

RIVER PARISHES

TOURIST COMMISSION

2020 EVENTS & MARKETING PARTNERSHIP GRANT GUIDELINES

IMPORTANT DATES

- September 1, 2019** Application Opens
- September 17, 2019** Mandatory Meeting @ River Parishes Tourism Summit
- **October 1-10, 2019** Optional Review Period
- October 15, 2019** Application Deadline
- December 1, 2019** Award Notification
- January 1, 2020** Grant period begins
- December 31, 2020** Grant period ends

Purpose:

It is the desire of the River Parishes Tourist Commission (RPTC) to assist with events and initiatives that generate overnight guests and increase tourism, while enhancing the visitor's experience in the River Parishes. Grants may be awarded annually in support of tourism-related events and marketing initiatives. Preference is given to new projects or events.

The River Parishes Tourist Commission is now accepting grant applications for 2020.

RPTC grants are used to assist with promoting and supporting events and initiatives that generate overnight visits and increase tourism, along with enhancing visitors' experiences to the River Parishes. Funding comes from occupancy taxes collected in the River Parishes that is reinvested in the local communities through the grant program.

Several key changes were made to the grant program:

1. Entities are now eligible to apply for grant funding, with a one-to-one cash match eligibility
2. A pre-application workshop is now included as part of the process, helping applicants determine how to best generate a successful funding request
3. The application is now easier to fill out and is provided online only, allowing those completing the application to submit documents, budgets and copy/paste information easily into the new form.

ELIGIBILITY (For Marketing Applicant and/or Event)

To be an eligible applicant, an applicant must:

- Be legally incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation, with a designated tax exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code or legally incorporated business
- Be able to obtain all permits

To be an eligible project, a Special Event must:

- Be a one-day event, a multi-day event occurring on consecutive days, or a related series of events over an extended period of time
- Be inclusive (no limits on who may purchase tickets or attend)
- Take place in the River Parishes
- Be held in a publicly-visible location
- Primarily be held in an outdoor setting as this program is *not* intended as a programming source for major indoor event venues

Note: Events may be ticketed

Requirements:

-Grantees must acknowledge the RPTC in all materials. Preferred acknowledgment is placement of the RPTC logo with a statement that "this project was funded in part by the River Parishes Tourist Commission."

-Failure to acknowledge the RPTC may result in loss of funding and future denial of funding.

-Grantees must obtain copies of print placements or digital placements showing the RPTC acknowledgement to submit with their project evaluation. Applicants are encouraged to read the evaluation form prior to their event to understand what information should be collected for post-event evaluation.

EXAMPLES OF ELIGIBLE EVENTS

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art Festivals | Local Food Festivals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Film Festivals | Celebration of Local Authors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music Festivals | Local Community Historic Events |

EXAMPLES OF INELIGIBLE EVENTS

- Trade shows, conventions, conferences, workshops, classes etc.
 - Annual lunches, galas, conferences, holiday parties, etc.
 - Class or family reunions
 - Block parties
 - Events organized around political or religious purposes
 - Festivals or events based solely on alcohol, drugs, sexually oriented content, etc.
- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| | Sporting events |
| | Beauty pageants |

FUNDING

Marketing: Each application may apply for up to \$2,000 in funding. The RPTC retains discretion to only fund a portion of a request or award no funds. For profits are required to provide a one-to-one cash match.

Event: Each application may apply for up to \$6,000 in funding. The RPTC retains discretion to only fund a portion of a request or award no funds. For profits are required to provide a one-to-one cash match.

APPLICANT MAY APPLY FOR BOTH

EVALUATION CRITERIA

All applications will be evaluated according to the criteria below which relate to the applicant's overall ability to successfully accomplish the Program Objective described earlier in this document. The Commission will develop a points-based system to score each application based on the following criteria.

1. Administration Ability

- Quality of the business plan
- Quality of the marketing plan
- Quality of the logistics plan
- Ability to describe the target audience for the proposed event and demonstrate knowledge about how best to engage with them
- Feasibility of accomplishing the project as described
- Completeness and clarity of application

2. Fiscal Management

- Quality of the financial plan and event feasibility
- Explanation of how grant funds will be spent to cover the costs
- Budget by major categories
- Funding being sought for the current application
- The degree to which the request is reasonable
- Demonstration of a broad base of financial support
- Ability to raise private support, and build and establish sustainable partnerships
- Accuracy and prudence of all budgets

3. Ability to Strengthen and Promote Cultural Assets

- The extent to which the event:
 - Is consistent with the program objectives
 - Fosters a vibrant community
 - Creates a sense of community
 - Contributes positively to place-making
 - Catalyzes the evolution of cultural engagement and civic pride
 - Promotes the rich history, heritage, amenities, natural environment and authentic characteristics that make the River Parishes special
 - Supports the programming and use of local parks, public spaces and amenities

- Encourages partnerships between organizations, members of the community and businesses – creates positive entanglements that drive greater collaboration among cultural assets

4. Quality of Team

- Experience as successful event delivery agents
- Ability to produce a well-planned and safe event, including the ability to effectively manage costs, attract event attendees, and obtain necessary permits, clearances, insurances, and event authorizations in a timely manner
- Past event success and reliability
- No evidence of any sustained complaints relative to past events from residents, vendors, attendees or staff
- Financial stability of the applicant organization

5. Economic Impact and Community Benefit

- Description of the following event impacts:
 - Attract visitors – increase tourism revenue
 - Economic Impact of event to local vendors
 - Return-on-investment to the community for the public investment
 - Promotion of the River Parishes as a destination
 - Benefit of the event to residents - overall residents or only a benefit to a specific segment or interest
 - Impact on the visibility and awareness of the River Parishes internally and externally
 - Degree to which the event has broad-based community appeal or support

6. Other Considerations

- a. The following criteria may, or may not, be considered when making a funding recommendation:
 - i. Whether or not the event will occur in a geographic area in an area of the community which may be targeted from time to time by the RPTC
 - ii. Whether or not the event will occur during a time that corresponds to a "slow period" for other community events, conventions, or visitors in general

APPLICATION PROCESS

Application Process:

The grant application must be completed online. Printed and/or handwritten copies will not be accepted.

Optional Review Period

The Optional Review Period is an opportunity for applicants to submit a draft application to program Staff within a enough time to allow Staff to offer suggestions and ask questions prior to the application being officially submitted. Staff strongly encourages eligible applicants to submit a draft application during the Optional Review Period.

Application Deadlines

Completed applications that are not delivered to the Commission by the date and time deadline established administratively by Staff will be considered LATE and not eligible for

consideration.

DRAFT

Application Review

Staff will review all applications submitted for completeness and consistency with the program objectives. Additional information may be requested by Staff at any time during the internal review process. Failure on the part of the applicant to provide information at any time during the final application review and/or Courtesy Meeting process will result in rejection of the application for the Funding Cycle in which it was originally submitted.

Required Grant Workshop:

All applicants are required to attend a workshop at the River Parishes Tourism Summit before application is made. The purpose of the workshop is to streamline the application process and provide oversight and recommendations in advance of your organization's application. Grant workshop dates are listed above. Applicants who are not able to attend should send another person from their organization.

Award Process

The appointed River Parishes Tourism Investment Committee (RPTIC) will review all applications and decide on funding recommendations. The RPTIC's recommendations will then be forwarded to the RPTC for final approval. The RPTC has full discretion and authority when deciding final funding amounts regardless of the Commission's recommendations.

Funding Process after approval

The applicants selected to receive funding must enter into a formal Funding Agreement ("Agreement") with the RPTC. The Agreement specifies the dollar amount awarded, scope of work, agreed Project budget, how outcomes will be measured, contract duration, the terms of funding and other terms and conditions.

Grant Payment:

After the RPTC has approved an application, a project may receive payment as appropriate based on the time frame of the event or project. Payment is preferable after the event/marketing has been completed and written evaluation, along with appropriately paid receipts and invoices, have been submitted to the RPTC.

Project Evaluation and Reporting:

Applicants must submit a written event/project evaluation (see attached) and return it to the RPTC no later than thirty (30) days after completion of the event/project. Failure to submit the evaluation form could result in denial of funding for future applications and/or a request for reimbursement of funding.

REIMBURSEMENT OF ACTUAL EXPENSES

Funds available to the applicant as part of an Agreement are reimbursements for actual expenses incurred and paid by the applicant, and consistent with the Matching

Fund requirement described in this document. With proper documentation acceptable to the RPTC, an applicant may receive a maximum of 25 percent of the total award before completion of the Event described in the application (the "Pre-Event Amount".) The Pre-Event Amount will only be paid as a reimbursement for actual expenses incurred and paid by the applicant. The remaining funds are only available after completion of the Event described in the application and Agreement. **Reimbursements are dollar for dollar. Applicants will not be reimbursed for expenses covered by in-kind support, however, in-kind support can be counted towards the required Matching Funds.**

Modification to Grant Projects:

If the scope of the project changes, the grantee must notify the RPTC in writing and request permission before applying any assumed grant funds to the modified project. The RPTC reserves the right to deny or revoke funding to modified projects and reserves the right to call for a full repayment of funds from any grantee not in compliance.

GRANT TIME LIMITS

Unless specifically recommended by the RPTIC and approved by the RPTC, funding for an approved Event is limited to the period it is proposed and budgeted in the application and/or subsequent Agreement. Extensions are granted only in special cases.

Event expenditures must take place during the grant period specified in the formal Agreement with the River Parishes. Event planning may begin before a funding request is approved/awarded and a funding agreement signed. However, the entity cannot be reimbursed for any cost incurred, nor will the cost be eligible to be credited as part of the entity's matching shares, prior to the approval of award recommendations by the RPTC. No cost incurred after the grant period has expired will be eligible for payment within the time period specified in the grant agreement.

HOW TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION

All grant applications are to be submitted by the deadline. To access all required application materials, please visit: riverparishestouristcommission.com/grant

A completed application must include:

- Application Form
- Project Budget & Event History Forms
- Business/Marketing/Logistics Plans (for Event)
- Most Recently Filed IRS Form 990
- Organization Financials for the past two years
- Two Letters of Support
- Additional Materials (i.e. event collateral, promotional materials, event agendas)

