



2023 SIGNATURE EVENTS PROGRAM REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS



DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF PROPOSALS IS

May 22, 2023, 4:30 p.m. HST

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SECTION 1 – OVERVIEW AND TIMELINE

1.1 Purpose of Signature Events Program

The Hawai'i Visitors & Convention Bureau (HVCB) and the Island Chapters are administering Hawai'i Tourism Authority's (HTA) Signature Events Program. HTA is the lead government agency for tourism established by the State of Hawai'i in 1998, pursuant to Chapter 201B of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes. Its mission is to strategically manage Hawai'i tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, community desires, and visitor industry needs. In addition, HTA's Five-Year Strategic Plan 2020-2025 lays out HTA's community pillar objective to "generate and/or invest in initiatives and projects that provide for positive resident-visitor interaction, celebrate Hawai'i's multicultural heritage, and support better relations between the community and tourism industry."

The Signature Events program supports major events that have broad appeal and align with Hawai'i's destination's image and brand. These world-class events help Hawai'i to remain competitive, generate media exposure for Hawai'i, increase economic benefits, and ensure tourism and communities enrich each other. Signature Events aim to attract attendees and participants from outside the state of Hawai'i with extensive national and international marketing and have a significant economic impact as measured by the number of out-of-state participants. The program also seeks to support and strengthen existing events in our communities and create new events for both residents and visitors alike. These events are typically larger in scale than those in the Community Enrichment Program.

The HTA supports Signature Events that provide an experience that is unique and enriching, while valuing and perpetuating Hawai'i's natural resources, Hawaiian culture, and honoring its people and traditions. To provide a diverse and quality tourism product unique to Hawai'i, the Signature Events Program also supports such events that celebrate its diverse multi-cultures and community. Signature Events are strategically positioned during normally soft or "shoulder" periods to attract visitors to travel during these times of the year.

The overarching purpose of Signature Sports Events is to draw visitors to the Hawaiian Islands from outside of the State to attend or participate in high profile events. Signature Sports Events are designed to have a high level of TV, digital, social and print exposure that highlight the state across multiple markets.

The objectives of the Signature Events Program are to:

- Exemplify the unique Hawai'i brand.
- Provide economic benefit to communities.
- Support marketing and promotional efforts with The Hawaiian Islands and keep in line with each island's brand identity.
- Create events, activities, and experiences which fulfill visitors' expectations of a quality destination:
 - Unique (to Hawai'i) activities/experiences.
 - Friendly interaction with residents.
 - Variety of activities/experiences.
 - Variety of cuisine and dining options.
 - Good value for the money.
- Ensure a sufficient number of quality, innovative visitor experiences to satisfy the high number of returning visitors and visitors with sophisticated needs.
- Attract attendees and participants from outside the state of Hawai'i with extensive national and international marketing.

1.2 Orientation/Informational Briefings

The HVCB and the Island Chapters will conduct two virtual general briefings to provide information and answer questions about both the Community Enrichment Program and this RFP at the same time. Registration is available at hvcb.org/cep.

- Thursday, May 4, 10:00-11:30 a.m.
- Monday, May 8, 10:00-11:30 a.m.

1.3 RFP Point-of-Contact

All questions and communications regarding this RFP shall be addressed to the point-of-contact listed below.

Signature Events Program

Email: SEP-Statewide@hvcb.org

Phone: (808) 924-0241

All emails must include the “HTA Signature Events RFP” in the subject line.

1.4 Disclaimer: Cancellation and Cost Liability

HVCB reserves the right to cancel this RFP, or any components of this RFP, at any time. HVCB assumes no responsibility and bears no liability for costs incurred by an applicant in the preparation and submission of proposals in response to this RFP. An applicant may not bill the HVCB for any costs or expenses incurred in pursuit of this award. Any incumbent under any HTA contract may not use HTA-funded resources to prepare its Proposal.

1.5 What are the Differences Among Community Enrichment Program, Kūkulu Ola Program, Aloha ‘Āina, and Signature Events Program

HTA’s Kūkulu Ola and Aloha ‘Āina projects can sometimes be events-based and so there can be some confusion regarding which RFP to apply for. HTA has made the following distinctions regarding the designation of different events:

- Kūkulu Ola: Hawaiian cultural events that are recurring and/or part of a larger program/project. For example, a weekly hula event over the course of the summer period, monthly steel guitar event, or an educational program that culminates with a ho’olaule’a.
- Aloha ‘Āina: Natural resources oriented-events that are recurring and/or part of a larger program/project. For example, an educational program that culminates with a festival or a community outreach event.
- Community Enrichment Program: Hawaiian cultural events and festivals that are stand-alone gatherings/event and are not recurring. For example, an annual hula competition, parade, or ho’olaule’a.
- Signature Event: Attracts attendees and participants from outside the state of Hawai’i with extensive national and international marketing. They are typically high-profile events larger in scale than those in the Community Enrichment Program. These events also have a high media value, i.e., print, online, and broadcast impressions.

SECTION 2 – APPLICANT AND PROJECT ELIGIBILITY/SPECIFICATIONS

The HVCB and the Island Chapters seek proposals for HTA’s Signature Events Program that meet the proposal guidelines and the following project eligibility.

2.1 Nonprofits and Government Agencies Only

- **Entity Type:** Applicant must be a licensed 501(c)(3). We will not accept applications from for-profit businesses for this RFP. For-profit businesses who apply under a fiscal sponsor for the purpose of achieving non-profit status will be rejected.

2.2 Term, Location, Award Limit

- **Project Term:** Project occurring during June through December 2023.
- **Project Location:** Project must take place in the State of Hawai‘i.
- **Award Limit:** HVCB is not imposing an award limit. However, applicant will be judged on the reasonableness of their request and the likelihood of success. See also, Paragraph 2.4, “Use of HTA Funds/Non-Allowable Expenses.”

2.3 Media Exposure

The RFP should outline marketing efforts within Hawai‘i, nationally, and internationally. It should also include anticipated media exposure and as many details as possible should be provided.

2.4 Use of Funds/Non-allowable Expenses

The following activities are **not** eligible for SEP funding:

- a. A recurring Hawaiian culture or natural resources event/activity. Please apply to HTA’s Kūkulu Ola program or Aloha ‘Āina. Recurring means weekly, monthly, or quarterly.
- b. Business or organizational start-up plans;
- c. Fundraising events (an event to raise money for your organization or a specific cause);
- d. Litigation efforts
- e. Endowments;
- f. Real Property;
- g. Capital improvements;
- h. Conferences/Conventions;
- i. Salaries and fringe benefits;
- j. Prize money;
- k. Merchandising (HTA funds to purchase goods (e.g. T-shirts) which will be resold for a profit);
- l. Computer equipment;
- m. Projects receiving funding from other HTA programs for the year 2023, including, but not limited to, the HTA’s Kūkulu Ola Program and Aloha ‘Āina Program;
- n. Reimbursement for pre-award expenditures or costs before June 1, 2023;
- o. Administrative costs outside of salary and fringe benefits: Only up to twenty percent (20%) of award money may be used for administrative costs.

2.5 Multiple Proposals and Other HTA Programs

- **Multiple Proposals to Signature Events Program.** Multiple proposals from an organization for *different and separate projects* will be accepted and considered independently of each other.
- **Applications to Other HTA Programs for the Same Proposal.** HTA solicits proposals for a variety of programs (community enrichment programs, Hawaiian culture, natural resources, etc.). An applicant may not apply for funding from more than one (1) of those programs for the same project or event. In addition, a project or event may not receive funding from more than one (1) HTA program in the same year.

2.6 Matching Funds Are Required

Matching funds are a requirement. A minimum of one to one (1:1) in matching funds to the amount of funds awarded by the HTA is required. At least 50% (.5:1) of the match must be in the form of cash. An additional 50% (.5:1) match is required but may be in the form of cash, in-kind contributions, or a combination of cash and in-kind contributions.

Matching funds shall not come from other state government sources including other HTA programs or the HTA's major contractors such as, but not limited to, the Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau or its Island Chapters. The project may be supported by other state government funds, but these funds may not be used as part of the required match to the HTA funds.

2.7 Signature Events Program Awardee Training Workshops

Applicants awarded funds through this RFP must agree to attend HVCB-mandated training workshops/seminars on contract management and payment process, public relations, and other relevant topics.

2.8 Signature Events Program Evaluation

Applicants awarded funds through this RFP must agree to be evaluated by HTA's contracted evaluation team, if requested.

2.9 Preferred Practices

Many efforts tied to the future of Hawai'i's visitor industry call for encouraging sustainable practices that affect the "triple bottom line" – the economy, the community, and the environment. These practices are strongly encouraged and recommended.

- a. **Environmental Sustainability.** The HTA would like to encourage applicants to consider incorporating and implementing "green" practices into your program and/or project. These practices could include, but are not limited to, efforts such as:
 1. Increasing recycling efforts;
 2. Minimizing waste production;
 3. Buying local;
 4. Minimizing printing and limiting number of handouts;
 5. Using recycled products such as paper for printing;
 6. Using more environmentally friendly products or biodegradable products;
 7. Providing transportation alternatives such as car sharing or park and rides;
 8. Conserving water;
 9. Ensuring your venue has an environmental sustainability policy; and/or
 10. Incorporating energy efficient practices.

Please refer to the state of Hawai'i Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism's ENERGY Office's [Green Business Program](#).

- b. **Authentic & Accurate Representation.** As identified in HTA's Strategic Plan 2020-2025, one of HTA's objectives is to "encourage accurate portrayal of Hawaiian culture in visitor industry marketing and experiences for visitors." As such, the HTA encourages applicants to use best efforts to follow the [Ma'ema'e Tool Kit](#) on the HTA website. This Tool Kit includes Hawaiian Language Tools and a Style & Resource Guide among other resources.

2.10 Rejection of Proposals

- **Requirements must be met.** HVCB and the Island Chapters reserve the right to consider as acceptable, responsible, and responsive only those proposals submitted in accordance with the RFP requirements.
- **Reasons.** A Proposal may be automatically rejected for the following reasons:
 - Failure to cooperate or deal in good faith;
 - Late proposals;
 - Proposal submitted to multiple HTA programs simultaneously;
 - Failure to submit in accordance with the RFP requirements, or failure to supply an adequate response to the RFP;
 - Lack of demonstrated experience or expertise;
 - Inadequate accounting system or internal controls;
 - Failure to meet the terms of agreement on any previous HTA award.

SECTION 3 – PROPOSAL OUTLINE AND INSTRUCTIONS

3.1 Submission Method

Applications must be submitted via email. The deadline is May 22, 2023, at 4:30 p.m. Hawai'i Standard Time (HST) .

Signature Events Program:

Email: SEP-Statewide@hvcb.org

3.2 Schedule of Events

	Date
Initial RFP release date	Friday, April 28, 2023
RFP Informational Briefing	May 4 and May 8, see page 5
Deadline for submission of proposals	May 22, 2023, at 4:30 p.m. HST
Contract award notification (estimated)	Week of June 5

3.2 Submission Deadline

The deadline for submission is **May 22, 2023, at 4:30 p.m. HST**.

3.3 Proposal Contents

Your proposal will consist of:

- **Application & Proposal form:** This form includes identifying information as well as the proposal information and the budget narrative. ALL FIELDS MUST BE FILLED IN.
- **Itemized Budget Form** (created as an Excel spreadsheet)
- **Other Attachments:**
 1. **List of Applicant's current Board of Directors** and/or leadership including names, titles, and affiliations.
 2. Applicant's **Articles of Incorporation** (preferred), or other documentation such as Bylaws that verify the person(s) authorized to sign legal documents on behalf of the organization.
 3. **Letters of Recommendation/Support.** Any letters of recommendation/support must be included with the proposal and submitted by the proposal deadline. Letters should be dated and signed. We will not accept recommendation letters after the deadline has passed. Maximum 3 letters.

SECTION 4 – SCORING/EVALUATION CRITERIA

4.1 Selection Committee

Proposals are evaluated by a Selection Committee whose members are selected by the HVCB and the Island Chapters and include representatives of the Island Chapters, HTA as well as community and business representatives throughout the state.

4.2 Scoring Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following scoring criteria. Also refer to the rubric, which provides a breakdown of the scoring the Selection Committee will be referencing:

Project Components (1-50 points)

- Meets Signature Events Program goals and objectives
- New Project – development of new experiences that have not been offered by others more generally.
- Enhancement of Existing Project – demonstrates enhancement and/or innovation of existing project or event to better the experience for the attendee.
- Executable Marketing & Promotional Plan – shows the ability to reach the right target audiences to ensure visitor and resident attendance and/or participation goals. Plan should show there is sufficient reach, frequency, and other measures to be effective and is timed appropriately to affect awareness, consideration and conversion of audience.
- High exposure and alignment with the [Hawai'i Brand - The Hawaiian Islands](#).
- Market penetration of HTA's major market areas: U.S., Canada, Japan, Oceania, Korea, and China.
- Highlights state's diversity and host culture.
- Work Plan and Timeline – work plan and timeline appear reasonable to execute the event/program.
- Community Support and Involvement – evidence of partnerships with outside organizations and visitor industry partners. Project has broad based community support and is in line with community value and community resources.

Project Impact and Performance Measures (1-20 points)

Reasonable and significant measures identified demonstrating positive economic impact on Hawai'i's community and visitor industry future. Positive impacts to the community and economy compared to similar projects. Plan to acquire the required measures and targets listed above is clear, resource needs are adequately addressed, use of information will lead to sustainable projects.

Organizational Capacity (1-10 points)

Ability to produce, implement, and execute the project. Has established network. Demonstrated success and expertise necessary to perform the project described. Past performance with HTA contracts.

Project Budget (1-20 points)

- Demonstrates organizational financial capability.
- An accurate and feasible budget for the project.
- Valid sources of revenue.
- Reasonableness of estimated expenses comparable to similar event/activity.
- Matching funds and other support

Project Components (1-50 points):

Points	Criteria
1-15 points	Meets minimum number of criteria outlined; proposal contains missing or unclear content; may contain typos or errors.
16-25 points	Meets just above the minimum criteria outlined; proposal contains missing or unclear content; may contain typos or errors.
26-35 points	Meets some of criteria outlined; may contain typos, errors or unclear content.
35-45 points	Meets majority of criteria outlined; content is presented in clear and concise manner; no typos or errors.
46-50 points	Meets all nine criteria; content is presented in clear and concise manner; no typos or errors.

Project Impact and Performance Measures (1-20 points):

Points	Criteria
1-5 points	Program demonstrates minimal to no community and visitor industry impact; positive impacts are not clear; KPI not substantial. Resource needs are not adequately addressed; unclear if project will be sustainable in future years.

6-10 points	Program demonstrates some community and visitor industry impact; positive impacts are somewhat clear; KPI are lacking. Resource needs are somewhat addressed.
11-15 points	Acceptable number of measures identifying positive community impact and economy. Resource needs are stable and clearly addressed. Project has the foundation for future project sustainability.
16-20 points	Significant measures identified demonstrating positive impact on Hawai'i's community and visitor industry future. Positive impacts to the community and economy are clearly identified in the proposal. Resource needs are strongly addressed. Project demonstrates sustainability in the direction of future projects that could be planned.

Organizational Capacity (1-10 points):

Points	Criteria
1-3 points	Not clear how project will be implemented and executed; community network not evident; little to no past experience on similar project. No past performance with a HTA contract.
4-7 points	Somewhat clear how project will be implemented and executed; Minimal community network; Some past experience on similar project. Worked with HTA on a past contract.

8-10 points	Clear how project will be implemented and executed; community network is established; Demonstrated and successful past experience on similar project. Worked with HTA on multiple past contracts.
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Project Budget (1-20 points):

Points	Criteria
1-5 points	Project demonstrates minimal to no organized financial capability; budget doesn't seem feasible and sources of revenue aren't clear. Estimated expenses aren't reasonable and don't appear comparable to a similar event or activity. Relatively little to no other support or matching funds.
6-10 points	Project demonstrates some organized financial capability; budget seems relatively feasible and minimal sources of revenue. Estimated expenses are somewhat reasonable and comparable to similar events or activities. Some support and matching funds.
11-15 points	Project demonstrates organized and financial capability; budget is feasible and lists sources of revenue. Estimated expenses are reasonable and comparable to similar events or activities. Community support is evident with matching funds.

16-20 points

Project is clearly organized and shows significant financial capability; budget reflects strong sources of revenue. Estimated expenses are less than similar events or activities. Community support is evident with matching funds exceeding fund allocation.

SECTION 5 – CONTRACTING PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Award Letter

Awardees will receive a letter informing them of the next steps in the contract process and advising them of any documents that may be due. The letter will include deadlines for receipt of these materials. Contract will not be executed until all required paperwork is received.

5.2 Timeliness

The SEP contract includes sponsorship and marketing requirements that must be fulfilled months prior to the event being supported. Therefore, the contract must be executed in time to fulfill these pre-event requirements. Failure to meet specified deadlines could result in the award being rescinded and the contract being canceled.

5.3 Contract for Services

Awardees will be signing a contract. A contract is a legally binding document that requires proof of services prior to payment. Contractor will be put on a payment schedule and each payment will have associated deliverables tied to it. Contractor will be required to submit an invoice along with any related deliverables in order to receive payment. Contractor will not be reimbursed for receipts. Contractor will not be paid a lump sum.

5.4 Commercial General Liability Insurance

Festivals and Events will be required to have commercial general liability insurance of at least \$1 Million per incident, \$2 Million in aggregate. Policy must also list HVCB and its Island Chapters, and either the Hawai'i Tourism Authority or the State of Hawai'i as an additional insured. If proof of insurance is not presented by contract execution, the award may be rescinded and the contract canceled.

5.5 Payments and Deliverables

A “deliverable” is what the contractor must deliver to HVCB and the Island Chapters in order to get paid. Examples of possible deliverables may be progress reports, updated budgets, pictures, and an invoice. We will create a checklist of deliverables for each payment. All deliverables must be received before a check will be cut. If we do not receive a deliverable on the list, you will not get paid. All required deliverables must be received along with, or prior to, receipt of invoice.

5.6 Visual Documentation

Copies of all advertising and promotional materials and a minimum of ten (10) high resolution digital photographs (minimum 300dpi) or other medium, submitted as downloadable items from a cloud source, will be required as part of the final reporting requirements of this program. Images including, but not limited to, still photography and video, must come with appropriate release agreements to allow the use of these materials for promotional efforts by the HVCB, the Island Chapters, HTA and/or approved contractors.

5.7 Summary Write-up and Photos

If funded, the awardee must provide a 500-word article describing the project scope and benefits with accompanying high-resolution pictures suitable for publication in the HTA newsletter, HTA's marketing contractors' newsletter or other news media.

5.8 Sponsorship Recognition

"Hawai'i Tourism Authority", "The Hawaiian Islands", and HVCB shall be credited as a sponsor in all advertising and promotional materials and activities. Logos will be provided.

5.9 Promotional/Outreach Programs

Contractors shall implement initiatives to promote their project through direct signage, leaflets, flyers, collateral material, social media, and/or other promotional initiatives. Examples of these promotional items will need to be submitted with the final report. Contractors under this program shall consult with the HTA's global marketing team and staff to coordinate marketing efforts as appropriate. Contractors under this program may be selected to participate in HTA's "Knowledge Bank – Digital Asset Library" program.

5.10 Evaluation of Program

Contractors under this program shall provide full access for a minimum of five (5) HVCB, the Island Chapters and HTA staff or their designee to review and monitor the project for evaluation purposes. The success of the project will be determined based on both qualitative and quantitative criteria, with the quantitative criterion measured against the KPI numbers submitted in response to the RFP.

5.11 Reporting Requirements

Contractors under this program shall submit a progress report, a final report, final schedule of activities and events, a final KPI report, and a final financial report with budget narrative.