



DUVAL COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL SPECIAL PROMOTION GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

The Duval County Tourist Development Council (TDC) conducts a tax-based program to award grants for deserving events which promote Duval County's appeal as a convention or tourist destination, and which have a documented impact on Duval County hotel/motel rentals. Grants are awarded in units of room nights [the total number of hotel/motel (or equivalent) room night rentals appropriately attributed to the event] and are designed to reimburse successful applicants for qualified event expenses [expenses specified in the award offer/acceptance] actually encountered up to the maximum amount awarded by the TDC.

Please Note: Unless otherwise specified, the TDC is only a financial contributor to the event and not a promoter or co-sponsor, and will not be responsible for any debts incurred for such event.)

The grant award process consists of 4 basic steps:

- (1) Application;
- (2) Presentation;
- (3) Offer/Acceptance; and
- (4) Disbursement.

(1) APPLICATION – Each Applicant must timely file with the TDC fifteen (15) fully completed Application Forms (one signed original and fourteen copies). Eligibility requirements include consideration of each Applicant and Application Form submitted.

A. Eligible Applicants must:

- be tax exempt pursuant to section 501(c) of the United States Internal Revenue Code. Any properly documented tax-exempt entity will not be disqualified from an award of grant funds solely due to event sponsorship or other participation by a for-profit entity;
- be fiscally and managerially solvent, including being current in all taxes and other financial commitments due Duval County;
- be current in all obligations under any prior financial award made by the TDC or the Consolidated City of Jacksonville (City), whether acting in its capacity as a county or municipality, including timely submission of required reports;

- be properly licensed or permitted for all activities involved in conducting the event;
- present to the TDC a Room Night Guarantee [written commitment for a minimum number of room nights within Duval County]; and
- present to the TDC, in writing, the specific event expenses for which grant funds are being requested.

B. Each Application Form must:

- be completely filled out, including but not limited to marking “N/A” or “Not Applicable” for any question deemed inapplicable to the Applicant;
- be signed by an Authorized Agent [a person specifically authorized in writing to act on behalf of the Applicant (with the original or certified copy of original written authorization attached)] with respect to all aspects of the application process;
- be filed in the offices of the TDC, 117 W. Duval Street, Suite 425, Jacksonville, FL 32202, by the posted application deadline for the period in which the event will occur. The TDC may reject any late-filed application without further review or recourse. Fax or email applications are not acceptable;
- be accompanied by:
 - (a) Articles of Incorporation;
 - (b) IRS letter of tax-exempt status as well as completed IRS Forms W-9 and 990;
 - (c) TDC Final or Interim Report (for previous TDC grantees only);
 - (d) Written authorization for Authorized Agent to act on behalf of the Applicant;
 - (e) Organizational outline, including but not limited to the names and addresses of each board member and corporate officer. Please identify any board member who is a Jacksonville employee (or was a Jacksonville employee at any time within one year prior to filing of Application Form);
 - (f) Sponsorship package;
 - (g) Detailed project budget for present fiscal year;
 - (h) Any and all written agreements involving media and hotels/motels; and
 - (i) No more than three support documents (letters of recommendation, programs, articles, etc.);

- specify a Contact Person -- an individual who can be reached during normal office hours (Mon-Fri: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.), and who is knowledgeable about Applicant's event, organization and budget; and
- submit application in a portfolio format using dividers or tabs for all items outlined above.

(2) PRESENTATION – Applications are considered by the TDC in noticed meetings open to the public. Each Applicant may make an oral presentation of up to five (5) minutes to the TDC (Presentation Meeting). The TDC may limit the manner of any oral presentation, and may opt to vote on any application either at the Presentation Meeting or the next publicly noticed meeting.

Prior to the Presentation Meeting, the Application Form will be reviewed by TDC staff for completeness. Any Applicant or Application Form that fails to meet their respective criteria (see 1 above) may be rejected without further TDC consideration. Unless otherwise specified, rejection is deemed to be a TDC final decision, and is not subject to reconsideration or appeal.

Unless otherwise specified, an award offer is reliant upon the number of room nights [hotel/motel room nights attributable to the event], and is initially calculated by multiplying a TDC-determined room night award (historically in the \$1 to \$5 per night range) by the Applicant's room night guarantee. The TDC reserves the right to unilaterally reduce the maximum amount of any grant awarded should the Applicant's room night guarantee not be satisfied. In such instance, grant reduction will normally be based upon the TDC's previously determined room night award multiplied by the number of documented room nights [hotel/motel room nights appropriately documented by Applicant after the event].

For example, assume the applicant is seeking a \$2,000 Special Promotion Grant for a two day event. The completed Application Form reflects the applicant's room night guarantee of 400 (200 rooms for each of the two nights involved). If the TDC determined that a \$5 per room night award was justified, a maximum award of \$2,000 would result ($\$5 \times 400 = \$2,000$), and an Award Offer/Acceptance would be drafted and sent to applicant stating both the \$5 room night award and the \$2,000 maximum award. If, after the event, the applicant can only timely and properly document a total of 300 actual room nights, the maximum award will automatically be reduced to \$1500 ($\5×300 documented room nights = \$1500).

Grant awards are expense specific, and may only be used for the Qualified Event Expenses specified in the Award Offer/Acceptance. All grant awards are subject to the availability of funds to the TDC. All aspects of grant awards, including expenditures for which reimbursement is sought, are subject to audit by the City Council Auditor or his designee.

(3) OFFER/ACCEPTANCE – Preference will be given to events in their first few years in this county, as “seed” money, in the hope and expectation that Applicants will become self-sufficient in covering their own future event expenses. The TDC will actively avoid becoming a perpetual funding source for any event.

Favorable event characteristics include:

- A. It will attract out-of-town guests to occupy hotel/motel rooms;
- B. It has growth potential and the grant funds can be useful as “seed” money; and
- C. It is likely to generate media exposure.

Unless otherwise specified, all grants awarded by the TDC will be described in an Award Offer/Acceptance, a writing signed by the TDC chairperson in which the room night award and maximum award will each be clearly stated, as will the Qualified Event Expenses and any other applicable grant award conditions. No grant is deemed awarded until the Applicant has formally accepted the grant amounts and conditions by returning to the TDC a copy of the Award Offer/Acceptance containing an original signature of the Applicant’s Authorized Agent (see 1B(2), above, for definition of Authorized Agent).

(4) DISBURSEMENT – Unless otherwise specified, grants are in the form of expense reimbursements paid directly to the providing vendor or to the Applicant. No grant money will be distributed until after the goods and/or services for which a Qualified Event Expense has been incurred have been actually provided and documented. Reimbursement requests to the TDC must be made on a Payment Authorization Form (Attachment A). Before disbursement may be made, the Applicant must file with the TDC a Post-Event Tourist Development Council Report (Attachment B) and Room Night Pickup Forms (Attachment C). Disbursements are based upon the room night award multiplied by the number of documented room nights, up to the maximum award. In no event will the grant award disbursement exceed the maximum award as stated in the Award Offer/Acceptance.

The Applicant is responsible for documenting the number of room nights actually utilized per Event at each using hotel/motel by having each hotel/motel individually certify such usage on a Room Night Pickup Form (Attachment C). All Room Night Pickup Forms must be returned to the TDC no later than 30 days after the event

date(s). Any Room Night Pickup Form presented to the TDC after the 30 day period may be discounted solely on grounds of untimeliness.

Tax funds available for grant awards are extremely limited, and are encumbered in an amount equal to the maximum award as stated in the Award Offer/Acceptance. In order to avoid undue restriction of available grant funds it is necessary to put a time limit on the making of a valid reimbursement claim. That time limit is ninety (90) days from the last active day of the Event, on which date the funding encumbrance will be removed and the funds will then be available for other grants. **Any reimbursement claim not filed within 90 days of the last active day of the event is subject to rejection solely for untimeliness.**

Please Note: The TDC in making a grant for special promotions or other purposes does not assume any liability or responsibility for the ultimate financial profitability of the event for which the grant is awarded. The TDC, unless otherwise specifically stated, is only a financial contributor to the event and not a promoter or co-sponsor, and will not guarantee or be responsible or liable for any debts incurred for such event. All third parties are hereby put on notice that the TDC will not be responsible for payment of any costs or debts for the event that are not paid by the grant applicant.)

All tax funds utilized in this program result from tourist development taxes (popularly known as a "bed tax") authorized by section 125.0104, *Florida Statutes*, and imposed locally by section 666.106, *Jacksonville Municipal Code*. The tax applies to rentals of accommodations "in any hotel, apartment hotel, motel, rooming house, tourist or trailer camp or condominium for a term of six months or less."

All events must provide equal access and equal opportunity in employment and services and may not discriminate on the basis of disability, race or ethnicity, color, creed, national origin, religion, age, gender, or sexual preference. In accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 as amended (43 U.S.C. 2000d, et seq.), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.