

FY26 Tourism Advertising & Development Grant Guidelines

Visit Frederick (the Tourism Council of Frederick County, Inc.) is allocating \$450,000 toward its Tourism Reinvestment in Promotion & Product (TRIPP) Program for FY26, July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026. The TRIPP program has awarded over \$4,100,000 since the inception of the program in 2006.

Included within the FY26 program is \$260,000 for Tourism Advertising Awards and \$170,000 for Tourism Development Grants which both have an application deadline of MONDAY, March 31, 2025. Applications must be submitted through the digital platform.

Advertising awards are intended to reach audiences through media outlets that can demonstrate that at least half of their audience lives outside of Frederick County.

The purpose of TRIPP **Development Grants** is to help create new reasons for residents of other areas to want to visit Frederick County. This may include new or enhanced attractions, exhibits, website development, or major events (those attracting at least 500 attendees). Marketing expenses may also be covered with Development Grant funds, including brochure or poster printing, direct mail, advertising, or trade show registrations.

Awards will be announced in mid-May.

The intended use of these funds is to increase tourism and enhance the visitor experience in Frederick County. Preference is given to applications for initiatives likely to attract visitors from outside of Frederick County who are inclined to stay overnight. An additional \$20,000 is allocated for the TRIPP Group Overnight Incentive Fund and Unanticipated Opportunities grants. There is \$20,000 set aside for TRIPP Tourist Area and Corridor (TAC) Signage Program.

Applications may be submitted by nonprofit attractions or government agencies within Frederick County, as well as by nonprofit organizations that produce large events that are held within Frederick County, and which attract attendees from outside of Frederick County. Main Street organizations may only apply for advertising awards since there is a dedicated Main Street Cooperative Funding program.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend one of the TRIPP workshops in February scheduled for **Tuesday, February 4th at 11:00 AM or Friday, February 21st at 1:00 PM**. Complete and return the workshop RSVP form. If an organization does not attend a TRIPP workshop and receives funding, they will be required to attend training with Visit Frederick prior to beginning their grant project.

Successful applicants will be required to provide on their website a graphic/link to the <http://www.visitfrederick.org> website. The site encourages extending the visit to the attraction or event, hopefully overnight, by showcasing additional visitor experiences. If a past applicant, you will be asked to justify success or failure of previous TRIPP awards in the application.

Your complete application packet will include:

A. Completed application(s) - submitted electronically through the Submittable platform.

- Section I & IV completed by all applicants.
- Complete Section II and/or III as applicable.

B. Confirmation of non-profit status (such as IRS letter of determination)

- **First time applicant**
- **Previous applicant** – documentation is on file with the Tourism Council

C. Non-local Media Schedule for Advertising Award applications

D. Explanation in application (Advertising and/or Development) of how you will measure visitor attendance and/or overnight stays resulting from your use of grant funds.

Failure to attach any required documents will result in disqualification of your application.

Please **DO**

- *Ensure all attachments are on 8 ½ x 11 sheets of paper.*
- *Double check math calculations.*
- *Ensure all required fields of the application are completed.*

Please **DO NOT**

- *Provide additional material or information that is not requested.*
- *USE ALL CAPS or underline.*
- *Do not attach excessive supplemental documents.*

Section I -Performance Measures #2 - How will you **promote** overnight stays in Frederick County hotels and other increased visitation to Frederick County, in addition to inserting the required TRIPP graphic/link on your website? Examples include: Print, Own website, Social Media, Online Ads, Partner with other events with same event timeframe, Cross

promote using collateral available from Visit Frederick (i.e., Visit Frederick magazine, Calendar of Events, other).

Section II – Advertising (A)

A-1 -Tourism Advertising award funding is paid out directly to media outlets that have been selected by the successful applicant. Applicants for these funds submit a media schedule with their grant application, identifying media outlets (digital, print, broadcast or outdoor) that will deliver the applicant’s message to a relevant audience. Advertising means the purchase of space or time for which you will be invoiced to deliver a message to someone else’s established audience.

A-2 - Media Schedule Award

Media schedule contains only non-local media outlets, \$2,000 min. to \$40,000 max. award.

Applicant must match award with a contribution of 33.3% of total schedule expenses. Media schedule reflects a total dollar value of at least 1.5 times the requested award amount, as it incorporates the applicant’s 33.3% match. The media schedule must propose placements with media outlets that can demonstrate that at least half of their audience lives outside of Frederick County.

Section III – Development (D)

D-1 - Development Project Expenses - Please note the applicant does not need to match each line item, but rather the entire project must be matched 50/50. Add additional lines if needed using the project expenses format.

Section IV – Matching Fund sources

Section IV - 1 - An example of other revenue might be admission ticket sales.

Matching funds can be derived from:

- Applicant dollars
- Sponsorships
- Donated dollars
- Leveraging another grant

For each source of matching funds, indicate if the funding is secured at time of application.

TRIPP is a locally funded grant and can be used as a matching funding source for state and federal grants.

Section IV – 2 - Attach letters of intent from any partners that are providing financial or in-kind support.

An in-kind match could include:

- Donated physical items – examples - rental venue, printed collateral
- Donated professional services – classified as someone who routinely, as a career, provides that service – examples – accounting services, legal services, painting, IT development
- Volunteer hours will NOT be accepted as in-kind match
- Staff time will NOT be accepted as an in-kind match.

Do not submit extraneous reports. Supplemental information and statistics should be summarized and included in the application.

All in-kind matches need to be valued and documented by the donating organization(s). In-kind service documents must include work performed, date/dates of the service and hourly rate and hours donated.