Event Development Program

Guidelines and Application

The Charlotte County Tourism Event Development Program (EDP) provides reimbursable funding to **assist in the development of *new* events, occurring in low or shoulder seasons which promote Charlotte County as a tourist destination. The primary objective of this program is to promote tourism and attract overnight visitors to Charlotte County.** Funds received pursuant to the Event Development Program may only be used for the purposes authorized in Section 125.0104(5) of the Florida Statutes and specified in these guidelines.

The Program is administered through the Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach Visitor & Convention Bureau (VCB).

Applicants must substantiate the potential to draw overnight visitors to the area with a regional marketing plan. In addition, applicants must be able to **project a number of overnight visitors staying in Charlotte County accommodations and provide information on how they arrived at that projection (ex. Hotel partnerships)**.

Each applicant must meet with the VCB program liaison and/or the Tourism Director during the application process. Applications will be reviewed for completeness. VCB staff will make recommendations, if applicable, for improvements that might give the application a better chance of approval for funding. Applications are due by February 22nd of each year. Each applicant must present their application in-person to the Tourist Development Council (TDC) at one of the bi-monthly meetings following the application deadline. An oral presentation is mandatory and must include an overview of the event, how the event will be marketed and, more specifically, how the event will draw people from outside the market for overnight stays. The applicants will be notified, in advance, of the TDC meeting during which applications will be reviewed.

The amount of each award will be contingent upon the number of applications received and the availability of funds for events occurring between May 1 and September 30 (Summer Program) OR between May 1 and December 15 (Annual Program). Total funding available for Summer is $20,000. Total funding available for Annual is $40,000. The total program budget being $60,000.

Guidelines

General

1. Single application funding cap for both Summer or Annual events is $10,000.
2. Event must occur during the specified timeframe of May 1 through September 30 if a Summer application or between May 1 and December 15 if an Annual program application. Under special circumstances, the TDC may review and fund events occurring outside program window, if the dates in question would have a significant positive impact on room night generation.
3. Must be a new event or the second, consecutive, year of a previously funded EDP event.
4. The event may require paid admission but must be open to the public as opposed to a private event with paid admission.
5. Events which provide alcohol service may apply. All laws, local and state, must be stringently followed if alcohol is served at the event.
6. No event or festival may have, as its primary purpose, the promotion of any political issue, candidate or party.
7. All events must be held within Charlotte County.

8. A new EDP Funding Application must be submitted when material changes are made to an event after funding has been awarded. Material changes are changes to event location, event date, allocation of EDP funding or change in event management.
9. Successful applicants will be required to execute an Event Funding Agreement in the form required by the County.
10. Successful applicants will be required to provide a post-event report in a form acceptable to the County within 90 days after the conclusion of the event. Appropriate funds will be reimbursed after review by the VCB staff and may be pro-rated if room night projections are not achieved.
11. Applications received after the deadline will be reviewed at the discretion of the VCB and are subject to funding based on the balance of the program budget. Applicants will be required to present their application in-person to the TDC and will be notified in advance of the presentation date.

Eligible Expenses

1. Entertainment fees, e.g. musicians, singers and other performers
2. Exhibits or materials for special activities as part of an event or festival
3. Advertising, marketing, postage, printing (applications & registration forms) and the purchase of mailing lists
4. Transportation for larger venues, e.g.: carriages, wagons, shuttles, particularly if additional transportation options are needed to increase attendance
5. Equipment rental such as staging and lighting
6. Event signage
7. Prize money is eligible if it is: a) published in all advertising; b) subject to published guidelines for the event c) does not exceed $2000; d) subject to the review of at least three people who are responsible for determining the prize winner if a decision is required for that determination. Prize money may <u>only</u> be used for an activity which requires skill and may not be used for raffles, lotteries or any game of chance where something of value is required to enter and prizes are awarded by chance or lot.
8. Location fees, permitting fees for an event
9. Event insurance

Ineligible Expenses

1. Any event expenses not specifically approved for funding under "Eligible Expenses."
2. Salaries, administrative expenses or other monetary compensation to event organization staff.
3. Food and beverage or any hospitality or social functions
4. Any entertainment that is not for the general audience of the event
5. Legal, medical, engineering, accounting, or other consulting services
6. Interest or reduction of deficits or loans
7. Police or public safety services

Required Post Event Documentation

Due within 90 days following the last day of the event

1. Document all EDP funded expenditures. Provide copies of <u>receipts</u> and signed contracts for all *EDP funded* expenses. If necessary, the VCB can make copies and return the originals to you.

2. Provide evidence of local partnerships and how you worked together.

3. Provide documentation of attendance estimates and the process used to determine attendance numbers, e.g.: ticket sales, aerial photos, law enforcement estimates, etc. Please see attached suggested event survey.

4. Provide documentation of all relevant media coverage. This may be done in an excel spreadsheet. Include:

     Type of Media (print, radio, television, etc.)

     Circulation or audience reach

     Geographic coverage of each advertising placement – local, regional, national or international

5. Provide a general overview of the event to include:

     Elements of the event that were most successful

     Changes that would make the event more successful

     Any factors impacting the event either positively or negatively (weather, etc.)

6. Provide estimate of, and method used to determine room night generation. Please see attached room night tracking form.

ROOM NIGHT CERTIFICATION FORM

TO: Accommodation General Manager and/or Director of Sales

The purpose of this form is to quantify the actual number of room nights utilized in Charlotte County for the _____ Event. Your cooperation in documentation of these room nights is very important to the Visitor & Convention Bureau and our Event Marketing efforts. Thank you in advance for your assistance. Please provide the following information.

Hotel/Location: _____

TRACKED ROOM NIGHTS						
GROUP NAME						
EVENT						
DATE						
PAID ROOM NIGHTS						
COMP ROOM NIGHTS						

Please provide any comments:

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

SUGGESTED PARTICIPANT SURVEY

Visitor Tracking Survey: (Name of Event)

Hi, my name is _____, and we are taking a short survey about **(Name of the Event)**. I would like to ask you 4-5 questions that only take a minute.

-Where do you live?
City: _____   Zip Code: _____

-Are you here by yourself or with others? If others, how many are in your group?
Size of travel party: _____

-Are you (or your party) staying in a local hotel? -   ( ) Yes   ( ) No

      (If yes, Which Hotel? _____)

      (If yes, how many rooms for your party? _____)

      (If yes, how many nights for your party?   )