



Amended February 26, 1999
Amended June 21, 2001
Amended November 30, 2003
Amended November 17, 2005
Amended July 20, 2006

DARE COUNTY TOURISM BOARD TOURISM ASSISTANCE GRANT (TAG) GUIDELINES

OUTER BANKS VISITORS BUREAU:

The purpose of the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau is to increase travel to Dare County's Outer Banks generating revenues and improving the economy of the county. This is achieved through an aggressive advertising, tourism and public relations program designed to increase awareness and generate travel to the Outer Banks for vacationers, leisure travelers, group tours and meetings. The bureau develops high quality literature for use in its fulfillment program and responds to telephone, mail and walk-in inquiries generated by its various programs.

The Outer Banks Visitors Bureau is the lead marketing and promotional agency of Dare County and is funded by 1% of the occupancy tax and 1% of the prepared meals tax.

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM:

The Tourism Assistance Grant (TAG) program's primary purpose is to stimulate and assist Dare County organizations in promoting and marketing tourism and culturally-related events and activities that, on their own merit, will grow and become self-sustaining and are designed to bring visitors to Dare County's Outer Banks between August 15th and June 15th.

2. ELIGIBILITY:

Applying organization must be located in Dare County and be recognized as a not-for-profit organization (i.e. governmental agency, association, public authority, non-profit or civic association), which sponsor or operate tourism related events designed to bring visitors to Dare County are eligible to make application for grant funding. Organizations seeking grant funds must meet with the grant administrator prior to receiving an application. This process is to go over the TAG application and answer any questions the applicant may have. Any organization submitting a TAG application without meeting with the grant administrator will **not** be eligible for grant funds.

Organizations eligible for funding must meet the following specifications:

- A) The grant application must be for assistance with promotion or marketing of an event, festival or other promotional opportunity held between August 15 and June 15.
- B) Only Dare County organizations/entities will be considered for grant funding.
- C) Grants that include request for funding normal and routine operating and administrative expenses will not be considered for reimbursement except under the provisions of (D).
- D) The maximum period any activity or festival may receive TAG Grant Funding is four (4) consecutive years. Eligibility begins with the first TAG Grant awarded. A new grant application must be filed each year. Initial award does not guarantee funding for future requests.
- E) All grant requests should include the following fund ratios:

First time applicants:

No more than 20 % of the grant may be used for *permanent (reusable for future events)* start-up costs and infrastructure associated with making the event self-sustaining. A minimum of 80 % of the grant must be used for funding of direct advertising to markets outside of Dare County. All expenses must be accounted for with actual receipts, cancelled checks, and examples of actual advertising (tear sheets, brochures, flyers, public service announcements, etc.).

Previous Tag Grant Recipients:

All grant funding must be used for direct advertising to markets outside of Dare County. All expenses must be accounted for with actual receipts, cancelled checks, and tear sheets.

- F) **Changes to approved application:**

Unauthorized changes in the projects advertising plan from the approved TAG application will be sufficient cause for the reduction in, or complete withdrawal of, grant funds at the sole discretion of the bureau without recourse.

The application may only be rescinded, modified or amended upon written request to the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau grant administrator. Decision will be made by grant administrator within 10 working days upon receipt of the request.

EVALUATION OF GRANT PROPOSALS AND AWARDS

The Local Public Relations and Grants Committee of the Dare County Tourism Board will evaluate each request received and recommend awards to the Dare County Tourism Board at a regularly scheduled board meeting.

Applications will be accepted throughout the year. Requests must be submitted at least eight months prior to event.

Grants will be selected based on the following factors:

Objective Criteria

- A) Meeting with the grants administrator to determine eligibility.
- B) A typed, completed application, and any collateral materials, must be submitted by deadline.
- C) Request for advertising dollars is in accordance with eligibility guideline 2D.
- D) Event is held between August 15 and June 15.

Subjective Criteria

- A) The overall quality of the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau TAG application content and thoroughness in completing grant application.
- B) Potential for the event to generate travel to Dare County; and subsequent potential to generate hotel, motel or cottage room rentals and become self-sustaining annual events.

4. **GRANT AWARDS**

- A) Grant requests will be reviewed by the committee within 45 days of receipt. Applicants will receive notice within five days of the Dare County Tourism Board meeting at which request is recommended by the committee.
- B) The Outer Banks Visitors Bureau shall be given prominent recognition as a sponsor of the event. This includes using the logo as directed by the local public relations and grants committee and/or the grants administrator of the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau, which includes www.outerbanks.org and the phone number 877-OBX-4FUN and the following language on all printed and broadcast materials: "This project is funded in part by the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau."

All collateral materials (i.e. cups, T-shirts, tickets, banners, etc) must include the official logo of the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau. The Outer Banks Visitors Bureau shall be recognized as a prominent sponsor for funding the project. All projects must include the following:

Reimbursement request will be DENIED if the official logo of the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau is not included on all promotional material. High resolution images of the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau official logo will be provided free of charge to all grantees.

- C) All printed and broadcast advertising must be approved by the grant administrator before placement. If approval has not been sought prior to ad placement, grantee risks the possibility of grant reimbursement denial.
- D) If the event for which funding has been granted is canceled or modified in a substantial manner, the grantee should notify the grant administrator in writing immediately.
- E) Grantees are required to submit to the grant administrator, in writing, project updates from the date of grant award every 30 days leading up to event.

5. **GRANT REIMBURSEMENT**

- A) Satisfactory documentation must be submitted to the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau within 90 days after completion of project. Documents shall include the following: 1) project accountability report; 2) copies of paid invoices and canceled checks; 3) a breakdown of itemized expenses including all advertising tear sheets and copies of any scripts for broadcast advertising; 4) a breakdown of itemized income. Funds will not be distributed until all financial obligations are liquidated. The disbursement of all funds will follow *Accepted Accounting Practices of the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau*.
- B) Grant applicants requesting sums which are beyond amounts available for funding in any one given year may, at the discretion of the Local Public Relations and Grants Committee, be awarded a determined amount in a current budget year. Should a new project/event be developed that has long term visitor impact, the committee may choose to award the organizing agency funds in response to a subsequent application in a succeeding year, but in no case will funds be granted to a project for more than four (4) consecutive years.
- C) The grantee, its successors and/or assigns agree to indemnify and hold the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau, its directors, both individually and collectively, and employees thereof harmless from any and all monetary liability, loss or damage which the bureau, its directors, both individually and collectively, and employees may suffer as a result of claims, demands, costs or judgments against them or any nature whatsoever resulting from or in any way arising out of the awarded applicant's TAG project, including, but not limited to: (1) its acceptance and/or use of the awarded funds, whether disbursed presently or to be disbursed in the future; (2) any injuries suffered by third-parties, whether invitee, guests or otherwise; (3) the contracting for, construction, use, existence or maintenance of its property or facility, whether purchased, leased, borrowed or otherwise.
- D) Six (6) sponsorship tickets to the event will be provided to the Dare County Tourism Board.

Before an application can be presented to the Grants & Local Public Relations committee, one (1) hardcopy original (do not staple) and an electronic version must be provided. Applications will be accepted Monday - Friday (excluding Outer Banks Visitors Bureau recognized holidays) from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau.