

Red Tide Emergency
Sarasota County Tourism Marketing Grant Program
Administered by VISIT SARASOTA COUNTY

Mission: To help Sarasota County businesses negatively impacted by the late Summer / early Fall 2018 bloom of Red Tide raise awareness of their offerings to potential overnight tourists and to make Sarasota County the Must-experience destination on Florida's Gulf Coast.

FY 2019 RED TIDE RELIEF Marketing Grant Guidelines

VISIT SARASOTA COUNTY (VSC) is excited to offer one-on-one marketing support to entities desiring to market their program, event or festival outside of Sarasota County to garner attendance from tourists and rebuild revenue lost due to the presence of red tide.

Municipalities, local agencies, business associations and nonprofit organizations located in Sarasota County are eligible to apply.

Total budget for this grant program for FY 2019 (December 1, 2018 – September 30, 2019) is \$60,000. Marketing support funding per project is \$2,500 - \$10,000, to be expended directly by Visit Sarasota County.

Funding decisions are based on the strength of the applicant's ability and intent to attract visitors and lodging nights from outside Sarasota County from **December 15, 2018 to September 15, 2019.**

Selection Process –

A panel of industry partners and Visit Sarasota County staff will review and score all marketing grant requests received.

Program Guidelines:

1. **Recipient must be a marketing partner with Visit Sarasota County. *See bottom of this form for partnership information.**
2. Projects must be tourism related and will be judged based upon the project's ability to drive awareness of the destination and/or drive visitation to Sarasota County.
3. The program or event must be more than a single day program or event.
4. Ad campaigns will be Florida based only, excluding Sarasota, Manatee, Charlotte and Desoto Counties.
5. A single applicant may **only** be considered for one grant in the same project year.
6. No applicant will be considered if it applied for and received Tourist Development Tax (TDT) funds for any project.
7. No applicant will be considered if it has applied for and received a Cultural Tourism Grant from the Sarasota County Arts Alliance for the same project, program or event.
8. No applicant may receive funding under any other VSC or Sarasota Sports Commission Sponsorship program for the same project, program or event.
9. Only one grant per project. If two organizations are involved in a project, they may not both separately apply for grants. It would be considered one application.

10. All projects must demonstrate plans to use at least one method of tourism tracking or measuring return on investment (ROI) that they will share with VSC. This could be tracking from the purchased media, this could be pulling zip codes from ticket sales, or could include an “on the ground intercept survey” of which a sample survey is included at the end of this document.
11. All final reports must be submitted to VSC no later than 30 days from the event date or project completion date. These metrics will help better shape the marketing grant program as it moves forward.
12. Sponsorship recognition for VSC must be provided at the level reflected by the amount of the grant award. By signing agreed media plan before media is contracted by VSC, recipient will acknowledge that they have received the correct VSC logo from VSC.
13. Applications with incomplete information or that fail to meet the guidelines will be deemed ineligible.
14. Grant recipient will be expected to review, sign and return an accountability form by **December 14, 2018**. Failure to return the signed agreement by the deadline will render the entity ineligible to receive the grant.

As this is a grant where VSC purchases media directly from the advertiser, as a reminder, non-allowable expenses are as follows:

- Annual operating expenditures of the organization
- Legal, medical, engineering, accounting, auditing, or other consultant services
- Salaries of full-time staff or supplements for salaries of existing staff, or employment of personnel not directly related to the event
- Real property, capital improvements, including but not limited to new construction, renovation, restoration and installation or replacement of fixtures
- Tangible personal property including, but not limited to, office furnishings or equipment, permanent collections or individual pieces of art
- Rental of buildings
- Advertising or media distribution within Sarasota, Manatee, Charlotte or Desoto Counties.
- Stage production costs
- Interest on or reduction of deficits or loans, or expenses incurred or obligated prior to or after funding period
- Travel, accommodations, and personal expenses for organization staff or board members
- Events which are restricted to private or exclusive participation, private entertainment, food or beverages
- Attendance at conferences and seminars
- Endowment
- Entertainment expenses
- Fellowships or scholarships
- Law enforcement or public works expenses
- Alcohol or tobacco products

Requirements for those selected –

For those entities that are selected to receive marketing support, VSC will set up a meeting to better understand the program itself, and will start discussing objectives, markets, and will work together to shape the advertising campaign. These elements could be digital/traditional advertising, Radio, Television, social media engagement or other elements as determined by the collaborative team. VSC is only able to purchase advertising direct through advertiser and is not able to pay for items such as printing collateral or purchasing promotional items for this program.

Applicant must have available assets to build ads such as high-resolution photos and logos. Please note that the grant recipient itself will be responsible for designing the creative elements needed, such as logo, ad or commercial. Ads must also link to a landing page that informs the consumer about the program, event or festival for which the entity received the grant. If a landing page is not in place, the ad campaign will not launch and the dollars for the grant will be forfeited. If the content is removed from the page during the campaign, the ads will be pulled, and the remaining grant dollars will be forfeited.

To apply –

Applications must be received by the **VSC by November 29** no later than 4:00 p.m. An award decision will be made by **December 7, 2018**.

Applications are completed and submitted online at www.visitsarasota.com/grant-program-application.

Information needed to apply –

Business Name(s)

Name of person submitting application

Email

Address

City

State

Zip

Phone

Name of Program, Advertising Campaign, or Event/Festival

Start Date of Program, Advertising Campaign or Event/Festival

End Date of Program, Advertising Campaign or Event/Festival

Description of Program, Advertising Campaign or Event/Festival

Desired Markets

Existing Marketing Plan, if Any (including markets)

Lodging Projection, or if there are any room blocks, or arrangements with hotels, please include those details as well.

Has this project previously received a grant from VSC? (If so, when was the last grant received?)

Total Project Budget (total cost of expenses)

Matching Funds or In-kind services provided

Does your organization already receive any Tourist Development Tax Dollars, if so, please provide the amount.

Sample Survey (as example for needed metrics)

1. Are you a full-time or part-time resident of Sarasota, Manatee or Charlotte County?
2. Are you a day tripper, coming for this event from out of the area and returning home this evening?
3. Are you visiting? If you are, are you staying in paid lodging or with family/friends? If yes, what is your home city?

Optional Questions:

- If a visitor in paid lodging, where are they staying and for how long?
- How did you hear about this event?
- Is this your first time in Sarasota County?

Questions about Grant?

Erin Duggan, CDME

Vice President

EDuggan@VisitSarasota.org

Questions about application process online?

(www.visitsarasota.com/grant-program-application)

Matt Murphy

Website Supervisor

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***Information on Partnership with Visit Sarasota County**

Partnerships with VSC begin at \$450 annually and provide you visibility on VisitSarasota.com, in the VSC Visitor Center Outlets, and a listing in the annually printed VSC Visitor Guide.

Partnership questions can be directed to Erin Hurter, ehurter@VisitSarasota.org.