

# **Richland County Tourism Committee**

## **Tourism Promotion Grant Program Guidelines**

### **I. Purpose**

The purpose of this program is to support new Richland Center tourism or event initiatives that will serve to increase or generate new overnight stays in Richland Center motels. The program is intended to support project efforts that the grantee could not have initiated without the financial assistance of a program grant. The program will grant one-time funds (mini-grants) to not-for-profit organizations, for profit entities, a group of supporting individuals, or local promotion groups.

### **II. Intent**

The intent of the Tourism Promotion Grant Program is to assist to attract and host tourism events such as conventions, trade shows, sporting activities or new/enhanced festivals with potential to attract visitors and to produce an increase in overnight motel stays in Richland Center.

### **III. Funding**

Successful applicants will be eligible to receive up to \$5,000.00 in matching funds to support eligible costs associated with attracting and hosting tourism events. The applicants must show evidence of ability to provide 50% of proposed project expenses through in-kind or cash contributions. A total of \$15,000.00 is currently available for fiscal year 2008. Additional grant funds will become available in subsequent fiscal years dependent on motel tax revenues. Grant projects must be initiated in application year and events must be completed within one year of the date the grant is awarded. Grant funds are made possible through the assessment of a 2.5% room tax on overnight motel stays at Richland Center lodging facilities. Actual project funding amounts will depend on the number of proposals funded.

### **IV. Eligible Applicants**

To be eligible for funding, applicants must be an established for-profit or non-profit/not-for-profit organization, a group of supporting individuals, or a business. Individuals may apply for funding as a sole proprietor of an established business, or as part of an organized group of individuals. Individuals must submit documentation of how they will financial support the event. The program will not fund events relating to personal or family events.

### **V. Application Procedures**

**Quarterly Grant Application Due Dates: July 1<sup>st</sup>, October 1<sup>st</sup>, January 1<sup>st</sup>, April 1<sup>st</sup>**

To apply for project funds, organizations/businesses must submit the following documents by the deadlines indicated.

1. Tourism Grant Promotion Cover Sheet
2. Grant Application Narrative
3. Event Budget Form
4. Letters of Support from Partnering Organizations and all individuals

Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis until all grant funds have been allocated. Applications will be reviewed on a quarterly basis until all grant funds are awarded. Interested applicants applying for funding may contact the Richland County Economic Development Corporation (RCEDC) for information about available grant balances. RCEDC shall supply interested entities and the public with application guidelines upon request. Technical assistance in completing the application will be available through RCEDC if requested.

### **VI. Review of Applications**

RCEDC will serve to oversee the administration of this program. Within one-week of receiving a complete application for funding, the grant administrator will contact the applicant with receipt confirmation. All applications will be reviewed by a sub-committee of the RCEDC. Within thirty (30) days from the quarterly

application deadline, grant applicants will be notified as to their proposal status. All applications approved for funding by the RCEDC must be confirmed by the Richland Center City Council prior to the grant award notice.

## **VII. Committee Recognition**

The Grantee must acknowledge the granting agency as a sponsor of the event on all printed materials, promotional items and advertisements promoting the event. Recommended verbiage: "This event was made possible, in part, by a grant through the Richland County Tourism Grant Promotion Project, a program of the Richland County Economic Development Corporation, with support from the City of Richland Center and Richland County".

## **VIII. Eligible Event Activities**

Activities eligible for funding may include the following costs associated with attracting, hosting, and implementing new community, commerce, or tourism based events:

- 1) Advertising, marketing and promotional items directed toward increasing overnight motel stays
- 2) Travel costs necessary to transport an event speaker or performer
- 3) Building or equipment rental necessary to host the event
- 4) Receptions and banquets related to convention and conference activities
- 5) Entertainment and speaker stipends
- 6) Photography, postage and printing related to the event promotion
- 7) Audiovisual product development
- 8) Temporary staff

## **IX. Ineligible Event Activities**

Activities that are ineligible for funding include the following:

- 1) Developing or making permanent improvements to facilities
- 2) Purchase of equipment
- 3) Normal payroll or operating expenses
- 4) Lodging/housing costs
- 5) Registration fees
- 6) Volunteer/donated labor costs
- 7) Personal or family related events

## **X. Matching Funds**

The Grantee shall provide matching cash or in-kind contributions to support at least 50% of the total event cost. Matching funds must be:

- 1) identified in the application budget, and if approved in the budget, in the grant contract
- 2) in no case, less than an amount equal to the grant award
- 3) are necessary and irrevocably obligated to the event

Allowable contributions may include private or third party cash as well as in-kind contributions necessary to complete the event and for which the cash value is easily documented. If third party contributions will be utilized, the grantee must submit with the application a letter of support from the third party verifying the third-party obligation to the project will be met.

Unallowable match includes costs incurred or funds expended prior to the date of the grant award, event costs not included in the budget of the grant contract or normal operational expenses.

## **XI. Award Disbursement and Reporting**

Upon grant approval and confirmation, grantees will be provided an advance of funds equal to 20% of the total grant amount. The balance of grant funds will be disbursed upon approval of monthly grantee expenditure and activity reports up to \$1500 per invoice. All invoices in excess of \$1500 each will need to be approved by the Richland Center City Council Finance Committee and may delay payment. A final report providing full disclosure of project expenditures, project outcomes and the number of overnight stays generated by the event will be due within 60 days of the completion of the event.

**Richland County Tourism Committee  
Tourism Promotion Grant Program**

**Grant Application Cover Page**

Project Title:

Amount Requested:

Full Legal Name of Applicant/Organization:

Applicant's Address:

Name of Primary Contact:

Telephone:

Email:

Website:

Location of Project:

Project Start Date:

Project End Date:

## **Richland County Tourism Committee Tourism Promotion Grant Program Application Narrative**

**Please explain the nature and justification for your grant project by providing a narrative that considers each of the 10 questions below. Your total narrative should not exceed three pages.**

1. Where will the proposed event be held? Describe the location of this event.
2. Describe the event in as much detail as you are able. Include a proposed timeline that you will follow to plan, run and evaluate your event. We recommend that your timeline begin at least six months prior to the start date of your event and at end no sooner than two months after the end date of your event.
3. Provide a brief history of your organization or business including how long your organization or business has been in existence, if applicable. If an individual, describe your experience running events that are similar in scope and size to the one that you are proposing.
4. Will you be working with partner businesses or organizations to coordinate or run this event? If so, list partner organizations and main contact information. Describe what role the partner will serve to coordinate this event. Include a letter of support from each partner and attach it to your application.
5. Tell us about the scope and size of your event. What do you anticipate to be the total event attendance? Do you intend to repeat this event annually? If so, how do you anticipate your attendance will grow each year? If this will be a one time event, how will your event serve to encourage return travel to Richland Center? What percentage of your attendees will travel to this event from a distance greater than 75 miles?
6. Please provide an estimate of how many visitors you anticipate will spend the night due to the event and what you estimate will be the average length of stay of most attendees at the event.
7. Describe how you will market the event to visitors and participants (if applicable) from outside 75 miles and describe any media coverage you anticipate the event will receive.
8. Describe how you will track the event attendance and the origin of the event attendees.
9. Describe the sources of the matching funds required for this grant.
10. Using the event budget form on page five, provide an itemized budget breakdown for the event showing anticipated expenses and matching funds.

**Richland County Tourism Committee  
Tourism Promotion Grant Program  
Event Budget Form**

**Project Title:**

**Primary Project Contact:**

**Fiscal Agent and Organization:**

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Grant Request</b>	<b>Cash Match</b>	<b>In-Kind Match</b>	<b>Total Budget</b>
<b>Administrative Costs:</b>				
Temporary Staff				
Telephone				
Travel				
Other (please list)				
<b>Total Admin:</b>				
<b>Purchase of Services:</b>				
Sound/Lighting				
Catering				
Event insurance				
Entertainment				
Other (please list)				
<b>Total Services:</b>				
<b>Marketing/Promotions:</b>				
Printing/Graphic Design				
Advertising				
Banners/Signs				
<b>Total Mktg/Promo:</b>				
<b>Leasing/Rental Fees:</b>				
Bleachers/Fencing				
Other Rentals				
<b>Total Leasing/Rentals:</b>				
<b>Other(specify):</b>				

**Total Event Cost:** \_\_\_\_\_