



Sponsorship Guidelines and Application

Tourism Sponsorship Guidelines

Introduction

The Columbia County Convention & Visitors Bureau (CCCVB) is pleased to announce the Tourism Sponsorship Program to enhance visitor and tourism promotion efforts in Columbia County. This Sponsorship is made possible as a result of the local hotel/motel tax. The CCCVB designates a portion of this tax to make this Sponsorship possible in order to promote activities, attractions and special events, thereby fostering local economic development and creating economic impact through tourism. Any and all decisions regarding awarding or not awarding Sponsorships are at the sole discretion of the Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Sponsorships are first reviewed by the Tourism Sponsorship Review Committee and final approval is made by the CCCVB Board of Directors.

Mission

The purpose of this Sponsorship program is to provide funds for marketing and other qualified expenses directed towards increasing the number of overnight visitors to Columbia County from outside the area.

Qualifying Programs and Events

Programs: Qualifying entities may be attractions, associations, organizations or governmental or quasi-governmental agencies which promote their products and/or services to visitors from 60 miles outside the area.

Festival/Event: A festival is a cultural event or group of events planned, produced, and promoted in a well-defined period and organized to occur at regular intervals, usually on an annual basis, all related to a common cultural form, theme or vision.

There is no guarantee that all applicants will be awarded a Sponsorship. Even though a project may qualify, limited funds may not allow all projects to receive assistance. Any and all decisions regarding awarding or not awarding Sponsorships are at the sole discretion of the Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must fulfill all of the following:

- Have completed at least one year of fiscal operation.
- A Post Event Report is required for reimbursement of the remaining possibly awards and is determined by actual economic impact. In order to assess the impact of each event on the Columbia County, GA transient lodging industry, the Columbia County CVB emphasizes the importance of tracking the number of overnight visitors attending the event.

Should your event use a registration procedure, we encourage you to utilize the attached Visitor Tracking Form (Appendix A) to gather the requested information.

Each participant/group should sign his or her name, hotel in which they are residing, number of rooms secured, number of days, and the number of guests staying in each room. This information will be used to help track the number of visitors attending each event. Furthermore, the information can be used to determine the growth of a particular event. Subsequently, the growth of an event can impact the funding level of the sponsorship awarded to the organization.

Following the event, the Columbia County CVB reserves the right to conduct a post-audit of information presented on the Post-Event Report (Appendix B). All lodging accommodations listed will be contacted to confirm the number of room nights generated for the event.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ANY MISLEADING OR FALSE INFORMATION PRESENTED CAN AND WILL ADVERSELY AFFECT FUTURE AWARDS.

- All applicants must represent an ongoing, sustainable activity.
- No qualified entity may serve as a fiscal agent for a non-qualified entity.
- If requested, applicant may be required to furnish the CCCVB with up to 10% of all printed materials produced with the assistance of this Sponsorship.
- Applicants should be able to demonstrate the ability to execute its project without depending on the continued financial assistance from these funds. It should be the intention of the organization to be self-sustaining.
- The festival/event must take place in Columbia County with the expectation of overnight stays, organizers must use Columbia County Hotels. Or, if it is a program, the office must be located in Columbia County.
- An application and all related documents must be submitted and approved by the CCCVB Tourism Sponsorship Review Committee.
- Recognition of the Columbia County Convention and Visitors Bureau must be included where appropriate on all printed material and referred to in public relations activities. A camera-ready logo can be provided. The event website must link to the CVB website and must list only Columbia County lodging partners.
- The CCCVB encourages the use of local vendors.
- Failure to submit a complete Post-Event Report may result in disqualification for support.

- Funding will be disbursed as a partial payment. 50% of the total award will be disbursed before the event and the remaining funds will be on a reimbursement basis and determined by actual Economic Impact. Tear sheets or proof of marketing materials must be presented with the reimbursement invoice.

Funding Purposes

All Sponsorships must be used for expenses directly related to the project. Again, Sponsorships must be used for marketing and other allowable expenses directed toward increasing hotel/motel room nights (overnight visitors) and toward bringing people to Columbia County from outside the metropolitan area. **All print materials or advertising media must include the Columbia County CVB Logo.** The list below is a guide, but is not comprehensive. If you have questions about proper use of funding, please contact our office for clarification prior to spending the awarded funding. Allowable and disallowable expenses include, but are not limited to, the following:

Allowable Expenses

- Development of new events or major exhibits and activities
- Promotional activities that complement advertising, including materials that create awareness and build or maintain a good image of Columbia County, e.g., printing of brochures or inserts for events.
- Production costs of media advertising
- Marketing expenses, including outside professional marketing service.
- The purchase of recognized media advertising focusing on attracting visitors to Columbia County (radio, television, internet, billboard, magazine and newspaper). Advertising buys must include markets more than 60 miles from Columbia County or with broadcast radii of 60+ miles. Local media outlets do not normally meet the intended purpose of the Sponsorship and will receive less consideration than media outlets located 60+ miles outside of Columbia County.
- No more than 50% of Sponsorship funds may be used for postage.

Disallowable Expenses

- Capital expenditures
- Rent of offices, repairs, renovation and/or remodeling of facilities
- General operating or administrative expenses
- General staff or personnel costs (excluding sales and marketing staff)
- Interest or the reduction of deficits or loans
- Expenses incurred or obligated before Sponsorship project approval
- Projects restricted to private or exclusive participation, other than certain grand and pre-opening expenses

- Scholarships or endowments
- Cash awards of any description
- Expenses not directly related to the approved program
- Activities related to any for-profit organization
- Activities or materials which violate the law

Core Stipulations

- Failure to submit the agreed upon procedures and final report by the deadline is unacceptable and may result in penalties up to and including a full refund of Sponsorship funds.
- Organizations receiving a Tourism Sponsorship must have a reciprocal link on their Web site to www.VisitColumbiaCountyga.com Web site. The consumer must be able to reach www.VisitColumbiaCountyga.com in one click.
- Applicants who do not comply with all deadlines and procedures may be disqualified as eligible to receive Tourism Sponsorship Funds for one year.

Sponsorship Review Criteria

Applications are evaluated in the following areas:

- 1) Economic impact potential, i.e. increasing visitation, restaurant sales, and **most importantly, hotel occupancy**
- 2) Excellence and merit of program or event
- 3) Merit of marketing plan
- 4) Ability to attract and service visitors
- 5) Fiscal stability and administrative ability

In addition, the Columbia County CVB recognizes the significant impact that some events may have on the community in furthering economic development and the quality of life. Thus, other factors that may be considered in funding eligibility are:

- Date of the event. Is the event scheduled during a typically low occupancy period?
- Estimated number of out-of-town visitors and their length of stay.
- Is there a marketing plan for the promotion of the event?
- Method and use of revenues generated to host organization, if any.

The amount of funding to be awarded is determined by the number of room nights projected and/or the total economic impact of the event and the amount of funds available in the budget. Please see following guidelines for funding.

FUNDING LEVELS (may be altered during blackout periods, i.e. Masters Week, Peach Jam, etc.)

Room Nights	and/or	Economic Impact	Possible Awards
Up to 50		\$10,000 or higher	Up to \$ 500
51 - 250		\$30,000 or higher	Up to \$1,000
251- 499		\$100,000 or higher	Up to \$2,000
500-749		\$250,000 or higher	Up to \$3,000
750-1,499		\$500,000 or higher	Up to \$5,000
1,500 or more		\$1,000,000 or higher	Up to \$7,000

*Post-Event Reporting and disbursement of the remaining funding will be determined at the discretion of the Convention and Visitors Bureau Board of Directors. Extenuating circumstances may be taken into account if deemed necessary by the Board of Directors.

How to find the funding level for award request:

Column 1 represents the number of estimated room nights for the event. Column 2 represents the estimated economic impact range for your event. Column 3 represents the range of money for which the applicant may qualify.

EXAMPLE: If the estimated number of room nights is 114 and the economic impact is \$37,000 the award can be as much as \$1000.

EXAMPLE: If the estimated number of room nights is 1100 and the economic impact is less than \$500,000 then the committee will have to vote on which level to pay the award based on the complete application and community impact level.

Only 50% of the possible award is available prior to the event. The remaining funds are reimbursed once the post event report is submitted and are based on actual economic impact.

The sponsorship amount is awarded based on estimated economic impact; 50% of the possible award is available before the event. The remaining funds are reimbursed once the post event report is submitted and are based on the actual economic impact on the Post Event Report. (ie, If an event application estimated economic impact is \$10,000, and are awarded up to \$500 they would be eligible to receive \$250 before the event and the additional funds as a reimbursement sponsorship after the event, but only generate \$5,000 in economic impact based on their Post Event Report then the event will only be eligible for \$250. On the other hand, if the event estimates a \$10,000 economic impact, awarded up to \$500 as a reimbursement sponsorship, but generates \$11,000 in economic impact based on their Post Event Report, the event is only eligible for the \$1,000 total sponsorship.) Funding is based on a fiscal year budget from July 1 to June 30 and is available on a first come basis. Once the funds are allocated for the year there will not be more funds available until the next fiscal year.

Application Process

The Tourism Sponsorship Program consists of four basic areas:

- 1) Completed application
- 2) Sponsorship awarded by the Tourism Sponsorship Review Committee
- 3) Signed contract between the applicant and the CCCVB
- 4) A final report and agreed upon procedures are due to the CCCVB within ninety (90) days of the completion of the event or project. Programs and organizations must submit the same by June 30 of the year following the award.

If deadlines fall on a weekend or a holiday, applications and final reports are due by 4:00pm on the following business day.

Please submit applications to Shelly Blackburn

SBlackburn@ChooseColumbiaCounty.com

706-447-7677

1000 Business Blvd.

Evans, GA 30809

APPLICATION

(All applications must be received at least 60 days prior to an event)

Please Print or Type:

1. Name of Event: _____

2. Date of Event: _____

Start time: _____ End Time: _____

Cost to Attend: \$ _____

3. Description of Event:

4. Host Organization: _____

5. Description of Organization (include date organization was created):

6. Contact Person: _____

(Name)

(Title)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Daytime Contact #: _____ Email Address: _____

7. Non-Profit Organization: _____ Yes: _____ No:

If yes, Tax Exempt ID# _____

8. Liability/Medical Insurance? _____ Yes _____ No

Name of Carrier: _____

(Please include Proof of Insurance Coverage in Application packet)

9. Has venue/facility been secured? _____ Yes _____ No

If so, please list: _____

Contact Name and Day Phone #: _____

14. Economic Impact:

Number of Overnight Visitors x \$109.00 = _____(A)

_____(A) x number of nights = _____(B)

of day-trippers x \$55.00 = _____(C)

of local participants = _____ (not included in economic impact)

_____(C) x number of days = _____(D)

_____(B) + _____(D) = _____
(Total Economic Impact)

15. What plans have been made for promotion?

16. Amount of funding requested: \$ _____

Intended use of funds: _____

17. Have you received CVB funding in the past? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, include amount, name of event and year received:

Please return the original signed application ensuring an understanding and compliance with the conditions of this agreement to:

Columbia County Convention & Visitors Bureau
1000 Business Blvd
Evans, GA 30809

APPLICANT:

I, hereby, certify that I have been provided a copy of the Policies and Procedures of the Columbia County Convention and Visitors Bureau Tourism Sponsorship Program. I agree to comply with the policies therein as a condition of receiving funds from the Columbia County Convention & Visitors Bureau. Failure to submit the Post Event Report within **45 days** will result in disqualification for funding and future disbursements.

Name: _____

Organization: _____

(Signature)

(Date)

Columbia County Convention & Visitors Bureau

Tourism Sponsorship Program

VISITOR TRACKING FORM

Event Participant	Hotel	# of Rooms	# of Nights	# of Guests per Room

This form is to be used at registration desk.

**Columbia County Convention & Visitors Bureau
Tourism Sponsorship Program**

POST EVENT REPORT

Name of Event: _____

Date(s) of Event: _____ Awarded Amount: \$ _____

Contact/Title: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____ Telephone: _____

Actual Attendance

Total # of out-of-town overnight visitors	
Total # of day-trippers (travels more than 90 miles to event not anticipated to stay in a hotel overnight)	
Total # of local participants (travels less than 90 miles to event)	
Total visitors/participants:	

Total # Room Nights (room nights = # rooms x # nights)

Hotel	Total Room Nights	Room Rate

Provide summary of media exposure received (local, regional and national/ print/ television and radio) as well as examples of promotional materials (brochures, posters, programs, etc.). **Please add additional sheet if needed.**

Certification

On behalf of the organization identified on this application, I certify that the submitted application meets all the eligibility requirements for the CCCVB Tourism Sponsorship Program.

I understand that no funds will be awarded to a project that is completed prior to written approval notification by Columbia County CVB Tourism Sponsorship Review Committee.

I understand that in order to receive sponsorship funds, the event must take place as described in my application. Should any changes occur, a revised application must be submitted to the committee for approval. The Columbia County CVB Tourism Sponsorship Review Committee reserves the right to revoke sponsorship funding. Penalties up to and including a full refund of sponsorship funds may occur.

The applicant hereby certifies:

A. That the applicant will comply with all applicable laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, age, or handicap.

B. The applicant is aware the CCCVB must comply with certain state requirements, which may impact proposed projects. CCCVB funded projects must comply with all federal, state and community licenses, permits, laws and regulations.

C. To the best of my knowledge and belief the information contained in this application is true and correct and the governing body of the applicant has duly authorized the documentation.

Signature (required)

Name (printed)

Title

Date

*Failure to submit a Post Event Report within **45 days** will result in loss of reimbursement funds and disqualification for future disbursements.*