



Tourism Development Authority

Rutherford County, North Carolina

Marketing Grant Policy and Application Guidelines

Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority

The mission of the Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority (TDA) is to promote travel and tourism in Rutherford County through state, regional, national and international advertising and promotions. The TDA was created in 1991 by Senate Bill 585, which also mandates the Board structure and the proper use of its tax revenues. It is funded through a 6% room occupancy tax (effective January 1st 2018) collected and administered by the County Government.

Grant Purpose

The TDA Marketing Grant Program provides funds to organizations and agencies which conduct events to bring visitors from outside of Rutherford County into the county, through the placement of media or other promotional exposure. Funds may be used for promotional activities, including, but not limited to; printing of posters, fliers and brochures, the purchase and production of print and other media advertising, web based marketing and direct marketing. Grant funding may not be used for salaries, capital acquisitions, event production costs or development, or to assist with an organizations existing debt.

Eligibility

- Any non-profit entity with an organizational structure and non-profit tax identification number
- No funding will be provided for programs outside of Rutherford County
- Events are eligible for only one grant per fiscal year (July 1- June 30)
- Events that have already been completed prior to the grant cycle are not eligible for funding

Evaluation Guidelines

- Positive promotion of Rutherford County as a destination
- Stimulation of Rutherford County economy
- Responsiveness to community needs
- Creation of new programs or events promoting tourism
- Quality of proposed project
- Thoroughness of planning
- The ability of the applicant to carry out the project
- Generation of overnight stays
- Involvement of a diverse population

Grant Amounts

- 100 - 1,000 attendees \$1,000
- 1001 - 1,500 attendees \$1,500
- 1,501 - 2,000 attendees \$2,000
- 2,001 - 2,500 attendees \$2,500
- 2,501 - 3,000+ attendees \$3,000



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Deadline for Receipt of Grant Applications

Grants will be awarded two times each year. Application deadline is March 1 for events scheduled from July 1-Dec. 31 of the same year. Deadline is September 1 for events scheduled January 1-June 30 of the following year. Applications must be received in the Tourism Development Authority office by 5:00 p.m. on these dates. Applications received after the deadline date and time will not be considered for the grant period submitted, but can roll over into the next grant period if the project can be held within the next six months if grantee/grantor approves. Applications should be mailed to:

**Rutherford County Tourism
P.O. Box 834
Rutherfordton, NC 28139**

Clarification and/or Justification

In the event the Grants Committee feels insufficient justification or clarification is given in the grant application, the Committee may call for additional written information and/or call for a meeting with applicant in order to clarify/justify their request.

Notification of Grant Awards

All applicants will be notified by email and by letter by the end of the month in which the decision is made. These notices will be sent on or before May 1st and November 1st. The status of your application will not be discussed by telephone prior to notification of all applicants.

Grant Payment Requirements and Deadlines

- Payment for grants with March 1st deadlines will be for projects completed between July 1 and Dec. 31 of the same year.
- Payment for grants with September 1st deadlines will be for projects completed between January 1 and June 30 of the following year.
- Grant monies will be paid to grantee following the completion of the Event Evaluation Form (EEF). A EEF must be completed within 30 days of the completion of the project.
- Payment will be by check made payable to Organization/Agency.

Modification to Grant Events

If, during the course of an applicant's event, the scope of the event changes, the grantee must notify the TDA in writing and request permission before applying the grant funds to the adjusted project. The TDA reserves the right to deny funding to modified projects.

Acknowledgment

The phrase "**Funded in part by the Rutherford County TDA**" plus the TDA web address **www.visitncsmalltowns.com** must appear on all promotional material.



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APPLICATION FOR TDA GRANT FUNDS FOR MARKETING TOURISM RELATED SPECIAL EVENTS

1) APPLICANT INFORMATION (PLEASE PRINT):

ORGANIZATION/AGENCY: _____

ADDRESS: _____

ORGANIZATION'S NON-PROFIT TAX ID NUMBER: _____

EVENT NAME: _____

DATE EVENT TO BEGIN: _____ TO BE COMPLETED: _____

EVENT DIRECTOR(S): _____

TITLE/RELATIONSHIP TO ORGANIZATION: _____

DAYTIME PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET: \$ _____

EXPECTED ATTENDANCE: _____ PERCENTAGE FROM OUT OF COUNTY _____

FIRST TIME EVENT? _____ IF NO, HOW MANY YEARS HAS EVENT BEEN HELD? _____

LAST YEAR'S ATTENDANCE: _____ PERCENTAGE FROM OUT OF COUNTY _____

ESTIMATED ROOM NIGHTS ANTICIPATED FROM EVENT _____

DESCRIBE THE MARKETING PLAN (Include the target audiences and strategies. Provide the names of media outlets, type of advertisements, and plans for distribution. Include social media plans – Continue on back or attach sheet if needed).



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Grant Funding Agreement

As a recipient of grant funding from the Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority (RCTDA), I understand and agree to the following terms:

- 1) I assert that the information contained in this application and any attachments are accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. I realize that the RCTDA and the Grant Committee will rely upon these representations.
- 2) The grant funding received will be applied to the event outlined in the application submitted by my organization to the RCTDA. If the event changes at any time during the project timeline, I must contact the RCTDA for approval before proceeding.
- 3) I will only use grant funding to support the event's marketing efforts.
- 4) I understand that my grant funded event must be completed within the six month grant period, unless a written notification is made to the RCTDA. I understand that failure to notify the RCTDA that invoices for the grant amount will extend past the award period may result in a loss of the grant amount awarded to me.
- 5) I will complete and submit an Event Evaluation Form (found in this packet) to the RCTDA no later than 30 days after the completion of the funded event. I understand that failure to submit the evaluation form may result in forfeit of future grant monies being awarded.
- 6) I understand that the phrase "Funded in part by the Rutherford County TDA" plus the web address www.visitncsmalltowns.com must appear on all promotional material.

SIGNATURE (Authorized Agent)

Date

PRINT NAME AND TITLE

Return this application to:
Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority
P.O. Box 834
Rutherfordton, NC 28139

Please attach additional documentation as needed.