Tourism Council Special Event Grant Guidelines

[**Miami-Dade County**](http://www.miamidadearts.org/sites/default/files/files/inline/tdcgui_2017-2018_v2_6.30.2017.pdf)

The Miami-Dade Tourist Development Council grant program is utilizing an online application process.

There are 4 categories for funding:

1. Special Events/Promotions - including major festivals, performances, events and programs with significant cultural or entertainment components that attract national and international attention and are promoted and open to the public.
2. Sporting Events - including professional and amateur level national and international competitions that are able to provide specific evidence of substantially increasing the economic activity at hotels within Miami-Dade County. Collegiate sporting activities are ineligible, except for major tournaments or events with significant, quantifiable tourism impact for Miami-Dade County, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
3. Television - telecast programs, syndicated productions, and documentaries promoting MiamiDade County. Commercial films/movies are not eligible for funding through the TDC.
4. Government/Municipalities

All first-time applicants **must**attend a TDC Workshop to review program requirements, eligibility criteria and other program-specific information. A consultation with department staff is required for all returning applicants within 10 business days of deadline.

Returning applicants have the option to submit application, no later than one full calendar week in advance of the grant program’s published application deadline, for a thorough “Courtesy Review” by the Program Administrator.

Evaluation: Division A - Total Project Budget of $50,000 or less may request up to $5,000; Division B - Total Project Budget of $50,001 - $250,000 may request up to $15,000; Division C - Total Project Budget above $250,000 may request up to $25,000

All applicants must meet the program’s $1:$1 grant match in cash, or a combination of cash and in-kind contributions.

Application includes list of allowable expenses and non-covered expenses.

[**Flagler County**](http://www.flaglercounty.org/document_center/TDC/Applications/2017-18%20Regional%20Market%20Special%20Events%20Packet%20-%20Fillable.pdf)

Mandatory individual meeting with TDC representative required **before** application.

The logo of The Tourist Development Council with the Web Address must appear prominently in all advertising and publicity. **(This is required in the vast majority of locations, including VISIT FLORIDA)**

Required Match: Special Event Grant Funds awarded pursuant to this section shall represent no more than 33% of the total cost of the event.

[**Hernando County**](http://floridasadventurecoast.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/2016-TDC-Grant-Funding-Application-Guidelines-Updated-6-15-2016.pdf)

All Local Special Event Marketing Program grant recipients are required to attend a mandatory workshop on grant procedures.

No more than 1/3 of the Local Special Event’s total budget may be provided by the TDC.

Must demonstrate a history of producing room nights, creating positive economic impact, and/or the potential to draw visitors to the area with a regional marketing plan, and must be able to project a number of overnight visitors.

Visitor survey required: Visitor tracking of attendees is required. Local Special Event coordinators may choose to use the attached Visitor Survey sample, or a survey of their choosing, however all tracking must include at a minimum the zip code, number in party and lodging information of the visitor. Organizations that do not submit Visitor Surveys will automatically forfeit any and all tourism funds awarded.

[**Clay County**](http://www.claycountygov.com/Home/ShowDocument?id=2423)

Clearly defined point evaluation system and a three tiered categories for events:

1. Ongoing major or highly visible events held throughout the year in the county by non-profit organizations, entities or individuals that attract a substantial number of visitors or tourists.
2. Signature Events: An event attracting regional and/or national audiences with a minimum attendance of 20,000 having a significant level of economic impact on the county. (Maximum $45,000 per event)
3. Special Events: One, two or multi-day events sponsored by non-profit organizations, entities or individuals which are open to the public such as festivals, community activities, chili cook-offs, historical events, art shows and other events. (Maximum $3,500 per event)

[**Orange County**](http://www.orangecountyfl.net/DesktopModules/OCFL/CountyCalendar/CalFile.aspx?DumeotcnID=7552) **(Orlando)**

Capital project and venue funding, available only as funds are available for acquisition, construction, and renovation of (government owned or leased, non-profit owned or leased) facilities.

[Cultural tourism grants](http://www.orangecountyfl.net/Portals/0/resource%20library/culture%20-%20parks/Cultural%20Facilities%20Funding.pdf)- applicants must have provided at least one year of arts or cultural programming in Orange County attracting tourists. Request must be no greater than 50% of the total project cost.

[**Seminole County**](http://doorlandonorth.com/media/uploads/general/Seminole_County_Meetings_Group_Grant_Program_Form.docx)

The maximum allowable amount of any single sponsorship is $25,000.

It is up to the event organizer to set up a tracking code or system so that the hotel front desk and sales staff can track and document all event related room nights.

All marketing and promotional material must be submitted to the CVB for approval prior to distribution.

Direct economic impact required- using provided Excel [spreadsheet.](Seminole_CVB_Economic_Impact_2015.xlsx)

[**Leon County**](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=3&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiB1_z0gMnYAhUC7FMKHWDFAI0QFgg0MAI&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.visittallahassee.com%2Fmedia%2Fuploads%2Fspecial_grant_policies_with_sample_app..pdf&usg=AOvVaw2MYKh7mqX3sxToTrDE8qz4)

Visitor tracking: Room block reports from hotels are the preferred method. Or if the event uses an advanced registration procedure, utilize the Visitor Tracking Form (Each participant/group should sign his or her name, hotel in which they are residing, number of rooms secured, number of days, and the number of guests staying in each room). If neither of the above is used, a third option requires 100 completed five question surveys of event attendees.

[**Palm Beach County**](http://discover.pbcgov.org/touristdevelopment/PDF/grant_applicant_info_instructions.pdf)

Three grant categories:

1. Major Event- Budget of at least $500,000; 2,000 room night minimum; Off season (May to October) gives 10% more funding; Long term impact is substantial and can be projected and measured.
2. Tourism Special Project-Has a budget of at least $200,000; 300 room nights minimum
3. Environmental Tourism Special Project- Program does not meet the criteria of typical funding sources such as ERM, county, state, and local agencies ; Must be officially endorsed by the Director of the Palm Beach County Environmental Resources Management Department; Serves to promote an environmental experience in Palm Beach County primarily to our visitors.

Specific out of county marketing plan: Submit plans to market the program to out-of-county visitors. Include strategic approaches, the target audience, specific plans, and measurable goals or objectives. Be specific and highlight any plans for collaboration with other organizations, businesses, media, hotels, or the travel industry.

Room night counts include condo rentals and campground nights.

[**Pinellas County**](http://www.pinellascvb.com/sites/default/master/files/FY17-18%20EEFP%20Program%20Overview%20%28FINAL%204-14-17%29.pdf)

Category 1-Elite Events project or have a history of at least 25,000 paid or documented attendees or project or have a history of at least 10,000 room nights.

* Maximum of $250,000 or 20% of the total VSPC Elite Event budget, whichever is less.
* Must be nationally televised.

Category 2- Elite Events project or have a history of at least 15,000 paid or documented attendees or project or have a history of at least 5,000 room nights.

* The maximum funding available for any Category 2 Elite Event is $100,000 or 10% of the total VSPC Elite Event budget, whichever is less.

Funding requests for Elite Events may be provided in the form of either Sponsorships or for funding a Marketing plan.

Preference will be given to Elite Events which occur during “off season” periods, including January 1 through February 15, May 1 through June 30, and September 1 through December 31.

Visitor surveys: The applicant agrees to allow the VSPC's research firm of record access to the venue to conduct on site intercepts with attendees to determine the value of the event, festival, program, or project to tourism and its potential for future growth.

[**Hillsborough County**](https://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/library/hillsborough/media-center/documents/boards-and-committees/tdc/tdc-2017-guidebook.pdf)

Two-year, established funding application process.

Three categories of funding: Visitor Experience Program, Festivals and Events Program and Out-of-Area Marketing Co-Operative (Co-op) Program.

Negative evaluation factors: (1.) Organizations with a financial surplus in excess of the amount of funding being requested (submission of the organization's financial statements, see above, is required with application); (2.) Special events planned to be conducted during this market's peak season (January through March); and/or (3.) Advertising and marketing within a 50-mile radius of Hillsborough County. Other sources of funding should be used for local area advertising.

Required Surveys: primary data collection on visitor volume and spend estimates are from the origin visitor surveys and customer intercept surveys, primarily to capture domestic and international visitor profiles. For the Festivals and Events Program, the event attendee intercept surveys are conducted for individual events and attractions. For marketing campaigns conducted through the Out-of-Area Marketing Co-op Program, customer intercepts focus on the targeted audiences and markets. Secondarily, data mining enables supplemental collection on expenditures by our visitors on rental cars, gasoline, food and beverage and other retail expenditures in the County as well as sales at the venues and participating lodging properties.

**[VISIT FLORIDA](https://www.visitflorida.org/resources/grants/)**

Separate categories of grants with different award amounts and some with match requirements: [Advertising Matching Grants Program](https://www.visitflorida.org/resources/grants/advertising-matching-grants-program/), [Cultural, Heritage, Rural and Nature Tourism Grant Program](https://www.visitflorida.org/resources/grants/cultural-heritage-rural-and-nature-tourism-grant-program/), [Minority Convention Grant Program](https://www.visitflorida.org/resources/grants/minority-convention-grant-program/), [Small Business Grant Program](https://www.visitflorida.org/resources/grants/small-business-grant-program/)

Example A: Hernando County Evaluation Criteria

Production of Room Nights – Worth up to 6 points

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Room Nights | Grant Funding | Points Awarded |
| 300+ | Up to $5,000 | 6 |
| 201-300 | Up to $3,000 | 5 |
| 151-200 | Up to $2,500 | 4 |
| 101-200 | Up to $2,000 | 3 |
| 51-100 | Up to $1,500 | 2 |
| Up to 50 | Up to $1,000 | 1 |

Production of Room Nights (Worth up to 30 points/6 points per question)

1. Will the Local Special Event attract overnight visitors to Hernando County or, if a repeat event, has the Local Special Event demonstrated a history of generating room nights/overnight visitors?

2. Does the room night history show signs of growth or consistency? How significant are the recent calendar year room night numbers?

3. If a new event, how strong and accurate is the estimate of overnight visitors?

4. Has a host hotel or accommodation partnership(s) been established?

5. How accurate are the room night statistics? If a repeat Event, are the room nights validated by the property’s manager, booking engine, County document, or survey?

Marketing Plan – Worth up to 21 points / 3 points per question

1. Is there an itemized marketing/ad budget for the proposed Local Special Event? If a repeat Local Special Event how does the proposed marketing plan compare to past years?

2. How creative is the marketing plan? If a repeat event, is the marketing plan evolving with the room night numbers?

3. Did applicant use the previous grant awarded? (if applicable) How does the previous year’s marketing plan compare to actual reimbursed expenses? For example, did the applicant promote the Local Special Event as stated in the previous application?

4. When are the advertising/promotions for the Local Special Event scheduled? Are they planned in advance to promote travel to the event and produce overnight visitors? How will the requested funding be used?

5. Does the applicant propose co-op advertising opportunities with other Local Special Events or the Tourism Bureau?

6. If a repeat Local Special Event, how did the applicant measure the success of their promotions and marketing campaigns for the Event?

7. If a repeat Local Special Event, how much publicity and earned media exposure did the Event receive in the past? Who promoted the Local Special Event?

Out of County Advertising - 10 points (To be considered for funding, the proposed Local Special Event must be advertised outside of Hernando County; regionally, state wide or nationally)

1. Does the Local Special Event provide opportunities for state, regional, national, and/or international exposure?

2. Is the Local Special Event proposed to be advertised outside a 50-mile radius of Hernando County?

3. Is the Local Special Event proposed to be promoted regionally up to 250-miles (Jacksonville, South Florida, and the Panhandle?)

4. If a repeat Local Special Event, how well has the applicant credited/mentioned Hernando County Tourist Development Council and/or utilized the brand logo in prior ads?

5. Is the Local Special Event proposing to use new media (Constant Contact, e-magazines or social media)?

Economic Impact – Worth up to 10 points/2 points per question

1. How strong is the overall benefit to tourism in Hernando County?

2. How strong is the out-of-town day trip visitor impact to Hernando County? Not necessarily overnight visitors but producing an impact for our stakeholders: restaurants, shops, gas, food, entertainment, etc.

3. Is there growth in the Local Special Event? For example, has the main event added attractions to enhance the show?

4. What area businesses will benefit from this Local Special Event?

5. How do they calculate economic impact? Is it their study or survey, or generic version supplied by Visit Florida and/or Hernando County?

Timing of the Event. Worth up to 12 points / 3 points per question

1. How unique is the proposed Local Special Event?

2. Is the Local Special Event scheduled for more than one day?

3. Is the schedule for the Local Special Event created in a manner to lure overnight visitors?

4. Is the Local Special Event scheduled to occur during the off-season (May- October) which is more a desirable time?

Additional Organization Information - (Scored 0 or ±5 per question)

1. Has the applicant organization attended the annual Hernando Tourism Summit and/or the Local Special Events Marketing Program Workshop?

2. How often does the organization volunteer at other Local Special Events and/or the Hernando Tourism Bureau (either in the office or at Special Events)?

3. Did they turn in a sample of the Special Event County Survey or own survey?

4. Does the event have a recycling plan in place?

5. Does the event support one of the Tourism Bureau’s top five target markets?

6. Does the organization support other Local Special Events? Is there a plan to cross-promote other Local Special Events?

Example B: Clay County Evaluation Criteria

Commitment to the Expansion of Tourism in Clay County – Maximum 25 points

Purpose: The grant is evaluated based on evidence of the overall tourism impact of out of county tourists/visitors.

High Value Visitors – those tourists/visitors from areas outside of Clay County staying overnight in paid accommodations

Day Visitors – those tourists/visitors from outside of Clay County but not spending the night in paid accommodations

High Impact (25 points): More than 50 estimated room nights involving High Value Visitors and/or 4,000 Day Visitors

Medium Impact (15 points): More than 25 estimated room nights involving High Value Visitors and/or 2,000 day visitors

Low impact (5 points): Less than 25 estimated room nights involving High Value Visitors and/or less than 2,000 Day Visitors

Soundness of Proposed Event – Maximum 25 points

Purpose: The grant request is evaluated based on the event illustrating clearly identified objectives; other additional funding sources being used and an out of county advertising plan.

Stability and Management Capacity – Maximum 25 points

Purpose: The grant request is evaluated based on the event having a proven record or demonstrated capacity of the organization to successfully develop resources, effectively plan, organize and implement the proposed event.

1. How long has the event existed? a. Third year or more (10 points) b. Second year (5 points) c. First year (0 points)

2. Event History Documentation – For past events, were all the TDC grant documentation requirements submitted and adhered to as published in policy? a. All documentation properly submitted and grant funds appropriately used as outlined in the grant request (10 points) b. Documentation submitted but incomplete and/or grant funds not fully used as outlined on the grant request. (5 points) c. Documentation not submitted as required and/or grant funds not used as agreed. (0 points)

3. Visitor Survey – Does the event plan to use a visitor survey to capture data for future improvements and was a sample copy provided in the application package? a. Yes, sample survey included in the application with agreement to share zip code information with the TDC following the event (5 points) b. No survey planned (0 points)

Quality of Proposed Event – Maximum of 25 points

Purpose: The grant request is evaluated based on the event attracting residents and visitors to Clay County with a high quality experience which provides a significant benefit to Clay County. Also, whether the event would not take place in Clay County but for TDC funding assistance.

1. High Impact – Recurring event with increasing levels of participation and significant economic impact. Event uses a systemic approach to data collection and analysis (25 points)

2. Medium Impact – Recurring event with steady level of participation and economic impact to the county (15 points)

3. Low impact – First year event with level of impact unknown, does have positive anticipated level of participation and economic impact to the county OR a recurring event with a declining level of participation and economic impact to the county. (5 points)

Example C: Miami-Dade County Evaluation Criteria

Tourism Impact/Marketing Plan as determined by (50 points):

▪ program content

▪ projected attendance figures

▪ tourism industry support including hotels, airlines, etc.

▪ comprehensive marketing strategies

▪ media coverage as evidenced by ads in travel publications or other outside publications/electronic media

▪ television coverage and viewership from a major network or cable provider

▪ capability to serve as major tourism generators in the fourth quarter, “shoulder season” (i.e.

July – September)

Hotel Accommodations as determined by (20 points):

▪ location of hotels/motels contracted room block/booking contract(s) – both “guaranteed” room blocks (i.e., room blocks for which your organization has contracted to financially guarantee, wholly or partially) and “courtesy” room blocks (i.e., room blocks that are being held with no financial commitment from your organization)

▪ number of hotel room nights booked/blocked

▪ historic information on the number of room nights used during previous years of

the same event

Quality/Track Record as determined by (10 points):

▪ support material (media reviews, articles, catalogues, etc.)

▪ reputation of the event/program/project

▪ reputation of organization and its programs and services

▪ history of organization and the event

▪ nature and scope of the organization's program

▪ impact on and involvement of Miami-Dade's multicultural community in the program

▪ event’s ability to attract high caliber and high profile artists/participants

▪ programs that have a track record or a demonstrable potential to provide a significant national and/or international return for Miami-Dade County in regard to publicity and visitorship

 Event Coordination/Management/Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Compliance as determined by (10 points):

▪ brief resumes of key administrative staff

▪ project description and implementation

▪ feasibility of organizational structure in carrying out the event

▪ geographic location of program and project

▪ effective evaluation methods

▪ past events

▪ efforts to comply with and incorporate ADA into projects, including ADA-focused marketing, facilities’ compliance, involvement of artists, organizational hiring policies and board/volunteer recruitment with disabilities and technology (e.g., hearing assistance systems, audio descriptions, etc.)

Fiscal Feasibility/Accountability as determined by (10 points):

▪ financial stability of the organization

▪ broad base of financial support

▪ previous administration of Council grants

▪ capacity to attract financial support from other private and public sources as evidenced in matching requirements and in-kind services

▪ timely submission of final reports for applicants who have received previous TDC funding

Prepared by: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

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