



Visit 29 Palms Tourism Business Improvement District Sponsorship & Event Grant Program Guidelines 2025-2026

Program Purpose & Goals

The Visit 29 Palms Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) is dedicated to growing travel and tourism and strengthening the city's position as a premier destination in California's desert region. Recognizing events as a powerful tool to achieve these goals, the Sponsorship and Event Grant Program provides funding for events that attract overnight visitors, foster industry collaboration, and engage the community.

Aligned with the city's five destination pillars—**Outdoor Recreation; Arts, Culture & History; Health & Wellness; Culinary Experiences; and Stargazing & Astronomy**—the program supports tourism-focused experiences that elevate the city's brand and reach key travel segments.

Funding Overview & Opportunities

This program is funded by the Visit 29 Palms TBID through a 1.5% tourism assessment generated from overnight stays at hotels, motels, RV resorts, and vacation rentals in Twentynine Palms, and reinvested into tourism promotion, marketing, and event development. Program awards are structured with 75% of funding available prior to the event and the remaining 25% released following the event upon completion of required post-event reporting. Eighty percent (80%) of program funds are allocated to Event Grants and twenty percent (20%) to Event Sponsorships.

The program offers two funding opportunities:

1. **Event Sponsorships:** Ranging from **\$100 to \$3,000 per event**, sponsorships support smaller-scale projects or initiatives that align with Visit 29 Palms' tourism goals and five destination pillars.
2. **Event Grants:** Available from **\$3,000 to \$20,000**, event grants fund larger events with significant potential to increase tourism and overnight stays, particularly during the non-peak season.

Program Eligibility

Who Can Apply: Non-profit organizations, businesses, and independent event producers are encouraged to apply. Applicants must have prior event-planning experience to ensure successful and professional execution. Residency in Twentynine Palms is not required.

Event Location – Event Grants: 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 or submit a Venue Agreement as part of their application.

Event Location – Event Sponsorships: Event Sponsorships may be considered on a limited basis for events taking place elsewhere within the Morongo Basin when the event demonstrates clear alignment with Visit 29 Palms' tourism goals and provides meaningful promotional or visitor-generating benefits for Twentynine Palms.

Target Audience: Events should focus on attracting visitors from 50–100 miles away to increase tourism and overnight visitation in Twentynine Palms.

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.

2025–2026 Application Dates

October 15, 2025: Application deadline for events scheduled to take place between January 1 – June 30, 2026.

April 1, 2026: Application deadline for events scheduled to take place between July 1 – December 31, 2026.

Event Sponsorship

Sponsorship Application Process & Requirements: Applicants seeking event sponsorship support are required to submit their applications online. Applications must include:

- Event overview and alignment with Visit 29 Palms destination pillars.
- Promotional Strategy – brief description of the target audience and outline of planned marketing or promotional efforts.
- Budget – total event budget, amount requested from Visit 29 Palms, and breakdown of how TBID funds will be used (e.g., marketing, equipment, permits, venue fees), plus any confirmed or anticipated funding sources such as other sponsorships, grants, or in-kind support.

Sponsorship Review Process: Sponsorship applications are reviewed by the Visit 29 Palms TBID Event Subcommittee, which recommends funding to the Advisory Board. Reviews consider tourism impact, alignment with Visit 29 Palms destination pillars, and use of funds to enhance the event. Funding is approved by the Advisory Board during public meetings after each application round.

Sponsorship Evaluation Criteria:

Criteria	Description	Points
Event Overview & Tourism Impact	Clarity of event description, relevance to tourism, and potential to attract visitors.	0–5
Alignment with TBID Destination Pillars	Strength of connection to one or more destination pillars (outdoor recreation; arts & culture, history; health & wellness; stargazing and astronomy; culinary).	0–5
Use of Funding	Clear explanation of how requested funds will be used to enhance the event and benefit tourism.	0–5
Budget Overview	Accuracy, completeness, and reasonableness of the budget provided.	0–5

Total Possible Points: 20

A score of 15 points (75%) or higher is recommended for funding consideration.

Marketing & Promotion Requirements: All event sponsorship recipients must comply with the TBID's marketing requirements, as outlined in the agreement issued upon approval.

Requirements include featuring the Visit 29 Palms logo in event marketing materials, linking to the lodging page on Visit29.org, tagging Visit 29 Palms on social media, and fulfilling any additional promotional commitments specified in the agreement.

Funding Release Schedule: Once approved, event sponsorship funds are distributed in two phases:

- 75% of the awarded event sponsorship is released prior to the event.
- The remaining 25% is released after the event, following submission of required post-event reporting.

Reporting & Accountability: Sponsorship recipients are required to submit a post-event report within four weeks of the event. The report must include:

- A summary of the event and total attendance.
- Event photos and/or videos (high-quality images encouraged for marketing use).
- A description of how TBID funds were used.
- Financial documentation itemizing all sponsorship-funded expenditures.
- A copy of the actual event budget and expenditures.

Event Grants

Event Grant Application Process & Requirements: Applicants seeking grant support are required to submit their applications online. Applications must include:

- Event overview and alignment with Visit 29 Palms destination pillars.
- Promotional strategy and timeline – detailed strategy to reach target audiences, including specific marketing channels, tactics, and a schedule for promotional activities leading up to the event.
- Applicant's prior event experience.
- Detailed event budget – total event budget, amount requested from TBID, breakdown of how funds will be used, other confirmed or anticipated funding sources, and demonstration of the 1/4 matching funds requirement.
- Venue agreement for the proposed event location.

Matching Funds Requirement for Event Grants: Applicants must provide at least 1/4 of the total project budget (25%) as matching funds. TBID funds may cover up to 3/4 of the total project budget (75%). Of the required match, up to 13% may be in-kind, and at least 12% must be monetary. This ensures a shared investment in the event's success and demonstrates the applicant's financial commitment.

For example:

- Event Budget: \$20,000
- Maximum TBID Request (75%): \$15,000
- Required Match (25%): \$5,000

Of the required match:

- Up to 13% may be in-kind (goods, services, or volunteer time at fair market value)
- At least 12% must be monetary (cash from sponsors, businesses, tickets, etc.)

Grant Review Process: A five-member Review Committee, including the two-member TBID Events Subcommittee, reviews and scores applications using criteria such as event concept, alignment with Visit 29 Palms pillars, target audience, prior experience, marketing plan, and budget detail. A minimum score of 80/100 is required to advance for Advisory Board funding consideration. Funding decisions are made during public meetings after each application round.

Grant Evaluation Criteria:

Criteria	What We Look For	Points
Event Concept & Alignment with TBID Destination Pillars	Strength and clarity of the concept, connection to destination pillars (outdoor recreation; arts & culture, history; health & wellness; stargazing and astronomy; culinary).	0–25
Target Audience	Potential to attract visitors to Twentynine Palms.	0–20
Prior Event Experience	Applicant’s experience in organizing events of similar scale and scope.	0–15
Marketing Plan Quality	Strength of strategy to reach target audiences, including promotion timeline.	0–20
Budget Detail & Matching Funds	Clarity, accuracy, and demonstration that the 1-to-4 matching funds requirement is met.	0–20

Total Possible Points: 100

Applications must score at least 80 points (80%) to advance for funding consideration.

Marketing & Promotion Requirements: All event grant recipients must comply with the TBID's marketing requirements, as outlined in the agreement issued upon approval. Requirements include featuring the Visit 29 Palms logo in event marketing materials, linking to the lodging page on Visit29.org, tagging Visit 29 Palms on social media, and fulfilling any additional promotional commitments specified in the agreement.

Funding Release Schedule: Once approved, event grant funds are distributed in two phases:

- 75% of the awarded event grant is released prior to the event.
- The remaining 25% is released after the event, following submission of required post-event reporting.

Reporting and Accountability: Grant recipients are required to submit a post-event report within four weeks of the event. The report must include:

- A summary of the event and total attendance.
- Event photos and/or videos (high-quality images encouraged for marketing use).
- A copy of the actual event budget and expenditures, showing how TBID funds were used.
- Financial documentation itemizing all grant-funded expenditures.
- Results and insights from a post-event attendee survey, including data on visitor demographics, accommodation choices, spending in Twentynine Palms, event highlights, future visit intentions, and overall visitor experience.

Program Administration

Event Agreements: Upon approval, recipients must enter into a formal Event Grant Agreement with Visit 29 Palms and the City of Twentynine Palms. This agreement outlines the terms and conditions for the use of funds, including approved budget allocation, mandatory inclusion of the Visit 29 Palms logo and acknowledgment in event materials, adherence to branding guidelines, required marketing deliverables, and post-event reporting obligations. The agreement ensures clarity, accountability, and alignment with Visit 29 Palms' tourism marketing standards.

Amendments & Exceptions: The Visit 29 Palms TBID Advisory Board may revise these guidelines as needed to maintain the effectiveness and fairness of the Sponsorship and Event Grant Program. The Visit 29 Palms Events Subcommittee may approve changes to event dates, venues, or programming if the change occurs within 45 days of the original date and does not conflict with another scheduled event. Changes outside this window, or any other requests for exceptions, must be submitted to the Advisory Board for consideration to ensure all circumstances are reviewed transparently and fairly.

Grant Review Committee Eligibility & Conflict of Interest: To ensure the integrity and transparency of the Review Committee and event grant process:

- Committee members may not apply for an event grant during their term of service.
- Individuals are ineligible to serve if they have a close relative (spouse, parent, child) or an employer/employee relationship with someone submitting an event grant application in the same year.
- These measures safeguard against conflicts of interest and reinforce Visit 29 Palms' commitment to a transparent, impartial review process that supports tourism-focused events.