2020-2021
Franklin County
Tourism Marketing
MicroGrant Program

Application & Guidelines

Franklin County Tourism
Office of Economic Development
1255 Franklin Street, Suite 112
Rocky Mount, Virginia 24151
(540) 483-3030 - Office
(540) 483-3035 - Fax
David.Rotenizer@FranklinCountyVA.gov

Program Overview

I.   Application Process

• **Applications must be received no later than 5 p.m., July 9, 2020** and may be mailed, hand-delivered, e-mailed or faxed to:

> David Rotenizer, Director of Tourism
> Franklin County Tourism
> Office of Economic Development
> 1255 Franklin Street, Suite 112
> Rocky Mount, VA 24151
> David.Rotenizer@FranklinCountyVA.gov
> Fax: (540) 483-3035

Application and instructions also are available online at www.FranklinCountyVA.gov. For your convenience, the application portion may be completed online using our new or digital format. Note: Please keep a printed copy of the application and instructions for future reference.

• This is a 1:1 matching grant. The maximum amount of the Tourism Marketing MicroGrant to any one organization regardless of the number of events or projects is $4,000. However, a separate application must be submitted for each event.

• Awards under this program shall include, but are not limited to events, fairs, festivals and other projects promoting the tourism industry in Franklin County, Virginia. Only Franklin County based businesses or organizations may receive grant funds and those funds can only be used for events that are held within Franklin County. Projects involving adjoining localities are eligible, so long as funds directly support the needs of the Franklin County involvement. Other uses for joint locality projects must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

• The grant application must include a detailed description of the project that is no more than three pages in length, an attached marketing breakout, a contact information page, an event/project budget, a report of funding sources, a signed disclosure and a completed application certification form.

• Current copy of Form W-9 (IRS Taxpayer ID and Certification). Blank form available upon request.

• **The beginning event or project date may not be earlier than July 1, 2020.** No cost incurred before that date will be reimbursed by the grant and the period of service of all invoices must fall within the beginning and ending project dates specified on the project application. **All reimbursement requests must be completed and submitted prior to June 30, 2021**.

• The applicant must disclose in the application any personal financial benefit to be gained or conflicts of interest that may exist regarding any member of the applicant business or organization.

• The grantee must submit event or project details to Franklin County Tourism, Office of Economic Development – no later than three months prior to the event date for inclusion on the Franklin County tourism website and social media platforms. Information may be submitted by email, fax or mail. If approved award is within three months of event, details must be immediately submitted.

• The event or project must also be listed on the Virginia Tourism Corporation website at www.Virginia.org (see attached guidelines on how to create an effective listing).

• All grant recipients will be required to maintain a website and/or Facebook Page and provide a link to their website and/or Facebook Page. All projects receiving funding from the Franklin County Tourism Marketing MicroGrant Program are required to visually and/or audibly display the Franklin County Tourism brand identity and logo, *Franklin County – A Natural Setting for Opportunity*. A file with logo will be provided to successful applicants. Franklin County Tourism, Office of Economic Development also reserves the right to require brand identification on any approved project as part of the application and/or require that the applicant appropriately display the county's tourism website, www.VisitFranklinCountyVa.com, and apply a link from the grantee's website to the Franklin County tourism website and/or Facebook Page. Facebook Pages must reflect active status at least three months prior to an event (3-4 posts per month).

• Grants will be distributed on a <u>reimbursement basis only</u>.

•Amount of award for successful applicants will be judged on an individual basis and scored using a variety of weighted selection criteria, including positive impact on the tourism market of the community.

Organizations which have participated in the Tourism Marketing Program for at least three years and have been deemed eligible for annual external agency funding are no longer eligible for this grant program.

II.   Upon Conclusion of Event/Project

Approved grant recipients must provide the Franklin County Office of Economic Development - Tourism with the following:

   o   A final report detailing the outcome of the event or project and it must include copies of print ads, brochures and other related materials funded by the grant. Supporting documentation will include, but is not limited to, invoices for such items as advertising and creative expenses, appropriate tear sheets and vendor/supplier invoices.

   o   Reimbursement request must use "Reimbursement Request Example Format" including assigned award project number and amount awarded (attached to application).

   o   A completed official Event Summary Form must be included (attached to application).

   o   A representative sample of high resolution digital images should be submitted for each funded project.

Franklin County Tourism, Office of Economic Development reserves the right to conduct the placement of surveys or permit Franklin County representatives to survey participants and/or guests at the grantee's event(s). Data obtained from surveying attendees and/or guests at an event can be extremely valuable to both Franklin County and the grantee's business or organization in deciding where and how to market events. Franklin County agrees to share all data related to your event with the grantee's business or organization

Failure to fulfill the terms and conditions from prior MicroGrant awards may be a disqualifying factor for current and future grant awards. If you have any questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Application Assessment Criteria

Grant requests will be reviewed and scored based on the following criteria:

- **Leveraging** – How would Franklin County Tourism Marketing MicroGrant Program funds help secure more event support?

- **Regional Marketing** – How far do marketing efforts reach to attract tourists?

- **Economic Impact** – How many new dollars will the event bring to Franklin County? Provide as much quantifiable data as possible.

- **Partners** – What is the number and depth of community supporters and partners that the event brings to the table?

- **Financial Need** – Financial need is a significant factor in judging applications. Would Franklin County Tourism Marketing MicroGrant Program funds be crucial to jump-start this event or project?

- **Growth Markets** – Does your event have the potential to grow within any of the emerging tourism niches?

- **Uniqueness** – Is this event or project unique and will people travel from other areas to participate? This fund is meant to support new and growing events and ideas. If the event or project proposed is an existing event, what new element will be implemented in order to be competitive?

- **Overall Professionalism and Presentation** – Detailed planning is essential. Please demonstrate that the business/organization is truly prepared to make this event happen as proposed in the application.

- **Marketing** – While grant funds are not limited to supporting marketing efforts, it is our intent that the funds are primarily used in this manner. Provide a detailed marketing plan that shows where you will apply the grant funds. Remember, earned media and paid media have the same effect. What strategy will the grantee use to secure both? Keep the overall program goal in mind – grant funds serve as an investment to enhance Franklin County's visibility and to bring new tourists to our community. Advertising is a major component of this goal. Priority will be given to projects which focus on direct marketing and promotion over those that will direct funds toward program operational costs.

- NOTE: Franklin County is phasing out operational costs as eligible expenses in the near future. If you are including operational costs in this application, you should prepare for this change in future years.

Franklin County
A Natural Setting for Opportunity
Office of Economic Development • Tourism

Project Description

No more than three typed pages can be submitted along with this application (min. 12 pt. font). Ensure the following ten questions are addressed:

1. **Event/Project Description** – The name, date, time and location of the event or project, and complete contact information. Also, a detailed description including planned activities, related history, any revenues used for a community purpose, details of any special invited guests or acts, etc.

2. **Goals** – What are the goals for your program?

3. **Community** – Why is your event/project needed in Franklin County?

4. **Attractiveness** – What makes this proposed event or project unique or special for the area? How will it help attract visitors and further recognition of Franklin County as an ideal tourist destination?

5. **Marketing** – Describe the proposed marketing plan. Where do you plan to advertise and when? Why did you select these publications? What is your *marketing message?*

6. **Past Performance** (for repeat events/projects) – What were past attendance numbers? How did actual revenues and expenses compare to estimates and prior year numbers?

7. **Performance Projections** (for new events/projects) – What attendance or participation do you anticipate and how are you determining these projections? Aside from actual revenues and expenses, what other forms of measurement will you track to determine the success of your event/project?

8. **Partners** – Please identify partners within the community or region that are supporting this event and the type of support they are providing (financial, in-kind, etc.). Explain why the community supports this event.

9. **Other Funding Sources** – Please describe additional financial support for this event or project.

10. **Total MicroGrant Amount Requested**

Contact Information

If you are applying for a Franklin County Tourism Marketing MicroGrant to cover more than one event or project by your business or organization, each event or project must be listed on a separate Contact Information Form. Please submit all forms together.

Name of Submitting Organization:

Mailing Address/City/State/Zip:

Physical Address of Event/Program:

Point of Contact:

Telephone Number (Home/Work/Cell):

E-Mail Address:

Program Website/Facebook URL and other social media platforms:

Financial Commitment from your organization:

Total MicroGrant Amount Requested:

Name/Title of Authorized Person/Point of Contact

_____

Signature of Authorized Person/Point of Contact   Date

_____   _____

Media Breakout Form

ADVERTISING – PRINT MEDIA (Newspaper, Magazine) AND/OR DIGITAL (INTERNET, SOCIAL MEDIA)

Name of Publication	Designated Market Area (DMA)	Issue Dates	Size of Ad	Circulation	Cost	Target Audience/ Message

- **Total Newspaper Ads: $**_____
- **Total Magazine Ads: $**_____
- **Total Digital: $**_____
- **Total Other: $**_____
- **TOTAL PRINT/DIGITAL MEDIA: $**_____

ADVERTISING – BROADCASTING MEDIA (Radio, Television)

Name of Media Entity	Designated Market Area (DMA)	Dates	Ad Description	Circulation	Cost	Target Audience/ Message

- **Total Radio: $**_____
- **Total Television: $**_____
- **TOTAL BROADCAST MEDIA: $**_____

COLLATERAL (Printing of brochures, etc.)

Material Description	Date of Publication	Target Audience/ DMA	Specifications - Quantity, Page Size, Number of Pages, and Color/B&W	Distribution Outlets	Printing Cost	Anticipated Ad Revenue (If selling Ads)

- **TOTAL COLLATERAL MATERIALS: $_____**

BILLBOARDS

Name of Supplier	Dates	Location	Size	Estimated Traffic Count Per Month	Space Cost	Target Audience Message

- **TOTAL BILLBOARDS: $_____**

PRODUCTION DESIGN/OTHER

Source of Expense	Radio	Television	Print	Billboard	Collateral (Include direct mail)	Postage/ Mailing	Distribution

- **Total Production: $_____**
- **Total Other: $_____**
- **TOTAL PRODUCTION/OTHER: $_____**

PROJECT BUDGET

Planned Project Expenditures

1. Print/Digital Media
   a.) Newspaper $_____
   b.) Magazine $_____
   c.) Digital $_____
   d.) Other $_____

2. Broadcast
   a.) Radio $_____
   b.) Television $_____

3. Collateral Printing Costs $_____

4. Billboards $_____

5. Production Costs
   a.) Ad agency fees $_____
   b.) Supplier/Vendor Cost $_____
   c.) Other $_____

6. Other $_____

* Please attach a breakdown of "other" expenses on a spearate sheet

Grand Total Event/Project Expenditures $_____

PROJECTED FUNDING SOURCES

List all sources of revenue and amount dedicated to the event or project. In-kind contributions should be listed in the appropriate section. Do not include revenues expected to be generated by ticket sales or concessions.

1. Source Name: _____
    Contribution: $_____
    Contact Name and Phone Number: _____

2. Source Name: _____
    Contribution: $_____
    Contact Name and Phone Number: _____

3. Source Name: _____
    Contribution: $_____
    Contact Name and Phone Number: _____

4. Source Name: _____
    Contribution: $_____
    Contact Name and Phone Number: _____

5. Source Name: _____
    Contribution: $_____
    Contact Name and Phone Number: _____

IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

6. Source Name: _____
    Contribution: $_____
    Contact Name and Phone Number: _____

7. Source Name: _____
    Contribution: $_____
    Contact Name and Phone Number: _____

8. Source Name: _____
    Contribution: $_____
    Contact Name and Phone Number: _____

CERTIFICATION

I/We hereby certify that the information supplied in this application is true and correct and that I/we have read and understand the attached Program Overview that govern this grant program. Furthermore, I/we understand that if the grant is awarded, any proposed changes to the grant must be submitted to the Franklin County Office of Economic Development - Tourism in writing and receive written approval before changes can be implemented. I/We acknowledge that any variance from or violation of the rules and procedures that govern the Franklin County Tourism Marketing MicroGrant Program may result in non-reimbursement of any or all expenditures attributed to grant funds.

Signature_____

Printed Name_____

Title_____ Date_____

Organization_____

DISCLOSURE

The applicant must disclose in the application any personal financial benefit to be gained or conflicts of interest that may exist regarding any member of the applicant organization.

1. Will any member of the applicant organization receive a "direct financial benefit"* if this grant is awarded? _____ Yes   _____No

   If yes, please describe the benefit to be received. **

   _____

2. Will an employee or representative of the applicant/organization receive a "direct financial benefit" if this grant is awarded? * _____ Yes   _____No

   If yes please identify the employee or representative receiving the benefit and describe the benefit to be received. **

   _____

3. Are there other vested interests/employees or representatives of the applicant/organization that may be involved in the project?
   _____Yes   _____No

   If yes, please identify the individual and to what level of interest they may have:

   _____

* "Direct financial benefit" means that a portion of the total project cost will be received by a member of the applicant organization or by an entity in which the applicant organization, representative or employee has an ownership interest.

** Failure to disclose this information may result in the cancellation of any grant previously approved by Franklin County and the **disqualification of the applicant and its representatives from future grant awards**.

APPENDIX

A

Reimbursement Request Example Format
(Must be placed on the grantee's/organization's letterhead)

DATE

David Rotenizer, Director of Tourism
Franklin County Office of Economic Development
1255 Franklin Street, Suite 112
Rocky Mount, VA 24151

We have completed the event/project relative to the Franklin County Tourism Marketing MicroGrant Project #_____ as described by our grant application and approved on (date grant approved) in the amount of $_____ for the period of (beginning project date) to (ending project date).

We hereby request payment in the amount of $_____from Franklin County for the grant funds due per the award. The event summary sheet, copies of articles and advertisements, and eligible invoices/receipts with itemized list are attached for your review.

Sincerely,

Signature & Name

APPENDIX
B

Event Summary Form

Franklin County Tourism Marketing MicroGrant Program

(Attach additional pages if necessary)

1. Event Name & Assigned Project No: _____

2. Event Date: _____

3. How long have you hosted this event? _____

4. Event Attendance:

   a. What was the total attendance at your event? _____

   b. How did you determine this number? _____

   _____

   c. Did you have visitors from outside of Franklin County? _____

   d. If so, where were they from? _____

   _____

5. Please share a few challenges of your event.

   _____

   _____

   _____

6. Please share highlights of your event.

   _____

   _____

   _____

7. What marketing tools were used to promote the event? Check all that apply.

   Broadcast: ☐ Radio   ☐ TV

   Print: ☐ Newspaper ☐ Magazine   ☐ Flyer/Post   ☐ Rack Card   ☐ Newsletter

   Display: ☐ Billboard   ☐ Yard sign ☐ Banner

   Digital   ☐ Website   ☐ Social Media ☐ E-mail

   Other: _____

8. Did you target your marketing? (any particular geographic areas/demographic/interest)

_____

_____

9. What websites did you use to promote your event? List web address (es).

_____

_____

10. What forms of social media were used to promote your event? Check all that apply.

☐Facebook ☐Twitter ☐Instagram ☐Snapchat ☐Pinterest ☐YouTube

☐Other _____

11. Did you use paid social media ads or boosted posts? ☐ Yes ☐ No

12. Do you have digital photographs or video available of your event? ☐ Yes ☐ No

    a. If yes, may we use in Franklin County promotion and future marketing of your event? _____

13. What is the date(s) for next year's event? _____

14. Are there any suggestions on how to improve the Application & Guidelines Packet? _____

_____

_____

APPENDIX
C

How to Manage Event/Exhibit Listings on Virginia Tourism Corporation Website

LOGIN TO THE ADMINISTRATION TOOL

Step 1. Go to http://admin.virginia.org/. You can also go to www.Virginia.org scroll to bottom of page and click "Add/Update Your Listings". You will be redirected to the Administration Tool Login page.

Step 2. . Login to your account. If you do not have an account, click the "Register" button to create one for free.
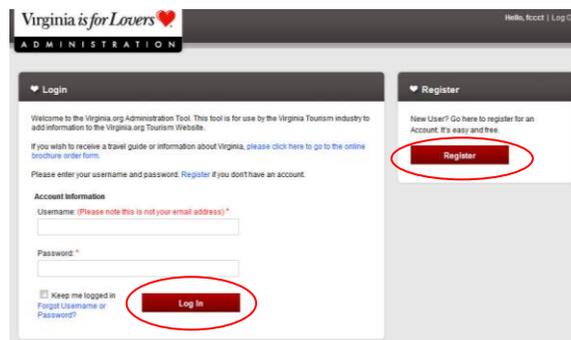
CREATING A LISTING

Step 1. From the Dashboard select "Add a New Listing"

Step 2. Create the listing by completing all areas with asterisks (*) and in **BOLD.**

> **TIP**: Make only one listing for an event (not a listing for each occurrence of an event), then select dates/times for each occurrence on the Details screen.

Overview (Step 1 of 5) screen:

- **Listing Name**: When creating a listing name do not use "1ˢᵗ, 2ⁿᵈ, etc." for annual events – just use the term "Annual". Next year you can reuse the same listing and update the date/time and description, this will allow you to keep the same listing URL which search engines already have cached thus making you more visible in search engine results.
- **Listing Venue**: Use the full name of your venue, not what it is commonly called.
- **Listing Category**: Always use Events & Exhibits.
- **Street Address**: Use the address where the event is being held. Visitors will use this for GPS.
- **Locality**: Make sure to select Franklin as the Locality, not Franklin City.
- **Phone:** Enter the primary contact telephone number for visitors to call for more information.
- **Phone Description**: You can leave this field blank unless you want the text to appear next to the phone number, this will automatically be placed in parentheses.
- **Website:** Fill in the website address for the event or event information.
- **Website Name/Description:** You may leave this field blank –the text does not appear on the listing.
- **Email:** Fill in the email address that visitors can use to request more information.
- **Email Description:** You may leave this field blank –the text does not appear on the listing.
- Click on the button "Show Me the Map". If the pointer is in the wrong place, just click it and drag it to the correct spot on the map.
- **Additional Contact Info**: If you choose to add additional phone numbers or email addresses, type in a description to appear next to the number in parentheses so travelers know what they are for. For example: If the number belongs to the venue, type in "Venue Information".
- **Additional Websites/Social Media Links**: Select the type. Type in the URL (website address). Write description (for website type write the name of the website – this text will appear on the listing; all others types text in description will not appear but instead will have appropriate icon). Booking type will display a "BOOK NOW" button on the listing that is linked to the URL indicated. Click "Add Website". Continue adding more types. You may add multiple website.

Details (Step 2 of 5) screen:

- Select if this listings is an event or an exhibit. For events, you may select up to 5 subcategories that are relevant to your listing. These are used by VTC when looking for content for their travel blog or when they make separate listings for specific experiences.
- Fees: If your event has a fee, check the box and write a description of the fee. If your event is free it is still recommended to check the box and type FREE so that it appears on your listing letting travelers know there is no cost.
- Selecting your dates: It is best to use Option 2 so that it feeds into our events calendar correctly. Select your date and indicate your start time, you may also select an end time but it's not required. Select multiple dates by clicking on each date – they will be highlighted, to unselect a date just click it again. Once you've made your selections, click add to see it added to the Listings schedule. You may list occurrences up to 5 years in advance.
- If the venue is wheelchair accessible and meets all 4 criteria, select the certification box and wheelchair accessibility box so that an ADA icon is displayed with the listing.

Description (Step 3 of 5) screen: (200 word limit)

- <u>Do not</u> copy & paste text with formatting. This section only allows plain text and unformatted text. Type directly into field or first copy text to "notepad" to convert to plain text, then copy &

paste into this section. You can also copy text to MS Word, highlight it then select icon to clear formatting before pasting into this section.

- o Be descriptive and make it interesting. Keep your audience in mind - remember that your audience may not be from the area so you want to let them know why it's worth them visiting the area and attending your event. What makes your event unique? What type of experience can they expect?
- o The listing name and description are Search Engine Optimized (SEO). The first phrase (20 or so words) of your description will appear under the event title in organic search engine results.
- o Once you have composed your text, it is beneficial to go back and break text into small "bite size" paragraphs. Research has shown that readers will remain more engaged when paragraphs are not long and bulky… break it up, break it up, break it up.
- Listing summary section: This text will appear under the listing title on search results in Virginia.org. The text should not include any references to dates as it will not be immediately updated when the listing is reused later.

Images (Step 4 of 5) screen:

- Use Browse button to upload an image to your image library or scroll through your image library inventory. Uploaded images must be in a JPEG format. It is recommended to use more than one image so that your listing has a slideshow. The first image will be used as your primary image on event lists. You can sort the order of your images by using the up and down arrows.
    - o Recommended image guidelines:
        - Landscape (Portrait images will be cut off about half way)
        - Image should have visual padding on all edges
        - High Resolution preferred: no more than 1600 x 800 pixels. Resolution can be lower but should have correct aspect ratio.
        - Aspect ratio of 2:1.
- Remember to check "I agree" box before clicking next step.

Review and Confirmation (Step 5 of 5) screen:

- **ALWAYS** preview your listing & check for typos before clicking "Confirm and Submit".

Step 3. Use Advance Options. You can add key words to maximize your view in search results and link this listing to your other listings so they cross-promote each other.

REUSING AND UPDATING AN EXISTING LISTING

NOTE: Reusing an existing listing allows you to use the URL that is already in the VTC search results and search engine databases. Recycled URLs will display an active listing on the Virginia.org website and search results immediately after approval. New listing URLs take longer to display on VTC search results and search engines.

Step 1. From your Administration Tools Dashboard. Scroll down to the listings you wish to reuse/update. You can also click on "See All Listings" and do a search by name.

Step 2. Click on the listing name. You will be taken to the listing view screen. Here you can also select preview to view the listing without making any changes.

Step 3. To make changes click "Edit". A message will appear asking if you want to remove your listing from the site until approved. We recommend to select "No" so the current listing is still viewable and no error

message is received by the public while pending approval. However, if your listings contains wrong date & time info then it may be best to remove from the site until your changes are approved.

Step 4. Follow directions in Step 2 and 3 of <u>Creating a Listing</u> above.