



**Haywood County Tourism Development Authority,
operating as Visit NC Smokies**

**1% Travel & Tourism Promotion Grant Guidelines
FY 2023-2024 | Second Funding Cycle**

All awarded 1% grants must be used between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024

Purpose:

The purpose of these funds is to increase tourism and enhance the visitor experience in Haywood County by providing funding for the marketing, advertising, and promotion of a new, enhanced, or expanded festival, event, activity, attraction, exhibit or thing to do. Since room tax revenue, fueled by overnight stays in Haywood County, sustains this grant fund, preference is given to applications for initiatives likely to attract visitors from outside of a fifty (50) mile radius, generating overnight stays and creating economic/destination impact while enhancing quality of life for residents.

Definition of “Tourism Promotion” per the State of NC:

To advertise or market an area or activity, publish and distribute pamphlets and other materials, conduct market research, or engage in similar promotional activities that attract tourists or business travelers to the area.

Who Can Apply:

- Not-for-profit organizations, museums, attractions, municipalities, or other tourism entities seeking to produce and promote a new, enhanced or expanded festival, event, activity, attraction, exhibit or thing to do that caters to visitors, producing economic/destination impact and creating sustainability. Not-for-profit organizations must have a minimum grant match of 25%.
- For-profit organizations seeking to produce and promote a new, enhanced or expanded festival, event, activity, attraction, exhibit or thing to do that caters to visitors, producing economic/destination impact and creating sustainability. For-profit organizations must have a grant match of 100%.

Criteria:

All grants will be awarded on a competitive basis, with primary consideration given to applications that focus on the following items:

- Enhance the destination experience for both visitors and residents
- Attract overnight visitors from more than fifty (50) miles outside Haywood County
- Events or projects planned during off-peak times: November - April and mid-week
- Multiple day or first-time events/activities
- Sustainability (event/project must become self-sufficient within three years and/or be good for the community & environment)
- Grant applications must be for \$2,000 or greater to be considered for funding.

Projects that are funded under this program should draw a significant amount of the attendance from at least 50 miles away; must be open to the public; be spectator friendly, “walk-up” friendly, or have a reasonable number of tickets available for purchase. Below is a list of examples of projects that will and will not be considered. Please note this is not a comprehensive list, rather it is to help point you in the right direction.

Examples of Projects that may be considered:

- New, substantive exhibits
- New events or festivals that are related to tourism and of interest to the traveling public
- New attractions or things to do
- Existing events, festivals, activities or attractions with a new feature, change or enhancement that has the potential to drive new and increased visitation
- New concerts and musical events featuring regional or national acts (not local acts)
- Sporting events
- Other events and activities that draw visitors to Haywood County

**Preference will be given to new and unique events or projects or the expansion/enhancement of existing items.*

Examples of projects that will not be considered:

- Family reunions
- Fundraising events such as banquets, annual galas, etc.
- Church or religious community functions
- Local school programs
- Community-specific programs
- Existing exhibits, galleries, activities, etc.
- Political events
- Reimbursement for previously incurred expenses
- Expenses typically considered to be overhead
- Any event not open to the public

Advertising Guidelines

In order to help drive increased overnight stays, the grant dollars shall only be spent on marketing and advertising to potential visitors at least 50 miles outside of our destination. Additional details follow.

Examples of expenses that DO qualify:

Note: all expenses must be geo-targeted to exclude Haywood County, or the majority of production is outside Haywood County.

- Print ads
- Google pay-per-click ads
- Social media ads and boosted posts
- Public relations
- Hosting an influencer
- Brochure distribution
- Radio ads
- Our State magazine – digital or print
- Photography that the HCTDA will have full access and rights to
- Videography that the HCTDA will have full access and rights to
- Printed brochures, with an out-of-market distribution plan

Examples of expenses that do NOT qualify:

- Administrative Expenses (ie: salaries or benefits)
- Memberships or Dues
- Scholarships or Prize Money
- Plaques, Trophies or Awards Certificates
- Promotional Items to Sell/Giveaway (ie: apparel, totes, etc.)
- Operational Business Expenses (ie: menus or signage)
- Wristbands, Tickets or Badges-Pass
- Food & Beverage for Staff, Volunteers or VIP's
- Day of Promotion Items (event maps, brochures, flyers, etc.)
- Entertainment production costs
- Mortgage payments
- Facility maintenance
- Lodging
- Activities which do not enhance, advertise, or promote Haywood County as a destination.

*** Contact the HCTDA if you have questions regarding the best use of tourism grant funds.*

Application Timeline:

- 1) Access the digital-only grant application at www.haywoodtda.com/grants
- 2) Completed application must be submitted to hayley@visitncsmokies.com no later than 5:00pm, Tuesday, January 2, 2024.
 - a. Failure to meet the deadline will result in the application not being considered for funding during this grant cycle.
 - b. All material submitted as part of an application will be a matter of public record, subject to Chapter 132. G.S. 132-1 of NC laws.
- 3) All applications will be reviewed and scored by the Product Development Committee, who will then provide recommendations for consideration to the HCTDA Board. Applications will be discussed at the January 24, 2024 meeting for approval and final decision.
- 4) All decisions will be made solely by the HCTDA Board of Directors.
- 5) Grant award notifications will be sent via email by January 31, 2024.

Evaluation & Payment Procedures:

This grant is reimbursable, and payment will be made after receipt of the Final Evaluation Report and Payment Request Form. Both forms must be submitted simultaneously and must be submitted within 60 days of completed event or project to receive grant funds. Final Evaluation Report must be completed to be eligible for any future funding.

Submit Payment Request Form and supporting documents to:

Hayley Printz, Haywood County TDA
91 N Lakeshore Dr., Suite 2, Lake Junaluska, NC 28745
Hayley@VisitNCsmokies.com

Stipulations:

- Grant recipient must display the designated Visit NC Smokies logo on printed materials, ads, and signage as available. The HCTDA logo can be found at: haywoodtda.com/grants
- Grant recipient must give recognition to the HCTDA for being a major funding source of projects during interviews, public meetings, press conferences, ribbon cuttings, or on a press release.
- Grant recipient must have a “Plan Your Trip” link on the homepage of their website using the following web link www.visitncsmokies.com
- Failure to include the Visit NC Smokies website as directed will result in non- payment of the funding allocation.
- Failure to use funds as specified in the application and award letter will result in nonpayment of the funding allocation.
- Failure to submit proper receipts and proof of payment will result in non-payment of the funding allocation.
- Failure to submit the final report and payment request within 60 days of project completion may result in the denial of future funding.
- Applicants who do not comply with all deadlines and stipulations may be disqualified and ineligible to receive future 1% HCTDA funding.

Zip Code Destination Marketing:

Per the HCTDA Board of Directors, a minimum of 50% of the annual travel & tourism promotion budget per zip code must be allocated to an advertising & marketing plan administered by the HCTDA and Agency of Record.

Disclaimer:

The Haywood County Tourism Development Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any application for funding and cannot guarantee that all applicants will be awarded funding. Funding may be awarded for less than the amount requested or not at all. Preference will be given to the projects that best demonstrate the above criteria. Final decisions regarding the award of grant funds are at the sole discretion of the HCTDA Board of Directors.