

Darke County Visitors Bureau 2018 Tourism Grant Program Guidelines

Program Description

The Darke County Visitors Bureau's Tourism Grants Program is designed to encourage **creation or expansion** of tourism-related initiatives. Funds are available to non-profit tourism attractions and non-profit organizations sponsoring special events and programs that impact Darke County. The DCVB Tourism Grant Program allows the DCVB and volunteer grant committee members from the Darke County community to equally evaluate applications from organizations seeking funding for tourism-related initiatives.

Initiatives should increase visitation and/or exposure of Darke County as a destination through promotional efforts. Initiatives must help enhance Darke County's image as a **distinctive** destination to visitors.

Four grants will be awarded: **Two (2) \$1,000 grants** for events with budgets above \$5,000, and **two (2) \$500 grants** for events with budgets below \$5,000. Organizations with budgets below \$5,000 have the option to apply for the \$1,000 grant if they wish to do so. Each event will only be eligible for one grant award.

Application Guidelines

- Applicants must be an incorporated, non-profit, tax-exempt organization or have a fiscal agent that provides administrative and financial services. The fiscal agent accepts responsibility for administering the paperwork and project funds throughout the grant process.
- **Priority will be given to first-time, new initiatives.**
- Successful applicants will explain how the event will attract overnight guests, including collaboration with other organizations/events during same time period to encourage visitors to utilize lodging facilities.
- Successful applicants will lay out a detailed, well-defined marketing strategy to boost exposure of the event/initiative, including out-of-county marketing initiatives
- Successful applicants will provide a **specific and precise** overview of the community impact their event will have for Darke County (including economic, cultural, artistic, etc. impacts of the event). **(Only required for \$1,000 grant applicants)**
- Applications must include relevant support materials. Support materials may include prior year's financial reports, marketing examples, event mission / vision statement, advertisements, etc. Limit of three.
- Funding shall be requested for marketing, promotion and advertising expenses **only**. Funding may **not** be used for costs associated with administration, equipment, capital improvements.
- Special events and programs for which grants are requested must occur during the year in which the grant application is awarded.
- Special events and programs are eligible for no more than three consecutive years. After one year of ineligibility, the organization will again be eligible to apply for grant funding.
- Previous grant recipients must have submitted a **Final Report Form** before being eligible for another grant.
- If an applicant is requesting funding for more than one special event or program, separate applications must be completed for each request. Applicant should prioritize requests.

Disclaimer: The Darke County Visitors Bureau reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications, to waive any informalities in the application process, and award grant(s) to the applicant(s) to whom in their consideration submitted the best applications(s).

Grant Process

- All completed application forms and support materials must be in the Darke County Visitors Bureau's office by the deadline date of February 28, 2018.

- Application packets are reviewed by the Tourism Grant Committee. A recommendation is then presented to the Darke County Visitors Bureau Board of Trustees by the committee for final funding approval.
- Once the final funding approval is given, letters will be mailed to all applicants informing them of the decision on or about March 31, 2018.
- Applicants who are awarded a grant will enter into an agreement with the Darke County Visitors Bureau.
- Within 30 days after successfully completing the special event or program, grant recipients are **required** to submit the **Final Report Form** to the Darke County Visitors Bureau for review.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact: Matthew Staugler, Executive Director of the Darke County Visitors Bureau at (937) 548-5158 or mstaugler@VisitDarkeCounty.org.