

Iowa Tourism Grant Program Frequently Asked Questions

Marketing

Q: Can I apply for more than one marketing tactic through the marketing program?

A: You cannot make more than one application in each of the three programs. However, if you're marketing effort includes several tactics you can apply for them all if they are related. For example, if you're creating several tools to marketing your event - a web site, a brochure and an app – you can apply for those together as one marketing effort. If you are creating materials for various unrelated events, those could NOT be grouped into one application. Of course you application may include only one marketing tactic.

Q: I would like to host a tourism-focused educational event in my community during National Tourism Week in May. I will place ads in the local newspaper to advertise it. I will rent the local community building as the event site. In what programs should I make my application?

A: You should split this into two applications: Include the advertising component in the marketing program and the education event in the professional development program.

Q: We work on our web site each year. We made some enhancements to it in FY13 and want to make more in FY14. Can I apply for marketing tactics – like web development - that span more than one year?

A: If you're taking a phased approach to a marketing initiative, you can apply in the current fiscal year for the phases that will be completed this fiscal year.

Meetings & Events Development

Q: Our community would like to host the Iowa Bowling Tournament. Can the Meetings & Events Development Program support our bid fee?

A: No. Eligible meetings in this category include regional and national meetings.

Professional Development

Q: I would like to hire an intern for May – August 2014. This timeline includes two fiscal years. How can I apply?

A: You can apply for the entire award in FY14. Your total award amount will be allocated from the FY14 pool but will be reimbursed as expenses are incurred in FY14 *and* FY15. For example, if you receive the maximum grant of \$2,000, and your intern works from May through August, you will receive 75 percent of your award when your contract is signed. You will receive the remaining 25 percent of the award after you show documentation of your intern's pay totaling at least \$2,500 (award plus cash

match) for expenses incurred anytime between May and August. The project completion date you identify in your application may be in FY15.

Cash Match

Q: Does the 25% cash match requirement mean I need to show 25% of the project cost or 25% of the award amount?

A: You need to upload a document(s) into the online application that validates that you have a 25% match for the total cost of your project. For example, if you are creating a \$4,000 brochure, your cash match is \$1,000 and your maximum grant request is \$3,000.

Q: What if I have more than 25% cash match? Will my application score better?

A: Yes. Cash match and leveraged funds ratio are relative. Using the example above, if you match a \$4,000 project with \$1,000, your LFR is 25%. If you match \$4,000 with \$3,000 (and request \$1,000), your LFR is 75%. The higher your LFR, the higher your application will score.

Miscellaneous

Q: Is it required that I participated in or watched online the webinar that the Iowa Tourism Office offered to introduce the grant programs?

A: No, it is not required. However, we highly encourage you to watch the webinar online to learn specific information about the grant program.

Q: How many grant applications may I submit?

A: You may submit one application per category.

Q: My destination hasn't opened yet, but I'd like to apply for a grant to do some marketing planning. Am I eligible?

A: Yes. First you need to add your destination to the database at traveliowa.com. (Our online database allows us to assign dates to records so that they don't appear on the web until a specified date.)

Q: My event takes place in July 2014 (FY15), but I'm going to advertise it in the spring of 2014 (FY14). It is eligible?

A: Yes. You must INCUR your expenses in the current fiscal year in order to be eligible. Your initiative does not necessarily need to take place in the current fiscal year.

Q: Our organization created a new brochure in August 2013. We didn't know this grant program would be available. Can we still apply?

A: Yes. In FY14 we are allowing initiatives that occurred since July 1, 2103 to apply for funds. Remember that the expenses that the state will support must have been INCURRED in FY14.

Q: My brochure will cost \$4,000 to produce. Can I apply for the entire cost?

A: You will have to show that you have 25% cash match, in this case, \$1,000, so your award request is \$3,000.

Q: Will my application score better if I am a member of my tourism region?

A: Yes. Each application can earn up to 10 bonus points. Up to five of those points are dependent on the applicant's involvement in the tourism industry, including membership in the tourism regions, etc.

Q: I represent a group of volunteers from a small destination. How can my application compete with those from large communities?

A: First, make sure your destination or event is listed at traveliowa.com. Next make sure your application is complete and thorough. Next, make sure you have at least 25% cash match or more. The more local money in your project versus state money will help your application score better. You can also earn bonus points if your destination is active in the tourism industry, if it has not received a grant previously, etc.

Q: My grant request represents a multi-county project. How do I determine our population?

A: Use the applicant's location for the purposes of the application. For example, if your event takes place in five counties, but the organization that is writing the grant is in Burlington, then the application should include Burlington's population.