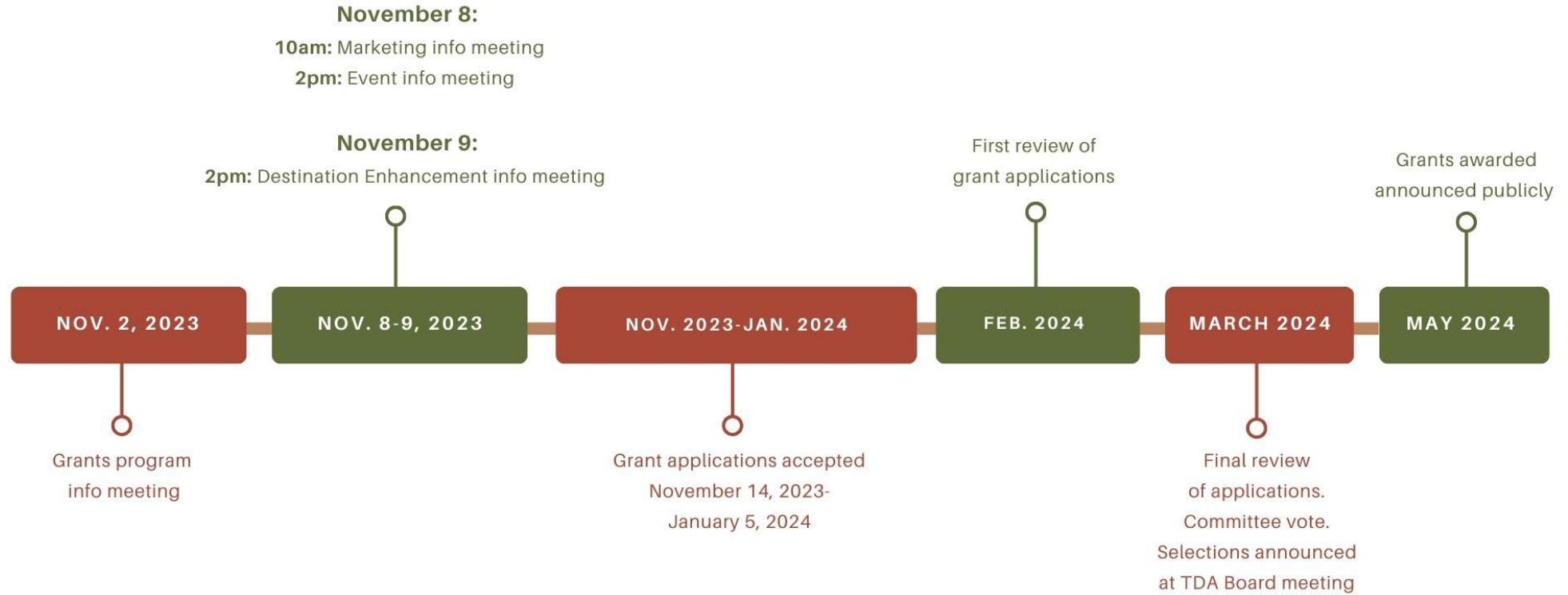




# 2023-2024 DESTINATION MARKETING GRANTS



# 2023-2024 GRANTS TIMELINE



[www.grantsfortourism.com](http://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

# 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.”



# DESTINATION MARKETING GRANTS

The objective of the Henderson County Destination Marketing Grant program is to support Henderson County tourism partners with their marketing needs to promote visitation to the county.

# DESTINATION MARKETING GRANTS

## General Eligibility Requirements

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

- a. Be a tourism-related business or other organization located in Henderson County that attracts visitors from outside the county
- b. Be organized under the laws of North Carolina or, if organized under the laws of another state, registered to do business in North Carolina
- c. Be registered as a federally-recognized non-profit, if applicable
- d. Have been in operation in Henderson County for at least one (1) year prior to the deadline for application submission
- e. Not be a property primarily used for lodging
- f. Demonstrate its intent to attract visitors to Henderson County
- g. Have a specific plan for how the requested funding will be invested to reach visitors or audiences outside of the Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson DMA

Out of market marketing is defined as marketing efforts designed to promote tourism to Henderson County from visitors that reside out of the county, with an added emphasis on targeting those visitors who will stay overnight in the destination. Marketing efforts with a reach of 50+ miles from Henderson County and outside of local media market is required. However, an exception may be given to marketing efforts placed in the Greenville-Spartanburg-Asheville-Anderson DMA depending on the marketing reach of the individual proposed media outlet



# DESTINATION MARKETING GRANTS

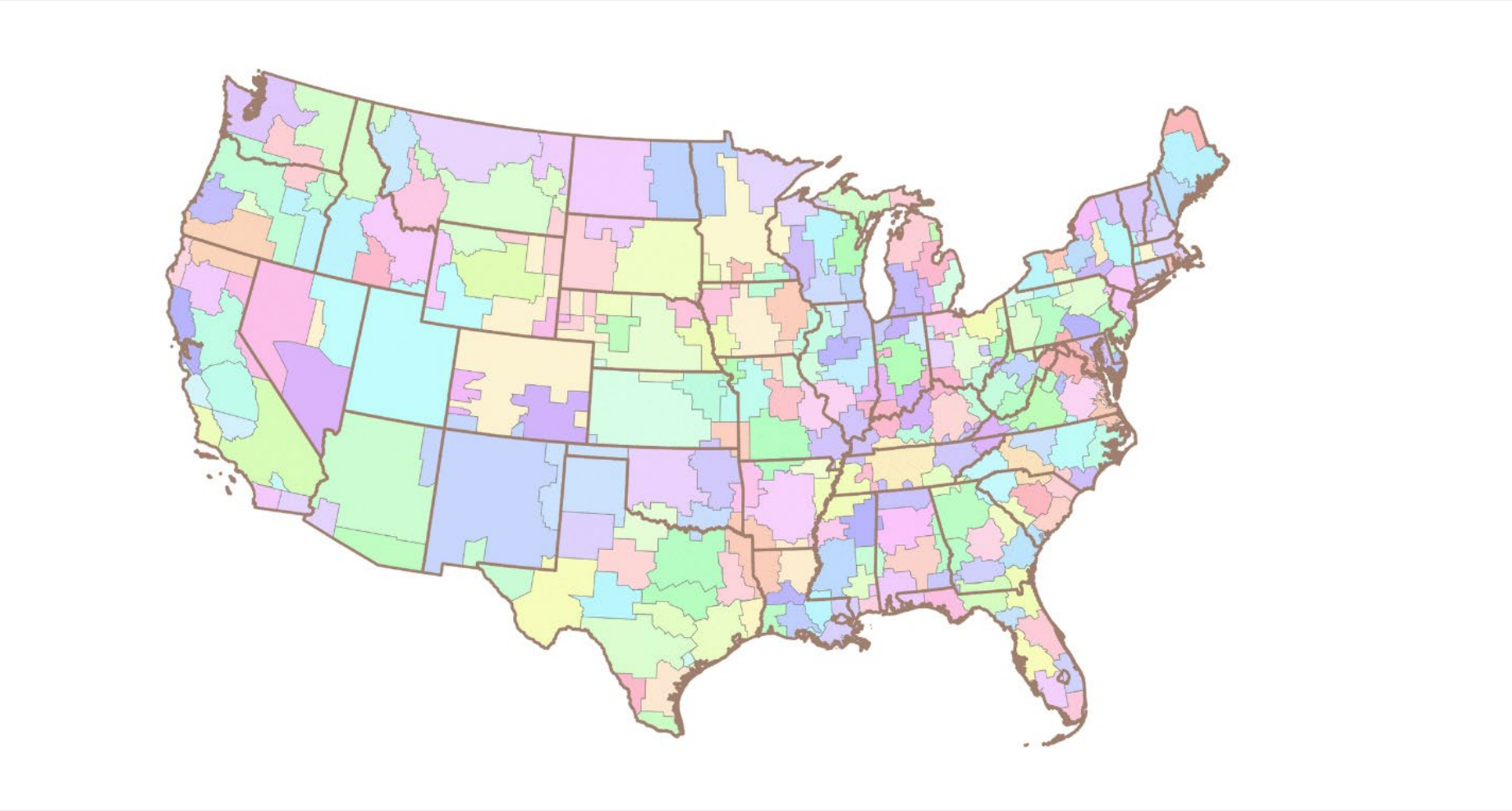
## QUICK STATS FOR GREENVILLE-SPARTABURG-ASHEVILLE-ANDERSON DMA

- MARKET NAME: GREENVILLE-SPARTANBURG-ASHEVILLE-ANDERSON
- TV HOMES: 845,990
- % OF US: 0.74%
- RANK: 37
- STATE: GA, NC, SC

## COUNTIES IN THE GREENVILLE-SPARTABURG-ASHEVILLE-ANDERSON MEDIA MARKET AREA

- Abbeville, SC
- Anderson, SC
- Buncombe, NC
- Cherokee, SC
- Elbert, GA
- Franklin, GA
- Graham, NC
- Greenville, SC
- Greenwood, SC
- Hart, GA
- Haywood, NC
- Henderson, NC
- Jackson, NC
- Laurens, SC
- Macon, NC
- Madison, NC
- McDowell, NC
- Mitchell, NC
- Oconee, SC
- Pickens, SC
- Polk, NC
- Rutherford, NC
- Spartanburg, SC
- Stephens, GA
- Swain, NC
- Transylvania, NC
- Union, SC
- Yancey, NC

# DESTINATION MARKETING GRANTS



USA DMAs





# DESTINATION MARKETING GRANTS

## Limitations

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

- a. Organizations may apply for funding for multiple marketing projects/events held during a single twelve-month period but cannot apply for multiple years of funding. Applicants must complete a separate application for each event for which they are seeking funding.
- b. The amount requested in the application must be for a minimum of \$500 and no more than \$20,000.
- c. HCTDA reserves the right to cancel the Destination Marketing Grant program at any time and for any reason. HCTDA is not obligated to fund any request, nor is it obligated to expend the entire amount budgeted for the Destination Marketing 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 that requested by the applicant.
- d. HCTDA will not make payment directly to any vendor or individual. Payment will only be made to the applicant organization.
- e. Applicants that are approved for funding will receive funds for expenses based upon the terms set forth in the funding agreement. Expenses incurred prior to the funding agreement will not be covered.
- f. The grantee may be forced to return some or all funding plus interest if the grantee is found to have used the funding inappropriately or otherwise violated the funding agreement.
- g. Funding granted through this program must be utilized within twelve (12) months of the approval of the HCTDA board
- h. Applications received after the published deadline will not be considered.
- i. The applicant assumes the burden of all expenses associated with this application.

# DESTINATION MARKETING GRANTS

## Permitted Uses

Examples of permitted uses of out-of-market Destination Marketing Grant funding include but are not limited to:

- a. Production of brochures and other print collateral
- b. Out-of-market print, television, and radio advertising
- c. Billboards and other out-of-market media
- d. Out-of-market trade and consumer show registration fees
- e. Targeted digital media, including search engine marketing targeting potential visitors to Henderson County, promoted posts on social media, and banner ads and similar types of pay-per-click advertising
- f. Out-of-market mobile marketing
- g. Expenses associated with out-of-market public relations efforts
- h. Design costs

## Ineligible Uses

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

- a. Marketing, advertising, or other expenses that is not intended to attract tourists or other business travelers to Henderson County
- b. Local print, television, radio, and advertising that is limited to Greenville-Spartanburg-Asheville-Anderson DMA
- c. Website design and hosting
- d. Operational expenses
- e. Capital expenditures
- f. Debt reduction
- g. Signage at a place of business
- h. Wayfinding signage
- i. Travel expenses
- j. Photography and videography services (funding available through the HCTDA Photography and Videography program)
- k. Search engine optimization (SEO)
- l. Fundraising expenses
- m. Event expenses (unless for marketing of an event)
- n. Influencer marketing
- o. Sweepstakes awards or similar kinds of prizes
- p. Expenses incurred prior to the project funding agreement

# HCTDA GRANTS PROGRAM

## Evaluation Criteria

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

1. Compliance with the stated requirements of the program.
2. Detailed information providing for how the funding will be invested.
3. Ability to help generate visitation to Henderson County.
4. Eligibility of the applicant as a tourism-related business or organization
5. Alignment with the goals of HCTDA and the destination brand of Henderson County.

Incomplete applications will not be considered. The grants committee will look especially favorably upon investments in marketing that help drive visitation during non-peak periods of visitation. Peak months for visitation to Henderson County are June, July, and October. Applicants which are not funded may reapply in future application cycles, but the applicant should seek feedback from HCTDA staff before doing so.



# HCTDA GRANTS PROGRAM

## Schedule

1. The HCTDA will determine the amount of funding to be budgeted for the Destination Marketing Grant program during its annual planning prior to the start of the new fiscal year in July.
2. The HCTDA will notify tourism partners of the opening of the annual grant cycle at least 30 days prior to a pre-application conference.
3. The pre-application conference to discuss funding requirements and answer questions of potential applicants will be held approximately 30 days in advance of the application deadline. Attendance at this conference is not mandatory for applicants.
4. All applications must be submitted online. A grants committee of the HCTDA will evaluate all applications for funding and make final recommendations to the HCTDA Board. The HCTDA Board will then review and approve recommended applications for funding. All decisions of the Board will be final.
5. A signed funding agreement between the applicant and the HCTDA will be required of any applicant receiving prior to receiving funds through this program.

# HCTDA GRANTS PROGRAM

## Reporting

Grantees who are awarded Destination Marketing Grant funds will be required to comply with the reporting requirements set forth in the funding agreement.

## Notice of Public Record

Because HCTDA is a quasi-public 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.



# HENDERSON COUNTY TDA

Partner Marketing Alignment





# TDA'S CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES

- Drive overnight stays among targeted visitor groups
  - Increase overnight visits over FY22/23
  - Drive midweek/extended stays (shoulder days: Monday and Thursday) among targeted visitor groups
  - Drive visitors December – February
  - Disperse visitation throughout the county





# TDA'S CAMPAIGN TIMING

- Always On Campaign
  - Flight Dates: 8/28/23 - 5/5/24
- Fall Campaign
  - Flight Dates: 8/28/23 - 10/15/24
- Holiday Campaign
  - Flight Dates: 11/6/23 - 12/17/23
- Winter/Spring Campaign
  - Flight Dates: 2/12/24 - 5/5/24





# TARGETING PARAMETERS

- Demographics: Adults 25-54 HHI \$100K+
- Interests
  - Agritourism
  - Family Activities
  - Outdoor, nature, eco-tourism
  - Arts, culture, history
  - Culinary, dining out
    - Food Tour/Ice Cream Trail
  - Dog Friendly Travel
  - Vacation Rental Travelers and Digital Nomads
  - Wine Enthusiasts
- Geo markets
  - Carolinas: Charlotte, Raleigh-Durham, Greenville-Spartanburg, Columbia, Charleston
  - Outside Carolinas: Atlanta, Tampa/St. Pete, Orlando, Knoxville





# AD MESSAGING

- A focus on direct messaging to consumers (tell them what you want them to do) through direct Calls To Action (CTAs):
  - Plan your trip
  - Request a visitor guide
  - Sign up for our e-newsletter
  - Book your getaway
- Ongoing development of “Mountain Moments” campaign creative through strategic guidance of a photoshoot
- Position Hendersonville as a year-round, affordable destination for leisure travel for all
- Ongoing messaging for annual events: Apple Festival, Garden Jubilee, Cider, Wine & Dine, Summer Concert Series, and Home for the Holidays
- Promote VisitNC’s 2023 Year of the Trail where appropriate (hiking, Ice Cream Trail, etc.)
- AVL Intercept Campaign (to entice visitors to AVL airport to come to Hendersonville too)



# TDA MEDIA TACTIC PARTNERS

- Adara: Digital Display Ads and Booking/ Searching Metric Tracking
- Amazon Ads: Digital Display Ads
- Asheville Regional Airport: Brochure Ad
- DigDev: Email Marketing
- Expedia / VRBO: Online Travel Agency Marketing
- Google: Paid Search Ads
- GumGum: Digital Ads
- Meta (Facebook & Instagram): Paid Social Ads
- Modern Dog: Email Marketing and Print Ads
  - Focused on Pet-friendly Content
- MobileFuse: Digital Display and Native Ads
- Our State: Print and Digital Magazine Ads
- Spectrum: Cable TV Ads
  - Focused on Holiday Content
- Spotify: Digital and Audio Ads
  - Focused on Holiday Content
- Strategus: Digital Streaming and Retargeting Ads
- The Local Palate: Print Ad
  - Focused on Holiday Content
- Wilkins: Digital Billboard Ad
  - Focused on wayfinding from Asheville Regional Airport
- WNC Magazine: Print Magazine Ad
- VisitNC: Print and Digital Travel Guide Ad





# WAYS TO ALIGN YOUR MARKETING WITH THE TDA

- Magazine Print Ads
- Paid Meta Ads
- Paid Pinterest Ads
- Spectrum TV Ads
- Our State Digital or Email Ads
- Other Regional Magazine Print Ads
- AVL Airport Ads
- Google: Paid Search Ads
- GumGum: Digital Ads
- MobileFuse: Digital Display and Native Ads
- Spotify or Pandora: Digital and Audio Ads
- Digital Billboard Ads
  
- Reach out to the HCTDA for additional ideas, suggestions & feedback!



# HENDERSON COUNTY TDA

## Marketing Plan Tips





# MARKETING PLAN TIPS

## Set your goals

- Determine what you want to achieve with your campaign(s).
  - Do you want to sell event tickets? Drive traffic to your website? Increase your social media following?

## Identify your metrics

- How will you measure your results?
  - Website metrics - visitors, sessions, pageviews, time on page
  - Conversions - such as ticket sales, event registrations
  - Social media metrics - reach, engagement
  - Digital metrics - impressions, clicks, click-through-rate
  - ROI - return on investment (what did you spend vs. what did you gain)





# MARKETING PLAN TIPS

## Outline your targets and timeframe

- Who are you trying to reach and when?
  - Are these targets aligned with the TDA's marketing strategy?
  - When will your marketing be most effective?

## Select your tactics

- Identify how you will achieve your goals via specific marketing channels and platforms
  - Digital marketing
  - Print advertising
  - Social media campaigns
  - Public Relations efforts



# MARKETING PLAN TIPS

## Plan your budget

- Define how much you are spending and what you are allocating to each tactic
- Be mindful of minimum spend requirements and ensure that your budget is realistic for the goals you've set

## Prepare your creative

- Ensure you have advertising material that meets the criteria and specifications for your tactics
- Is your messaging clear and concise with a direct call-to-action?

## Monitor your performance

- Track your metrics to measure the effectiveness of your campaign. Are there opportunities for optimization?







## HCTDA PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY PROGRAM

In lieu of offering grant funding for photography, the HCTDA now offers partners free photography & videography (limited) services. This is a great way to improve your online presence with updated images. A few notes about the program:

- Must apply using the online form with at least 60 days advance notice
- Must be a Henderson County tourism-related business
- Not all requests can be honored

Find additional requirement & apply year-round: <https://visithendersonvillenc.org/user-partner-photography-request-form>



# HENDERSON COUNTY TDA

Make Sure You're Media Ready



# MAKE SURE YOU'RE MEDIA READY – VISUALLY

- Consider investing in professional photography
  - High-resolution images
  - Landscape and horizontal
  - Portraits of business owners and your business in action
  - Store in shareable file
- Consider investing in professional videography
  - Have B-roll in shareable file
  - Helps explain your business to those unfamiliar







**GARDEN JUBILEE**  
HENDERSONVILLE NC

May 27 & 28, 2023  
Main Street  
Hendersonville, NC



Experience one of Western North Carolina's largest garden shows!  
See upwards of 200 vendors create a garden wonderland in historic downtown Hendersonville!

[VisitHendersonville.org/Garden-Jubilee](http://VisitHendersonville.org/Garden-Jubilee)






Things To Do    Lodging    Food & Drink    Start Planning



**Take Your Pick of Top Apple Orchards**

We're in the final few weeks of **apple season** in Hendersonville — the apple capital of North Carolina. This season, **Sky Top Orchard** was named one of the **10Best** in the country by USA Today. And **Stapp's Hillcrest Orchard** and **Justus Orchard** made the **Top-20 list** in Yelp's ranking of the nation's best ...

[Learn more](#)

PLAN A VISIT    FARM MARKET    SCHOOL GROUP TOURS    ABOUT US



**MEET THE FARMERS**

Mike Stepp has a passion for growing quality apples that he learned from his parents, the late J.H. Stepp, Jr. and Yvonne Stepp, who grew apples for over 7 decades in Henderson County and who were leaders in the North Carolina apple industry.

Mike, his wife Rita, who is co-farm coordinator along with their daughter Danielle Stepp McCall, and her family now continue the tradition that Mike's parents started in 1964. The family takes great pride in the orchard and sharing it with families who visit.

Mike was chosen Apple Farmer of the Year by the 2019 NC Apple Festival and Blue Ridge Apple Grower of the Year in 2020. He graduated from the Ag Institute at N.C. State University in 1971 and serves on the Henderson County Farm Bureau Board of Directors. He is a member of the Blue Ridge Apple Growers Association and the North Carolina Apple Growers Association.

He and Rita are former board members of the Blue Ridge Farm Direct Market Association. Rita is a retired teacher and graduate of UNC-Asheville.

Rex McCall, husband of Danielle, is a 1992 graduate of the Ag Institute at N.C. State University. He is president of the Blue Ridge Apple Growers

[FIND US](#)    [CURRENT U-PICK](#)

# MAKE SURE YOU'RE MEDIA READY – CONTENT-WISE

- Keep your website up to date and professional in appearance
  - With an easy to interpret URL
- Have your business' background readily available
  - Such as an "about us" or "history" page on your website
- Keep a printed (and digital) info sheet and/or rack card
- Make contact info easily accessible and monitor emails/phone calls
- Make sure your Google My Business listing is up-to-date, and your business name and information is consistent across all platforms



# 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.





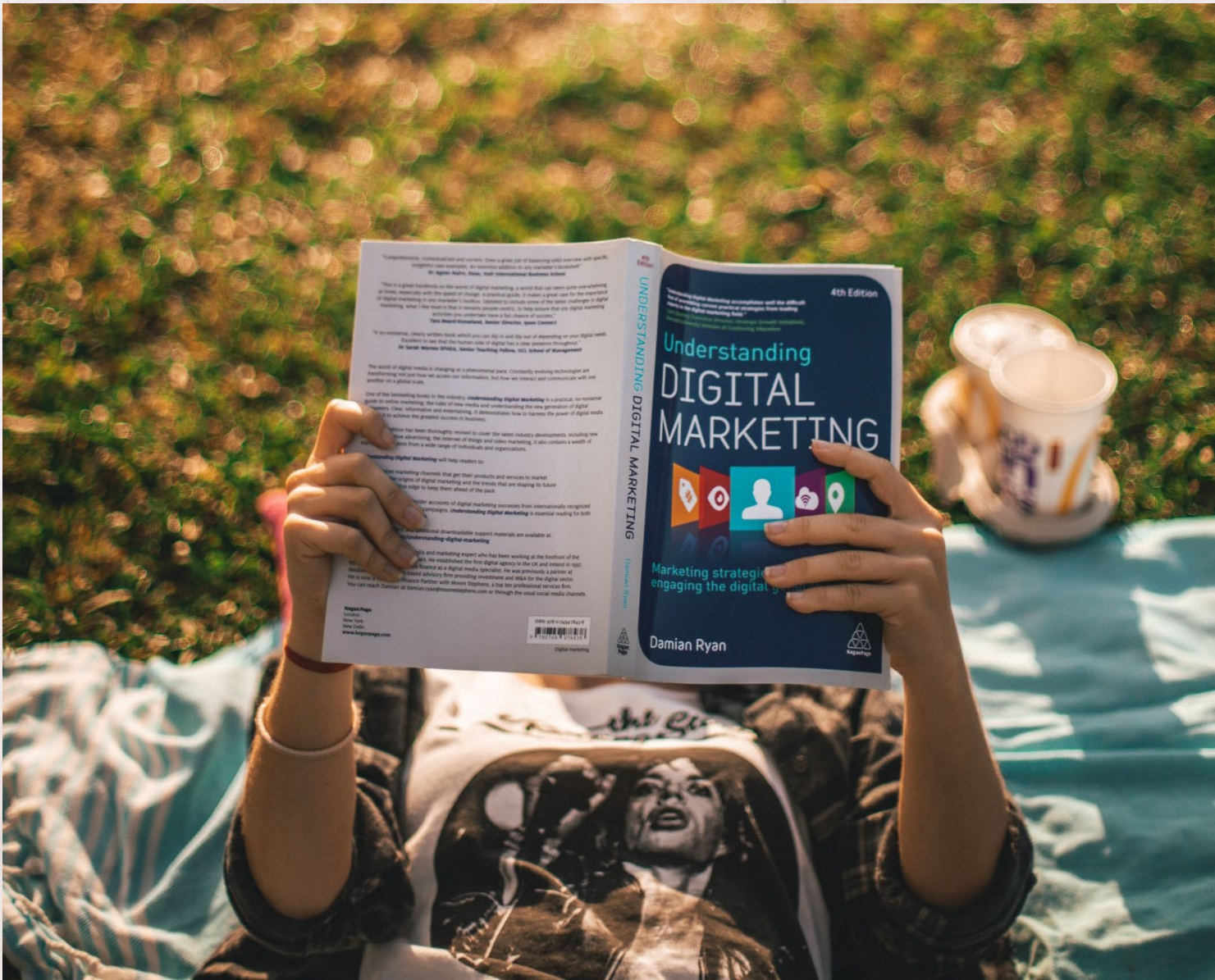
# BEST PRACTICES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 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 marketing efforts
- **Achievable**
  - Demonstrate that your efforts are realistic and that the grant will amplify your marketing reach
- **Relevant**
  - Show alignment with the TDA's marketing strategy and initiatives
- **Timely**
  - Ensure that your initiative is in line with the TDA's timing requirements





# QUESTIONS