



SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM GUIDELINES

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Discover Newport, the official destination marketing organization for Newport and Bristol Counties, has a mandate to promote and encourage inbound regional tourism.

To encourage the region's hospitality industry to align with this mandate, Discover Newport has established a Sponsorship Program. The program provides funding for eligible projects that demonstrate the ability to attract visitors to Newport and Bristol Counties, particularly those generating overnight stays and supporting year-round tourism.

ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

- Organizations (for-profit or nonprofit) within Newport and Bristol Counties during the eligibility period that advance Discover Newport's mission
- Organizations with a track record of producing programming at least once within the past three years

ELIGIBLE PROGRAMS



Special Events

Festivals, cultural events, and community-driven programming that attracts visitors and generates overnight stays



Public Art

Installations and creative placemaking efforts that add vibrancy, tell the region's story, and create memorable visitor touchpoints



Beautification Projects

Initiatives that enhance the physical environment, improve first impressions, and elevate the overall visitor experience.



Wayfinding

Projects that improve navigation, accessibility, and the ease with which visitors explore the destination.

GRANT AWARDS

Total funding for the program is capped at \$200,000 annually.

- Maximum award: **\$15,000**
- Typical range: **\$1,000–\$10,000**

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications are reviewed according to the following criteria and in Discover Newport's sole discretion.

1. Marketing & Promotional ROI

- Value of paid, earned, and owned media promoting the destination
 - Paid media is defined as any advertising or promotional materials that are purchased/paid for
 - Earned media is defined as unpaid editorial coverage via both traditional and nontraditional channels
 - Owned media is defined as any promotional activities that occur on organizational owned media (websites, social channels, etc.)
- Strength and clarity of marketing plan

2. Tourism Impact

- Ability to drive visitation and overnight stays
- Number of attendees, anticipated ticket sales, visitor origination, etc.
- Clearly articulated description of how this data is collected and tracked

3. Seasonal Priority

Preference given to events that:

- Occur November 1 – April 30
- Take place midweek (Sunday–Thursday)

4. Need & Impact of Funding

- Need will be measured based on applicant's demonstrated ability to maximize the potential impact of funds on the overall success of the event – for the current year and potentially years to come.
- Regardless of the size of the producing organization or the event, all applicants must demonstrate that they have support through anticipated or secured attendees, financial backing from other sources, etc.

5. Mission Alignment with Discover Newport

- Clear benefit to the region's tourism economy
- PR and promotional opportunities for Discover Newport

6. Capacity

- Proven ability to execute the event successfully

7. Application Quality

- Completeness and clarity

PROMOTIONAL PARTNERSHIP

Awardees are required to include Discovery Newport branding, as provided to the awardees by Discover Newport, across all event materials, including without limitation, all print, digital or other materials. Awardees agree that the Discover Newport branding and related marks are the proprietary marks and intellectual property of Newport and Bristol County Convention and Visitors' Bureau dba "Discover Newport," and awardees are granted a limited license to use such proprietary marks and intellectual property for the limited purpose of each approved sponsored event.

Additional opportunities (encouraged):

- Dedicated destination landing page featuring the region
- Post-program communications encouraging return visitation
- Complimentary access for media, influencers, and VIPs

EVENT AND BUDGET HISTORY

Applicants must provide:

- Most recent organizational budget (P&L)
- Revenue/expense summary of the most recent event, if different than the organizational budget
- A line-item breakdown is not required for past history

CONTRACTS, PAYMENTS, FINAL REPORTS

Sponsorship funds will be sent to awardees within thirty (30) days of receipt by Discover Newport of signed agreements and a Purchase Order or Invoice from awardees.

A final report form will be required of awardees to be submitted within sixty (60) days of completion of the sponsored event. Failure to complete and submit a final report will render awardee ineligible to receive future sponsor awards.

Awardees shall promptly notify Discover Newport in writing, in the event a sponsored event is or will be canceled and shall return to Discover Newport any award that has been made to an awardee for such event.

TIMELINE

Beginning in Fiscal Year 2027 (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027), Discover Newport will launch a **quarterly application and award cycle**. Each cycle will include review and recommendation by the **Discover Newport Sponsorship Committee**.

Quarter 1

- Application Window: May 1 – May 31, 2026
- Workshop for Applicants: May 7, 2026
- Application Review: Early-June 2026
- Award Notification: Mid-June 2026

Quarter 2

- Application Window: July 1 – July 31, 2026
- Workshop for Applicants: July 8, 2026
- Application Review: Mid-August 2026
- Award Notification: Late-August 2026

Quarter 3

- Application Window: October 1 – October 31, 2026
- Workshop for Applicants: October 1, 2026
- Application Review: Mid-November 2026
- Award Notification: Late-November 2026

Quarter 4

- Application Window: January 1 – January 31, 2027
- Workshop for Applicants: January 5, 2027
- Application Review: Mid-February 2027
- Award Notification: Late-February 2027

HOW TO APPLY

Applications may be submitted via discovernewport.org/sponsorships. Handwritten and incomplete applications will not be accepted.