



December 2018

Dear Tourism Partner:

On behalf of Freeholder Joseph H. Vicari, the Liaison to the Department of Business Development and Tourism, we are happy to announce that the annual Ocean County Tourism Promotional Matching Grant applications are now available!

The intent of the **Tourism Promotional grant** is to enable stronger, more effective marketing opportunities for tourism-based activities and events which will ultimately increase the number of visitors to Ocean County throughout the year. "Tourism", which refers to visitors / consumers from outside of Ocean County, generates \$4.7 Billion of local revenue, making it our number one industry. The consumers who travel here for our beaches, parks, venues and attractions continue to drive our local economy even after the Summer Season ends, due to our tremendous festivals, events and activities. It is critical that our tourism partners continue to create and design smart, attractive tourism programs and to market them effectively outside of the area so that Ocean County continues to thrive as a premier tourism destination.

**Please note, that this is a "matching grant" which requires that you match the award dollar-for-dollar. For example, a recipient of a \$1500 grant would need to spend at least \$3000 on eligible marketing to fulfill their commitment and receive their grant funds.**

For your convenience and to enable the Grant Committee to more carefully review your submissions, the Grant Application is now available for completion AND submission online. Please go to our website at [www.oceancountytourism.com](http://www.oceancountytourism.com). You will find the link to our grant application at the bottom of the home page under "Quick Links". Please follow the instructions for completion and ONLINE SUBMISSION as stated in the grant documents.

To be sure that you fully understand the Grant requirements, application, and submission procedures, we will hold an informational meeting, which is open to all who are interested in the opportunity.

**The 2019 Grant Orientation Meeting will be held  
Thursday, January 10, 2019 at 5:30 pm  
Room 119, Ocean County Administration Building  
101 Hooper Ave, Toms River, NJ.**

Both the person completing the application and the person who is responsible for expenditures should be present at this meeting. We highly recommended that you attend in order to avoid issues and ensure that your application, and potential grant fulfillment requirements, are clearly understood. The meeting should take less than one hour, depending on the number of questions.

If you plan to attend, please call the Ocean County Department of Business Development and Tourism at **(732) 929-2000 to register.**

**\*FINAL deadline to submit the grant application is January 31, 2019 by 5:00 p.m.**

Thank you for contributing to the success of tourism in Ocean County!

Best Regards,

Dana Lancellotti  
Division Director  
Ocean County Business Development and Tourism  
Ocean County Tourism and Business Advisory Council

**Following are the rules and the application for the 2019 Ocean County Tourism Promotional Matching Grant. The grant application deadline is January 31, 2019 before 5pm.**

The Tourism Promotional Matching Grant has undergone significant changes in recent years, with strict requirements and revised guidelines. In 2019 we will continue to distribute higher dollar amounts to fewer awardees in order to elevate the impact and effectiveness of these grant funds. The eligibility for the grant and the amount of the grant award will depend on the quality of the applicant's marketing strategy and their potential to draw visitors from OUTSIDE of the area. It is critical that the awardees contribute to our primary goal, which is to elevate the visibility of Ocean County as a tourism destination and increase travel and commerce from OUTSIDE of this region. Applicants who do not fit that agenda will not be approved.

**Do You Qualify for the Grant?**

**Check these guidelines to determine your eligibility:**

1. You must be a nonprofit organization or a government agency to apply for this grant. Municipalities must provide a certified resolution by their governing body approving the grant application
2. The 2019 grant awards will vary in amounts with maximum award potential of \$7500. If awarded, you must match the grant funding by 100%. If you receive an award of \$1500, you must spend \$3000 on **eligible marketing expenditures** in order to qualify for the reimbursement. (See **ELIGIBLE and INELIGIBLE** Expenses on pages 9 & 10 of this document.)

**Do not ask for more money than you can match and use.** The funds are appropriated when the grant is awarded. By asking for more than you can use, you deprive other organizations of the opportunity to obtain funding. \*Failure to use the full award will negatively impact and possibly disqualify the current grantee from consideration the following year.

**3.** The funds are to be used for marketing **prior to the event only**. Non-promotional items or items distributed at the event site itself are **NOT ELIGIBLE**. For example: Costs associated with holding the event, postage costs, event journals, Banners onsite, materials such as carpeting or tents or give-aways at the event are NOT eligible. Remember, these grants are for the purpose of generating tourism. **The goal** is to draw more visitors / attendees from OUTSIDE of Ocean County to attend your event. Once these attendees are onsite, the promotions displayed or distributed at the venue are NOT ELIGIBLE since they are not part of the marketing efforts to attract tourists.

**4.** Applicants who demonstrate marketing plans which utilize advanced technology such as digital advertising strategies, social media and / or smart media placement, OUTSIDE of our

region will be considered for higher dollar awards. \*\* Applicants who do not advertise OUTSIDE of our region will likely be declined funding altogether.

5. Events / programs which draw attendance off season and/or engage in effective advertising and tracking methods which generate large attendance from outside of the area will be considered for higher dollar awards.

6. For previous, 2018 grant recipients: Non-compliance with the rules of the 2018 Grant will result in penalties for this, 2019 Grant. This decrease in scoring may disqualify the current application from any funding in 2019, or significantly diminish the amount of their award.

7. Recipients must use the Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders Tourism Grant logo in print and internet advertising according to the requirements indicated. Video and radio requirements are also indicated.

**Failure to comply with the proper use of the Ocean County logo and verbiage provided will result in penalties of non-compliance and will result in a retraction of the grant award and also impact future grant consideration due to penalty.**

8. The person who completes this grant should ensure that the grant rules are understood clearly by the person who will be managing the expenditures so that both are aware of the correct and necessary procedures.

9. Proof of qualified expenditures will be due by **October 30, 2019**. Documentation requirements are specified in Part G of the Grant overview section. Reimbursement checks will be issued to the grantee after approval at a meeting of the Board of Chosen Freeholders. Payment will take three to six weeks from the time the proper documentation is submitted, depending on the Freeholder Board Meeting Schedule.

**Failure to submit grant fulfillment documentation by the above deadline will result in penalties for noncompliance, causing a reduction of grant reimbursement and /or ineligibility for the following year's grant consideration. If your event takes place in the Fall or after the above deadline, you MUST contact the office of Business Development and Tourism to receive authorization to submit your grant fulfillment report after the above deadline.**

10. The grant application must be submitted through our **ONLINE SUBMISSION** process ONLY. Hand-written and mailed or faxed applications WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.



## **2019 Ocean County Tourism Promotional Matching Grant Rules**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Ocean County Tourism & Business Advisory Council offer this Promotional Matching Grant to provide funding assistance with the marketing of tourism-based events and programs. The goal of these grants is to help tourism partners implement smart and effective marketing campaigns to promote their tourism events or programs, to ultimately drive more travelers to Ocean County, increase commerce, and expand our visibility outside of the region as a premier travel destination. We encourage applicants to include backup documents that demonstrate proof of previous tracking methods, digital analytics, attendance history, publicity, etc. With the online submission method, our Committee is able to review the grants as they are received, and to evaluate websites and social media pages of the applicants, allowing a thorough review process.

### **Grant Committee**

The Tourism Promotional Matching Grant Committee consists of volunteers from the Ocean County Tourism & Business Advisory Council. This committee is engaged in the requirements, rules and approval of the grant application as well as the evaluation and scoring of grant submissions and final award decisions. The Committee includes the following:

1. A minimum of three and maximum of five members of the Tourism Advisory Council
2. The current Chairman of the Board of the Tourism Advisory Council
3. The Executive Director of the Tourism Advisory Council / Director of OC Business Development and Tourism
4. Also invited: Freeholder/Tourism Liaison (attendance not required)

## **Applicants' Qualifiers & Restrictions**

1. Only Ocean County based entities may apply
2. Governmental Entities, Nonprofit Organizations as defined in N.J.S.A. 15A:1-1 et seq. and including, but not limited to Chambers of Commerce, merchant business associations, heritage, cultural and historic museums or commissions may apply.
3. Applicants must submit their taxpayer I.D. number AND IRS Tax Exemption letter with their application. Municipalities are exempt from the requirement letter, but must submit Federal ID # and certified resolution from the governing body approving the grant.
4. No applicant may act as a "feeder" for a third party or organization.
5. The applicant must be the sponsor of the activity.
6. Bills / invoices must be made out to and paid by the applicant. Proof of this is required in final report.
7. No more than one grant will be awarded to any applicant.
8. If multiple applications are submitted by separate, but closely related organizations with different federal identification numbers, each may apply for a grant.
9. No more than one application per Federal ID number may be submitted, but including the promotion of multiple programs/activities in one application is permitted.

## **II. FUNDING**

Due to budget constraints, any grant award is subject to the adoption of the county budget and funding by the Board of Chosen Freeholders. The Board of Freeholders and the Tourism Council are not responsible for actions taken regarding applicants in anticipation of receiving funding. Applications may be submitted for promotions of events already held during January, February and March of the grant year, but there is no guarantee funds will be awarded. A grant awarded in prior years is not a guarantee that a grant will be received this year. Official notice will be received through an award letter along with the Ocean County Purchase Order, not through any newspaper coverage or other methods.

### **MATCHING FUND FORMULA:**

The amount requested must be matched dollar-for-dollar in the promotional budget of the application. In the application, you will be able to indicate the maximum dollar amount that your organization is requesting. For example, a \$7500.00 award will require expenditures of \$15,000 on qualified promotional costs. **Do not request more than you can spend.** These funds are appropriated in the amount requested and will not then be available for other deserving applicants. If all the funds are not fulfilled by the awardee, there will be a penalty of noncompliance which will disqualify your organization from consideration for next year's grant.

### **Projected Award Levels**

This will be a competitive grant. The 2019 Grants are intended to result in awards ranging from \$1500 to \$7500. Some awards may be significantly less due to previous noncompliance penalties and / or County budget restrictions.

### **III. PROCEDURES**

#### **Submission**

The fillable grant application is available online at [www.oceancountytourism.com](http://www.oceancountytourism.com). Applications must be completed and submitted through the required online submission process by the deadline below. Handwritten applications will NOT be considered. The applicant will receive a confirmation and time/date stamp of submission. We suggest that you print your confirmation for your records. **DEADLINE for Receipt of Application: JANUARY 31st, 2019 before 5:00pm**

#### **Notification**

Successful applicants will be notified by mail. Upon notification, the awardee will receive:

1. A Grant Agreement, consisting of (2) two originals, both must be signed, witnessed and returned within 30 days.
2. A sheet containing the current **mandatory LOGO and verbiage**. The LOGO used must be the correct 2019 version. The logo must meet the minimum size as well as the resolution requirements to qualify. A digital copy of this logo can be emailed to you. Upon approval of a grant award, please reach out to request the logo, or special formats of the logo, by calling Patty Rutkowski at 732 929 2000 or by email at [prutkowski@co.ocean.nj.us](mailto:prutkowski@co.ocean.nj.us).

#### **Reimbursement**

Upon completion of the program/event or promotional publication, the grant recipient must return the following documents to the Ocean County Business Development and Tourism Department by the deadline indicated in order to receive reimbursement funds:

1. The signed purchase order (received after Agreement is returned)
2. Invoices in the name of the grant recipient for at least twice the amount of the grant
3. Proof of payment for these invoices
4. Proof of the proper use of the required **Ocean County LOGO and verbiage**, or the required verbiage for use in radio ads.
5. Completed Checklist.

Documents listed above are due by October 30th 2019. Failure to provide proper proof of grant fulfillment by the deadline will result in penalties of noncompliance which may result in loss of reimbursement funds and disqualification of eligibility for a grant award in the following year.

**For awardees whose events occur after October 1<sup>st</sup>:** The grant recipient must notify the office of Ocean County Business Development and Tourism in advance so that a later deadline can be assigned. It is MANDATORY that the awardee initiates this communication, or their grant funding may be disqualified as of October 2<sup>nd</sup> due to noncompliance of deadline.

All approved reimbursements are issued after official approval at a meeting of the Board of Chosen Freeholders. Grant reimbursement will be received three to six weeks from the time the proper documentation is submitted, depending on the Freeholder Board Meeting Schedule.

### **Notification of inability to use Grant Funds**

If something unanticipated happens and a grant recipient is unable to use a portion of the funds or all of the funds due to an event cancellation or other unexpected interference, the awardee must notify the Department of Ocean County Business Development and Tourism as soon as possible. Notice must be made directly **by phone and by email prior to October 1**. Failure to provide such notice will result in penalty for noncompliance and ineligibility for the next year's grant

## **IV. EVALUATION**

### **Grant Scoring System**

All applications will be reviewed by the Grant Committee. The following is the points structure which will determine the awardees and their potential dollar amounts upon Committee Review. Please Note: Approvals are based on the applicant's ability to achieve the highest points possible. The scoring criteria is assessed under two separate categories: the Event / Program assessment and the Marketing Plan assessment. After scoring is completed, the Committee will review past performance with regard to the eligible applicants. If noncompliance issues are found, the applicant's penalties will be applied and total scoring for this grant will reflect the necessary reductions.

### **Part One: Event / Program**

<b>How will the event/program support Ocean County's Tourism goals?</b>	<b>Point Value</b>
Potential to draw visitors from OUTSIDE of Ocean County	10
Potential to draw visitors to STAY OVERNIGHT in Ocean County	10
Potential to draw visitors OUT-OF-SEASON or in-season on WEEKDAYS	10
Scope / size of program / event: anticipated attendance for event or quantity of distribution for program	10
Link to <a href="http://www.OceanCountyTourism.com">www.OceanCountyTourism.com</a> on event or organization website	10



## Part Two: Marketing Strategy

How will your Marketing plan support Ocean County's Tourism goals?	Point Value
Ad placement on media platforms that will reach OUTSIDE of Ocean County	10
Use of social media marketing strategies that promote higher reach, active engagement and targeting OUTSIDE of Ocean County	10
Use of digital advertising, video, banner links, mobile app, smart digital advertising platforms that are hyper targeted and highly impactful	10
Use of tracking methods to identify the zip codes or other profile, geographic or demographic information of attendees	10
Distribution of information / materials OUTSIDE of Ocean County	10

### Mandatory LOGO

The Ocean County Tourism Matching Promotional Grant has an official logo that must be included in all ads, promotional materials, digital advertising, websites, etc that are going to be submitted for funding. The 2019 LOGO must be easy to read and no smaller than the minimum size requirement indicated.

**Failure to use this logo properly will result in noncompliance penalty and reimbursement on that expenditure will not be approved.**

Print, Website or TV Advertising must feature the complete logo AND verbiage, which is provided at the time of grant approval notification and also available on our website at [www.oceancountytourism.com](http://www.oceancountytourism.com). For radio advertising approval, the voiceover must include the **verbiage**: "Funded in Part by a Grant from the Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders. Visit [oceancountytourism.com](http://oceancountytourism.com)." Proof must be submitted digitally through email, DVD or CD.

### Expenses

**The following expenses ARE ELIGIBLE for grant funding consideration:**

- Multi- Media Advertising (newspapers, radio, television, Internet, mobile apps) with placement in publications or platforms reaching OUTSIDE of Ocean County.
- Printed, promotional publications, distributed in locations OUTSIDE of Ocean County, including trade show displays, videos and informational guides and brochures.
- Social Media strategies, advertising, boosting and targeted ads
- Use of "Influencer" blogging strategies which target potential travelers to Ocean County

The following expenses **ARE NOT ELIGIBLE** for grant funding consideration:

- Durable equipment including rental of tables or tents, registration fees, clean-up costs, capital investments, restoration or rehabilitation of buildings
- Website development and/or hosting costs
- Wages, benefits or other employee compensation
- Hospitality expenses, including food or alcoholic beverages
- Entertainment
- Fireworks
- Transportation, dining and lodging
- Postage
- Membership Fees
- Programs, journals, banners, T-shirts and giveaways distributed at the event or program itself. ( distribution at consumer / trade shows outside of Ocean County are ELIGIBLE )
- Ads placed in local media that does not reach outside of Ocean County. Locally placed billboards, lawn signs, posters, etc.
- Trophies
- Newsletters dealing mainly with topics other than tourism activities
- Signage used only the day of the event or onsite at the event.
- Services-in-kind are not eligible for match.
- Tablecloths, flags, digital billboards, tickets, restaurant placemats IN Ocean County

## **2019 SCHEDULE**

**Deadline for submitting applications:** January 31, 2019 by 5:00 pm

**Announcement of Awards:** Approx. March 30, 2019

**Deadlines for submitting expenditures and proof of match:**

**County Purchase Order & Paid Bills/Checks:** October 30, 2019

**For events held after Oct. 6, 2019 deadline:** December 3, 2019

**Grant-awarded Project Completion Date:** December 31, 2019