



## Visit Loudoun Tourism Marketing Leverage Program

Visit Loudoun's (Loudoun Convention & Visitors Association) Tourism Marketing Leverage Program is intended to extend the reach of Loudoun's tourism industry, attract visitors, and increase visitor spending through partnerships and leveraged funds. A competitive application process enables Visit Loudoun to provide funding for those projects and programs that will have the greatest return on investment in terms of visitor spending.

Applications are reviewed by a volunteer committee of marketing and business professionals who are not directly related to the applicants. The Committee makes funding recommendations that are submitted to the Visit Loudoun Board of Directors, for approval. The leverage fund process takes approximately 90 days from application submission to notification of awards. **There is no guarantee of funding for a submitted application.**

Applicants are encouraged to submit for projects that are at least 6 months out from application deadline date.

### **Criteria**

Each application will be evaluated based upon the following criteria:

- Programs must directly impact the tourism and travel industry of Loudoun through promotion to out-of-county and out-of-state visitors.
- Programs and promotions should increase visitor spending through increased visitation and/or overnight stays. **Higher priority will be given to placements outside the Northern Virginia region.**
- Higher priority will be given to those projects that partner with hotels and/or B&Bs and attract overnight visitors during periods of need. (Room availability is greatest on weekends, January through March, and July and August.)
- Proposed uses must be compatible with the programmatic elements of Visit Loudoun.
- Applicants must have a tracking mechanism to measure effectiveness.
- Funding received through this program must be spent within one year from the date of notification of the funding award.
- Partnerships, coalitions, and joint efforts are encouraged.
- Visit Loudoun logo and/or mention is required on all printed materials. Website link to [VisitLoudoun.org](http://VisitLoudoun.org) for visitor information is also required on websites. Proof will be required before any leverage fund payment is made.

## **Eligibility**

- Businesses and organizations operating within Loudoun County and its jurisdictions may apply individually or as a group.
- Tourism promotions such as advertising, promotional brochures, online marketing, and other promotions that will attract visitors to Loudoun County and its jurisdictions:
  - Printed materials to be used outside the destination (such as brochures, advance mailings, and other printed promotions to create visitation)
  - Costs associated with tracking or market research associated with your event
  - Placements of advertisements in **out-of-county and out-of-state media outlets targeting non-residents of Loudoun County**
  - Original photo and/or video production that is used to attract visitors to Loudoun (Visit Loudoun requests that it have equal rights to use such photography/video for promotional purposes)
  - Online marketing related to tourism promotion (i.e. Facebook advertising or website banner ads)
  - Website development for **visitor related pages**
  - Travel and trade show booth rental/participation fees
  - Fulfillment costs associated with a marketing program to attract out-of-county visitors
  - Trade and consumer show displays
  - Creative design for marketing materials
  - Marketing materials designed to build attendance for familiarization tours and site visits may be eligible based on attracted audience
- Ineligible expenses including but not limited to:
  - Programs that do not contribute to increased visitation to the business and to Loudoun
  - Event start-up or production costs
  - Administrative or overhead expenses including but not limited to office space, salary, and personnel costs, office supplies, office equipment, normal office postage, rent, and other administrative costs
  - Costs of give-away promotional items and event production costs such as food and supplies
  - Ongoing maintenance fees for websites
  - Travel expenses, including accommodations, transportation, and meals
  - Cost of signage, including fabrication and installation
  - Any expenses incurred prior to the funding award date

## **The Funds**

The Visit Loudoun Tourism Marketing Leverage Program is a matching funds program. The maximum amount to be allocated per application is capped at \$10,000 and the amount that an organization may be awarded in a given fiscal year (July 1 to June 30) is also capped at \$20,000. Non-profit organizations may include professional in-kind services as part of the match and **MUST** provide proposals detailing the in-kind value to verify the match. In-kind expenses will be allowed in proportion to the overall portion of eligible expenses.

## **Application Process**

1. Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend a pre-application meeting before submitting an application.

***A pre-application meeting will be held for the current application process: 5:30pm, Tuesday, January 15, 2019 at the Visit Loudoun Office Conference Room.***

*Please RSVP to Greg Harp, 703-669-2008 or [harp@VisitLoudoun.org](mailto:harp@VisitLoudoun.org).*

2. **ALL application submissions must be submitted using the online submission at <https://www.visitloudoun.org/tourism-industry/programs/market-leverage-program>. Please contact Greg Harp following submission to confirm receipt by Visit Loudoun. Visit Loudoun is not responsible for applications not received by the submission deadline. *\*All materials become the property of Visit Loudoun and will not be returned***

### **Current Application Deadline: 4pm, Friday February 15, 2019**

3. If the committee has additional questions, the applicant will be notified and asked to provide answers in writing\* as well as attend a follow-up interview. It is highly recommended that the individual(s) who prepared the application attend the interview.

***Current Application Interview Date(s): 4pm, March 11, 2019 and/or March 13, 2019. \*Depending on the number of submitted applications only one interview date may held; please reserve both dates on your calendar.***

4. The Visit Loudoun Board of Directors votes on the applications during their monthly board meeting.

***Visit Loudoun Board of Directors is scheduled for: March 27, 2019***

5. Letters are sent out to the applicants to let them know if they have been awarded funding and if so, for what amount following the Visit Loudoun Board meeting.
6. All funds awarded must be spent WITHIN 12 MONTHS AFTER the award notification is sent.

***Applications for the current application process must be for projects started after March 27, 2019***

*\* No modifications or adjustments to the applications are accepted once the applications are received. This excludes any clarifying information that may be requested during the review process, but includes any changes in program description or funding requests.*

**Questions about the program process?**

Greg Harp, Director of Finance & Admin, 703-669-2008, Harp@VisitLoudoun.org

**Questions about program eligibility, criteria, or review of application prior to submission deadline?**

Beth Erickson, President & CEO, 703-771-4964, Erickson@VisitLoudoun.org