



2019
Tourism Grant
Guidelines

2019 Tourism Grant Guidelines

Introduction

The Augusta Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) is pleased to announce the 2019 Tourism Grant Program to enhance visitor and tourism promotion efforts within the Augusta area. This grant is made possible as a result of the 1998 increase in the local hotel/motel tax. The City of Augusta and the Augusta CVB designate a portion of this tax to make this grant possible in order to promote activities, attractions and special events, thereby fostering local economic development and creating economic impact through tourism.

The Augusta CVB administers the grant under contract with the City of Augusta. Grants are reviewed by the Tourism Grant Committee which is comprised of the Mayor Pro Tem, two commissioners, and four members of the Augusta CVB Board of Directors.

Mission

The purpose of this grant program is to provide funds for marketing and other qualified expenses directed towards increasing the number of overnight visitors to Augusta from outside the area.

Qualifying Programs and Events

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

Festival/Event: A festival is a cultural event or group of events planned, produced, and promoted in a well-defined period and organized to occur at regular intervals, usually on an annual basis, all related to a common cultural form, theme or vision.

There 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 Tourism Grant Committee.

Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must fulfill all of the following:

- Be a documented non-profit agency as defined by the Internal Revenue Service.
- Have completed at least one year of fiscal operation as a not-for-profit organization.
- An annual financial agreed upon procedures review must be conducted by the Augusta CVB's chosen CPA firm. Please contact:
Mary K Grady, Audit Senior
Cherry Bekaert, L.L.P.
1029 Greene Street, Augusta, GA 30901

706.421.1359 direct
706.724.3557 phone
706.724.1667 fax
mgrady@cbh.com

- A final report is required for each grant and for each year during the grant.

The final report should consist of a one page (maximum) typed summary of the results of the project and the impact it had on tourism. Attendance figures are appropriate. Samples of advertising and promotions including tear sheets, photographs, brochures and other collateral materials, video, broadcast affidavits, etc. may be attached.

- All applicants must represent an ongoing, sustainable activity.
- No qualified entity may serve as a fiscal agent for a non-qualified entity.
- If requested, applicant may be required to furnish the Augusta CVB with up to 10% of all printed materials produced with the assistance of this grant.
- 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 Augusta. Or, if it is a program, the office must be located in Augusta and/or a board of directors composed of at least one half Augusta residents and must meet on a regular basis.
- An application and all related documents must be submitted and approved by the Tourism Grant Committee.
- A sponsorship benefits package equivalent to the dollar amount of grant funds awarded. Sponsorship benefits could include, but are not limited to: event tickets, website exposure, print advertising acknowledgement, press passes, etc.
- A contract must be signed by the applicant and the Augusta CVB prior to distribution of funds. The contract may be for a term of one year, but no more than five years based on qualifications.

Funding Purposes

All grants must be used for expenses directly related to the project. Again, grants must be used for marketing and other qualified expenses directed toward increasing hotel/motel room nights (overnight visitors) and toward bringing people to Augusta from outside the metropolitan area. The list below is a guide, but is not comprehensive. Allowable and disallowable expenses include, but are not limited to, the following:

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 Augusta, e.g., printing of brochures or inserts for events

- Production costs of media advertising
- Marketing expenses, including outside professional marketing service
- The purchase of recognized media advertising focusing on attracting visitors to Augusta (digital, broadcast, billboard, magazine and newspaper). Advertising buys must include markets more than 60 miles from Augusta or with broadcast radii of 60+ miles. Local media outlets do not normally meet the intended purpose of the grant and will receive less consideration than media outlets located 60+ miles outside of Augusta.
- No more than 50% of grant funds may be used for postage.

Disallowable Expenses

- Capital expenditures
- Rent of offices, repairs, renovation and/or remodeling of facilities
- General operating or administrative expenses
- General staff or personnel costs (excluding sales and marketing staff)
- Interest or the reduction of deficits or loans
- Expenses incurred or obligated before grant project approval
- Expenditures for local food and beverage events
- Projects restricted to private or exclusive participation, other than certain grand and pre-opening expenses
- Scholarships or endowments
- Cash awards of any description
- Expenses not directly related to the approved program
- Activities related to any for-profit organization
- Activities or materials which violate the law

Core Stipulations

- Failure to use funds as specified in the contract may result in penalties up to and including a full refund of grant funds.
- Failure to submit the agreed upon procedures and final report by the deadline is unacceptable and may result in penalties up to and including a full refund of grant funds.
- Project applicants cannot transfer funds from one specific tourism project to another without a written request and addendum to the contract. Submit any requests for official modification forms to Lindsay Fruchtl at Lindsay@VisitAugusta.com no later than October 11th.
- Organizations receiving a Tourism Grant must have a reciprocal link on their website to www.VisitAugusta.com. The consumer must be able to reach www.VisitAugusta.com in one click.
- Applicants who do not comply with all deadlines and procedures may be disqualified and ineligible to receive Tourism Grant Funds for one year.
- Applicants must attend the mandatory grant review workshop.

Grant Review Criteria

Applications are evaluated in the following areas:

- 1) Excellence and merit of program or event
- 2) Merit of marketing plan
- 3) Ability to attract and service visitors
- 4) Fiscal stability and administrative ability
- 5) Economic impact potential, i.e. increasing visitation, restaurant sales, and most importantly, hotel occupancy

Application Process

The Tourism Grant Program consists of six basic areas:

- 1) Completed application
- 2) Grant awarded by the Tourism Grant Committee
- 3) Signed contract between the applicant and the Augusta CVB
- 4) Attend a mandatory workshop reviewing proper use of grant funds and procedures
- 5) All supporting information is due to the Augusta CVB's chosen CPA firm by December 28 for conducting the annual financial agreed upon procedures review (as mentioned in the eligibility requirements).
- 6) A final report and agreed upon procedures are due to the Augusta CVB before January 25 of the year following the award. (Samples attached.)

2019 Tourism Grant Timeline for Application and Awards

DATE	ACTION
September 18, 2018	2019 Marketing opportunities planner (MOP) presentation and mandatory grant guidelines review
October 19, 2018	2019 Application deadline (4:00 p.m.)
November 21, 2018	Target date for notifying 2019 grant recipients
December 28, 2018	2018 supporting information for financial review due to CPA firm to conduct review
January 25, 2019	2018 Final Reports due to Augusta CVB for 2018 grants
March 14, 2019	Target date for mandatory workshop/contract signing/distribution of 2019 grant funds

Your Organization's LETTERHEAD

Month, Day, Year

Bennish Brown
President & CEO
Augusta CVB
PO Box 1331
Augusta, GA 30903

SAMPLE
COVER
LETTER

Dear Mr. Brown;

Please find the **INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME HERE** 2018 Tourism Grant audit and final report enclosed.

The **INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME HERE** had a successful year and attributes some of that success to the marketing we were able to do with 2018 Tourism Grant funds.

If you have any questions regarding the enclosed materials please contact me at 706-555-1212.

Sincerely,

John Q. Citizen

John Q. Citizen
Executive Director

SAMPLE

Your Organization's LETTERHEAD

SAMPLE
FINAL
REPORT

FINAL REPORT 2018 TOURISM GRANT

The INSERT ORGANIZATION'S NAME HERE received \$XX, XXX in 2018 Tourism Grant Funds.

Please find the attached tear sheets as examples of our advertising efforts. The June ad in Southern Living resulted in 700 inquiries; allowing for the opportunity to send more information on ORGANIZATION NAME HERE and Augusta. Our September ad in People Magazine resulted in 856 inquiries.

Additionally with 2018 Tourism Grant funds we were able to place television commercials in our selected markets; attendance figures at our annual 2018 event were up 5% from last year. Likewise, we partnered with Augusta Hotel ABC for our annual event and are able to report 200 hotel room nights were generated.

Website user sessions have also increased 3% since enhancing the website with 2018 Tourism Grant funds. ORGANIZATION NAME also created a new rack card and sent 10,000 of the 30,000 printed to Welcome Centers around the state of Georgia.

Furthermore, an analysis of our guest book registry indicates more than 65% of our visitors are from outside of the immediate Augusta area.

Thank you for the opportunity to continue to promote ORGANIZATION to visitors. If you have any questions regarding this information please contact John Q. Citizen, Executive Director at 555-1212.

SAMPLE

Bennish Brown
 President & CEO
 Augusta Convention and Visitors Bureau
 P.O. Box 1331
 Augusta, GA 30901

**SAMPLE AGREED
 UPON
 PROCEDURES***

*To be conducted by
 Cherry, Bekaert

Dear Mr. Brown:

This letter is to confirm that Organization XYZ received a 2018 Tourism Grant totaling \$12,800.00, and expended it as stated in the tourism grant application and contract. Please note expenses are summarized by award category.

Grant Funds	Received	Amount
Check Date:		
4/05/2018		\$ 12,800.00
 Grant Funds Disbursed		
Check Date/Payee		
3/15/2018	ACVB/or designated ACVB AD Agency – (list publication here)	\$ 1,000.00 *
6/15/2018	ACVB/or designated ACVB AD Agency – (list publication here)	\$ 1,000.00
9/15/2018	ACVB/or designated ACVB AD Agency – (list publication here)	\$ 1,000.00
10/15/2018	ACVB/or designated ACVB AD Agency – (list publication here)	<u>\$ 750.00</u>
	CO-OP Subtotal	\$ 3,750.00
5/1/2018	Agency XYZ - Rack card design	\$ 350.00
7/15/2018	Printer XYZ - Print 30,000 cards	\$ 3,000.00
9/30/2018	Mailhouse XYZ - fulfillment cost 15,000 cards	<u>\$ 1,000.00</u>
	Individual Projects Subtotal (i.e. Rack Cards/Brochures/Postage/Fulfillment)	\$ 4,350.00
4/13/2018	Agency XYZ- Ad design (copy attached)	\$ 500.00
5/11/2018	Atlanta Journal Constitution – Advertisement	\$ 2,000.00
5/11/2018	Macon Magazine – Advertisement	\$ 300.00
5/11/2018	Charlotte Magazine – Advertisement	\$ 300.00
5/11/2018	Peach State Public Radio – Advertisement	\$ 1,000.00
6/01/2018	Southeast Festivals Magazine – Advertisement	<u>\$ 600.00</u>
	Out-of-Area Event Advertising Subtotal	\$ 4,700.00
Tourism Grant Funds Expended	Total	<u>\$12,800.00</u>

***All costs should be detailed as in these examples.**