



# **Festivals & Cultural Events Support Fund Grant Program**

## **Program Guide for 2023 Events**

## **Table of Contents**

- I. Overview
  - a. Background and Goals of the Program
  - b. Source of Funding
  - c. Strategic Imperatives
  
- II. Grant Program Specifications
  - a. Available Grants
  - b. Eligibility Requirements
  - c. Evaluation Criteria
  
- III. Submission Process
  - a. Application Timeline
  - b. Application Materials
  - c. Supporting Documentation
  
- IV. Grantee Information
  - a. Grant Agreement
  - b. Disbursement of Funds
  - c. Reporting Requirements
  
- V. Disclosures
  
- VI. Contact Information

## I. Overview

### I.a. Background and Goals of the Program

The Festivals & Cultural Events Support Fund Grant Program was launched in 2016 by the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA) and is designed to provide financial support for events that serve both the residents of Buncombe County and the visitors that travel to the Asheville area for the sense of authenticity and welcoming spirit that the destination exudes.

The primary purposes of this fund are to:

- Support and preserve cultural identity within Buncombe County;
- Stimulate the creation of new or expansion of existing festivals and cultural events; and
- Contribute to the financial viability and long-term sustainability of the area's festivals and cultural events.

### I.b. Source of Funding

The BCTDA's sales and marketing programs are funded by the occupancy tax, which is governed by North Carolina law. The law does not provide for funding the operations of individual festivals or cultural events.

Revenue earned through advertising sales and reservations booked on ExploreAsheville.com is dedicated to the Festivals and Cultural Events Support Fund. Occupancy tax revenue is not used in this program.

### I.c. Strategic Imperatives

Explore Asheville and the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA) enhance the economic vitality of Buncombe County through tourism. Our strategic priorities align with broader community priorities and are organized around four strategic pillars, which inform and guide the direction of Explore Asheville's program of work and community investments. These include grants through the Festivals and Cultural Events Support Fund.

The pillars are defined as: *Deliver Balanced Recovery & Sustainable Growth, Encourage Safe & Responsible Travel, Engage & Invite More Diverse Audiences, Promote & Support Asheville's Creative Spirit.* (See more details in Section II.c. below.)

## II. Grant Program Specifications

### II.a. Available Grants

Grants range from \$1,000 to a maximum of \$5,000. The funding level will not exceed a 50% match of the total event budget.

This is a competitive application process. The number of grant awards is limited by available funds, which will vary from year to year and do not have to be fully appropriated.

The grant application process as outlined in this program guide is valid for festivals and cultural events occurring in the calendar year 2023. Although applicants will receive funding commitment notification in October 2022, funds will not be disbursed until after the successful completion of the festival or cultural event in 2023.

## **II.b. Eligibility Requirements**

To be considered for funding, the festival or cultural event must occur in Buncombe County. Applications will be accepted only from registered 501(c)3 or 501(c)6 non-profit organizations chartered and working in Buncombe County. The festival or cultural event for which the application is being made must be sponsored by a non-profit organization whose purpose is to conduct programs that benefit the citizens of and the visitors to Buncombe County and have the potential to enhance the culture and vitality of Buncombe County.

If the applying organization is not a designated non-profit, you must have a qualified non-profit serve as your fiscal agent.

## **II.c. Evaluation Criteria**

In addition to meeting eligibility requirements, applications will be assessed using criteria developed to determine the extent to which the festival or cultural event is in alignment with the Buncombe County TDA's strategic imperative pillars, as follows:

### **Pillar: Deliver Balanced Recovery & Sustainable Growth**

Balance resident and visitor needs, recognizing the necessary role that sustainable, long-term growth of travel has in achieving a healthy, collective economy.

Focus on the quality of each visit to our community – balancing growth across the seasons, business and leisure travel, and throughout Asheville and Buncombe County.

*Examples: Ability of event to attract out-of-town attendees for day trips and overnight visits; hosting event in needs period – off peak seasonally and midweek; ability to disperse visitors outside the core of downtown Asheville; providing employment opportunities for Buncombe County residents; sourcing from local Buncombe County-based vendors; etc.*

### **Pillar: Encourage Safe & Responsible Travel**

Engage residents and visitors with shared values to care for and respect natural, cultural and human resources vital in delivering quality guest experiences.

Collaborate with community organizations, local businesses and environmentally focused partners to support the sustainability and growth of our outdoor economy.

*Examples: Incorporation of sustainability principles in production of event; incentives provided to vendors and/or attendees to embrace environmental measures; strategic partnerships with local nonprofits whose mission is to serve the natural, cultural, or human resources in the region; etc.*

## **Pillar: Engage & Invite More Diverse Audiences**

Extend a genuine invitation to Black travelers and other diverse audiences including LGBTQ visitors – connecting them with local neighborhoods, businesses and entrepreneurs – creating more opportunities for all to win.

Support product development, place making and community connections, enabling new experiences and business opportunities throughout our community.

*Examples: Ability of event to appeal to diverse audiences; percentage of opportunities afforded to minority-owned businesses; strategic partnerships with local nonprofits whose mission is to support underserved and underrepresented segments of the community; etc.*

## **Pillar: Promote & Support Asheville’s Creative Spirit**

Share stories of creators and makers who help differentiate our destination through food and drink, visual and performing arts, experiences and more.

Support product development, place making and community connections, enabling new experiences and business opportunities throughout our community.

*Examples: Demonstration of what makes the event stand out from other events in Buncombe County or in the region; ways in which the event will contribute to the cultural identity and vibrancy of Buncombe County; the extent to which the festival or cultural event is anticipated to enhance the local community and/or economy; percentage of opportunities afforded to local creative individuals or businesses, etc.*

## **III. Submission Process**

### **III.a. Application Timeline**

Applications Deadline: Tuesday, September 27, 2022, 5 p.m. ET  
Grant Awards Announced: Wednesday, October 26, 2022

### **III.b. Application Materials**

A sample application is provided on the AshevilleCVB.com website *for planning purposes only*.

All applications and associated materials must be submitted electronically via the online portal. Paper applications, emailed PDFs, or correspondence via any other type or form will not be accepted.

Upon successful completion and submission of your application, you will receive an email confirming receipt of your submission. It is your responsibility to ensure receipt of application.

### **III.c. Supporting Documentation**

Submit any additional documentation supporting your application in PDF format including but not limited to the following:

- Sponsorship Deck (document outlining the sponsorship levels your event offers)
- Board of Directors
  - Event Committee (if applicable)
- Event Budget (include all known and/or anticipated expenses and revenues)
- Liability Insurance

Optional Supporting Materials

- Marketing Materials
- Media Coverage
- Photographs and/or Links to Videos

## **IV. Grantee Information**

### **IV.a. Grant Agreement**

Applicants will be asked to acknowledge and certify the following statements as part of the application process:

#### **SPONSOR RECOGNITION**

All festivals and cultural events receiving grant support must display the designated Asheville destination logo provided by Explore Asheville on materials and signage as appropriate and wherever sponsors are recognized. The use of the logo must be approved by Explore Asheville prior to public dissemination.

#### **DISCLOSURE FOR PUBLIC RECORD**

As a governmental agency, Explore Asheville is subject to Chapter 132 of the North Carolina General Assembly Statutes. Therefore, any and all aspects of this application, except qualified trade secrets as described in Section V(c) below, must be made available by Explore Asheville to any party, public or private, upon request without exception. If you are concerned that the distribution of any of your application materials may do irreparable damage to you, your organization, or associated parties, Explore Asheville highly recommends that you seek alternative funding.

#### **PROJECT MONITORING**

I hereby acknowledge that if I am awarded Festivals and Cultural Events Support Funds, I will be required to submit a final report within two months of the event's last scheduled date. This report will include attendance numbers, final actual-to-budget figures and a narrative of the event's success. The report is provided with grant award notification.

#### **Buncombe County TDA MARKETING**

I hereby acknowledge that certain information from my application, such as the Event's Description and Partners & Leadership, may be used by Explore Asheville at its sole discretion for the promotion and marketing of the Festivals and Cultural Events Support Fund program and the region as a tourism destination.

## **INDEMNITY**

Grantee agrees, to the fullest extent permitted by law, to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless BCTDA and Explore Asheville, its officers, directors, affiliates, employees, and agents, from and against any and all claims, liabilities, losses and expenses (including reasonable attorney's fees) directly, indirectly, wholly or partially arising from or in connection with any act or omission of Grantee, its employees or agents, in applying for or accepting the grant, in expending or applying Grant funds or in carrying out the festival or event as set forth in the proposal.

### **IV.b. Disbursement of Funds**

The grant funds will be disbursed to the grantee following the successful completion of the festival or cultural event and submission of a final report.

An updated W-9, New Vendor form and Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) form should be submitted with an invoice to expedite the process. The New Vendor and EFT forms are available for download on AshevilleCVB.com.

### **IV.c. Reporting Requirements**

Submission of a final report is necessary to receive disbursement of funds. The report includes information about attendance, budget, and execution of the event.

## **V. Disclosures**

The following information from the application is provided for your preview:

- a) Unless otherwise specified by the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (Explore Asheville), no event shall consider Explore Asheville a promoter or co-presenter and therefore Explore Asheville will not be responsible for any debts incurred by a promoter or co-presenter for such event.
- b) As covered under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Explore Asheville does not discriminate on the basis of disability and upon request will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to proposals, programs, services and activities we host or convene.
- c) Upon receipt by Explore Asheville, applications are considered a public record except for material which qualifies as "trade secret" information under N.C. Gen. Stat. 66-152 et. seq. To properly designate material as trade secret each applicant must take the following precautions: (a) any trade secrets submitted by an applicant should be submitted in a separate, sealed envelope marked "*Trade Secret—Confidential and Proprietary Information—Do Not Disclose Except for the Purpose of Evaluating this Application,*" and (b) the same trade secret/confidentiality designation should be stamped on each page of the trade secret materials contained in the envelope. Trade secret information should not be included in electronic versions of applications emailed to Explore Asheville and should be hand-delivered to the Explore Asheville offices at 27 College Place, Suite 200, Asheville, NC 28801. To the extent such material is actually a trade secret under North Carolina laws; it will not be subject to disclosure. You are directed to consult your own counsel as to whether information is in-fact a trade secret. In submitting an application, each applicant agrees that Explore Asheville may reveal any trade secret materials contained in such response to all Explore Asheville staff and Explore Asheville officials involved in the selection process. Furthermore, each applicant agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Explore Asheville and each of its officers, employees, and agents from all costs, damages, and expenses incurred in connection with refusing to disclose any material, which the applicant has designated as a trade secret.

## **VI. Contact Information**

For assistance, please contact:

Anne Mullins, Vice President of Destination Development and Community Engagement

Explore Asheville

(828) 210-2724

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