

ST. JOHNS COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT ARTS/CULTURE/HERITAGE GRANT PROGRAM 2021 FISCAL YEAR (ENDING 09/30/21)

Board of County Commissioners approved February 18, 2020

This program is administered by the St. Johns Cultural Council as part of a tourist development agreement with St. Johns County.

Application Deadline: July 5, 2020

Introduction

Arts, culture and heritage can be expressed through local customs, crafts, cuisine, visual and performing arts, history, literature and oral traditions. Areas rich in these unique resources have an increased appeal to many travelers and often these areas see a higher than average level of tourism.

Tourism is a significant contributor to the overall economy of St. Johns County and tourism provides both direct and indirect benefits to the citizens by generating additional tax revenue and support for local businesses and jobs.

The intent of the Arts, Culture & Heritage (ACH) Grant Program is to increase the positive economic impacts of local tourism by encouraging memorable unique events and supporting enhanced advertising and promotion of quality tourism opportunities.

Events and programs selected for funding through the grant program must have an arts, culture, and heritage focus; have high artistic quality; historic authenticity; and offer cultural experiences that are unique and designed to attract visitors to St. Johns County. Funding priority will be given to events, programs and performances that generate high-value overnight stays and occur during non-peak tourism periods.

Not all applications will be awarded funding either fully or partially. This is a highly competitive process and applications will be reviewed and scored on rigorous criteria. Awarded funds are intended to supplement, not supplant the project budget.

Late applications will not be considered Early submission of applications is encouraged and a courtesy review of early submissions is available by appointment with the Cultural Council. This review is for technical purposes only and does not guarantee the award of funding.

This grant opportunity is funded through the Tourist Development Tax (TDT) which is paid by individuals who rent overnight accommodations such as hotels/motels, condos, campsites, etc. for a period of six months or less while visiting St. Johns County.

More information about the TDT can be found in the enabling legislation, Section 125.0104, Florida Statutes.

Purpose

The purpose of the Tourism Development ACH Grant program is to provide financial support to events, programs and performances that are unique and will generate interest from outside the county and attract overnight visitors. Events and programs should be of the scale and quality to attract visitors and support the local brand, “*Florida’s Historic Coast has Culture Around Every Corner.*”

Eligibility Requirements

1. Events/performances/programs must take place in St. Johns County.
2. The events/performances/programs must have a primary purpose of attracting and/or engaging overnight tourists in arts, culture or heritage opportunities.
3. Arts, culture or heritage must be the primary focus of all funded events/performances/programs.
 - Applications that include an ACH activity that is secondary to the overall purpose of the event are not eligible for funding.
4. All events/performances/programs must be open and accessible to the general public.
 - Events, performances and programs must be promoted to the public and cannot be unreasonably restrictive through admittance fees, lack of public access or crowd capacity.
 - Events which require the purchase of an admission ticket to a third-party facility or attraction will not be considered for funding.
5. Applicant must be an organization qualified to do business in Florida.
 - Units of local government and higher education are eligible for programs and events that have an ACH focus.
 - Organizations that are not Florida corporations/organizations/entities must qualify with the Florida Department of State to do business in Florida.
6. Applicants must have a checking account with a licensed financial institution.
7. Applicant must demonstrate sufficient available funds for planning and implementation of the event/performance/program.
 - Applicant should understand that **funding advances are not made as part of this grant.** This is a reimbursement grant. Therefore, grant funds are only paid following the submission of paid invoices documenting eligible expenses; proof of received matching funds; and submission of the interim or final report.
 - Payments or reimbursements for expenses occurring outside of the grant period are not allowed without the written consent, provided in advance, of the Tourism and Cultural Development Director.
8. Matching funds must be provided for all grants. The amount of required matching funds varies by grant category. See additional information below.
9. Proof of necessary permits is required at the time of application.

- Applicants proposing to present events/performances/programs that require permits from federal, state, county or city governments must provide a copy of the permit or proof of application for the permit with the initial grant application.
 - If the permit is denied, the applicant must submit an amended application.
 - If a permit is denied and no other date/time/location is allowed, the application will be withdrawn from consideration or if a contract has been awarded, it will become void.
10. Projects must be completed within the fiscal year for which funds are awarded.
- The fiscal year begins October 1st and runs through September 30th of the following year.
11. The applicant shall conform to the following Non-Discrimination Statement: *“No person shall, on the grounds of race, creed, color, handicap, national origin, sex, age, political affiliation, or beliefs be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any Event/Program or activity funded in whole, or in part, with funds made available by the County.”*

Submittal and Review Process

1. Application Workshops
The St. Johns Cultural Council will host a series of application workshops. Attendance at one of these workshops is highly encouraged as the workshops provide the opportunity to review the application requirements, and format of and have both general and specific questions answered. The workshop schedule and locations will be provided at a later date.
2. Grant Review and Funding Panel
Grant applications are reviewed by an appointed Grant Review and Funding Panel with seven (7) voting members and two (2) alternate members. Panel members independently score the grant applications in each category. Applicants are encouraged to attend the subsequent funding panel scoring meeting (date and time to be determined) and may offer brief updates and respond to questions from the panel members. The panel members may revise their scores based on the applicant updates and responses. Any application receiving an average score below 80 points will not be considered for funding. **Recommendation of award of the grant(s) by the funding panel does not guarantee funding of the grant(s) in the Fiscal Year 21 budget.**
3. Review and Recommendation by the TDC
The TDC receives the final scores of the Grant Review Panel and at their discretion make a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners for award of grant dollars. The TDC may decide to fully fund the top scoring applications or may choose to partially fund any or all of the applications proportionally based on the scores of the Grant Review Panel. Any application receiving an average score below 80 points will not be considered for funding. **Recommendation of award of the grant(s) by the TDC does not guarantee funding of the grant(s) in the Fiscal Year 21 budget.**

4. Review and Award by the BCC

The BCC receives the recommendation of the TDC and may award the grant funding as part of the County budget in September

Grant Categories

Organizations may submit grant applications for multiple events and in multiple categories. However, only one application per event is allowed. Duplication or overlap between applications, including programming, matching funds and use of awarded grant funds, is not allowed and may result in disqualification of an application.

I. Visitor Experience Grant

Less than or up to \$100,000 of FY21 funds allocated to ACH Grants may be awarded in this category depending on the number of overall applications

The maximum award per event, performance, or program, with advertising, is \$20,000

The maximum award per organization for this category, with advertising is \$40,000

These free events/performances/programs enhance an area's visitor appeal by reinforcing the unique positive "selling points" of St. Johns County's visitor experience which help to differentiate the destination from other available options. The draw of this type of programming is the uniqueness of the activities (which may include historical re-enactments or parades) that are based in local culture and heritage. These programs must be high quality, historically accurate when relevant, and add value to the visitor experience. The events should have no commercial sales activity unless that activity is limited to period appropriate or hand-made items. Details of each funded event(s) must be submitted to historiccoastculture.com at least 150 days in advance or as soon as possible following the award of the grant.

Qualifying Criteria:

- These programs must be free of charge and open to the public
- Programs may occur on a single day, multiple consecutive days or multiple days over a limited but specified period with a minimum of 5 total hours of programming
- Applicant must provide a match of at least 50% of the requested grant amount. Applications for events, performances or programs that demonstrate a greater match will receive a higher score than applications which only meet the minimum match. The match may consist of cash or documented in-kind donations of goods, services, promotional activities or volunteer hours (assigned value of volunteer hours shall comply with County Policy). All grant recipients must document in detail, the sponsoring organization's expenditures for the program/event including those for the required marketing activities.

Allowable Use of Funds:

- Of the total event spend, an amount equivalent to at least 50% of grant funds must be allocated to advertising and promotion of the program/performance/event. All advertisements and promotional materials must include the TDC logo to be considered for reimbursement.
 - Up to 25% of the advertising and promotion grant funds may be allocated to in-county promotion through the lodging industry
 - Organizations may elect to have event advertising and promotion (totaling 50% of the grant award amount) completed by the County via the Cultural Council. If this election is

made, the County reserves the right to exercise full control over the type of advertising utilized and the content/look of that advertising. If this option is selected, the organization may only submit reimbursement requests for 50% of the total awarded grant amount.

- T-shirts or merchandise giveaways are not an approved form of advertising or promotion
- Up to 50% of grant funding may support direct program presentation costs
 - A receipt signed by the payment recipient must be submitted with grant reimbursement requests) for payments to all support staff, including historical re-enactors
 - Items which will be sold (merchandise, food, etc.) at the event may not be paid for with grant funds

Evaluation Criteria:

The following criteria will be considered by the Grant Review and Funding Panel when scoring grant applications:

- Does the event meet all of the above listed Qualifying Criteria and Allowable Use of Funding Criteria? (failure to meet these criteria may result in disqualification of the application)
- Does the event provide a high-quality experience for tourists?
- Is the event unique to the local area and is it something that will inspire visitors to travel to experience?
- Is the event scheduled for a non-peak tourism period? If not, does it significantly enhance visitor experience? Priority will be given to events, programs and performances occurring during non-peak tourism periods.
- Does the Event Marketing Plan have a clear target market?
- Is the plan well formed, understandable, diverse and appropriate for the target market? Does the marketing plan target out-of-county overnight tourists?
- Are the evaluation and tracking methods for marketing success well formed, logical and likely to be accurate?
- Does the total projected program budget make sense and support the details of the event?

II. Annual and Special Events Grant

At least \$425,000 of FY21 funds allocated to ACH Grants will be awarded in this category

The maximum award per event is \$60,000

The maximum award per organization for this category is \$120,000

These annual and special events are well organized, highly visible programs/events/performances with a regional or national draw for visitors. Examples include such performances of nationally and internationally recognized performers and performing arts companies; festivals that include such recognized performers and performances; art, culture and heritage exhibitions from nationally and internationally recognized cultural and heritage institutions. These events may be scheduled for a single day, multiple consecutive days, or multiple days over a limited specified period. These programs and events must have a demonstrable tourism impact with an emphasis on generating overnight stays. Details of any funded event must be submitted to historiccoastculture.com at least 150 days in advance or as soon as possible following the award of the grant.

Qualifying Criteria:

- The event must have a demonstrable regional or national draw for out-of-county visitors. Each application should highlight new or unique elements of the program, event or performance which will attract both new and repeat visitors.

- The event must generate overnight stays and related incremental economic activity.
- The event may be ticketed but must be open to the public. Ticket prices must be reasonable.
- The event may be scheduled for a single day, multiple consecutive days or multiple days over a limited but specified period. A minimum of 5 total hours of programming is required.
- The applicant must provide a 1:1 match of the requested grant amount. Applications for events, performances or programs that demonstrate a greater match will receive a higher score than applications which only meet the minimum match. Up to 25% of the match may consist of documented in-kind donations of goods, services, promotion activities or volunteer hours (assigned value of volunteer hours shall comply with County Policy).
- Only events as defined above will be considered. On-going programs are not eligible for funding.

Allowable Uses of Funds:

- Of the total event spend, an amount equivalent to at least 50% of grant funding must be allocated to out-of-county advertising and promotion. All advertisements and promotional materials must include the TDC logo. T-shirts and merchandise giveaways are not an acceptable form of promotion.
- Up to 50% of grant funding may support direct program presentation costs
 - Items to be sold (merchandise, food, etc.) at the event may not be paid for with grant funds.
- Grant funds may only be used for expenses directly resulting from the event and may not be used for operational expenses such as normal staffing or “rent” paid to institutions for staging special exhibits. These expenses also may not be utilized as an in-kind match for the grant.

Evaluation Criteria:

The following criteria will be considered by the Grant Review and Funding Panel when scoring grant applications:

- Does the event meet all of the above listed Qualifying Criteria and Allowable Use of Funds criteria? (failure to meet these criteria may result in disqualification of the application)
- Does the event provide a high-quality experience for visitors?
- Does the event include notable professional artists, unique exhibits or other features that provide an enjoyable and memorable experience for visitors?
- Does the event anticipate significant or meaningful total out-of-county visitor attendance relative to the amount of funding requested? And does the explanation of how this number was calculated make sense?
- Does the applicant demonstrate how attendance will be tracked including overnight stays?
- Does the applicant have a specific plan for generating overnight stays? Is the anticipated period of lodging occupancy reasonable for this type of event?
- Have the event organizers demonstrated the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to successfully produce this event?
- Is the event unique to the local area and something that visitors will travel to experience?
- Is this event scheduled for non-peak tourism period? Or for events with period appropriate dates that are scheduled during peak periods, will the event generate enhanced tourism visitation and does it provide a significant draw for tourists? Priority will be given to events, programs and performances that generate high-value overnight stays and occurring during non-peak tourism periods.

III. Resource Development Grant

Less than or up to \$60,000 of FY21 funds allocated to ACH Grants may be awarded in this category depending on the number of overall applications.

The maximum award per application is \$30,000

The max award per organization for this category is \$30,000

Resource Development projects must result in a programmatic improvement, have a demonstrable impact on the attractiveness of St. Johns County as a tourism destination and be of professional quality. The projects must have an emphasis on either generating overnight stays or increasing the appeal for tourists already visiting the area through new or improved unique and authentic experiences. These projects will expand or improve the existing tourist resources currently available and provide new and continued draw for a broad spectrum of tourists.

This funding may not be used for facility repairs or maintenance (e.g. window replacement, interior/exterior painting, roof repairs, parking lot improvements/repairs, etc.) nor may these funds be used to enhance marketing efforts such as website improvements or production of video.

Examples of eligible projects may include development of display quality interpretive signage, installation of outdoor art displays, creation of a self-guided tour, expansion of exhibition space, implementation of an interactive kiosk system for visitors and other similar projects.

All projects must comply with F.S. 125.0104 to receive funding.

Qualifying Criteria:

- The applicant must be a qualified non-profit or government entity
- Applicant must provide a match of at least 50% of the requested grant amount. At least 25% of the requested grant amount must be matched with cash and up to 25% of the requested grant amount may be matched with documented in-kind donations of goods, services or volunteer hours (assigned value of volunteer hours shall comply with County Policy).
- The developed resource must be available to the public. Reasonable ticket prices for access to the resources are allowed.
- The developed resource must enhance art, culture or heritage-based tourism in St. Johns County
- The expenditure of grant funds must result in a finished product and may not be used strictly for design or conception of a project

Allowable Use of Funds:

- Funds must be spent on the development of the resource described in the awarded grant
 - Funds may not be used for operating costs, including staff.

Evaluation Criteria:

The following criteria will be considered by the Grant Review and Funding Panel when scoring applications:

- Does the application meet all of the above listed Qualifying Criteria and Allowable Use of Funding Criteria? (failure to meet these criteria may result in disqualification of the application)
- Is the resource to be developed of professional quality?

- Will the resource to be developed improve the uniqueness and authenticity of the local tourism experience?
- Does the resource to be developed provide a significant improvement to the local arts, culture, heritage tourism industry through increased overnight stays or increased appeal for tourists already visiting the area?
- Does the project development plan make sense and correspond with the description of the project?
- Does the applicant have a comprehensive plan for advertising or otherwise making tourists aware of the completed resource?
- Does the budget make sense and support the details of the project?

Funding Restrictions

Grant funds may not be utilized for any of the following:

1. Capital improvements, including expenditures for the acquisition, construction or alteration of a facility, unless allowed by Florida Statutes, Chapter 125.0104, Paragraph 5 Authorized Uses of Revenue
2. Mortgage payments
3. Purchase of equipment, which has a useful life of one year or more and a unit cost of \$100.00 or more
4. Payment of past deficits
5. Administrative costs
6. Activities and events intended only for the applicant's membership or local community
7. Activities and events, which **do not promote tourism** in St. Johns County
8. Food, lodging, and personal transportation for traveling within or out-of-county, unless pursuant to a written agreement with an outside contractor
9. Rent paid to a sponsoring organization for hosting a special event
10. Scholarships, plaques or awards
11. Food or beverages for the event or activity

Matching Fund Requirements

- Regardless of the funding level awarded, reimbursements will not exceed documented expenditures and required matching amounts.

- **In-kind services** are defined as goods or services provided for the festival, event or program for which you would normally have to pay. The value of the match should be based on what you would normally have to pay for the goods or services, and what you actually have to pay. Documentation of the value of in-kind-services will be required from the contributing entity. Applicants are encouraged to list in-kind donations as demonstration of additional community support even if those donations are not to be used as part of the match for the grant.
- Matching funds based on **projected earned income** from the event or program may not exceed 25% of the total matching funds required. If full matching funds are not committed at the time of application, recipients must indicate how additional funds will be raised before the event or program start date.
- Matching funds in one grant application may not be used as matching funds in another grant application. Each applications costs and match must remain totally separate and auditable.
- TDC funds allocated to an organization cannot be used as matching funds for another ACH grant application or as matching funds for any other St. Johns County program.

Contract Reporting Requirements

Once the Panel awards have been reviewed and subsequently approved by the Board of County Commissioners, all contracts will be issued by the Tourist Development Council staff and returned to the Cultural Council. Interim and Final Reports and all reimbursement requests are to be submitted to the Cultural Council.

1. A final report must be submitted with reimbursement requests within sixty days after completion of the grant activity but under no circumstances later than October 10th whichever occurs first.
2. A documented assessment of results measured against the application's projections for attendance, overnight stays and out-of-county visitors in attendance, proof of marketing and/or promotions must be included in the final report. The final report should include economic impact calculations based upon these measures.
3. Any grantee that fails to file required reports will not be eligible for TDC funding during the next funding period. **Under no circumstances, will payment be made for a grant with reports outstanding.**
4. Grantees must notify the Cultural Council and TDC in writing of any substantial changes (i.e. date, venue, event content etc.) to their plans at least **150 days prior** to the event or program start date or as soon as possible following the award of the grant. Failure to do this can result in suspension of the contract and jeopardize future funding. Upon approval of the changes, the grant recipient will be responsible for updating any information previously submitted to historiccoastculture.com.
5. All information provided to the TDC in connection with the ACH Grant Program will become a matter of public record.

Record Keeping and Audit

1. Grantees agree to provide TDC and Cultural Council staff complimentary access to their program or event for the purpose of determining economic impact and evaluating conformity with the grant application.
2. If tickets are required for the program or event, the grantee must collect (and provide to the Cultural Council and TDC) the purchaser's name and either a street or email address to facilitate post event surveys.
3. All contracts are subject to programmatic and financial audit by the TDC or other County staff or authorized personnel. All programmatic and financial documents related to the Grant are subject to public inspection.
4. Recipients must acknowledge funding by the St. Johns County Tourist Development Council in all advertising and publicity for the event or program. That can be achieved in one of the following ways:
 - a. If the primary "call to action" of the ad is to direct people to an event / program specific website, an appropriate, approved logo must be placed on the site's opening page with a link to www.historiccoastculture.com and the words "*Plan your stay in St. Augustine | Ponte Vedra today. The preferred logo is shown below however additional logo and credit line options are available upon request (i.e. black and white, stacked, etc.)*"
 - b. Printed promotional media must include the logo below and the website www.historiccoastculture.com.
 - c. Radio or television ads must acknowledge TDC support.
 - d. Emails or newsletters promoting the event must acknowledge TDC support.

Color & B&W versions are available



5. The TDC reserves the right to request additional information beyond that requested in the initial grant application.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to the guidelines, the grant application, contract and addenda.

Marketing Related Definitions

Advertising / Paid Media: Paid advertising placements in traditional publications such as newspapers or magazines or outdoor media; web-based placements on commercial sites; paid broadcast spots on television or radio; and/or event-specific direct mail (electronic or traditional).

This may include the production and distribution of event-specific brochures or fliers (T-shirts, on-site banners or similar items will not be considered advertising).

Earned Media: Public relations/publicity costs associated with efforts to generate editorial content/mentions other than paid placements in media outlets i.e.: news releases, event or program-specific newsletters, photography or videography for promotional purposes.

Pooled Advertising: Funded events/programs for several organizations may be listed in one advertisement or brochure based on common dates or themes.

Promotion: A variety of activities specific to your funded program or event designed to attract overnight visitors and excursionists to the program or event. **Out-of-Market:** Outside the Jacksonville MSA and any counties adjacent to St. Johns County not part of the Jacksonville MSA.

Other Program Definitions

Admissions: Revenue from the sale of admissions, ticket subscriptions, and memberships for the program.

Application Cash: Funds from Applicant's present and/or anticipated resources that Applicant plans to provide to proposed project.

Budget Detail: Itemized breakdown of proposed program expenditures and income.

Contracted Services Revenue: Revenue derived from fees earned through sale of services. Include sale of workshops, etc., to other community organizations, government contracts for specific services, performance or residency fees, etc.

Eligible Non-profit: Organization recognized as having a non-profit status by the Florida Department of State Division of Corporations.

Foundation Grants: Revenue from grants by private foundations.

Fundraisers: Events that produce revenues beyond what is needed for event expenses and intended proceeds are designated for other purposes.

Government Grants - Federal: Revenue from grants by agencies of the federal government.

Government Grants - Local: Revenue from grants or appropriations by city, county and other local government agencies including the St. Johns County Tourist Development Council.

Government Grants - State/Regional: Revenue from grants by the State government and/or multi-state consortiums of state agencies.

Holidays: New Year's week, one week prior to Palm Sunday to one week after Easter Sunday, Memorial Day weekend, July 4th weekend, Labor Day weekend, Thanksgiving weekend, Christmas week.

In-Kind Contributions: Donated goods and services for which a fair market value shall be calculated, if an organization chooses to use them as partial matching funds.

Multi-Day Event: Any event that lasts longer than one day and less than 32 days.

Multi-Month Event: Any event that spans two or more months, or extends more than 31 days.

Moderate Demand Periods: see definition of “Peak”

Near Peak: see definition of “Peak”

Non-Peak: Events and programs occurring Sundays through Thursdays during times not identified as “Peak” (see definition below).

Other Private Contributions: Revenue from cash donations including gross proceeds from fund raising events.

Outside Professional Services - Cultural: Payments to performers, guest speakers or curators whose services are specifically and exclusively engaged for a funded program performed by non-employees.

Outside Professional Services - Other: Payments to firms or persons for non-cultural services that are specifically and exclusively incurred for a funded program or festival performed by non-employees.

Out of Market: “Out of Market” refers to geographic areas and non-contiguous counties to St. Johns County. i.e. Clay, Duval, Flagler and Putnam Counties are “out-of-county” but NOT “ Out-of-Market.”

Peak Periods: *Dates and time periods defined annually by the TDC and posted with the grant guidelines on stjohnculture.com*

Personnel: Payments for administrative, marketing, curatorial, technical/promotion employees including salaries, wages, fees and benefits to organization staff, specifically identified with the funded program.

Program Services Revenue: Includes ticket, concession, merchandise and upsell (VIP) sales and other earned revenue generated from the program or event.

Remaining Operating Expenses: All expenses not entered in other categories.

Space Rental: Payments specifically identified with this project but not owned or leased by your organization on an annual basis.

Total Operating Budget: Gross itemized summary of organization’s probable or actual expenditures and income for a proposed current or completed fiscal year.

Travel: Costs directly related to travel of an individual or individuals specifically identified with the program. Costs must be in accordance with Florida State Statute 112.061.

Venue: The scene or setting such as a physical location where the event or activity takes place.