

2024 Wine Industry Report Action Plan

	Recommendation	Potential Leaders & Partners	Potential Funding Sources	Priority	Timeline	Est. Cost
1	Industry Coalition – Virginia Wine Institute: Create a coalition of industry professionals and support organizations to meet regularly for two years to drive the initiatives outlined in the Wine Cluster Up Planning Grant report and catalyze coordination between private sector needs and public/private resources to provide educational opportunities that support expansion into the traded sector.	Virginia Wineries Association, Virginia Vineyards Association, Winemakers Research Exchange, VA Wine Marketing Office, Small Business Development Center, Destination Marketing Offices, Virginia Tourism Corporation, Piedmont VA Community College, winery owners, wine trade professionals, and other private sector leaders	GO Virginia, private sector partnerships	High	2 Years	\$125,000
2	Contract with professional to support implementation of report recommendations and action plan	Private sector consultant	Go Virginia, VA Wine Board	High	Ongoing	
3	VA Wine Certification Program - Develop an accessible, online Virginia wine certification program available to Tasting Room staff, wine trade, and consumers, with targeting marketing throughout Virginia, Washington D.C., New York, and beyond, giving them talking point and confidence to direct consumers to purchase the region's wines.	Virginia Wineries Association, Piedmont VA Community College, Private sector consultant	VA Wine Board, GO Virginia, industry coalition, private sector partnerships	High	1 Year	\$260,000

4	Hidden Gems Wine Trail - Establish a “Hidden Gems Wine Trail” showcasing wineries which produce fewer than 2,500 cases. This will provide a much-needed spotlight to the 58% of the region’s wineries at this production level.	VA Wine Marketing Office	VA Wine Board, Virginia Tourism Corporation	Medium	1 Year	
5	Consultation with Business Services - Arrange for free or low-cost consultation sessions for the region’s wineries with local businesses identified as leaders in label and packaging design, branding, marketing, and website development.	Industry coalition		High	1 Year	
6	Resource Directory Expansion - Curate, maintain, and actively market a comprehensive guide of available resources and programs which can serve vineyards and wineries in the region.	Industry coalition		High	3 Months	
7	Gold Medal Wine Shipping - Support Governor’s Cup Competition Gold Medal winning wineries who can opt into a marketing program which will connect their wines with various influencers.	Destination marketing offices, Virginia Tourism Corporation	Virginia Tourism Corporation, Localities	Medium	6 Months	\$5,000
8	Secret Shopper Program - Develop a targeted secret shopper program which	Industry coalition	VA Wine Board	High	1 Year	\$15,000

	will provide valuable feedback and supply action items to owners and managers regarding every aspect of the guest experience.					
9	Consumer Focus Group - Fund consumer focus groups in target markets to solicit anonymous feedback on perception of Virginia wine quality, wine style, packaging, branding, pricing, etc.	Industry coalition	VA Wine Board, GO Virginia	High	1 Year	\$20,000
10	VWDC Review - Undertake an extensive feasibility study on the potential of expanding the VWDC to offer full-service distribution, sales team, and logistics, akin to a traditional distribution company, thus helping more Virginia wines make it to the traded sector.	Industry coalition	VA Wine Board, Private sector contributions	High	2 Years	\$75,000
11	VA Wine Roadshow - Fund and organize "Virginia Wine Roadshows", inspired by successful efforts organized by the Willamette Valley and Finger Lakes (i.e. Finger Lakes Wine Alliance FLX Roadshow) wine regions, which bring Virginia winemakers and their wines to out-of-state buyers in target markets.	Industry coalition	VA Wine Board, GO Virginia	High	1 Year	\$15,000

12	VA ABC Store Placement - Call on industry leaders with the Virginia Wineries Association and the Virginia Wine Board to engage directly with the Virginia ABC regarding this issue.	VA Wine Board, Virginia Wineries Association		Low	Ongoing	
13	Equipment Sharing Coop - The region may be interested in seeking out recommendations about the possibility of establishing a “sunbelt equipment rental style” entity which could allow for the rented use or fractional ownership of certain expensive pieces of vineyard and winery equipment.	TBD		Low		
14	Industry Speaker Series - Establish and fund a twice annual speaker series with the intentional focus of bringing in outside industry experts to discuss topics which cover grape growing, winemaking, and the business and marketing of wine.	Industry coalition, Piedmont Virginia Community College	VA Wine Board	Medium	Ongoing	\$12,000
15	Sustainability Partnership - Support an organization of growers in the region who will work to define and establish best practices for increased sustainability in the vineyard and winery. This will not only serve the environment	Regional winemaking leaders under the administration of the coalition: Matthieu Finot, Damien Blanchon, Jess Trapeni, et al.	VA Wine Board	High	Ongoing	\$10,000

	well but will also make the region's wines more attractive to consumers increasingly looking for sustainably produced wines, particularly in target markets such as Washington D.C and New York City.					
16	Workforce Development – Support investment in more robust workforce development programs with partners from community colleges and other colleges and universities. Additional education will not only support stronger operations in the vineyard and winery, but business and marketing focused education will support increased success of expanding in the traded sector.	Piedmont Virginia Community College, University of Virginia, industry coalition	PVCC	High	Ongoing	
17	Support Internship Opportunities – Support connecting vineyards and wineries with financial incentives for hiring of untrained interns and offer the opportunity to gain experiences in various areas of the business.	Virginia Wineries Association, Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership (VTOP), industry coalition	VTOP	High	Ongoing	
18	Educational Trips - Subsidize visits to the region by connecting with high performing wine professionals working	VA Wine Marketing Office, industry coalition	VA Wine Board	Medium	Ongoing	\$15,000

	in target markets through essay contests and/or educational presentations and testing.					
19	Agricultural Partnerships - Develop cross-industry marketing to support “what grows together, goes together”, and leverage Virginia’s position as a major agricultural producer to uplift marketing across the entire sector.	VA Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Industry Partners		Medium	Ongoing	
20	Anti-Alcohol Awareness - Educate the region’s producers about the efforts sponsored by California wine and other alcohol industry groups to combat anti-alcohol messaging in the market and ensure Virginia has a seat at the table in these efforts.	Virginia Wineries Association, VA Wine Marketing Office, industry coalition		High	Ongoing	
21	Finance Education Resources - Develop professionally prepared training material, including video instruction, which covers how to address vineyard and winery specific accounting challenges.	Virginia Wineries Association, accounting specialists, industry coalition, Small Business Development Center	VA Wine Board	Medium	1 Year	\$10,000
22	Access to Capital Resources - Work with agriculturally focused financial institutions, grant organizations, and government backed programs to clarify	Virginia Wineries Association, VDACS, Financial Institutions, Small Business Development Center	VA Wine Board	Medium	6 Months	\$2,000

	what financing options are available to vineyard and winery owners.					
23	Production Costs Analysis – Work across regional wineries and vineyards to establish target metrics which may enhance profitability by reducing production cost.	Virginia Wineries Association, Winemakers Research Exchange, Virginia Vineyards Association, industry coalition	VA Wine Board	High	Ongoing	\$12,500