Event Support Grants

Mission

Grants will be awarded for the purpose of generating increased visitation and economic impact for the region through the support of major events including but not limited to, conferences, reunions, meetings, sporting events & and tournaments, and complementary experiences with festivals and events.

Goals

The goals of the Visit Canton Event Support Grant Program include:

- **To attract and retain events that generate significant visitor spending in Stark County**
- **Increase attendance at events that generate, or could generate, significant visitor spending in Stark County.**
- **Maximize the economic impact of events that generate significant visitor spending in Stark County with complementing programs, events, and initiatives to increase visitor spending in Stark County.**

Eligibility

Applicant Eligibility

Eligible organizations include, but are not limited to event organizers, host organizations, local organizing committees, chapter branches, and sports associations, both non-profit and for-profit.

Project Eligibility

Events requesting support should align with the Event Support Grant program's mission and increase the likelihood of hosting an event in Stark and visitation of participants and spectators. Minimum Economic Impact Eligibility = 100 Stark County hotel room nights and/or 350-day visitors.

Project proposals are not limited to, but may focus on one of the following categories:

- **Meetings & Conferences**
- **Sporting Events: Tournaments, Camps, and Spectator Games**
- **Complementary Experiences provided with Special Events & Festivals**
- **Reunions, Group Tours, or Marketplaces**

Project examples within the categories include:

- **Operating expenses for Stark County Service Providers including:**
    - ☐ **Transportation**
    - ☐ **Hospitality**
    - ☐ **Venue Rental**
- **NEW Marketing initiatives to attract event participants and spectators**
- **Addition of a Stark County experience that elevates the visitor/guest experience within the itinerary.**

The following expenses are **<u>ineligible</u>** for grant funding:

- Staff salaries, mileage, or other fees that are already budgeted to carry out daily work
- Purchasing of Alcohol
- Ad buys targeted only to cities/locations/audiences within Stark County (*Marketing and advertising expenses submitted for grant consideration must target at least 40% out-of-county audience*)
- Marketing materials including event signage, photography, or videography
- Grant Project must not solely be dependent on the Event Support Grant funding. Re-occurring funding for projects is not available from year to year – applicants must re-apply and present their event information at the time of application.

Awards and Timeline

- **Grant requests for up to 50% of hospitality needs and/or marketing initiatives will be considered through this competitive application process.**
- **Event Support Grant applications must be submitted at least 60 days before scheduled programming or special event**
- **Events must be started and completed within the 2024 calendar year (January 1-December 31, 2024).**

Application Proposal Timeline

If funds are still available in the Event Support Fund, Visit Canton will accept rolling applications throughout 2024 until there are no longer dollars available. Event Support Grant Applications must be submitted at least 60 days before the scheduled program or event to be considered.

Online Applications are available at <u>https://visitcanton.grantplatform.com/</u>

Grant Application Requirements

<u>For consideration, grant applications must provide the following within their online grant application proposal:</u>

1. Name and dates of event for which the Event Support Grant will be used (the "Grant

Event")

2. Location of event (contracted venues including meeting space, fields, hotel, attraction, etc.)
3. Applicant organization's name, phone number, mailing address, email, and website
4. Name of person filling out the application on behalf of the organization and their contact information
5. Amount of funding support being requested
6. Project Description and Goals with requested funding
7. A detailed line-item Operational Budget AND Marketing Budget showing the overall project scope and uses for all funding associated with the project, and identifying the source and status of funding (e.g., secured, contingent, applied for, etc.)
8. Contracted Venues/Hospitality Vendor quotes (if applicable)
9. Names of Host Hotel Locations and Estimated Contracted Rooms
10. Estimated attendance from both spectators and participants at or with the Grant Event
11. If Event/Program has happened in the past, past data must be submitted:
    • Previous attendance at Event
    • Previous venue/location of Event
    • Previous dates of Event
12. If a project is a public special event, must be submitted to the VisitCanton.com Calendar of Events.

==Applications that do not submit all the requirements will not be considered.==

Scoring Considerations

Applications that have addressed all requirements above will be scored. Applications that reflect collaboration with multiple partners on the project are highly desired.

Did the applicant provide all the materials as requested in the grant application?
Does this project's application present a complete & well-planned operational plan and marketing plan to accomplish the proposed goals?
Does the project clearly identify how this investment would provide the quantitative value of economic impact for Stark County?
Does the project demonstrate that it is sustainable without Event Support?

Does this project show how the funding will enhance the event to encourage registrants to attend in Stark County and promote as travel and tourism destination?
Will this event be located to another host location if they do not receive Event Support funding?

Recognition and Acknowledgement Requirements

Visit Canton will notify grant award recipients following approval by the Event Support Grant Committee.

Initiatives completed using Event Grant Funds must acknowledge such financial support by including Visit Canton logo on marketing materials, website landing pages, signage at events, event programs, and include the Visit Canton VIP Offers landing page/ad on all registration websites and welcome packets.

Applicants receiving grant funds will be issued a Memorandum of Understanding that must be signed and returned to receive funding. Event Support funds will be paid to the awarded projects as follows; 70% disbursed 21 days before the event start date after the return of signed MOU, and the remaining 30% will be disbursed following review of the final evaluation report submitted by the recipient organization

Final Evaluation Reporting

If a grant project is awarded funding, the lead organization must complete the following reporting:

- A detailed summary of all expenditures and how all Event Support funds were invested, including, but not limited to work orders, invoices, and receipts will be required with the final evaluation report.
- A report that shows attendance figures with estimated locations of out-of-town visitors. This information can be reported through the following methods:
  - An event ticket report that shows the location of ticket purchasers
  - A hotel report that shows out-of-town visitor rooms contracted
  - Participating team rosters that show the number of team members and their cities of origin
  - An event registration report that shows the number of out-of-town attendees

  Other methods of reporting that show attendance and percentage of out-of-town attendees will also be considered.

The final evaluation form will be submitted to the grantee upon completion of their event or marketing campaign. **The grantee has 30 days to remit a completed report. Should the Committee need any additional information, the grantee will have 10 business days to submit the additional data requested. Should the grantee not remit a completed report or the additional requested data in the aforementioned perimeters, the remaining 30% grant allocation will be forfeited and it will be notated on the grantee's profile.** This forfeiture will also be considered in judging future Event Support Grant applications from the grantee.