



2021 TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION

Effective January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021

OVERVIEW

Explore Gwinnett (EG), the marketing brand of the Gwinnett Convention and Visitors Bureau (GCVB) is pleased to announce our 2021 Tourism Grant Program, designed to enhance visitor and tourism promotion efforts in Gwinnett County. EG designates a fixed amount of funds annually to assist organizations with destination marketing, promotion, special events marketing and tourism product development, attractions and special events that will foster local economic impact through tourism, optimally resulting in increased hotel occupancies or stronger destination appeal.

This program is designed for qualified applicants whose project(s) or event(s) clearly demonstrate a tourism or destination marketing mission. It should be the intention of the organization for the project(s)/programs to eventually be self-sustaining. This is strictly an expense reimbursement program and should not be viewed as a loan program. No advance payments will be made.

Grant applications are reviewed at the GCVB Board of Directors meetings (January, March, May, August, October & November). Applications should be received by the third Wednesday prior to the Board meeting for review, and should be sent to: Lisa Anders, Executive Director / lisa@exploregwinnett.org / 770.814.6044.

- All applications received for specific period will be reviewed together
- Greater consideration and higher priority will be given to projects that demonstrate the highest potential for economic impact and overnight hotel visitation
- Greater consideration will also be given during the first three years of operation
- Greater consideration will be shown to projects that incorporate paid digital/social media into the overall project plan
- Qualified first-time applicants are given a higher priority than organizations/events that have previously received funding
- Greater consideration is given to projects that utilize partnerships, or are done in conjunction with another non-profit organization

Even though a project application may qualify, limited funds may not allow all projects to receive assistance. All projects awarded a grant must be completed, and final receipts/project overview submitted by December 13, 2021. If project receipts are not received by December 13, 2021, the GCVB reserves the right to decline funding. All projects are funded on a calendar year budget.

GUIDELINES

To function in accordance with Georgia Hotel-Motel Tax law and the state legislation regarding lodging tax dollars, all grant money must be used for promotional and marketing efforts, or for the purpose of tourism product development. Both must have the express intention of destination marketing, with specific goal of trying to increase the number of overnight visitors staying in Gwinnett County. These promotional efforts may include, but are not limited to, paid media advertising, event development, digital media (web, social media, etc), destination wayfinding signage and tourism product development.

The Tourism Grant Program consists of four basic areas:

1. Eligibility Requirements
2. Application Process
3. Performance Criteria
4. Final Report Process

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All applicants must be recognized as not-for-profit entities as defined by the Internal Revenue Service; Eligible categories include:

1. **Festival/Event:** A public, themed celebration or activity that has the potential & mission of drawing out-of-market visitors, as well as generating room nights
2. **Organization/Associations:** Organizations whose project, event or initiative will enhance Gwinnett's tourism efforts for both leisure and/or group visitors
3. **Attraction/Public Use Facility:** Physical attractions or structures that strive to generate tourism visitation or create ongoing tours or activities

Items eligible for funding assistance include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Development of new events, qualifying major exhibits and activities geared to potentially generate overnight visitors to Gwinnett County
2. Successful expansion of established programs or events that have previously generated overnight visitors and economic impact for Gwinnett County
3. Out-of-market tourism advertising/marketing or promotion, including digital, social, or other types of marketing. For purposes of this grant "out of market" is considered to be outside the Atlanta MSA
4. Destination marketing activities: advertising, printed materials, billboards, online marketing and social media
5. Tourism Product Development – TPD is new product development, adding to the local tourism portfolio. Examples include: wayfinding destination signage, arts + cultural facilities, and other capital projects specifically related to tourism

Items ineligible for funding consideration include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Expenses incurred or obligated before grant project approval
2. Projects restricted to private or exclusive participation
3. Activities related to any for-profit organization
4. Administrative costs including salaries, travel, food, beverages, lodging and entertainment for personal and/or volunteers of organization
5. Tangible personal property including, but not limited to, office furnishings or equipment, permanent collections of individual pieces of art, etc.
6. Interest, reduction of deficits or loans
7. Scholarships, endowments or cash awards of any type

Factors considered in grant approval include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. High probability of significant economic impact on the Gwinnett County hospitality community
2. Major tourism drawing power from outside the metro area, thereby generating overnight stays in Gwinnett County
3. Organizational stability, management capacity, responsibility and accountability of organization
4. Advance marketing and public relations planning; advance budget planning
5. Overall impact or potential for Gwinnett's overall tourism portfolio
6. Applications that are part of partnerships or implement new media
7. Grant applications with financial input from organization are typically graded higher than those requesting 100% assistance

APPLICATION PROCESS

A COMPLETE APPLICATION CONSISTS OF AN OFFICIAL APPLICATION FORM, PLUS THE FOLLOWING ITEMS.

- A. Documentation of non-profit status: Charter, Articles of Incorporation, by-laws or other proof of current status
- B. A project marketing plan describing the specifics of the proposed project, including project bids if applicable.
 1. A minimum of two written quotes for contract services/materials for purchases over \$500 that are part of the requested grant project (i.e. printing bids)
- C. A complete business plan (if available) describing the financial aspects of the project. The business plan should address and include:
 1. Projected revenues anticipated to be generated by sponsorships, grants, gate receipts, concession sales, souvenir sales, in-kind services or other forms of financial contributions
 2. Projected expenses for the project in line-item detail
 3. Profit/Loss projections

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- A. Notification - The GCVB Grant Administrator will notify all grant recipients of final decision by email
- B. Project Contents
 1. Project must contain the following phrase on all printed materials, collateral materials, advertising materials, banners and signs and in some instances, tag lines of broadcast media. If feasible, project must include Explore Gwinnett logo on printed materials or event website as partner/supporter.
 2. If applicable, furnish Explore Gwinnett with a percentage all printed materials produced through the assistance of the grant
- C. Execution
 1. Project must be completed as approved. Any substantial changes made to the project that alter its approved format may result in the project not receiving reimbursement
 2. Reimbursements will be made for pre-approved expenses only; reimbursements will not exceed the total amount approved for the original grant
 3. A final project overview must be submitted within 30 days of completion of the project or by December 13, 2020 whichever occurs first, or Explore Gwinnett reserves right to deny reimbursement

FINAL REPORT PROCESS

A COMPLETE FINAL REPORT MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ITEM(S):

- A. A written summary of the results of your project, as well as event/project images. Include attendance figures for festivals/events, pictures, media coverage, etc. if available

THE GCVB RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REQUEST:

- B. A summary of all expenditures. (Copies of invoices may be requested)
- C. A summary of all revenues generated by your project (sponsorships, grants, gate receipts, concessions, etc.)
- D. Actual samples of advertising and promotions from the completed project (tear sheets, tapes, photographs, broadcast affidavits, audio/video tapes, etc.)

2021 TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION

COMPLETED APPLICATION CONSISTS OF THIS ORIGINAL APPLICATION FORM PLUS THE FOLLOWING ITEMS SUBMITTED AS ATTACHMENTS: (if available)

1. Documentation of non-profit status (required)
2. A project marketing plan
3. A complete business/financial plan
4. Any other materials that further support your application

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Organization Name: _____

Non-Profit Classification: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/State /Zip: _____

Telephone _____ Fax: _____

Chief Officer of Organization (Name, Title) _____

Contact Person for Project _____

What is the total amount of grant funding that you are requesting? _____

Have you previously received any grant(s) from Explore Gwinnett/Gwinnett Convention and Visitors Bureau? Yes No

If yes, complete the following:

Date of Grant _____ Project _____ Amount _____

Date of Grant _____ Project _____ Amount _____

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name _____

Description of Project _____

Project Category: Festival/Event Tourism Project Development Marketing Assistance Web Marketing/New Media Other

Project Type: New Continued Expansion

Date you will begin work on the project: (Month/Year) _____

Date project scheduled for completion: (Month/Year) _____

Date(s) if project is Festival/Event: (Month/Year) _____

ECONOMIC IMPACT INFORMATION

Will your project attract overnight visitors from outside the Gwinnett County area? Yes No

If yes, how many hotel rooms do you anticipate using? _____

Please list hotels contracted, with estimated room blocks if applicable _____

Will your project attract/influence local area citizens? Yes No

If yes, how? _____

Will your project create economic impact (i.e. restaurants, shopping, etc.)? Yes No

How is your attendance tracked and verified? _____

What is the expected total attendance for your festival, event or tourism product? _____

How many people outside of Gwinnett County will be exposed to your project? _____

What will be the primary benefits of your project for the hospitality community? _____

What additional comments can you provide that support the economic impact of this project? _____

PROJECT BUDGET INFORMATION

What is the projected cost (all expenses) of your project? \$ _____

What amounts do you project to expand for?

Paid Media Advertising:

Digital \$ _____

Social \$ _____

Print \$ _____

Television \$ _____

Billboards \$ _____

Total Paid Media \$ _____

For Tourism Product Development, please provide information on the project timeline, how grant money would be utilized and any other supporting materials.

What is the total amount that your organization will directly provide in funding for this project? \$ _____

If you will be receiving private funds for this project, complete the following:

Funding Source _____ Amount \$ _____

Funding Source _____ Amount \$ _____

If you will be receiving public funds from other sources, complete the following:

Funding Source _____ Amount \$ _____

Funding Source _____ Amount \$ _____

Please attach budget for the project, if applicable.



All applications should be emailed or mailed to:

Lisa Anders, Executive Director / lisa@exploregwinnett.org

Explore Gwinnett/ Gwinnett Convention and Visitors Bureau

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770.814.6044