

Guidelines

Rock Falls Tourism – Marketing Promotion Grant

The Rock Falls Tourism (RFT) Marketing Promotion Grant is a cost sharing program between RFT and organizations that promote tourism-related activities in Rock Falls, Illinois and potentially the immediate surrounding area as a travel/overnight destination for visitors from more than 50 miles away.

The RFT Marketing Promotion Grant may support new or on-going special events, including but not limited to, sporting activities, trade shows, major conventions, festivals, expos, rallies, educational events, historical or cultural events, and agritourism programs that draw visitors from more than fifty (50) miles while working to improve the quality of life for citizens of Whiteside County.

Requested funding should be used to enhance existing events or programs, or to create new events or programs. The intent of the grant is to generate incremental visitor spending in the region. Therefore, funds will not be allocated to simply subsidize the operation or promotion costs of existing events or project, but rather to help them attract more visitors beyond what could be done with current resources.

Eligible Applicants

1. **Not-for-profit groups with recognized 501** status promoting tourism related activities in Rock Falls and surrounding areas that will have an impact on overnight stays in Rock Falls, Illinois.
2. **Public sector festivals/events committees**
3. **Committees recognized under the auspices of the local governments**

Note: The RFTBD reserves the right to consider any other type of organization not listed on a case-by-case.

Eligible Event Criteria

1. Grant money must be used for tourism marketing or promotional activities only.
2. Event should demonstrate a positive impact on overnight stays in Rock Falls, Illinois
3. The event cannot precede application for grant funding
4. The event must be completed by end of the RFT fiscal [April 30th] year in which application for the grant was made.

Eligible Projects

Funding is restricted to marketing of the event to audiences at least 50 miles outside the Rock Falls city limits. The event or attraction being marketed must be located in Whiteside County or the immediate surrounding area in which Rock Falls hotels are the primary location to accommodate overnight visitors.

Examples of eligible projects include:

1. Advertising placement in or on:
 - a. Newspapers, magazines, radio, television (advertising media must have a significant circulation or viewership outside the 50 mile radius of Rock Falls, IL)
 - b. CVB publications and advertisements (i.e. Visitor Guides; maps, etc)
2. Printing – Brochures, Rack cards Posters, Flyers (50% of distribution must be outside the 50 mile radius of Rock Falls, IL)
3. Website advertising (i.e., Google Adwords; Twitter; Facebook) (must specifically target demographic audience outside the 50 mile radius of Rock Falls, IL)

Funds cannot be used for:

1. Annual operating expenditures of the event or attraction
2. Salaries, wages or employee benefits
3. Consulting services of any kind
4. Prize money, scholarships, awards, plaques or certificates
5. Events which are restricted to private or exclusive participation
6. Marketing efforts within Whiteside County, unless otherwise specified above.
7. Other expenses not identified as eligible unless approved in advance by RFT.

Use of Logo and Statements

Credit Lines Rules - Funded projects must credit RFT as follows:

Use only the Rock Falls Tourism logo and website VISITROCKFALLS.COM. It must be included in all approved projects. Logo slicks or digital images will be provided.

The only exception is for radio advertising. The credit line must then say “Advertising funds provided by Rock Falls Tourism.”

NO PROJECTS WILL BE REIMBURSED WHICH DOES NOT INCLUDE THE PROPER RFT LOGO AND WEBSITE OR AUDIO TAG LINE.

Note: Applicants are encouraged to work with RFT staff on layout design prior to printing, etc, in order to assure compliance with guidelines and timely review of project proposals.

Public Acknowledgement of Funds

All events utilizing a RFT Marketing Promotion Grant are required to place RFT signage at the event indicating funding was provided by the RFT including all acknowledgement on all social media. The RFT office will provide banners, yard signs or indoor signs and digital logos for this purpose. All signs must be returned to the office within one week after the event. Secondly, any and all print/digital materials created to advertise the event must have the RFT logo and website address with active links to visitrockfalls.com placed upon it. Radio advertisements must elude to “Sponsorship provided by Rock Falls Tourism and/or visitrockfalls.com”

Events receiving a RFT Marketing Promotion Grant may be required to provide additional public acknowledgement in the form of sponsorship recognition. The level of sponsorship will be determined prior to awarding of the grant.

Facebook-Boosted Posts

Due to Facebook’s General Advertising Policies on Boosted Posts-it is not required to add acknowledgement to the original boosted posts. Acknowledgement must be added to the “write a comment” on the boosted post and all other non-boosted Facebook posts are required to acknowledge RFT sponsorship indicating funding was provided by the RFT.

Request Application Deadlines/Timelines

Applications may be submitted at any time during the RFT fiscal year May 1 – April 30. The board will consider funding of projects until annual allocation is expended.

Request applications should be received a minimum of 60 days prior to the start of the event for review by the RFT Board for approval. However, submission of the request does not imply an award of funds. RFT is under no obligation to disburse funds to any given applicant.

Award Limits

The RFT Board allocates a portion of its annual budget for marketing promotion grants. The highest priority will be given to events and opportunities with the greatest potential to attract overnight stays in Rock Falls.

The Rock Falls Tourism Marketing Promotion Grant is for a maximum reimbursable amount of \$2,000 for each approved application. Events will be awarded grants based on their ability to create overnight visits to Rock Falls and overall economic impact to Whiteside County. The RFT Board reviews all applications and awards funding based upon the application, project and research submitted.

Request Frequency

Rock Falls Tourism will fund no more than TWO grants per organization per RFT fiscal year. Applicants may not request funds from more than ONE RFT grant program per event.

Application Procedure:

1. Eligible applicants must provide the original completed and signed application form to RFT office. Proposals may be mailed or hand delivered to the RFT Office: 603 West 10th Street, Suite 1A, Rock Falls, IL 61071.
2. Emails and faxes will not be accepted.
3. Eligible applicants must indicate how the funds will be utilized, as well as, identify additional sponsorships received.
4. Each proposal should include a plan for measuring the impact and effectiveness of the project as stated above.

Review Process

The RFT staff reviews the application submittal and assesses completeness before it is forwarded to the RFT Board for review at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The RFT Board's decision will be communicated via written correspondence.

The Rock Falls Tourism Board considers the proposal based on the following criteria:

1. Impact on overnight stays and local economy
2. Cooperation and partnerships with other local entities
3. Overall budget and percentage of funding provided by RFT
4. Potential benefits of event to the local community

Reimbursement Procedures:

The RFT Promotion Grant Program operates as a reimbursement grant only. A one-time payment will be made to requesting entity for funds expended and will not be paid directly to vendors. Recipients may submit reimbursement paperwork to the RFT staff up to 60 days after the completion of the event. Funds will be released within approximately 30 days after determination of compliance.

The following must be submitted after the event to RFT office before reimbursement will be made:

1. Completed event summary form
2. Copies of paid vendor invoices
3. Copy of the project (i.e., brochure, advertisement, etc)
4. Photographs showing proof of performance
5. Event tracking data (optional)

Compliance to Guidelines:

The major objective of the RFT is to assist entities to market opportunities in Rock Falls and the surrounding area available to visitors outside the community for overnight stays, as well as, to create and enhance the visitor experience. Failure to comply with guidelines will jeopardize future consideration of grant fund awards. The RFTBD encourages applicants to work closely with the RFT staff to ensure a successful experience for all involved.

The submission of a signed application is considered as an entity's comprehension and agreement with the rules and regulations set forth for granting marketing promotion funds.

Indemnity Clause:

The applicant organization agrees to indemnify and hold harmless RFT, its directors, officers, agents and employees from and against all claims, demands, actions, causes or action and other liability and expense (including attorney's fees and costs) arising out of or related to the Event, including without limitation, claims for bodily injury, death, or property loss or damage by whomsoever such claims may be asserted, including specifically but without limitation, employees of applicant organization, vendors, contractors, and members of the general public. The applicant organization liability shall not extend to claims that are determined by a court of competent jurisdiction to be due solely to the negligence or willful misconduct of RFT.

Independent Contractor:

The applicant organization agrees that it is an independent contractor with respect to RFT and has no authority or power to incur obligations or make commitments of any kind for or on behalf of RFT, or to commit or bind RFT to any form of contract, agreement, or employment relationship. The applicant organization is not a partner, joint venture or employee of the RFT. The applicant organization will be solely responsible for persons engaged by the applicant organization to work on the event.

Insurance Waiver

Organization agrees to list and provide Rock Falls Tourism with a certificate of second party insurance coverage when grant funding is utilized for the promotion of special events.

Organization agrees to provide liquor liability insurance covering the serving or sale of alcoholic beverages to the public at the event in the amount not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence.

Such insurance policies shall include by endorsement, the RFT, and its directors, officers, employees and affiliated companies as additional insured for the event in entirety.

Inquiries may be directed to:

Rock Falls Tourism Director
601 W. 10th Street, Suite 1A
Rock Falls, IL 61071

Telephone: 815-622-1106 | Cell: 815-590-7330

Email: director@visitrockfalls.com

Application

Amount Requested: _____ Application Date: _____ Application Received: _____

Requesting Organization Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Person: _____ Telephone: _____

Email: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Not-for-profit

Civic group

For profit business

Event Information

Event Name: _____

Date(s) of Event: _____ New Event Existing Event of _____ years

Cost of Admission per person: _____ Free

Potential Attendance this year: _____

Actual Attendance last year: _____

Potential Overnight Stays this year: _____

Actual Overnight Stays Last Year: _____

Explain in detail the impact of the event to the community at large: (continue on another page if necessary)

Projected number of overnight stays: _____ Projected attendance: _____

How will the proceeds from this event be used? (continue on another page if necessary)

Will Liquor be sold? Yes No If Yes, Proof of Insurance must be attached to process request.

Use of Rock Falls Tourism Funding for Promotional Information

(Continue on another page if necessary)

[] Magazine/Newspaper Advertising: List publication and how often advertisement will run

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

[] Radio/Television Advertising: List Stations and how often the advertisement will be aired

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

[] Brochures/Flyers/Rack Cards: List locations of Placement

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

[] Internet Advertising: List which sites and to what audience is being targeted

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Type of Signage needed for event:

Banner

Yard Sign - how many _____?

Budget for Event	
Overall Budget for Event:	_____
Amount Requested from RFT:	_____
Amount Received from other Entities:	_____
Projected Net Income from Event:	_____

I, the undersigned, understand the following:

- The submission of an application does not guarantee an award
- To my knowledge information provided is true and accurate
- Failure to comply with the requirements associated with this request may jeopardize any future funding from RFT
- If applicable, that my organization will provide proper insurance coverage as indicated in these guidelines

I do hereby agree to all the terms and conditions contained in the guidelines which I acknowledge that I have received, read and fully understand.

Signed _____

Date _____

For Rock Falls Tourism Board ONLY		
Action Taken:	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied
Comments:	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	
Date Received: _____	Date of Action: _____	Release of Funds Date: _____

Reimbursement Form

Name of Event: _____

Date(s) of Event: _____

Attendance: _____

Overnight stays generated: _____

Vendor	Amount
Example: ABC Signs Co.	\$235.00

Documents to Attach Checklist

- RFT recognition displayed during event. Signs or banners have been returned to Rock Falls Tourism Office
- Copies of paid invoices being submitted for reimbursement
- Copy of ALL advertising material

I, the undersigned verify the receipts and claims submitted to the RFT meet the criteria set forth in the RFT Promotional Grant Guidelines.

Signed _____ Date _____