



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. The ability to fund the grant program, is a result of occupancy tax collected and generated from overnight stays in lodging facilities within Rutherford County.

Grant Purpose

The TDA Marketing Grant Program provides funds to organizations and agencies, which produce events to bring visitors from more than 50 miles outside of Rutherford County and generates overnight stays, through the placement of media or other promotional exposure. Creative marketing should focus on cities/towns more than 75 miles away. 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, equipment, prizes/event merchandise, or to assist with an organizations existing debt.

Eligibility

- Any non-profit entity with an organizational structure and non-profit tax identification number or a not-for-profit organizational structure.
- Grant monies cannot be used to promote private business.
- 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
- Grants may be awarded for events or activities, but they are expected to be self-supporting after three years. Events and programs are eligible for funding for no more than three consecutive years. Grant funding is for short term seed money to grow event programs. There is no guarantee of multi-year support.

Grant Requirements

- Event must generate overnight stays
- Funding shall only be requested for marketing, promotion and advertising expenses for at least 50 miles outside of Rutherford County.
- If an applicant is requesting funding for more than one special event or program, separate applications must be completed for each request with separate summaries and budgets.
- The application must include a clear, well thought-out marketing plan. The marketing plan should include the name of the media buy, run dates and actual cost of the ad(s). Applicant must research media buys prior to submitting grant.



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- Applications must include a detailed budget, including summary of expenditures, and estimated attendance.
- Applications must include relevant support materials. Support materials may include prior year's financial reports, marketing plans, event mission / vision statement, advertisements, etc.
- Applying event, programs, or attractions must be open to the general public
- No events/attractions may promote a specific candidate, political party or platform
- The recipient of this grant is responsible for any and all liability issues resulting from the activities of this project/event.
- Grant recipients may not promote facilities located outside of Rutherford County.

Grant Guidelines

- Positive promotion of Rutherford County as a destination
- Substantial economic impact on the County from visitors
- 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
- 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

Deadline for Receipt of Grant Applications

Completed application for grant requests, should be submitted to Rutherford County Tourism no less than four months prior to the event date.

Applications and all supporting documentation should be mailed to:

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

or emailed to the TDA Administrative Assistant, at Emily.Ostertag@rutherfordcountync.gov



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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.

Disclaimer

The Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications, to waive any informalities in the application process, and award grant(s) to the applicant(s). 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.

Acknowledgment

- The TDA logo and/or the phrase “**Funded in part by the Rutherford County TDA**”, along with the TDA website (www.visitncsmalltowns.com) must appear on all promotional material.
- The TDA logo can be requested by email to: Emily.Ostertag@rutherfordcountync.gov

Grant Payment Requirements and Deadlines

- Grant monies will be paid to grantee following the completion of the Event Evaluation Form (EEF). An EEF must be completed within 30 days of the completion of the event and will be emailed to you after the event occurs.
- Payment will be by check made payable to Organization/Agency.

If you have any questions, please contact Emily Ostertag, TDA Administrative Assistant, at Emily.Ostertag@rutherfordcountync.gov or by phone at (828) 287.1220



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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 #: _____

Event Name: _____

Date Event to Begin: _____ Date Event to be Complete: _____

Contact Person(s): _____ Title/Relationship to Organization: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Total Project Budget: \$ _____

Expected Attendance: _____ Estimated Room Nights Anticipated: _____

First Time Event? _____ If no, how many years has event been held? _____

Last Year's Attendance: _____ Last Year's Estimated Room Nights: _____

Give a narrative description of your project and explain how this event/activity: (1) will attract tourists to Rutherford County; (2) increase tourism; (3) and/or encourage visitors stay overnight. (Use separate page if necessary)

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)

(Use separate page if necessary)



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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 (emailed after event) 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 TDA logo and/or the phrase "**Funded in part by the Rutherford County TDA**", along with the TDA website (www.visitncsmalltowns.com) must appear on all promotional material.

SIGNATURE (Authorized Agent)

Date

Return this application to:

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

Or email to: Emily.Ostertag@rutherfordcountync.gov

Please attach additional documentation as needed.