



Hotel Tax Fund Expenditure Overview Packet

Rules Governing the Application

1. The applicant must present reasonable evidence that the expenditure or event will directly promote tourism AND impact the hotel/convention/business/sports in Brazos County.
2. For any applicant applying for HOT funds to advertise an event, Experience Bryan College Station and HOT Funds Review Panel recommends these funds focus on targeting visitors outside a 60 to 150 -mile radius of Bryan College Station. *Applicant must also attach copy of their marketing plan for advertising including (1) venue for advertising; what medium (magazine, newspaper, radio etc.); (2) rate card/sheet for said venue (3) expected run date or issue.*
3. The applicant must ensure that a direct link to Experience BCS/Sports & Events website is included on ANY information provided to a registrant, vendor/event attendee, including but not limited to any event website. Experience BCS/Sports & Events website will contain a complete list of all hotels and Bed and Breakfasts in good standing.
4. If the request is for cooperative advertising support, Experience BCS Director or its designee must approve the final advertising copy for appropriate representation of the community and local lodging three (3) weeks before the ad or publication's proof deadline.
5. Any promotional materials (brochures, website, advertisements, etc.) using HOT funds are required to include the appropriate Experience BCS/Sports & Events logo with the experiencebcs.com website below the brand. The Experience BCS logo must be used on all advertising, print, television and online; and a website link provided. The funding cities logo must also be included. If both cities are providing funding both logos must be used. *(Contact Experience Bryan College Station @ 979-260-9898 for approval and the correct version of the brand and link to use for promotional item.)*
6. After the application process is complete, and upon recommendation from an Experience BCS HOT Fund Review Panel for approval, the applicant may be expected to present an overview of the information and/or items included in the application such as expected visitor attendance to event, hotel selection, and expected overnight stays directly attributed to the event and to the City designee or any other group or entity that the City deems necessary.
7. Applications may be submitted for event multiple years out. Applications must go through the panel review no less than 3 months prior to the event date. All applications, post event reports, and invoices must be submitted through the online grant portal.
(<https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=experiencebcs>)
8. The group must have a minimum of 250 room nights. Consideration may be given for those close to the minimum and filling a need time in our community.
9. Should you be approved for Hot Grant funds a hotel room rebate may **NOT** also be utilized.

Process Overview

The Pre-Event Funding and Reimbursement Process:

1. The City of College Station and/or City of Bryan reserves the right to decide how funds will be dispensed; annually, quarterly, monthly, or in a single installment.
2. If any funding is provided prior to the event, The City of College Station and/or City of Bryan reserves the right to decide if **partial** or **all** funding should be reimbursed to the city provided the organization or event did not meet the requirements of said contract.
3. The City of College Station and/or City of Bryan reserves the absolute and ongoing right to conduct an audit of anyone receiving HOT Funds to ensure correct use of HOT Funds.
4. The application must be submitted by the deadline established. You may submit a draft form for review prior to this date for assistance and guidance from the Experience BCS staff – but all final applications *must be submitted on time*.
5. All applications must be submitted via the online application system.

Review of Applications Process:

A review panel will meet twice a year to review all applications received. (Usually in the fall and spring)

Review Panel Members:

- President of Experience BCS
- Vice President of Experience BCS
- Other pertinent Experience BCS staff
- Minimally 3 Experience BCS Board Members
- Representative from City of Bryan Staff
- Representative from City of College Station Staff
- Arts Council Executive Director
- Others as deemed necessary

The Applicant will have the opportunity to be present at the review panel discussions to answer any questions and provide more information. If the Applicant cannot be present, a phone conference call may be conducted or Experience BCS Staff can present on their behalf. Decisions will be made by majority vote of the review panel.

Post-Review Panel:

The client will be notified after the review panel meeting as to the outcome of the meeting.

In College Station, if the amount being recommended is over \$25,000; it will be scheduled for the next available City Council meeting for Council approval. In Bryan, the city manager has the ability to make the decision to fund up to \$50,000. If the amount exceeds this limit, it will be scheduled for the next available City Council meeting for Council approval.

The Post-Event Process:

The Analysis of Event must include all of the items outlined in the follow-up form in the online application system, including samples of advertisements produced with the use of HOT funds. If the Analysis of Event and the final accounting of room nights are not received by the due date, the City of College Station and/or City of Bryan reserves the right to refuse funding the event now or in the future.

It is the responsibility of the event to monitor the number of out-of-town guests who stay in Bryan and College Station lodging properties in relation to their event. We strongly recommend working with Experience BCS and the hotels to ensure proper credit and tracking. Some suggestions for tracking out-of-town guests would be to survey attendees during a check-in process. Please note that stated room nights generated will be subject to an audit by Experience BCS, City Manager and/or staff or the City designee. It is suggested that the surveys are done on site at registration. Experience BCS can provide guidance on what types of surveys to use or the best way to conduct a survey. You must receive a 75% response rate from the survey in order to qualify for funding.

Please note that room nights generated outside of Bryan or College Station, or in accommodations which do not pay local hotel taxes, do not fulfill the requirements of this grant and will not be credited to your event.

Payment to Client:

Applicant may receive up to 25% of the grant approval pre-event, should the panel deem funds necessary, after a signed contract and all required documentation has been received. The full balance or remaining balance will be distributed based on the room night pick up, the burden of proof lies exclusively on the applicants.

It is required that applications be filled out completely and accurately. If you need assistance in completing the application or have further questions, please contact John Friebele at 979-260-9898 or via e-mail at John@ExperienceBCS.com.

Tax Code – Use of Hotel Occupancy Tax Revenue

§ 351.101. USE OF TAX REVENUE.

- (a) Revenue from the municipal hotel occupancy tax may be used only to promote tourism and the convention and hotel industry, and that use is limited to the following:
- (1) the acquisition of sites for and the construction, improvement, enlarging, equipping, repairing, operation, and maintenance of convention center facilities or visitor information centers, or both;
 - (2) the furnishing of facilities, personnel, and materials for the registration of convention delegates or registrants;
 - (3) advertising and conducting solicitations and promotional programs to attract tourists and convention delegates or registrants to the municipality or its vicinity;
 - (4) the encouragement, promotion, improvement, and application of the arts, including instrumental and vocal music, dance, drama, folk art, creative writing, architecture, design and allied fields, painting, sculpture, photography, graphic and craft arts, motion pictures, radio, television, tape and sound recording, and other arts related to the presentation, performance, execution, and exhibition of these major art forms;
 - (5) historical restoration and preservation projects or activities or advertising and conducting solicitations and promotional programs to encourage tourists and convention delegates to visit preserved historic sites or museums;
 - (6) for a municipality located in a county with a population of one million or less, expenses, including promotion expenses, directly related to a sporting event in which the majority of participants are tourists who substantially increase economic activity at hotels and motels within the municipality or its vicinity.
 - (7) the promotion of tourism by the enhancement and upgrading of existing sports facilities or fields, including facilities or fields for baseball, softball, soccer, and flag football
 - (8) for funding transportation systems for tourists

§ 351.108. RECORDS.

- (a) A municipality shall maintain a record that accurately identifies the receipt and expenditure of all revenue derived from the tax imposed under this chapter.
- (b) A municipality or entity that spends revenue derived from the tax imposed under this chapter shall, before making an expenditure, specify in a list each scheduled activity, program, or event that:
- (1) is directly funded by the tax or has its administrative costs funded in whole or in part by the tax; and
 - (2) is directly enhancing and promoting tourism and the convention and hotel industry.
- (c) If a municipality delegates to another entity the management or supervision of an activity or event funded by the tax imposed under this chapter, each entity that is ultimately funded by the tax shall, before making an expenditure, specify in a list each scheduled activity, program, or event that:
- (1) is directly funded by the tax or has its administrative costs funded in whole or in part by the tax; and
 - (2) is directly enhancing and promoting tourism and the convention and hotel industry.