



## **Twentynine Palms Tourism Business Improvement District Sponsorship and Event Grant Program Guidelines**

### **Introduction to the Twentynine Palms TBID Sponsorship and Event Grant Program**

The Twentynine Palms Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID), established in October 2017 and branded as Visit 29 Palms, is a collaborative initiative between the City of Twentynine Palms and its lodging community. The Twentynine Palms TBID Sponsorships and Event Grants are funded by a 1.5% tax on lodging, and are designed to enhance the city's appeal as a tourist destination. Focused on increasing overnight stays, the program encourages the development of innovative tourism products, elevates the city's brand, fosters industry collaboration, and targets key travel segments, all while emphasizing the five key destination pillars: Outdoor Recreation, Arts, Culture and History, Health and Wellness, Culinary Experiences, and Astronomy.

The Sponsorship and Event Grant Program offer two distinct opportunities for fostering tourism. Event Grants are specifically designed to support the establishment of new events that attract tourists to the area. In contrast, Sponsorships focus on backing existing, ongoing events within the Morongo Basin. Through these sponsorships, the Twentynine Palms TBID helps sustain and grow these established events, ensuring they continue to contribute to the area's vibrant and diverse tourist offerings.

### **Fiscal Year and Budget for the Twentynine Palms TBID Sponsorship and Grant Program**

The fiscal year for the Twentynine Palms TBID spans from October 1st through September 30th. These funds are made available through the support of the Twentynine Palms TBID lodging partners. For every occupied room night, guests are assessed a 1.5% fee that is returned to Twentynine Palms to aid in tourism, promotion and marketing within the district. The distribution of these funds follows a general guideline, with 80% directed towards Event Grants and 20% for Sponsorships.



## Sponsorship and Event Grant Funding Details

- **Sponsorships:** Ranging from \$100 to \$3,000 per event, sponsorships support smaller scale projects or initiatives, aligning with the Twentynine Palms TBID's goals and the five key destination pillars.
- **Event Grants:** Event grants are available from \$3,000 to \$20,000, catering to larger events with significant potential to boost tourism and overnight stays during the non-peak season (May through September).
- **Funding Release:** For sponsorships, funds are released once the application is approved and agreements are signed. For event grant recipients, 75% of the funding is disbursed once agreements are signed, 25% contingent upon completing all requirements, including a comprehensive post-event report detailing economic impact, adherence to marketing strategies, and overall success metrics.

## SPONSORSHIPS

### 1. Sponsorship Application Process

Applicants are required to submit their applications online. As part of the application, a detailed budget outline must be included to provide clarity on the proposed use of funds.

Once submitted, these applications will be reviewed by the Twentynine Palms TBID Advisory Board during their regular meetings. This review process, inclusive of the budget assessment, allows for a thorough and fair evaluation of each sponsorship request, ensuring that each application receives the attention and consideration it deserves.



## EVENT GRANTS

### 1. Eligibility Criteria for Twentynine Palms TBID Event Grants

- **Applicants:** Non-profit organizations, businesses and individuals are encouraged to apply. It is a requirement that applicants have prior experience in organizing events to ensure the successful and professional execution of their proposed activities. Twentynine Palms residency is not a requirement to apply.
- **Event Location:** All events must take place within the Twentynine Palms sphere of influence, which includes the City of Twentynine Palms, Desert Heights, Indian Cove Campground and Amphitheater, the JTNP northern boundary, and Wonder Valley. Additionally, applicants are required to upload/submit a preliminary Venue Agreement as part of their application.
- **Target Audience:** Events should primarily aim to attract tourists located 50 to 100 miles away, contributing to the city's tourism from beyond the local area.
- **Event Timing:** While events can be scheduled at any time, there is a particular interest in those planned for the non-peak months of May through September. This approach supports our goal of fostering year-round tourism and aligns with the Twentynine Palms TBID's strategy to increase occupancy in hotels and vacation rentals during these typically quieter months.
- **ADA Accessibility:** We encourage events to strive for venues that are accessible in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act standards. Recognizing the challenges of our rural area, we value efforts to make events as inclusive and accessible as possible.
- **Marketing Requirements:** Event Grant recipients must commit to including the Visit 29 Palms logo in their marketing materials and tagging their social media accounts in posts.
- **Economic Impact Assessment:** Events are required to submit a post-event plan for assessing their economic impact, which should include an analysis of local spending and visitor demographics.



## **2. Matching Funds Requirement for Twentynine Palms TBID Event Grants**

Applicants for Twentynine Palms TBID Events Grants must provide a 1:4 match for the requested grant amount. For instance, for a project budget of \$20,000, \$15,000 may be requested from the Twentynine Palms TBID and \$5,000 must come from the event grant recipient. 13% of this match can be in-kind contributions, such as goods, services, or volunteer time, valued at fair market rates. A minimum of 12% of the match should be in monetary form, including cash contribution from other organizations or businesses, advertising revenue or other cash amounts. This requirement demonstrates the applicant's financial commitment and resource mobilization ability, ensuring a shared investment in the success of the event.

## **3. Application Deadlines and Review Process**

### **2024 Deadlines:**

- A special deadline of February 15, 2024, is set for events happening between March 1 - June 30, 2024.
- Apply by April 1, 2024 for events happening between July 1 - December 31, 2024.

### **2025 Deadlines:**

- Apply by October 1, 2025 for events happening between January 1 - June 30, 2025.
- Apply by April 1, 2025 for events happening between July 1 and December 31, 2025.

## **4. Application Process and Subcommittee Review**

- **Submission:** Applicants are required to fill out a standard event grant application form online, detailing their event plans, budget, marketing approach, and anticipated ROI for the destination.



- **Review Committee:** The Review Committee is integral to the TBID's mission, consisting of five dedicated community volunteers, which may include up to two board members. These volunteers are carefully selected for their impartiality, tasked with the important role of evaluating event grant applications using a transparent scoring system. This ensures that every application is judged fairly and aligns with the Twentynine Palms TBID's goals.

To participate in the inaugural Review Committee, we invite community members to apply by February 15, 2024. In the following years, the invitation to volunteer will be extended annually, with applications due by September 1st. Interested parties are encouraged to submit their applications online by these dates. The selection of volunteers will be conducted by the TBID subcommittee board members tasked with being on the Review Committee, based on the applications received. This process ensures that the committee is composed of individuals who best represent the diverse interests and perspectives of our community, while upholding the principles of fairness and impartiality.

#### **Eligibility and Conflict of Interest:**

To maintain the integrity of the Review Committee and the event grant process, the following guidelines have been established:

- Volunteers serving on the Review Committee are not eligible to apply for an event grant during their term of service.
- Additionally, volunteers are ineligible to apply for the Review Committee if they have a close relative (including, but not limited to, a spouse, parent, or child) or an employer/employee relationship to someone submitting an event grant application in the same year.

These rules are designed to prevent any conflicts of interest and ensure that the event grant review process is conducted with the utmost fairness and transparency. By adhering to these principles, the Review Committee supports



the TBID's commitment to enhancing the cultural and economic vitality of Twentynine Palms through the support of valuable community events.

- **Twentynine Palms TBID Advisory Board Review:** Applications that meet all the criteria and achieve a minimum score of 80 points will be reviewed by the full Twentynine Palms TBID Advisory Board during their regular meetings, which are open to the public. Applicants who fulfill these requirements will be invited to present their proposals at a board meeting. Each presentation will have a time limit of 5 minutes, and applicants should be prepared to answer any questions that the board members may have following their presentation.

## 5. Application Scoring System

The event grant applications submitted to the Twentynine Palms TBID will be evaluated using a comprehensive scoring system to ensure fair and transparent assessment. The maximum number of points an applicant can receive in the scoring system is 100 points. The scoring system consists of the following criteria:

1. **Event Information** (Including 5 Pillars) (up to 20 points)
  - 0 points: Does not meet any of the 5 pillars.
  - 10 points: Meets at least one of the 5 pillars.
  - 20 points: Meets two or more pillars.
2. **Financial Information** (Including Requested Amount) (up to 10 points)
  - 0 points: Unclear or incomplete financial information.
  - 10 points: Clear and complete financial information.
3. **Application Questions** (11 Questions) (up to 50 points)
  - Each question can be scored from 0 to 4.55 points based on the quality of the response, with a maximum of 50 points for all questions combined.
4. **Required Documents** (up to 20 points)
  - 20 points: All required documents provided.



- Partial points based on completeness for cases where some required documents are missing.

This scoring system ensures that event grant applications are evaluated comprehensively, taking into account the alignment with Twentynine Palms TBID's pillars, completeness of applicant information, financial transparency, the quality of responses to application questions, and the submission of required documents. The cumulative score will guide the grant approval process, with higher scores indicating a stronger application.

## 6. Marketing and Branding Requirements

- **Branding Requirements:** All event materials are required to feature the Visit 29 Palms logo. This acknowledgment must be included in every type of event communication, from digital to print, to maintain consistent and prominent branding.
- **Marketing Plan Submission:** Applicants must submit a comprehensive marketing plan that outlines strategies for effectively promoting their event. This plan should detail how the event will engage with the Visit 29 Palms social media accounts and the approaches to attract audiences, especially those more than 100 miles away. The marketing strategies should align with Twentynine Palms TBID's destination pillars, focusing on showcasing Twentynine Palms as a premier destination and highlighting local attractions and accommodations.

## 7. Reporting and Accountability

Event grant recipients are required to submit a detailed post-event report using the provided form, focusing on the economic impact and visitor engagement. This report should encompass local spending patterns, visitor demographics, and the overall influence on local accommodations and tourism. Additionally, it is important for grantees to supply Twentynine Palms TBID with images and videos from the events, which will be included in the report. Event grant recipients must also conduct and



report on a survey of event attendees, collecting data to evaluate the event's direct impact and visitor experiences. These reports are essential in offering a comprehensive understanding of the event's contribution to Twentynine Palms' tourism economy and its alignment with the Twentynine Palms TBID's strategic goals.

## **8. Accommodation and Promotion**

- Local Accommodations: Events receiving Twentynine Palms TBID funding should prioritize the use of local hotels and vacation rentals, showcasing them as the preferred options for attendees.
- Promotion of Accommodations: Event marketing and materials must actively promote these local accommodation options. This includes the mandatory inclusion of a direct link to the Visit29.org lodging page on the event's website, providing attendees with easy access to information on local hotels and vacation rentals. This effort is integral to driving tourism and supporting the local hospitality industry.

## **9. Event Surveys**

Event grant recipients are required to conduct surveys of attendees to gather specific information on their experiences. These surveys should focus on aspects such as accommodation choices (hotels or vacation rentals), overall event highlights, future visit intentions to Twentynine Palms, and the economic impact, including local spending in the City. The goal of these surveys is to gain insights into the event's effectiveness in attracting visitors and contributing to the local tourism economy, as well as understanding attendee preferences and experiences.

## **10. Event Grant Agreements**

Upon approval of an event grant application, a formal Event Grant Agreement will be established between the grantee and the Twentynine Palms TBID. This agreement will outline the terms and conditions for the use of funds, including budget allocation, branding guidelines specifying the mandatory use of Visit 29 Palms logo and





acknowledgment in event materials, marketing plan requirements, and reporting obligations. The Event Grant Agreement ensures clarity and accountability in the use of grant funds and adherence to the Twentynine Palms TBID's branding and marketing standards.

## **11. Amendments and Exceptions**

**Policy Amendments:** The Twentynine Palms TBID Advisory Board retains the authority to make revisions to these guidelines when deemed necessary to enhance the effectiveness and fairness of the grant program.

**Exceptions:** Any requests for exceptions or deviations from these established guidelines must be submitted to the Twentynine Palms TBID Advisory Board for consideration and require board approval. This process ensures that any unique circumstances are thoroughly reviewed and decided upon in a transparent and accountable manner.