

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
SPECIAL EVENT FUNDING REQUEST**

PART I - INSTRUCTIONS AND DEFINITIONS

PURPOSE:

This document sets forth the guidelines and categories for requests for funds from Tourist Development Taxes. Applications will be accepted from organizations that will sponsor and promote tourism activities within Columbia County that bring substantial numbers of over-night visitors to the County.

TIMETABLE FOR REVIEW:

The Tourist Development Council will distribute applications to organizations that express an interest in receiving funds for upcoming Fiscal Year. Projects must meet the guidelines and criteria outlined in this document.

Completed applications should be submitted to the Tourism Development Department Office as follows:

Events scheduled for January 1 st - March 31 st	Due October 1st
Events scheduled for April 1 st - June 30 th	Due January 1st
Events scheduled for July 1 st - September 30 th	Due April 1st
Events scheduled for October 1 st - December 31 st	Due July 1st

Applications may be mailed or hand delivered to the Tourism Development Department office: 263 NW Lake City Avenue, Lake City, FL 32056.

APPLICATION AND EVALUATION PROCEDURE:

The following procedure will be strictly followed. Applicants are cautioned not to contact any member of the Columbia County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) or Tourist Development Council (TDC) regarding their request. All contacts should be channeled through the TDC Director's office.

Please read the following instructions carefully and call the Tourism Development Office with any questions. Incomplete or incorrect applications will be returned.

The Tourist Development Council Director will review all applications to determine if they meet the established criteria for funding. Only those requests that will have a substantial economic impact on the County from visitors will be considered further. The Tourism Department office staff will notify qualifying applicants who are finalists. All finalists will then be invited to present their applications to the TDC at the regular scheduled meeting the third Wednesday of the month.

The Tourist Development Council will vote on each qualifying applicant and prepare, in priority order, their recommendations for funding. Funding recommendations of the Tourist Development Council are final..

All materials submitted with applications will become a matter of public record, open to inspection by any citizen of the State of Florida subject to Chapter 119, Florida Statutes.

OVERALL GUIDELINES

Applications must conform to the guidelines specified by the Tourist Development Council. Applications that do not conform to these guidelines will not be considered for funding. The funding limits are subject to final approval by the Tourist Development Council.

Funding is available for major events staged in the County that attract large numbers of visitors from outside the County. Example would be state, national or international amateur sports events, and multiple day festivals.

Advertising and promotional campaigns supporting events must be in out of Columbia County media such as broadcast, web and regional print.

TYPES OF EVENTS:

Programs, festivals, or special events should have a history of, or the potential for attracting out-of-county visitors, either as participants or spectators, generating hotel/motel/campground room nights. Consideration will also be given to events that can generate national, state, or regional media exposure for Columbia County and its tourist offerings.

ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS:

Not-For-Profit Organizations under section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code (a copy of the IRS determination letter provided by the applicant confirms federal tax-exempt status) and For-Profit Organizations are eligible for funding. Organizations must have significant county ties, established primarily to produce cultural programs, festivals, or special events, utilizing private sector community financial support and volunteers as well as paid staff to carry out the objectives of the organization.

PROJECT GUIDELINES:

1. Project must take place within the Suwannee Valley Region (Columbia, Suwannee, Hamilton).
2. Applicant must make project accessible to the public and to disabled persons.
3. Applicant must submit a list of the Board of Directors, with addresses, salaries and occupation or affiliation – if applicable.
4. Applicant must submit most recent preliminary final/attendance and final reports if you have received a grant in the past from Columbia County.
5. Applicant must match the amount requested on a dollar-for-dollar basis, showing revenue specifically contributed for program (50% of this match may be in-kind contributions, accompanied by a list of fair and reasonable market value).
6. Applications failing to meet deadline will not be considered.
7. Multiple events must be separate and distinct applications with separate summaries and budgets.
8. Advertising and promotion must take place in areas outside of Columbia County. This is to ensure that funds will be used to attract visitors who reside out of Columbia County and who may stay at least one night in local lodging.
10. Invoice must be made to Columbia County TDC. No funds will be forwarded in anticipation of the receipt of an invoice.
11. A complete detailed project budget must be submitted that includes all expenses.
12. The complete detailed project budget must include all revenues.
13. All information should be submitted on 8 ½ x 11” white paper.
14. A certificate of liability insurance, naming Columbia County as an additional insured, is required before any reimbursements can be released.

SPECIAL NOTE:

In the event that any funding request is turned down, the organization will not be permitted to come back to the TDC for the same event until the next fiscal year. An exception would be if new information, not previously presented, might alter the TDC’s decision. In this case, the applicant must bring the request back to the TDC for further review.

Funding Administration: No funding may be reimbursed until the Columbia County Tourist Development Council approves the funding.

Funding Manager: Organizations receiving funding shall designate a Funding Manager. That individual shall be responsible for maintaining the official file with application, correspondence, funding, narrative progress reports, request for funds/reimbursements, invoices and sample of promotional materials used. The organizations funding manager will insure that all elements of the funding application are followed, that narrative progress reports are submitted in a timely manner, that requests for funds are accurate and appropriate attachments are included, and that the event funding is closed out

efficiently with the necessary reports and financial submitted. It is the funding manager's responsibility to see that any applicable Federal, State or County laws and policies are followed.

Applicants should be aware that the TDC staff will also survey hotels and event attendees to confirm the data collected by the event organizers.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES:

1. If you are applying for more than one event, a separate applications and distinct separate budgets are required..
2. State the goals and objectives for each event for which you are applying for.
3. Describe what benefits will be received from each event or promotion for which you are applying.
4. Describe how the event increases awareness of the County as a visitor destination, increases the number of visitors, their length of stay, and promotes inter-county travel by visitors.
5. Describe how the effectiveness of each event will be evaluated.
6. Describe how financial resources will be monitored.
7. Describe, in detail, how the event will be implemented?
8. Attach copies of letters of commitment to substantiate matching funds.

STATUS REPORTS:

Preliminary Status Report: A preliminary status report is due at the time of submission of application indicating an overall status of the event and revenue generated to Columbia County.

Interim Status Report: A detailed interim status report will be required sixty (60) days prior to the event. This report will identify at what point you are with the planning of the event.

Final Status Report: A detailed final status report is due within sixty (60) days of the close of the event.

PROCEDURES FOR DRAW OF FUNDS

A Request for Funds Form must be completed and submitted to the TDC office for interim draws and for final payment. All payments are on a reimbursement basis only and made after proof of paid invoices are presented. Reimbursement of funds must stay within the confines of the Project Expenses outlined in your application. Organizations receiving funding should take into consideration that it will take a minimum of 30 days for the County to process a check. Copies of paid invoices, cancelled checks, tear sheets, printed samples or other backup information to substantiate payment must accompany request for funds.

USE OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FUNDS

Tourism grant funds must be used to promote and advertise tourism in the State of Florida, nationally and internationally. However, if tax revenues are expended for an activity, service, venue, or event, the activity, service, venue, or event shall have as one of its main purposes the attraction of tourists as evidenced by the promotion of the activity, service, venue, or event to tourists. Florida State Statutes 125.0104 section 5(A) 2.

NOTICE: All collateral material and advertisements must list Columbia County as one of the event sponsors. All printed material must contain the verbiage "A cooperative effort funded by the Columbia County Tourist Development Tax".

FUNDING CATEGORY GUIDELINES

I. Sponsorships and Event Bid Fees: Minimum two-day events with 100 or more hotel room nights per day of the event. Funds are to be used exclusively for advertising and promotion in out of market media. The maximum is \$10,000 for events with a minimum of three years of result history.

II. First Time Events: These would include newly created events, or ones that have little history. The maximum amount per event is \$1,500. Subsequent year funding will be determined by results of the first or second year.

III. Cultural Events: Two or more day events that bring significant number of overnight visitors to Columbia County. The maximum amount per event is \$2,500.

IV. Sporting Events: Two or more day events that bring significant number of overnight visitors to Columbia County. The maximum amount per event is \$2,500.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be scored in five (5) categories with a maximum score of one hundred (100) points per applicant.

I. COMMITMENT TO THE EXPANSION OF OFF-SEASON TOURISM IN COLUMBIA COUNTY- Maximum 25 Points.

Evidence that the project: serves to attract out-of-county visitors generating hotel/motel/campground rentals; will be marketed to the fullest extent possible in an effective and efficient manner; demonstrates a willingness of the organizers to work with the tourism industry; commitment to develop other funding sources in subsequent years.

II. OUT-OF-COUNTY PROMOTION- Maximum 25 Points

The proposed out-of-County advertising is well thought out and detailed to show the potential broad awareness of the event in out-of-market media. Packaging of hotels, attractions and shopping through tour operators or travel agents will also be evaluated.

III. SOUNDNESS OF PROPOSED PROJECT - Maximum 20 Points.

The extent to which the project has clearly identified objectives; has assigned responsibilities and accountability; has a realistic timetable for implementation; has additional funding sources available that will be utilized; will accomplish its stated objectives.

IV. STABILITY AND MANAGEMENT CAPACITY - Maximum 15 Points.

- A proven record or demonstrated capacities of the organization to develop resources, effectively plan, organize and implement the proposed project.
- The organization has a successful history of service in and to Columbia County .
- Ability of the organization to administer public grants and to prepare and deliver the necessary progress reports to the Tourist Development Council.

V. QUALITY AND UNIQUENESS OF PROPOSED PROJECT -Maximum 15 Points.

Extent, to which the activity provides a program for Columbia County visitors and its residents, which is of significant merit and that, without such assistance, would not take place in the County.

After the fourth year of requesting Tourist Tax funding the event should have enough sponsors to fund the event without using the Tourist Tax. If a request for funding is submitted after the fourth year, the Special Events Committee will take the request under consideration and forward a recommendation to the Tourist Development Council. A detailed explanation letter of why the funding request is needed will be required before any review of the application takes place.

For second and third year requests special consideration will be given to organizations that have secured additional support through private or corporate contributions.

USES OF TOURIST DEVELOPMENT FUNDS

AUTHORIZED USES OF FUNDS:

The following are examples of how Tourist Development Funds may be used to promote tourism for the County.

- Advertising and promotional expenses in out-of-market media in conjunction with an event to increase participation in the event and bring visitors to Columbia County. Examples are: printing and distribution of promotional pieces prior to the event including creative design, printing, copying, ad placement cost, distribution of direct mail.
- Creating an internet web site promoting the event linked to the County's Tourism website to increase participation, attendance and awareness of the event and generate hotel room nights.
- Bid fees to attract major sports or other special events to Columbia County to generate visitors and economic impact to the community.

TOURISM FUNDS MAY NOT BE USED FOR:

- Prize money, scholarships, awards, plaques, or certificates.
 - Travel expenses.
 - Projects that are restricted to private or exclusive participation.
 - Private entertainment, food, and beverages and lodging.
 - Legal, medical, engineering, accounting, auditing, planning, marketing, feasibility studies or other consulting services.
 - Salaries or supplements to salaries for existing or future staff, or employment of personnel directly or indirectly related to the project or event.
 - Real property or capital improvements, new construction, renovation or restoration to facilities.
 - Tangible personal property including but not limited to office furnishings or equipment, permanent collections, or individual pieces of art.
 - Interest or reduction of deficits and loans.
 - Expenses incurred or obligated prior to or after the project period.
 - Advertising and promotional materials distributed at the event site or after the event.
 - Payments for services or goods purchased for previous or other events.
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One copy of the following items is required and should be attached to your original application:

- Charter, Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws, Proof of Current Status (except government entities)
- Minutes of meeting authorizing officers to apply for these tourism tax funds
- IRS Determination Letter of non-profit status (except government entities)
- List of current Officers and Board members with terms and salaries, if applicable.
- Organizational Chart
- Copy of financial statement of your most recent fiscal year (except government entities)
- Proof of Liability Insurance
- List of other Financial Commitments

COLUMBIA COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
FISCAL YEAR _____
SPECIAL EVENT GRANT APPLICATION

1. NAME OF EVENT/PROJECT: _____

2. DATE OF EVENT/PROJECT: _____

3. LOCATION OF EVENT/PROJECT (address and/or specific location where event/project will take place):

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

4. NAME OF APPLICANT/HOST ORGANIZATION:

Legal Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

5. CONTACT PERSON/TITLE:

Name _____

Title _____

Telephone No. (____) _____ Fax No. (____) _____

E-mail _____

6. TYPE OF ORGANIZATION - IRS STATUS (TAX ID NO.)

If applicable, attach Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws.

FID NO. _____

7. ATTACH A LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE ORGANIZATION'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

8. ATTACH A LIST OF PAID STAFF OF THE ORGANIZATION.

9. ATTACH MOST RECENT ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT FOR ORGANIZATION AND BUDGET FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR.

10. DESCRIPTION OF EVENT/PROJECT.

11. ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF LOCAL EVENT ATTENDEES: _____

12. ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF OUT-OF-TOWN, OVERNIGHT ATTENDEES (include vendors staying overnight in this number): _____

13. ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF EVENT VENDORS: _____

14. LIABILITY/MEDICAL INSURANCE? ___ No ___ Yes Carrier _____

15. HAS VENUE/FACILITY BEEN SECURED? ___ No ___ Yes
If Yes, indicate location, contact and telephone number. _____

16. HAS HOTEL(S) BEEN SECURED? ___ No ___ Yes
If Yes, indicate place(s), contact(s), and telephone number(s)

<u>Hotel</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Telephone Number</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

17. ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF HOTEL ROOMS PER NIGHT:

<u>Day/Date</u>	<u>No. of Single Rooms (one person per room)</u>	<u>No. of Double/Double Rooms (up to four persons per room)</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

18. ROOM NIGHT HISTORY OF EVENT (INCLUDE AS MANY YEARS PREVIOUS AS POSSIBLE):

<u>Dates</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Hotel and Contact</u>	<u>Room Nights (# of rooms X # of nights)</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

19. ATTACH EVENT/PROJECT BUDGET WITH ITEMIZED CATEGORIES OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES.

20. AMOUNT OF FUNDING REQUESTED (only specific costs for out-of-County advertisements and promotional materials will be accepted):

\$ _____

21. INTENDED USE OF THE FUNDS:

What plans have been made for out-of-County advertising/public relations/promotion of the event? Please provide details of activities, placements, and collateral materials, including the names of publications targeted, location of billboard, number of brochures to be produced, and where brochures will be distributed, etc. Attached separate page as needed.

22. HOW WILL THE EVENT/PROJECT BENEFIT TOURISM IN COLUMBIA COUNTY?

23. HAVE YOU RECEIVED A COLUMBIA COUNTY TDC GRANT IN THE PAST? No Yes
If Yes, indicate name and date of event/project and amount received.

24. IF YOU HAVE RECEIVED A PREVIOUS TDC GRANT, PLEASE PROVIDE COPIES OF ALL EVENT PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS, INCLUDING RADIO OR TELEVISION SCRIPTS, BILLBOARD COPY, PRINTED FLIERS, ADS, OR OTHER MATERIAL YOU PURCHASED WITH TDC GRANT MONEY. (ONLY PROVIDE MATERIAL ON THE MOST RECENT YEAR A GRANT WAS RECEIVED.)

25. WHAT RESEARCH DO YOU HAVE REGARDING THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF YOUR ATTENDEES? HOW DO YOU MEASURE THE SUCCESS OF YOUR EVENT? HOW DO YOU MEASURE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR PROMOTION?

26. ARE YOU INTERESTED IN PARTNERING WITH COLUMBIA COUNTY TO PURSUE ADDITIONAL PRIVATE SPONSORSHIP? No Yes

27. WOULD YOUR EVENT BE SUITABLE FOR "PACKAGING" WITH OTHER VENDORS? ARE YOU INTERESTED IN WORKING WITH TDC TO DO THAT? No Yes

VERIFICATION

OFFICIAL WITH CONTRACTING AUTHORITY FOR THE ORGANIZATION

I HEREBY CERTIFY that I have read the foregoing application and that the facts stated herein are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I have read the Special Event Policies and Procedures and agree to comply with the policies and procedures therein as a condition of receiving grant funds.

Official's Signature

Official's Name & Title (Typed)

ON This ____ day of _____, 20____, before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for the State of Florida, personally appeared _____, to me known to be the person named in and who executed the foregoing document.

Notary Public
My Commission Expires:

CONTACT PERSON AS LISTED ON PAGE ONE OF APPLICATION

I HEREBY CERTIFY that I have read the foregoing application and that the facts stated herein are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I have read the Special Event Policies and Procedures and agree to comply with the policies and procedures therein as a condition of receiving grant funds.

Official's Signature

Official's Name & Title (Typed)

ON this ____ day of _____, 20____, before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for the State of Florida, personally appeared _____, to me known to be the person named in and who executed the foregoing document.

Notary Public
My Commission Expires:

Sample Proposed Budget of Event/Special Project Sample

ANTICIPATED REVENUE:

Admissions	\$	
Booth/Space Rentals.....	\$	
Corporate Sponsorships:		
.....	\$	
.....	\$	
.....	\$	
.....	\$	
Other Revenue:		
.....	\$	
.....	\$	
Applicant Revenue	\$	
Sub-Total	\$	
TDC Funding Sought.....	\$	
Sub Total	\$	
In-Kind Contributions of Services, Equipment, Accommodations, Advertising (Please List)		
.....	\$	
.....	\$	
.....	\$	
Estimated Value of In-Kind Revenue	\$	
TOTAL REVENUE	\$	

ANTICIPATED EXPENSES:

Personnel:		
Administrative.....	\$	
Artistic.....	\$	
Technical/Production.....	\$	
Contracted Services (Please List):		
.....	\$	
.....	\$	
.....	\$	
Space Rental.....	\$	
Travel	\$	
Advertising/Marketing	\$	
Other (Please List)		
.....	\$	
TOTAL ESTIMATED EXPENSES	\$	

Columbia County Tourist Development Council
Preliminary Status Report

EVENT NAME: _____

REPORT DATE: _____

ORGANIZATION: _____

CONTACT PERSON: _____ TITLE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ FAX: _____

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On an attached sheet, answer the following questions and attach it to your application.

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION:

Is this a first time event? _____

If not, how many times has this event taken place?

What hotels have committed to special rates or packages for the event to date?

What are the estimated hotel room nights generated by this event?

What is the estimated revenue generated by this event?

What is the estimated number of participants expected at this event?

If event planning is in progress, what has been done, what remains to be done, and are there any problems?

If the event planning has not been started, why?

List the out-of-county advertising, marketing, and/or public relations that have been contracted or placed to date?

Interim Status Report

EVENT NAME: _____

REPORT DATE: _____

ORGANIZATION: _____

CONTACT PERSON: _____ TITLE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ FAX: _____

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On an attached sheet, answer the following questions to identify the status of the event. Submit this report at least quarterly.

INTERIM – These questions will identify the current status of the upcoming event. After the TDC staff reviews this Interim Status Report, if they feel you are behind schedule on the planning stages, they will make recommendations to help get the event back on schedule.

Has the planning of this event started?

At what point are you at with the planning stage for this event? (Percent of completion)

What hotels/motels have committed to special rates or packages for the event?

What is the number of booked hotel/motel rooms to this point for this event?

What is the total dollar amount to date of matching contributions?

What is the status of the advertising and promotion for this event?

Have your submitted any advertisements or printed pieces to the TDC staff for approval?

Please supply a sample and indicate the ad schedule.

How has the public interest for this event been up to this point?

Final Status Report

EVENT NAME: _____

REPORT DATE: _____

ORGANIZATION: _____

CONTACT PERSON: _____ TITLE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ FAX: _____

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On an attached sheet, answer the following questions for each element in your scope of work.

Final – These questions should be answered for your final status report.

1. Is this a first time event? If not, how many times has this event taken place?
2. What hotels have committed to special rates or packages for the event to date?
3. What is the number of hotel room nights generated by this event?
4. What is the name and address of Hotels/Motels and contact person?
5. What is the total revenue generated for this event?
6. Total expenses. (Have all vendors been paid?)
7. List the vendors that have been paid, if not, what invoices are still outstanding and why?
8. What is the number of participants that came to this event?
9. What is the percentage of the total participants from out of Columbia County?
10. What problems occurred if any during the event?
11. List the out-of-county- advertising, marketing, and/or public relations that have been contracted or placed to date?
12. How can the event be improved or expanded?