

Towns County

Conventions & Visitors Bureau

2020 Tourism Grant Guidelines



TOURISM GRANT GUIDELINES

Towns County Conventions and Visitors Bureau presents the 2020 Tourism Grant Program to promote tourism and convention business within the geographical area of Towns County, Georgia and enhance the economic environment and opportunities for citizens of the County.

The mission of the grant program is to provide funds for marketing and other qualified expenses which will increase the number of overnight visitors to Towns County.

Qualifying Programs & Events

Programs: Qualifying entities may be attractions, associations, organizations which promote their products and/or services to visitors from outside the area.

Festivals/Event: A festival is an organized event or groups of events planned, produced and promoted in a well-defined period of time.

The is no guarantee that all applicants will be awarded a grant, even though a project may qualify, limited funds may not allow all projects to receive assistance. Any and all decisions regarding awarding or not awarding grants are at the sole discretion of the Board.

Eligibility Requirements: Applicants must fulfill the following:

- Be a documented non-profit agency as defined by the Internal Revenue Service
- Have completed at least one year of fiscal operation for a not-for-profit organization
- **A final report is required for each grant** - the final report should be one page typed summary of the results of the project and the impact it had on Tourism. Attendance figures, samples of advertising and promotions including tear sheets, photos, brochures and other collateral materials, video, broadcast affidavits, etc. must be attached.
- No qualified entity may serve as a fiscal agent for a non-qualified entity.
- **Applicants should be able to demonstrate the ability to execute its project without depending on the continued financial assistance from these funds. It should be the Intention of the organization to be self-sustaining.**
- **The festival/event must take place in Towns County.**
- An application and all related documents must be submitted and approved by the the Towns County Conventions and Visitors Bureau.
- A contract must be signed by the applicant and the Towns County Conventions & Visitors Board prior to distribution of funds.

Funding Purposes: All grants must be used for expenses directly related to the project. Grants must be used for marketing and other qualified expenses directed toward increasing room nights for hotel/motel, cabins and private homes, dining and shopping and toward bringing people to Towns County from outside the area.

Allowable Expenses:

- Development of new events or major exhibits and activities
- Promotional activities that compliment advertising, including materials that create awareness and build or maintain a good image of Towns County, printing of brochures or inserts for events
- Production costs of media advertising
- Marketing expenses, including outside professional marketing services
- The purchase of recognized media advertising focusing on attracting visitors to Towns County (digital, broadcast, billboard, magazine and newspaper). **Advertising buys must include markets more than 60 miles from Towns County. Local media outlets do not normally meet the intended purpose of the grant and will received less consideration.**

Disallowable Expenses:

- Capital expenditures
- Rent of offices, repairs, renovation or remodeling of facilities
- **General operating or administrative expenses or business expense**
- Interest or the reduction of deficits or loans
- Expenses incurred or obligated before grant project approval
- Expenditures for local food and beverage events
- Cash awards of any description, free tickets or entry fees
- Expenses not directly related to the approved program
- **Funds cannot be used for postage**
- **Website**

Stipulations:

- ***Grant money to be dispersed based upon availability of funds.***
- Failure to use funds as specified in the contract may result in penalties up to and including a full refund of the grant funds.
- **Failure to submit the agreed upon procedures and final report by deadline is unacceptable and may result in penalties up to and including full refund of the grant.**
- Project applicants cannot transfer funds from one specific tourism project to another without a written request and addendum to the contract.
- **Organizations receiving a Tourism Grant must have a reciprocal link and logo on all electronic media to CVB website.**
- Applicants who do not comply with all deadlines and procedures may be disqualified and ineligible to receive Tourism Grant Funds for one year.

Grant Review:

- Excellence and merit of program or event
- Merit of marketing plan
- Ability to attract and service visitors
- Fiscal stability and administrative ability
- Economic impact potential - increasing visitors, restaurant sales and most importantly Hotel (**Lodging**) occupancy

Application Process:

- Completed application
- Grant awarded by Towns County Conventions and Visitors Bureau
- Signed contract between the applicant and the Towns County CVB Board
- **A final report and agreed upon procedures due to the Towns County CVB Board before January meeting of the year following the award. (Samples attached)**

Tourism Grant Timelines for Applications and Awards

Date	Action
October Meeting	Marketing opportunities presentation & mandatory grant guidelines review
November Meeting	Application Deadline
December Meeting	Target for notifying 2020 grant recipients
December Meeting	Support information for financial review for previous year
January meeting	2019 Final Reports due to Towns CVB for current Grants