

# Denison Tourism Board

# Tourism Grant Award Guidelines

## Purpose

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The Denison Tourism Board Grant Awards are intended to aide and encourage the development, continuation, and promotion of projects and events which attract visitors from outside of Denison, especially those who are likely to spend the night in local hotels, motels, or B&B's.

## Summary of Program

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Funding for this program is generated by Hotel / Motel Guest Tax, less funds needed to replace the local option sales tax revenues that were not collected due to the existence of the Hotel / Motel Guest Tax.

The Board shall have control of the expenditure of all funds provided for tourism under the annual budget adopted by the Council. The program is designed to assist an organization in the start-up or growth of an event/project. This is a reimbursement grant and is NOT designed to cover the entire expense of the event/project. Preference may be given to one-time projects that encourage overnight stays, that demonstrate an economic impact in the community, and/or that promote community enhancement and an improved quality of life.

Following are some of the events/projects that have been funded: Cinco de Mayo (SW Iowa Latino); Crawford County Fair (Crawford Co Fair Board); Fall Frolic (PEO Chapter); Red, White, & Boom (CDC); TriCity BBQ (CDC); Comedy Sportz (Donna Reed Foundation); Summer Slam Demo (JD1 Enterprises); Hot Summer Nights (Uptown Retailers); Conference (Western Iowa Tourism); Icon Series (Donna Reed Foundation); Art in the Park (Midwest Art); Concert Series (Donna Reed Foundation); Immigrant Heritage Festival (LULAC Denison); Mulch Project (Master Gardeners); Tree Project (Arbor Committee); Uptown Banners (City of Denison); Christmas Lights (Holiday Lighting Committee); Race Promotion (Crawford County Racers); Ice Fishing Tournament (Craw Co Pheasants Forever); Airport Upgrades (Airport Board); Bridge Replacement (Majestic Hills Golf Course); Tech Supplies for Home Meets (Denison Spring Rays); and McHenry House Restoration (Craw Co Historical Society).

## Application and Deadlines

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All applications must be completed in full, including a proposed budget with detailed expenses and revenues, including for what the Grant funds will be used. Completed applications and supplemental materials are to be submitted to Attn: Tourism Board; Denison City Hall; 111 North Main Street; PO Box 668; Denison, Iowa 51442. Completed applications and supplemental materials can also be emailed to: deputyclerk@denisonia.com.

Applications will be reviewed quarterly and must be submitted by 4:30 p.m. on March 31, June 30, September 30, or December 31 for consideration at the next regular Tourism meeting. If the deadline is on the weekend, applications are due on the Friday preceding the deadline. Tourism meetings generally take place at noon on the third Tuesday of January, April, July, and October.

**Organizations who apply for funding are required to have a representative attend the meeting in which their application will be discussed to answer any questions the Tourism Board may have.**

## Grants

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Funding requested may not exceed \$15,000 and should represent no more than 50% of the total project budget. All grants require a minimum 1:1 cash match. Applicants will be required to demonstrate a minimum of 1:1 match between Tourism Grant funds and other project funds, as well as the applicant's organizational and financial capacity for completing the project. The Tourism Board may choose to increase funding for certain projects of merit.

## Eligibility

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Projects or events – or a series of events – which promote Denison as a desirable tourist destination are eligible for Denison Tourism Grant funds. All projects or events must attract visitors to Denison and be open to the general public. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- **Community Celebrations / Events:** Projects that build upon historical, musical, culinary, agricultural, recreational, and/or cultural traditions of the area to attract visitors/tourists.
- **Education:** Projects that spread of knowledge of Denison's historical attractions.
- **Arts & Culture:** Projects that promote public engagement and access to the arts.
- **Community Beautification:** Projects that beautify tourist attractions, areas around tourist attractions, and/or access to tourist attractions.
- **Sports & Recreation:** Projects that promote public engagement with recreation activities.
- **Promotion/Marketing:** Projects designed to promote specific and unique places, activities, or tourism areas within Denison to target visitors. Funds could be used for printed materials, websites, social media marketing, or other promotional initiatives.
- **Capital Improvements:** Projects may include the renovation/construction of tourism properties, infrastructure improvements with a direct and obvious relationship to tourism, and other physical/structural items with a greater than 5-year lifespan.

## Evaluation Criteria

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Funding from the Denison Tourism Board shall not be intended as an annual revenue stream for any group. Multiple years for the same project/event may be funded; however, the Board expects the funding requests to be reduced each year until the project/event is self-sufficient. Organizations who have received funding previously must have reported back to the Tourism Board following their previously funded event or project. The following criteria may be used to evaluate applications:

### Tourism Enhancement

- The organization describes how the proposed event/project impacts and/or contributes to tourism and overnight stays in the City of Denison.
- Event/project helps promote Denison as a desirable tourist destination.
- The proposed event/project will generate overnight visits to Denison.
- Event/project encourages overnight lodging.
- Event/project will draw people to Denison during the mid-week and/or off-season.

### Economic Benefits

- The proposed event/project creates an overall economic benefit for the community.
- Proposal will enhance the organization's marketing efforts and mission.
- Organization has a strong and effective marketing plan.
- Organization has an effective plan to track results of marketing efforts through audience surveys and/or other methods.

### Project Proposal

- Application is completed in full.
- Event/project is clearly defined and likely to succeed.
- Event/project can be completed in a timeframe that is reasonable and appropriate.
- Potential benefits of event/project are significant and measurable.
- Event/project demonstrate strong partnerships, community support, and collaboration with for-profit businesses.

### Financial Considerations

- Project match funds are documented.
- Budget is reasonably detailed and appropriate
- Applicant has organizational and financial capacity to undertake and successfully complete the event/project.
- Overall project costs and grant request are justified based upon the expected benefits.
- Project leverages other public and/or private funds.

## **Receiving Funding**

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Applicants will be notified of a grant award via letter or email within 1 week of the meeting at which the funding was requested.

Grant funds must be used for the expenses at the event and date for which they are requested, which must take place within 12 months of the application. If an event/project is cancelled or does not take place within 12 months for any reason, funding will not be awarded. Grant awards are not carried over and all grant recipients must reapply the following year whether the event takes place or not.

Organizations whose event/project is approved for a grant will need to submit copies of paid invoices for reimbursement. Funds may be paid directly to event vendors when the cost is prohibitive to the organization. All requests for payment must be submitted within sixty (60) days of the end of the event/project, otherwise the remainder of any amount awarded but not paid will be returned to the grant fund to be allocated to other projects.

## **Liability**

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The recipient is responsible for all liability issues evolving from their activities.

## **Required Reporting / Eligibility for Future Funding**

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All public notices (press releases) and printed promotional materials (flyers, posters, ads) must acknowledge the support of the Denison Tourism Board. Example: "This project made possible in part by the financial support of the Denison Tourism Board."

Organizations who receive funding will be required to report back to the board on the success of the event/project funded and provide documentation as to how the funds awarded were used. Generally, this would occur at one of the next two Tourism Board meetings following the completion of the project/event.

Organizations which do not submit any funding requests without any explanation, and/or do not present a final report within six months to the Tourism Board following the completion of their event/project will be ineligible to submit applications for funding for a total of 5 (five) years.

## **Questions?**

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For answers to questions relating Tourism Grants, or for assistance in completing the application, please contact the Denison City Clerk's office at 712-263-3143.

Passed by Tourism Board: November 15, 2022