



# EVENT SPONSORSHIP POLICY

Travel Santa Ana (TSA), a 501(c)(6) private, non-profit organization, is the official Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for the City of Santa Ana.

**Our Mission:** To share Santa Ana with the world, leading to increased visitor spending and an enhanced quality of life for residents.

**Funding:** TSA is funded through a private-sector Tourism Marketing District (TMD) 2% self-assessment on overnight accommodations, which our 17 hotels and motels have agreed to collect in order to promote tourism in Santa Ana.

**Event Marketing in Promotion of the Destination:** TSA and its board of directors recognize that special events and festivals can create vibrant experiences for visitors, showcase the destination to niche audiences with specific interests, and help build overall brand awareness. These events can attract non-Orange County residents as well as overnight and day visitors, supporting local retailers and restaurants and generating a positive economic impact for the community.

We provide complimentary marketing and service support for events and festivals, as well as three separate tiers of funding support, depending on the event's characteristics, including its target audience, status as an ongoing or developing event, and the visitor-resident customer mix.

**Exclusion of Support for Event Operations:** TSA is a destination marketing organization. As such, our mission, expertise, and support are focused on marketing, public relations, social media, visitor information services, and group housing/ bid assistance for events. We do not provide operational or volunteer support for events.

## Section I: Marketing & Visitor Services Assistance

TSA may offer a variety of complimentary marketing and visitor services support for local events that attract visitors and promote Santa Ana positively. Here's an overview:

### Core Marketing & Sales Support:

- Free listing on TSA's events calendar on our destination website: [www.travelsantaana.com](http://www.travelsantaana.com).
- Free outreach to local hotels by our Director of Sales to secure competitive bids for event accommodation rates, room blocks, event space, catering, and related services as requested.
- Social media posts on TSA's Instagram and Facebook feeds that reach engaged Travel Santa Ana visitors both locally and from outside the destination.
  - Facebook: [@TravelSantaAna](https://www.facebook.com/TravelSantaAna)
  - Instagram: [#TravelSantaAna](https://www.instagram.com/TravelSantaAna)
- TSA consideration of enhanced social media promotions—custom developed—such as Facebook Live at the event, digital influencer familiarization trips (FAM) to cover the event, TSA blogger coverage, or features in the leisure visitor e-newsletter.
- TSA consideration of hosting individual media visits/FAM during targeted annual signature events.
- If an event is well-suited as a hospitality hosting venue for meeting planners, TSA's group sales team may consider activation of a planner FAM or hosted day activity for targeted planners.
- Other customized support services considered on an individual basis.

### Section II: Eligibility: For event applicants to be considered for sponsorship support from TSA, all applicants must clearly demonstrate that:

- The event will attract overnight visitors to Santa Ana, California.
- The event will have a measurable, quantifiable positive impact on the local economy, including estimated visitor spending and resident impact.
- The event benefits Santa Ana's hospitality and tourism industry.
- The proposed event or activity fits into TSA's destination marketing strategy, appeals to targeted visitor markets, and reflects positively on the city.
- The applicant will provide TSA with meaningful sponsorship recognition and marketing benefits that help achieve organizational goals.

- The applicant will provide a projected budget, including projected total revenues, expenses, and net balance for the proposed year.
- The submitting organization must have adequate resources and financial standing to produce the event successfully. The organization must be a legally registered for-profit or not-for-profit corporation with a valid business license in Santa Ana, California, or within its home municipality. (Please supply your organization's federal tax ID number on your application.)

### **Section III: Applicants Overview**

The number of sponsorships available through TSA is limited and may vary from year to year depending on budgetary constraints.

In general, TSA sponsorships are not considered long-term commitments, in order to encourage independent event viability as well as support for new initiatives.

An organization may apply for funds for up to three consecutive years; however, there are no guarantees that a sponsorship will be renewed from year to year. Sponsorships that continue beyond one year should normally expect a 20% decrease in funding each year. An exception may be granted if the event organizer can clearly demonstrate, through measurable results, that the event or activity is substantially increasing its return on TSA's investment in the city's tourism community, particularly its accommodation providers that contribute TMD funding.

There must be a clear value received by TSA for any event sponsorship. For example, groups or individuals coordinating and executing a public event or activity must accomplish one or more of the following objectives:

- Promote tourism by bringing overnight guests to Santa Ana hotels/motels. (Note: Third-party rentals, e.g., Airbnb, are against city ordinance. Any event organizer found to be promoting or utilizing third-party rentals will be ineligible for TSA funding. See specific minimum requirements within each funding level.)
- Improve or enhance the quality of destination experiences for visitors, as well as the quality of life for residents in Santa Ana.
- Create direct economic impact for the city through spending on accommodations, restaurants, retail shops, attractions, event fees, parking fees, job support, and taxes generated.

### **Section IV: Budgetary Limitations and Submission Response Timing**

Any consideration for sponsorship is subject to budgetary limitations. Event sponsorship funds are limited. Before awarding funds, TSA must ensure that it has the necessary resources to carry out its core mission and objectives. Therefore, the sponsorship budget will vary from year to year.

Applications for funding above \$1,001 will be reviewed annually by a three-member task force of board members and staff, selected by TSA's chairman and president. Applications will be scored using the agreed-upon evaluation criteria, and the task force will make recommendations for sponsorship funding.

These general distribution guidelines will be followed:

- Recipients of Level II and Level III sponsorships must submit verification of expenses paid with TSA funds in order to receive payment disbursement.
- Any unawarded funds may roll over into the next budget year to be used by Travel Santa Ana for general destination marketing programs.
- Once budgetary limits are depleted, no additional requests will be considered until the next budget cycle.

### **Section IV: Sponsorship Applicants**

Applicants will receive confirmation of receipt of their application via email within ten (10) business days, along with a schedule for sponsorship evaluation by the task force, if applicable.

Applicants requesting funding between \$3,499 and \$5,000 may be called upon to make a presentation to the TSA Event Task Force.

Each group or organization submitting a request must provide a completed application along with all required documents per funding tier. Requests for sponsorship will be deemed ineligible if any section of the application process is incomplete.

### **Section V: Funding Tiers**

#### **Tier 3 Sponsorship (under \$1,000)**

Tier 3 sponsorship will be considered when all previously defined eligibility requirements (see Section II), as well as the following criteria, are met:

- No event shall be considered unless there is a minimum lead time of at least 30 days prior to the proposed event, in addition to the application review process.
- The event or activity must have the potential to generate at least 10 room nights at Santa Ana hotels/motels that can be directly and specifically attributed to the event.

Sponsorships at this level will be awarded internally by TSA's president and are not subject to review by the Event Sponsorship Task Force.

## **Tier 2 Sponsorship (\$1,001 – \$3,499)**

Tier 2 sponsorship will be considered when all previously defined eligibility requirements (see Section II), as well as the following criteria, are met:

- No event shall be considered unless there is a minimum lead time of at least 90 days prior to the proposed event, in addition to the application review process.
- A marketing plan with a detailed section on how the event will be promoted to attract overnight visitors.
- The event or activity must have the potential to generate at least 50 room nights at Santa Ana hotels/motels that can be directly and specifically attributed to the event.

## **Tier 1 Sponsorship (\$3,500 – \$5,000)**

Tier 1 sponsorship will be considered when all eligibility requirements (see Section II), as well as the following criteria, are met:

- No event shall be considered for this level of sponsorship unless there is a minimum lead time of at least 120 days prior to the proposed event, in addition to the application review process.
- A strategic plan is included at the time of the sponsorship application.
- A marketing plan includes a detailed section on how the event will be promoted to attract overnight visitors.
- The proposed event or activity should be unique; sponsorship will not be considered for events similar to those found in other cities, particularly within Orange County.
- The event or activity must have the potential to generate at least 100 room nights at Santa Ana hotels/motels that can be directly and specifically attributed to the event.

## **Section VI: Timeline and Application Link**

Event organizers may submit applications starting **January 1, 2026**, for events occurring on or after **February 15, 2026**.

