



OVERVIEW

Since 2008 Visit Bloomington has distributed more than \$400,000 to 50+ organizations through its special event grant program. The mission of the program is to assist events in creating positive economic impact, growth, and publicity of Monroe County as a tourism destination by providing funding for event marketing.

The grant is available in two categories: emerging events (five or less years old) and established events (six or more years old). The maximum level of funding for any qualifying application is \$5,000.

TIMETABLE & EVALUATION PROCEDURE

Visit Bloomington will accept completed applications beginning Friday, May 1, 2020 until 5:00 pm Wednesday, July 1, 2020. Approximately \$50,000 in funding is available and only applications received before 5:00 pm on Wednesday, July 1, 2020 will be eligible for consideration. Late applications will not be accepted.

Applications must be emailed in Adobe PDF format to erin@visitbloomington.com.

Applications will **not** be reviewed for completeness or missing information upon submission. A complete application does not guarantee funding. Visit Bloomington reserves the right to reject any application for any reason. Visit Bloomington staff and representatives of the Board of Directors review and score the applications. The Visit Bloomington Board of Directors approve all funding decisions.

Once the final decision on funding is determined, applicants will be notified. Qualifying applicants receive a letter of agreement with funded award amount, instructions on exact items that were approved for funding, and information on invoicing, reimbursement and reporting. The agreement letter must be signed and returned to Visit Bloomington prior to the organization receiving any reimbursement funding.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

1. Must be an organization seeking to produce and promote a well-defined tourism-oriented festival or event.
2. An organization may submit only one application, requesting funds for one project/event.
3. All events must be held within Monroe County.
4. All events must occur January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021.
5. Events must be open to the general public, not exclusive in regard to attendance, and handicapped and programmatically accessible.
6. No event may have as its primary purpose the promotion of a specific candidate, political party or platform or promote lodging facilities outside Monroe County.
7. Events must directly increase hotel/motel occupancy and designate a hotel partner or multiple hotel partners, through which they can offer a trackable room block (for artists/performers and attendees).
8. Events must provide recognition to Visit Bloomington as an event or promotional sponsor and have website linked on your event and/or organization homepage. Visit Bloomington will supply logos and trackable links.
9. Only marketing efforts running outside a 50-mile radius of Monroe County are eligible for funding. Indianapolis **is** an eligible market for grant funded projects.

IMPORTANT DETAILS

1. Applicants are urged to schedule their events at times of the year when hotel occupancy rates are not at a peak in Bloomington. Event dates will be considered in the evaluation criteria when applications are scored.
2. Events that have been awarded grant funding three times must apply for new projects, which may include new target markets or new media outlets. Funding will not be awarded for the same markets/outlets more than three times.
3. Events must designate a project manager to serve as the primary liaison to Visit Bloomington for any/all inquiries relating to the application, event, and reimbursement forms.
4. If an event has a history of attendees or participants creating negative experiences or damages to Monroe County lodging, restaurant or attraction partners, funding may be affected.
5. Each organization receiving grant funding is encouraged to conduct surveys to capture information on attendees, including demographic information, spending habits, event satisfaction, and how they heard about the event. Visit Bloomington can offer assistance in building the survey and provide suggestions on how to implement it.
6. If applicant cannot complete the approved event for which funds have been allocated, Visit Bloomington must be notified immediately. Reimbursement funding is non-transferrable and failure to complete an event as submitted in the application may have an impact on future funding decisions and allocations.

QUALIFYING APPLICANTS

Grant funds are issued to qualifying applicants through a reimbursement process. In order to receive reimbursement, applicants must:

1. Supply proof of event liability insurance, including a certificate adding Visit Bloomington to the event's liability policy prior to event.
2. Submit completed reimbursement forms and proof of payment for all eligible grant expenditures within 90 days after funded event occurs.
3. Complete a post-event summary form, provided by Visit Bloomington, within 90 days after funded event occurs. All fields are required.

Visit Bloomington reserves the right to provide funding to organizations outside of the grant program. This funding does not affect the Emerging and Established Event funds. Any outside funding provided will be at the discretion of Visit Bloomington. Reimbursements will be issued within 60 days of receiving completed reimbursement forms.

ELIGIBLE REIMBURSEMENT EXPENDITURES

1. Advertising (print, social media, web display, outdoor, and radio) placed in media outlets that reach areas outside a 50-mile radius of Monroe County. (Indianapolis is an eligible market area.) Applications must include media details including outlet, advertising dates, size, and frequency of ads to be placed.
2. Event website development provided by an independent contractor.
3. Graphic design services provided by an independent contractor.
4. Photography and/or videography services provided by an independent contractor (not to exceed 30% of award).
5. Artist and/or performer fees (not to exceed 30% of award). Eligible for emerging events only.
6. Facility rental (not to exceed 30% of award). Eligible for emerging events only.

INELIGIBLE REIMBURSEMENT EXPENDITURES

1. Advertising (print, social media, web display, outdoor, and radio) placed within Monroe County or a 50-mile radius.
2. Wages for any salaried or hourly staff/employee.
3. Fees associated with the hiring of a marketing or public relations company.
4. Event tickets or passes used in marketing or public relations projects. Visit Bloomington considers tickets and passes to be in-kind expenses, and will not pay the cost of providing tickets to media outlets for contests and/or public relations campaigns.