



TOURISM DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT GRANT

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

BACKGROUND

Flagler County currently collects a five percent (5%) Tourist Development Tax (Bed Tax) on all overnight tourism accommodations within the County. This tax is levied on customers of hotels, motels, condominiums, campgrounds, apartments, and private homes that rent accommodations for periods of less than six (6) months.

The Tourist Development Tax funding provided under this Agreement satisfies the strict limitations on the expenditure of such revenue under Section 125.0104(5)(a)3, Florida Statutes. One of the main purposes of the expenditure must be the attraction of tourists, as evidenced by the promotion of activities, services, venues, or events for tourists.

Definitions:

- Promotion: Marketing or advertising designed to increase tourism-related business activities.
- Tourist: A person who participates in trade or recreation activities outside the county of their permanent residence or who rents or leases transient accommodations.
- Project: Small-scale projects include, modest enhancements to existing facilities or services, as well as recurring programs or long-term initiatives.

The Destination Development Grant (DDG) is administered by the Flagler County Cultural Council (FC3) and provides financial support for small-scale projects and programming that enhance the visitor experience, improve tourism assets, and strengthen the destination's appeal. The program focuses on new programs or the expansion of existing projects and programming that increase tourism in Flagler County. While residents may benefit from the project, the main purpose must be the attraction of tourists.

Each application will be evaluated based on established criteria and its overall impact on tourism. The number and extent of these grants will depend upon the availability of designated funds and specific allocations.

A. STATEMENT OF POLICIES

To be considered for DDG funding, this application and all supporting documents must be submitted through Submittable. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

1. Eligible applicants must be based in Flagler County.
 2. Minimum request: \$2,500. Maximum request: \$10,000.
 3. Cash Match Requirement: A 1:1 (50/50) cash match is required. Proof of cash match must be provided with a current bank statement. In-kind donations and other grants may not be used toward the cash match.
 4. Applicants must have a minimum of one (1) year in operation with established programming.
 5. FC3 will establish the application period, process applications, verify applicant eligibility, and confirm adherence to these guidelines before submitting requests for final approval.
 6. Funding decisions are at the discretion of the awarding authority; applications may receive full, partial, or no funding.
 7. FC3 will make recommendations to the Flagler County Board of County Commissioners (FCBCC). The FCBCC is not bound by FC3 recommendations and has final approval or denial of grant requests. All DDG awards are subject to availability of funds through the FCBCC's annual budget.
 8. Projects are required to utilize the Palm Coast and the Flagler Beaches & Flagler County Cultural Council logos at the project site and on all relevant marketing materials.
 9. Funding is provided as reimbursement for approved expenditures upon project completion. A Reimbursement Request Form must be submitted with receipts and proof of payment (vendor receipt and front and back copies of cleared checks or credit card receipts). Receipts and payments must be in the name of the applicant organization. Proof of logo usage, as required in item 8, must be submitted with reimbursement requests.
 10. All reimbursement requests and supporting documents must be submitted online. The Tourist Development Office (TDO) will review submissions to ensure all requirements are met before releasing funds. Organizations failing to comply with reporting requirements will not be eligible to receive funding.
 11. Organizations receiving a DDG are subject to audit by the FCBCC.
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B. ELIGIBILITY

1. Nonprofit organizations (cultural, heritage, arts, environmental, historical) with a project focused on tourism.
2. Applicants must be based in Flagler County with at least one (1) year of programming experience.
3. Be in good standing with all governmental and regulatory requirements, including previously awarded County grants.
4. Have the financial capacity to fund 100% of the project costs and manage matching funds.
5. Demonstrate the ability to complete the project within nine (9) months of final FCBCC approval.

6. The project and matching funds must be approved by the applicant's board. Applicants must provide board minutes or a letter of approval.
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C. APPLICATION PROCESS AND REVIEW

1. FC3 will announce the DDG timeline, including the application opening date, evaluation schedule, and FCBCC meeting date for final approval.
 2. Completed applications will be evaluated and scored within forty-five (45) days of receipt.
 3. All applications must be submitted using the links provided at flaglerartsandculture.org.
 4. FC3 may offer an optional review period before the application deadline to confirm completeness and adherence to guidelines.
 5. Applicants must submit a current IRS Form W-9 and a completed Vendor Information Form, matching the organization's legal name.
 6. The application must be signed by an authorized agent of the organization.
 7. The FCBCC must be named as additional insured on the applicant's general commercial liability policy certificate, with coverage limits of no less than \$1 million per occurrence and \$1 million for personal injury, including death. The policy must be occurrence-based and fully paid.
 8. Certificates of insurance must be submitted thirty (30) days prior to project commencement.
 9. Organizations with ineligible applications will be notified of the guideline or criteria not met.
 10. A panel of reviewers selected by FC3 will score applications using the rubric in Section E and rank them for FCBCC recommendation.
 11. Applications receiving an average score below seventy-five (75) points will not be considered and there is no appeal process.
 12. Scores will be presented to the FCBCC for final approval.
 13. TDO will send formal notification to each applicant regarding FCBCC's decision.
 14. Applications not receiving funding will not be reconsidered until the following fiscal year.
 15. All materials submitted become public record under Chapter 119, Florida Statutes.
 16. Applicants should be prepared to present their project to the FCBCC and answer questions.
 17. The grant portal remains open until all DDG funds are awarded or the fiscal year ends on September 30, whichever occurs first.
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D. GRANT COMPLIANCE AND PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

Recipients must complete projects in accordance with the approved scope, timeline, and deliverables. Flagler County reserves the right to withhold, reduce, or require repayment of funds if the recipient fails to:

- Complete the project as approved.
 - Use funds only for approved purposes.
 - Provide required documentation or proof of project completion.
 - Maintain funded improvements or programming for the duration specified in the grant agreement.
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E. SCORING CRITERIA AND EVALUATION RUBRIC (100 Points)

Applications are scored in five categories:

1. Project Impact (0–30 points)
 - Assesses how the project enhances the tourism destination.
 - 0 = minimal impact, 10 = moderate, 20 = significant, 30 = transformative
 - Key questions:
 - How will your project improve or enhance the tourism experience in Flagler County?
 - Who will primarily benefit (visitors, residents, businesses)?
2. Project Readiness and Feasibility (0–20 points)
 - Evaluates whether the project is realistic and achievable.
 - 0 = not ready, 10 = partially ready, 20 = fully ready
 - Key questions:
 - Is the project ready to be implemented within the grant period?
 - Is there a clear timeline and budget?
 - Does the organization have a demonstrated history of successful projects?
3. Financial Viability and Match (0–20 points)
 - Ensures financial stability and compliance with the 50/50 match requirement.
 - 0 = no, 10 = partial, 20 = fully meets requirement
 - Key questions:
 - Is a 1:1 cash match provided and board-approved?
 - Is the budget reasonable and cost-effective?
 - Is the organization financially stable?
4. Innovation and Creativity (0–15 points)
 - Assesses originality and potential to differentiate the destination.

- 0 = not innovative, 5 = somewhat, 10 = moderately, 15 = highly innovative
- Key question:
 - How is your project unique compared to existing tourism offers?

5. Marketing and Long-Term Benefit (0–15 points)

- Evaluates marketing strategy and sustainability.
- 0 = no sustainability, 5 = limited, 10 = moderate, 15 = strong sustainability
- Key question:
 - How will the project maintain benefits beyond the grant period?

F. POST-PROJECT REPORT AND REIMBURSEMENT

Within sixty (60) days of project completion, the applicant must meet with a TDO representative for a post-project review. Prior to this meeting, the applicant must submit all required forms and documentation via the online grant platform.

Required materials:

1. Completed post-project report with photos and narrative.
2. Reimbursement Request Form with proof of payment (vendor receipts and front/back copies of cleared checks or credit card receipts). Purchases must be in the organization's name; personal cards or checks are not permitted.
3. Final project budget report comparing projected and actual expenses.
4. TDO will review all submissions to ensure adherence to approved guidelines. Failure to comply will result in ineligibility for reimbursement.

G. DISCLAIMER & LIABILITY

Flagler County reserves the right to conduct post-award audits. Any false, misleading, or materially inaccurate information may require repayment of all awarded funds and may render the organization ineligible for future grant funding.