles, pre-event videos, etc.

ZAP Administrative Staff and Advisory Board members will periodically audit the use of the ZAP logo to ensure it is being utilized in compliance with the logo usage standards outlined in the Contract Media Obligations guide.

LINK TO CONTRACT MEDIA OBLIGATIONS GUIDE CAN BE FOUND IN THE APPENDIX

2. Invite SLCo to Your Activities/Events

The ZAP program encourages grantees to provide free tickets and/or invitations to the SLCo at least once per year so that members of the applicable Advisory Board, elected officials, and ZAP staff may evaluate the applicant and the merits of its programs and activities. Advisory Board members and ZAP staff are encouraged to attend free events whenever possible.

Inviting Advisory Board members, elected officials, and ZAP staff to your activities is a welcoming opportunity for them to learn about your organization in an experiential way. Additionally, while attending your activities, many ZAP representatives enjoy meeting applicant staff and performers and interacting with fellow audience members.

Invitation Form to invite SLCo to your ZAP funded event (also in Appendix)

3. Now Playing Utah

If awarded, grantee organizations agree to use the http://www.nowplayingutah.com (NPU) website to promote its events. This arts and cultural calendar has been created by the ZAP program, Utah Division of Arts and Museums, and Visit Salt Lake in order to benefit Utah's arts and cultural community and individuals interested in attending arts and cultural events. Grantees shall provide its publicity materials to NPU in a timely manner and shall promote the NPU website among its constituents, patrons, audiences, etc., including linking to NPU from grantee's website. Grantee also agrees to list artist profiles on NPU, if applicable.

4. Press Releases and Public Relations Materials

Awarded grantees agree to provide the SLCo with press releases and other public relations material designed to promote grantee's programs and projects. Submission by email is preferred at PRZAP@slco.org.

ZAP CONTACT INFORMATION

Salt Lake County Zoo, Arts & Parks

saltlakecounty.gov/zap

Mailing Address
Mid-Valley Performing Arts Center
2525 Taylorsville Blvd.
Taylorsville, Utah 84129

Hours
Monday through Friday
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Samantha Thermos
ZAP Program Director
sthermos@slco.org
(385) 468-7057

Cody Goetz
Grants and Communications Coordinator
cgoetz@slco.org

Kelsey Ellis
Impact Program Manager
kmellis@slco.org
(385) 468-2593

APPENDIX

2026

DOCUMENTS:

- **2026 Tier I + Zoological Application Questions**
  - **QE WORKSHEET CAN BE DOWNLOADED FROM RESOUCRES TAB IN ZOOMGRANTS APPLICATION**

- **Financial Health Test**

- **2026 Tier I + Zoological Additional Data Metrics**

- **Sample Board Roster**

- **Sample Tier I Funding Contract**

- **Sample Zoological Funding Contract**

LINKS:

- **ZAP 1031 Countywide Policy**
  https://bit.ly/4btkRVN

- **Salt Lake County Council District Interactive Map**
  https://bit.ly/41CT2qA

- **ZAP Contract Media Obligations Guide**
  https://bit.ly/43o63FM

- **Invite Board Members and Elected Officials to your ZAP Funded Event**
  https://bit.ly/3D0Lhl9