

2012-2013 Nebraska Tourism Marketing Grant Program

Overview

The Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism has allocated \$125,000 of its operating budget for tourism marketing grants in Nebraska. There are three grant categories: **1) Promotion of an Event, 2) Promotion of a Region, and 3) General Marketing.** The minimum grant amount that can be requested is \$2,000 and the maximum is \$10,000. No more than two grant applications are accepted from any single applicant. Grants are available for both for-profit and nonprofit organizations. A Federal identification number is required in the submittal of an application. Federal and State government agencies are not eligible for grants. The grants are awarded on a reimbursement basis. After completion of a project awarded a grant and after verification that the entire project was paid for, the State will reimburse for the pre-approved portions of the project. It is the responsibility of the applicant to initially pay all expenses to complete the project.

Grant Schedule

October 14, 2011

January 23, 2012

March 16, 2012

July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013

Grant applications made available

Grant applications due

Grant awards announced

Grant paperwork due for reimbursement
(Upon completion of project with payments made)

Grant Match and Eligible Expenses

All grantees must provide at least a 25% match. Put another way, a grant can not exceed 75 percent of the total project cost. Half of the match can be in-kind services and/or donated materials; however, documentation must be provided for any in-kind match. Volunteer work is valued at \$10/hour and must be documented, including dates and list of volunteers, the services they provided, and their hours of service. If you receive a grant, you can incur expenses eligible for assistance immediately after grant notification. Many marketing expenses are eligible for grant assistance, but some are not. Among expenses not covered for reimbursement are: food; lodging; transportation costs; purchase or rental of computers, projectors, and other equipment; telephone expenses; postage; membership dues; talent/dignitary honorariums; administrative expenses for salaries; rental of office space; physical construction of billboards (billboard rental is allowed); local signing; and items for resale. Reimbursement will begin July 1, 2012 and must be completed by June 30, 2013. A credit line for the Division of Travel and Tourism and its official logo must be included on any advertisement or literature paid by the grant. Once notification is given to those projects selected for a grant, a contract will be made between the Division of Travel and Tourism and the applicant that will spell out specifically what is covered in the grant. At that time a copy of the official Division of Travel and Tourism logo and suggested tag line will be provided. If an applicant fails to include the logo and tag line on materials paid with the grant, reimbursement will not be made.

Instructions

For each grant application, complete the cover page and include a Federal identification number and valid signature. Provide no more than three (3) typed pages (if single-spaced with 12 pt. font) to answer the specific questions for each grant. Fill out a budget worksheet and attach any letters of support and other support materials. Submit the original and three copies paper-clipped separately (please do not staple), and submit the application by January 23, 2012. Do not place applications in folders or binders.

Other Specifics:

1. All printing and advertising projects with the exception of media buys must include at least two (2) written bids with the application. If two bids are not included, that portion of the application will not be considered. There may be situations where you can find only one local or nearby business that can do the work; if so, you will need to get the second bid from outside of your community.
2. A signature of an official of a primary local tourism organization (convention and visitors bureau, chamber of commerce, county visitors committee, etc.) must be included on the cover page. This helps show that proper local support is in place for the project (Division of Travel and Tourism staff can help identify an appropriate official for your project if needed). Applications will not be judged without the required signature.
3. Include a coverage map for any print or electronic media you wish to use. Coverage maps are available from individual advertising businesses (TV stations, radio stations, newspapers, magazines, etc.).
4. When requesting reimbursement of a grant award, you must include measurements of the effectiveness of your marketing, such as attendance this year versus in the previous year, license plate counts showing origins of attendees, numbers of advertising-stimulated inquiries for information, etc. Please include as much information as possible regarding the impact of the grant on your project.

Contact Heather Hogue of the Division of Travel and Tourism if you have questions about the grant requirements and/or eligibility of projects for grant assistance.

Contact Heather at 402-471-3796 or e-mail: heather.hogue@nebraska.gov

Grant Categories

Category 1. Promotion of an Event (\$2,000-\$10,000)

Applicants can get financial assistance to market new or expanded existing events and festivals with significant additions of days and/or activities compared to those in previous years. One time events that will not be continued annually do not qualify. Funded marketing efforts may begin no earlier than the marketing grant announcement date. New events may earmark up to 50% of the grant toward local marketing. The remaining dollars should be geared towards attracting visitors from at least 100 miles away. Existing events and festivals may request funds to reach a new market that is at least 100 miles away. Local media may be included in advertising plans if the majority of their audience is beyond the 100-mile radius. For example, a local radio station that reaches more than 100

miles away could be included in the application, but a local station with a 25-50 mile radius would not be eligible. Check with the Division of Travel and Tourism before submitting your application if uncertain about whether the desired media are eligible.

Take up to three (3) typed pages to answer the following:

1. Describe the event and audience you are trying to attract (though a desired focus is attracting attendees/visitors from more than 100 miles away, the advertising dollars spent to market your event locally should also be shown and could be used as your match.)
2. How will this event be marketed? Specify your marketing effort, both locally and to the target audience more than 100 miles away. What is the local support for this event?
3.
 - A. For new events only: What plans do you have to make this event self-sustaining in the next few years?
 - B. For expanded existing events only: Show how the event will be significantly expanded in duration (number of days) and/or activities from previous years. Explain how/why you chose the new market you are trying to reach.

On a separate sheet of paper, include a complete marketing budget for the event and specifically list those activities that the grant will be used for. For existing events, include a program or list of activities from the last event as well as new activities. Clearly show where your match is coming from. Include a minimum of two (2) and a maximum of five (5) letters of support from businesses (motels, restaurants, etc.) and/or organizations who benefit from the success of this event.

Category 2. Promotion of a Region (\$2,000-\$10,000)

A region is considered to be at least three (3) communities or at least two (2) counties. "Regional" also includes at least three (3) entities that are separate but mutually benefitting from increased tourism (museums, historical homes, wineries, antique shops, regional tourism associations, theaters, etc.). The grant can be used for an overall marketing program or for specific projects within the region.

Take up to three (3) typed pages to answer the following:

1. Describe the regional project for this grant and those involved.
2. What is the overall marketing plan for this project and how will the grant be used?
3. What are the goals for this regional project in terms of bringing tourism dollars to the area?
4.
 - A. If this is a first-time effort for this group, describe how this project will produce long-term benefits for the group in efforts to boost tourism.
 - B. If this group has worked on other projects designed to increase tourism revenues, describe those projects and any successes that were achieved.

On a separate sheet of paper, include a complete marketing budget for the regional project and specifically note on the list those activities the grant will be used for. Clearly show where your match is coming from. Include a minimum of two (2) and a maximum of five (5) letters of support from entities involved in the project.

Category 3. General Marketing (\$2,000-\$10,000)

Applicants can get funds for a number of tourism marketing projects to attract more visitors to a specific area. This category is open to individual communities, regional organizations, nonprofit groups, and for-profit groups. Some potential projects are internet web site development or enhancement, image marketing (developing or enhancing photo or film libraries, developing a new logo, new art work, etc.), sales blitz to locations 100 miles or more away, booth displays, tourism awareness programs, customer service programs, group tour manuals, and meeting planner guides/publications. Individual communities or facilities can get funding for promotional materials through this category.

Take up to three (3) typed pages to answer the following:

1. Describe the project, who is involved, and how the grant will assist in their efforts.
2. Who is the target market for this project and how will they be reached?
3. Describe the marketing plan for this project and how it will boost tourism.

On a separate sheet of paper, include a budget for this project and specifically note on the list those activities the grant will be used for. Clearly show where your match is coming from. Include a minimum of two (2) and a maximum of five (5) letters of support from entities involved in the project.

Tips

Make certain you do your homework. Research your target markets and be prepared to justify them in your three (3) page summary.

When gathering letters of support, do not bother sending any from elected officials not directly involved with tourism. Instead, get letters of support from businesses and/or organizations that will directly benefit from your project. Your application will be judged on a point system. Insufficient support letters or too many will count against you.

When submitting requests for advertising funding, make certain you include information from the media advertisers (newspaper, TV, radio, internet site, etc.) that shows their audience and reach. Application budget worksheets must identify radio and TV stations by location and call letters (for example, KOLN-KGIN TV, Lincoln-Grand Island).

For additional information regarding grant writing and applying for grants please visit the Tourism 101 guide at <http://industry.visitnebraska.org/pdfs/industry/Tourism101Guide.pdf>. "I want a grant. Now how do I go about getting it?" is a helpful grant writing resource on page 21.

If you have questions regarding your application, contact:
Heather Hogue (402) 471-3796 or heather.hogue@nebraska.gov

**2012-2013 Tourism Marketing Grant Cover Page
(Complete This Page for Each Grant You Are Applying For)**

Name of Grant Application/Project _____

Name of Sponsoring Organization/Community _____

Contact Person/Title _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ FAX _____

E-mail _____ Web Site _____

Federal ID # _____

Business/Organization Federal ID # Assigned To:

Grant Request \$ _____ Cash Match \$ _____ In-Kind Match \$ _____

Category (check only one category):

Promotion of an Event

Promotion of a Region

General Marketing

Signature of Applicant Date

Signature of Official Tourism Entity Representative Date

For each grant application you must include four (4) sets of the following: a cover sheet, a project description no more than three (3) pages long, a budget worksheet, and letters of support. These materials must be delivered or postmarked by January 23, 2012 to:

Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism
301 Centennial Mall South
P.O. Box 98907
Lincoln, NE 68509-8907

2012-2013 Tourism Marketing Grant Budget Worksheet
 (Include Advertising and Contractor Bids if Applicable)

Be specific regarding types of advertising (for example, magazine, newspaper, radio, TV, visitors guides, rack cards, brochures, posters, web sites, travel show booth and registration fees, etc). All radio, television, and print media advertising must be listed separately. Show radio and TV advertising by both call letters and city of origin (for example, KRVN-Lexington) and magazine and newspaper advertising by individual publications and costs.

You must show how both the grant amount requested and the matches (both cash and in-kind) will be allocated among activities. Remember that the match must be at least 25% of the total cost and that at least half of the match (or 12.5% of the total cost) must be cash. The other half of the match can be "in-kind," consisting of volunteer services and donated materials. Volunteer services should be valued at \$10 per hour.

Application/Project _____
 (Name of Grant)

City/Town of Applicant _____ Federal ID #: _____

Activity	Grant Amount Requested	Match (Cash)	Match (In-kind)	Source of Match	Total Funds
Column Totals:					

(Total of Grant Amount Requested + Match (Cash) + Match (In-Kind) Must Equal Final Column Total.)