



## **TOURISM GRANT GUIDELINES & INFORMATION**

Visit Eau Claire is a non-stock, not-for-profit, private corporation, established to develop the tourism industry in the Eau Claire area. Visit Eau Claire's revenue sources include annual appropriations from room tax dollars and various revenue generating programs and grants.

The Visit Eau Claire grant programs assists entities with tourism marketing, promotion, attractions, special events, and festivals that will foster local economic impact and higher destination appeal through tourism ultimately resulting in increased visitation from outside of the Eau Claire County area.

### **Grant Program**

The purpose of the tourism grant program is to assist organizations in hosting events that will promote a positive image to potential visitors, generate overnight visits, extend visitor stays and create a desire to return. First consideration will be given to new and expanding festivals, sports tournaments, conventions, and special events benefiting the City of Eau Claire. This is a competitive application, based on limited resource dollars. The grants are made possible each year through the generous support of the City of Eau Claire, based on recommendations from the Visit Eau Claire Grants Committee and with final approval by the Visit Eau Claire Board of Directors.

### **Eligibility**

- For-profit organizations, Not-for-profit organizations, Non-profit organizations, volunteer managed organizations, and individuals may apply
- Organizations that receive money from the City of Eau Claire Community Enhancement Fund may only apply for specific projects and/or programs outside the scope of existing operations

### **Application Guidelines**

- All grants are encouraged to be matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis - matching funds include cash contributions, in-kind contributions or a combination of both
- The event date must occur a minimum 45 days after the respective April 15 and November 15 grant cycle dates:
  - April - event dates from July 1 to December 31
  - November - event dates from January 1 and June 30
- Indicate within the application the purpose of urgency if the event date occurs more than 6 months after the grant cycle date
- In-kind services include complimentary contributions of space, materials, equipment or professional services (calculated on a local wage scale acceptable to Visit Eau Claire)
- Grants are not federally funded; therefore indirect (F&I) costs are not applicable.
- Choose the funding category best suited to your event
- Applications must be legible and signed by applicant – only complete applications will be considered



- Applicants must have a valid organization bank account (non-personal)
- All events must create a positive image of Eau Claire and the Chippewa Valley
- If a project changes during the development stages, notice must be submitted to Visit Eau Claire for approval before modification.
- Grant funds cannot be reallocated to a different event if the original event submitted for funding does not occur.
- If the event does not take place, the grant award is cancelled and any expenses incurred are not eligible for reimbursement, including force majeure.

## **Tourism Grants Specifications**

- Grant projects must have a significant impact on overnight stays within the City of Eau Claire
- Grants must be used for marketing the project to promote tourism

## **Application Procedures**

- Grant applications are reviewed twice a year – November 15 and April 15
- Late applications will NOT be accepted. On rare occasions, deadlines will be extended
- Visit Eau Claire staff reviews applications and clarifies areas as needed with the applicant
- The Visit Eau Claire Grant Committee reviews and evaluates applications, completing a standard rating form, and makes funding recommendations to the Board of Directors for approval
- After the Board of Directors approval/denial (approximately six weeks after the application deadline) a written notification is forwarded to all applicants
- The Visit Eau Claire Board of Directors reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications - all decisions made by the Board of Directors are final
- Grant funds are disbursed post-event – AFTER SUBMISSION OF THE REQUIRED FINAL EVALUATION REPORT
- Indicate within the application the purpose of urgency if the event date occurs more than 6 months after the grant application is submitted

## **Review Criteria**

- Completeness of application
- Level of community impact and public benefit
- Uniqueness of project
- Quality of the proposed project
- Evidence of careful financial planning
- Evidence of need and sustainability/growth potential
- Preference will be given to events that create regional partnerships/collaborations and have not received Visit Eau Claire grant funds in the current fiscal year.
- 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.



- Each application will be evaluated against established criteria, past performance and historic precedent.

## **Scoring Criteria**

- Demonstrates high quality of project and financial planning
- Demonstrates evidence of sustainability growth potential
- Enhances tourism spending through new hotel room night generation
- Enhances visitor spending at area businesses
- Offers a unique and creative project for the community and visitors to enjoy

## **Ineligible Organizations & Programs**

- Organizations that discriminate because of race, color, creed, gender, national origin or limited participation
- Political organizations, candidates for political office, and organizations whose primary purpose is to influence legislation
- Building (brick and mortar) or capital campaigns
- Staffing/administrative costs
- Individuals and organizations which have not fulfilled all previous grant administrative guidelines
- Fraternal organizations, churches of church-related groups with proposals which promote religion or an individual doctrine