

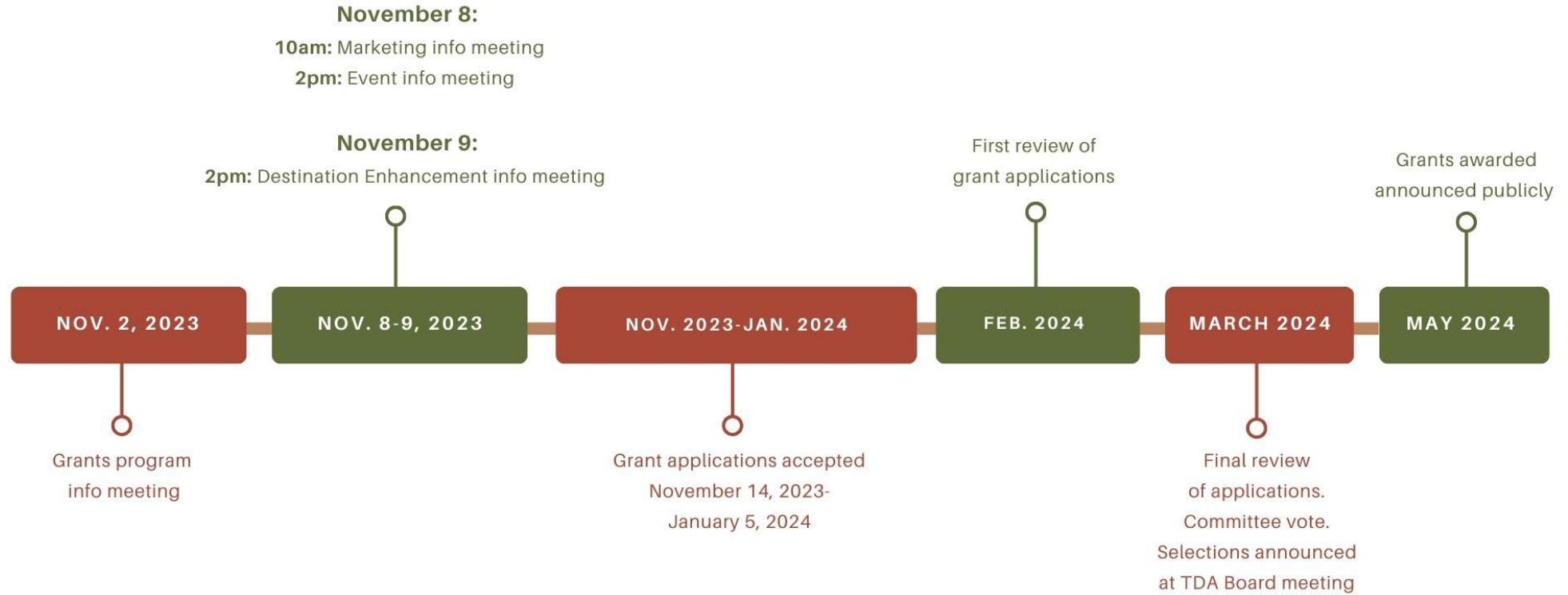


2023-2024 DESTINATION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

LEGISLATIVE MANDATE

The Henderson County Tourism Development Authority (HCTDA) is empowered to make grants to its tourism partners under the authority granted by its enabling legislation, Session Law 2013-61, House Bill 545, Section 1, (e) Use of Tax Revenue: “The county shall, on a quarterly basis, remit the net proceeds of the room occupancy and tourism development tax levied under this act to the Henderson County Tourism Development Authority. The Authority shall use at least two thirds of the net proceeds of the room occupancy tax levied under this act to promote travel and tourism in Henderson County and shall use the remainder for tourism related expenditures.”

2023-2024 GRANTS TIMELINE



www.grantsfortourism.com

Grants for projects/events happening between May 2024-May 2025

TDA BOARD MEMBERS

- Richard Rhodes, Chair
- Brittney Jones Brady
- Travis Bonnema
- Joe Dinan
- Selena Einwechter
- Julie Hall
- Debi Smith*
- Danielle Stepp McCall*
- Jeremy Weber

*Grants Committee Members

DESTINATION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

The objective of the Henderson County Destination Enhancement Grant program is to support the development of tourism-related capital investment in Henderson County to promote visitation to the county and enhance the destination.

DESTINATION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

General Eligibility Requirements

To qualify for a HCTDA Destination Enhancement Grant, the applicant must:

- a. Represent a project located in Henderson County
- b. Represent a project that will enhance Henderson County as a destination
- c. Have been in operation as an organization for at least one (1) year
- d. Be organized under the laws of North Carolina or, if organized under the laws of another state, registered to do business in North Carolina
- e. Be registered as a federally-recognized non-profit, if applicable
- f. Not be a property primarily used for lodging
- g. Applicant must be able to provide a match equal to at least 50% of the grant amount being requested from the program
- h. Utilize the funding received from the program for capital assets only

DESTINATION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

Limitations

Limitations imposed by HCTDA upon the Destination Enhancement Grant program include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Destination Enhancement Grant funding can only be used for:
 - i. New construction that will enhance Henderson County as a destination for at least 10 years
 - ii. The expansion, renovation, rehabilitation, replacement, or acquisition of an existing structure that will enhance Henderson County as a destination for at least 10 years
 - iii. The acquisition of equipment or other similar capital assets that will enhance Henderson County, with an anticipated life of at least 10 years
- b. If a project is partially located in/will be used partially in Henderson County, only the Henderson County portion/share of the project is eligible for funding
- c. Grant funding cannot be used for projects located on property that is primarily used only for lodging.
- d. HCTDA cannot commit to funding projects in future years. HCTDA may prioritize future funding for a specific project in future years but cannot commit to funding beyond the current fiscal year of the application cycle. Organizations may reapply for funding in future years for multi-phase projects.
- e. HCTDA will not consider more than one application for Destination Enhancement Grant funding from any organization in a given fiscal year.
- f. The Destination Enhancement Grant application must be for a minimum of \$8,000, with at least 50% of every dollar requested to be matched by the applicant.

DESTINATION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

- e. HCTDA reserves the right to cancel the Destination Enhancement Grant program at any time and for any reason.
- f. HCTDA is not obligated to fund any request, nor is it obligated to expend the entire amount budgeted for the Grant program in a given fiscal year. Recognizing that its resources are limited, HCTDA may, in its sole discretion, grant funding that is less than requested by the applicant.
- g. HCTDA will not make payment directly to any vendor or individual. Payment will only be made to the applicant organization.
- h. HCTDA may, in its sole discretion, decide to disburse funds only after the achievement of certain milestones by the grantee, and funds may be paid out in predetermined phases after consultation with the applicant. Specific terms of payment will be included in the project funding agreement.
- i. Changes in project schedule and/or modification of project's design or scope will require the grantee to seek review and approval of the HCTDA Board before any additional disbursement of funds.
- j. If the grantee is unable to fund and/or complete the project, HCTDA may revoke all or part of the grant. The grantee may be forced to return some or all funding plus interest if the grantee is found to have used the funding inappropriately, if the project was not completed, in accordance with the schedule provided, if the project scope or design was changed without approval of HCTDA, or if the grantee otherwise violates the funding agreement.
- k. If the grantee is unable to fund and/or complete the project, HCTDA may revoke all or part of the grant. The grantee may be forced to return some or all funding plus interest if the grantee is found to have used the funding inappropriately, if the project was not completed, in accordance with the schedule provided, if the project scope or design was changed without approval of HCTDA, or if the grantee otherwise violates the funding agreement.
- l. Applications received after the published deadline will not be considered.
- m. The applicant assumes the burden of all expenses associated with this application.

DESTINATION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

Permitted Uses

Examples of permitted uses of Destination Enhancement Grant funding include but are not limited to the following types of expenses:

- a. Construction, expansion, renovation, rehabilitation, replacement, or acquisition of structures or tourism-related infrastructure with an anticipated life of at least 10 years
- b. Purchase of major equipment or similar tourism-related capital assets with an anticipated life of at least 10 years
- c. Design and engineering studies for tourism-related capital projects

DESTINATION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

Ineligible Uses

Examples of ineligible uses of Destination Enhancement Grant funding include but are not limited to:

- a. Operating expenses
- b. Salaries and benefits
- c. Marketing and sales expenses
- d. Fundraising expenses
- e. Travel expenses
- f. Legal services
- g. Debt reduction
- h. Feasibility studies
- i. Acquisition of land
- j. Expenses incurred prior to the project funding agreement
- k. Projects that are not open to the public
- l. Projects located on property that is primarily used only for lodging
- m. Projects that will only benefit a single lodging property

DESTINATION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

Evaluation Criteria

Criteria to be used by the HCTDA grants committee to evaluate applications include the following:

- a. Compliance with the stated requirements of the program
- b. Detailed information providing for how the funding will be invested
- c. Amount of matching funds provided by the applicant. A minimum of a 50% funding match is required.
- d. Overall benefit to Henderson County tourism
- e. Ability to promote overnight visitation to Henderson County
- f. Overall benefit to the community
- g. Eligibility of applicant as a tourism-related business or organization; non-profits may be given higher priority.
- h. Tax status of the applicant organization
- i. The ability of the applicant to manage and execute the project
- j. Alignment with the goals of HCTDA and the destination brand of Henderson County
- k. Readiness of the project to contribute as an asset to Henderson County tourism
- l. Ability to fill strategic gaps in Henderson County tourism, such as drawing new visitor audiences or enhancing the destination during off- or shoulder periods.
- m. The frequency of utilization of the project by visitors
- n. The anticipated return on investment

Incomplete applications will not be considered. Applicants with projects that are not funded may reapply in future application cycles, but the applicant should seek feedback from HCTDA staff before doing so.

DESTINATION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

Reporting

Grantees who are awarded Destination Enhancement Grant funds will be required to report the status of their project to HCTDA at least every six months until the project is complete.

This report should include the information required by the project funding agreement, including but not limited to the other sources of funding that were utilized to complete the project.

Once the funded project is complete, the grantee must annually provide a detailed report to HCTDA, in accordance with the project funding agreement, detailing the impact of the project upon Henderson County tourism for up to four (4) years.

If the project is expected to positively impact the destination through room nights generated or other measurable objectives that it ultimately fails to achieve, the grantee must demonstrate what efforts were made to generate economic impact or to show how the project was a contributing asset to the Henderson County tourism sector.

DESTINATION ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

Notice of Public Record

Because HCTDA is a quasi-government entity, it is subject to Chapter 132 of North Carolina General Statutes. Consequently, this application and any materials submitted as part of this application and any documentation regarding any funding received are subject to disclosure to any party, public or private, upon request.

Recognition

In accordance with the project funding agreement, recipients of HCTDA Destination Enhancement Grant funding are required to acknowledge the support of HCTDA at the project itself (in signage, plaques, etc.) and in any announcements, press releases, and other communication (printed or electronic) announcing the project's start and opening. HCTDA will review and approve any related communication in advance of distribution or publication.



QUESTIONS

HENDERSON COUNTY TDA

Grant Application Best Practices



BEST PRACTICES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Make a Compelling Case for Your Request

- **Set yourself apart** - be extremely specific about what you hope to accomplish and how exactly the grant will help.
- **Use data to persuade** - highlight your past successes and demonstrate your ability to deliver a successful project.
- **Keep it short and sweet** - submit a concise and well-written application.
- **Reference direct impact** - clearly identify, throughout the application, how the grant funding will have a positive impact.



BEST PRACTICES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Take the SMART Approach

Identify your goals and how the grant funding will help you achieve them. In your application be:

- **Specific**
 - Clearly articulate how the grant funds will help support your mission
- **Measurable**
 - Outline what data you will use to monitor the success of your efforts
- **Achievable**
 - Demonstrate that your efforts are realistic and that the grant will enhance your project
- **Relevant**
 - Show alignment with the TDA's mission- "Promoting travel to Henderson County for the economic benefit of all."
- **Timely**
 - Ensure that your initiative is in line with the TDA's timing requirements



Hendersonville
NORTH CAROLINA

HCTDA GRANTS PROGRAM WEBSITE

www.GrantsForTourism.com