

Leon County  
Tourist Development Council

**Tallahassee Sports Council  
Special Event Grant  
Program**  
(Policies & Application)

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# **Leon County Tourist Development Council Special Events Grant Program**

## **I. INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION**

The Leon County Tourist Development Council (TDC) was created pursuant to the State of Florida Local Option Tourist Development Act and Leon County Ordinance #88-01. The TDC administers funds collected from a local option tourist development tax on occupied transient lodging sales, i.e. hotels/motels, campgrounds and condominiums. The funds are designated to promote Tallahassee/Leon County as a preferred visitor destination with emphasis in the following markets: meetings and conventions, group leisure travel, special events, cultural activities and amateur sporting events.

The TDC allocates funds from its annual budget to a grant program for local groups and organizations that coordinate events with a demonstrated history of visitor impact or significant potential to draw visitors to the area. The Special Event Grant Fund is administered by the TDC with recommendations from designated advisory groups including the Special Event Grant Committee and Tallahassee Sports Council Advisory Board.

A "Special Event" shall be defined as a new or existing organized concert, exhibition, festival, sport event, competition, fair, conference or celebration which is conducted according to a prearranged schedule and in which general public interest is manifested. For the purpose of this grant program, the public interest should extend to Leon County residents and to those living outside Leon County who would consider visiting the destination and staying overnight to observe or participate.

Direct sales, advertising or marketing programs that are either supplemental to, or are in conflict with the "Visit Tallahassee" direct sales, advertising or marketing programs do not qualify as a special event.

Each application will be evaluated against established criteria and historic precedent. The number and extent of these grants will be dependent upon the availability of designated funds and specific allocations. Ideally, the funds allocated by the TDC will eventually be returned through an increase in transient lodging sales and the tourist development tax generated from those sales.

## **II. STATEMENT OF POLICIES**

- A. Grant funds are intended to supplement the sponsoring organization's budget.
- B. Funding is not intended to support administrative costs or non public events. Funding is intended to support marketing and promotional efforts, venue/site rentals and costs associated directly with the event .
- C. Grant applications will only be received during the advertised cycle. One application will be accepted per event, per fiscal year. In the event that a Special Event Grant application is received outside of the Tourist Development

Council's designated submission dates and grant funds are still available in the budget, the Council may elect to consider the request following a super majority vote (majority plus one) of the Council.

- D. Hotels secured for the event must be located within Leon County.
- E. Funding shall be provided as reimbursement for approved actual expenditures upon completion of the event. Proof of payment must be provided. Proof of payment may be submitted in the form of a vendor receipt and a front & back copy of cleared check or credit card receipt. Cash receipts can be accepted for reimbursements; however, grant recipient is strongly encouraged to use a check or credit card. If a check is used, a copy of both the front and back of canceled check must be provided. Written confirmation from vendor that expenditure has been paid in full is necessary if only a copy of the front of the cleared check is provided.
- F. To be eligible for payment, a completed Post-Event Report must be submitted. The report must include tracking statistics regarding out-of-town visitors and their overall impact on the local economy, particularly on transient lodging facilities and occupancy. Failure to submit a complete Post-Event Report will result in disqualification for support. If the event occurs near the end of the fiscal year, request for reimbursement must be received by September 30.
- G. Any funds granted will be subject to audit by the Leon County Auditor.
- H. To qualify for reimbursement, proof of liability/medical insurance must be provided by the host organization in the amount of \$1 million.
- I. The TDC may choose to lend assistance or administer grant funds approved in the form of advertising, public relations, promotions or research programs through its respective agency of record on behalf of the applicant.
- J. Recognition of the Leon County Tourist Development Council and/or Visit Tallahassee / Tallahassee Sports Council must be included where appropriate on all printed material and the organization's Web site and referred to in public relations activities. A camera-ready logo will be provided. All printed materials with the Visit Tallahassee or Tallahassee Sports Council logo must be presented with the Post Event Report. Failure to include the logo can be cause for disallowing reimbursement of that portion of the grant.
- K. Allowable expenses shall include the following:  
Promotion, marketing and programming expenses, paid advertising that reaches beyond Leon County with potential to drive overnight visitation, and media buys, production and technical expenses, site fees/costs (contract help, rentals, insurance) rights fees, sanction fees, non-monetary awards and travel expenses including lodging. Item #19 of the Application requires all applicants to describe how the grant funds will be used. Any changes to the items submitted in #19 MUST be submitted in writing to Visit Tallahassee and will not be allowed without written approval from Visit Tallahassee staff.

L. Unallowable expenses:

General and administrative expenses, building, renovating and/or remodeling expenses, permanent equipment purchases, debts incurred prior to grant requests, programs which solicit advertising or sponsorships, and hospitality or social functions and advertising that only reaches Leon County and its residents.

**III. FUNDING ELIGIBILITY**

The intent of the Special Events Grant Program is to provide funding assistance for events that attract overnight visitors to Leon County impacting the commercial lodging industry, hotels/motels, campgrounds, condominiums as well as restaurants, retail establishments and other businesses. To be considered for funding, the following criteria have been established:

1. Each application must include a signed Certification and Compliance page
2. Event must take place between October 1, and September 30, of the upcoming fiscal year.
3. The event must have the potential to bring or have had past history of bringing out-of-town visitors.
4. Applicant must provide a marketing/promotions plan.
5. Applicant must provide a detailed event budget.
6. The event must use commercial lodging establishments within Leon County.
7. Must provide Liability/Medical/Workers Comp Insurance Coverage.

**IV. RATING CRITERIA AND PROCESS**

Each grant application will be reviewed by staff to ensure that all required materials have been supplied. Failure to supply all the required materials will result in disqualification. Following staff review, the applications will be turned over to the Tallahassee Sports Council Special Events Committee consideration. The committee will score each application on a 50 point scale based on the following chart:

			<b>Score</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Tourism Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proposal has potential or previously proven ability to generate visitation to Leon County that includes overnight stays in Leon County commercial lodging</li><li>• Proposal contributes to overall appeal of Leon County as preferred visitor destination through its event offerings.</li><li>• Proposal explains domestic marketing initiatives. This could include strategies for attracting visitors from Florida and the</li></ul>	25 points		

	Southeast <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing plan is well-defined and thorough</li> <li>• Marketing plan seems realistic</li> <li>• Event coincides with non-peak or shoulder seasons</li> </ul>			
Event Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event supports organization's mission</li> <li>• Budget seems realistic</li> <li>• Funds requested meet grant criteria of allowable expenses</li> <li>• Proposal includes event goals &amp; objectives</li> <li>• Proposal includes method for documenting and evaluating outcome of event</li> <li>• Proposal includes documentation plan for overnight hotel stays</li> </ul>	25 points		
		Total Possible Points: 50		

#### V. GRANT REQUEST FUNDING LEVELS

The following table reflects the level of funding possible based on the event's estimated number of room nights. Funding levels range from \$0 to a maximum of \$6,500. The estimated number of room nights **does not guarantee the level of funding at which the event may be approved. The Final funding recommendation will be based on the committee's discretion and available funding levels. As an example, if the committee believes the event has overstated the potential room nights, the committee has the right to place the application in a lower funding category.**

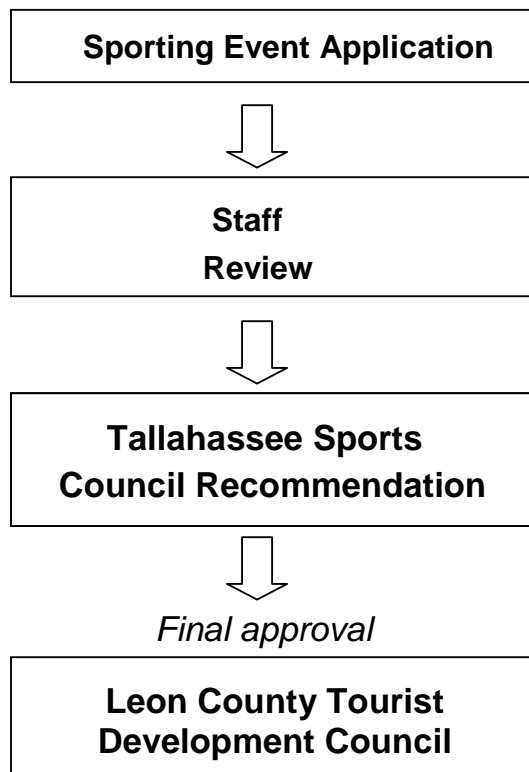
Estimated Room Nights	Room Night Funding Range
500 and over	\$4500 - 6,500
200 to 499	\$2400 - 4,499
100 to 199	\$1201 - 2,399
Less than 100	\$0 - \$1,200

The committee will review each event application and determine the final grant amounts

based on the following criteria:

1. The potential of an event to bring overnight visitors to Leon County.
2. Events scheduled during non-peak or shoulder seasons will be a priority.
3. The estimated number of out-of-town visitors and their length of stay.
4. The history of the event including previous grant support and potential for growth.
5. The amount of potential media exposure to Tallahassee and Leon County.
6. The submitted detailed plan for marketing and promotion.
7. The submitted detailed budget with realistic expectations. Applicant must show a need for funding.
8. The intended use of funds must fall within scope of the special events program as stated in policies.
9. Availability of funding for entire program.

## VI. APPROVAL PROCESS



## VII. SPECIAL EVENT GRANT TIMELINE

	<u>Process</u>	<u>Date</u>
1.	Advertise Grant Cycle Opening	12/2011
2.	Applications Available	1-1-2012
3.	Workshop for Grant Applicants Location – 106 E Jefferson Street Tallahassee FL 32301	NA
4.	<b>Deadline for Applications Submittal</b>	<b>2/17/2012, 5 p.m.</b>
5.	Review by Advisory Committees -Tallahassee Sports Council	2/28/2012
6.	Review & Final Approval by LCTDC	03/01/2012
7.	Funds Available – Must provide <b>proof of paid expenses</b> and <b>room night/ Visitor report.</b>	2 weeks following submittal and approval of Post-Event Report

**Out of Cycle Process** - In the event that a Special Event Grant application is received outside of the published dates the Tallahassee Sports Council and Tourist Development Council's may elect to consider the request following a super majority vote (majority plus one) of the Council if any special event grant funding dollars are available.

## VIII. VISITOR TRACKING

In order to assess the impact of each event on the Tallahassee-Leon County transient lodging industry, the TDC wants to emphasize the importance of tracking the number of overnight visitors attending the event.

Should your event use a registration procedure, we encourage you to utilize the **Visitor Tracking Form** (available on the [visittallahassee.com](http://visittallahassee.com)) to gather the requested information. Each participant/group should sign his or her name, hotel in which they are residing, number of rooms secured, number of days, and the number of guests staying in each room. Room block reports from hotels are the preferred method of reporting room data. This information will be used to help track the number of visitors attending each event. Furthermore, the information can be used to determine the growth of a particular event. Subsequently, the growth of an event can impact the funding level of the grant awarded to the organization.

Following the event, the TDC reserves the right to conduct a post-audit of information presented on the **Post-Event Report**. All lodging accommodations listed will be contacted to confirm the number of room nights generated for the event. **PLEASE NOTE THAT ANY MISLEADING OR FALSE INFORMATION PRESENTED CAN AND WILL ADVERSELY AFFECT FUTURE GRANT AWARDS.** Not tracking your event rooms and/or visitors could

void your post event funding.

## **IX. CONCLUSION**

Applicants are asked not to contact members of the TDC, Special Events Grant Committee, or the Tallahassee Sports Council. The event director, fiscal administrator or other contact person may be called upon by any one of these groups or their staff at any time during the review process.

Please submit the original plus **FOUR (4) copies** of the attached application form **by 5 p.m. on July 18, 2011** to:

Tallahassee Sports Council  
Special Event Grant Program  
c/o Visit Tallahassee  
106 East Jefferson Street, Suite 400  
Tallahassee, FL 32301

**Failure to meet the 5 p.m. July 18 deadline will result in disqualification.**

**For questions or additional information, please contact:**

(850) 606-2300

**X. Leon County Tourist Development Council  
SPECIAL EVENT GRANTS PROGRAM APPLICATION**

Please Print or Type:

1. Name of Event:

2. Date of Event:

Start time:  End Time:  Fee: \$

3. Description of Event (# of teams, potential for growth, media coverage, what governing bodies are involved, where athletes and teams will travel from, regional, national, history of the event, adult, youth, etc):

4. Amount of Grant Request: \$

5. Host Organization:  
(If approved this organization will be granted funds)

6. Description of Organization (include date organization was created):

7. Contact Person:    
(Name) (Title)

Address:

City:  State:  Zip:

Daytime Contact #:  Email Address:

Public Information #:  Website:

Mobile Phone #:

Facebook Address:	<input type="text"/>
Twitter Account:	<input type="text"/>

8. Non-Profit Organization:  Yes  No

Tax I.D. #:	
or	
Social Security #:	

(This information is required)

Has your host organization received grants in the past?  Yes  No

If you are a new vendor / organization please complete a **W-9 Form** and fax to 850-606-2304

9. Liability/Medical Insurance:  Yes  No

Name of Carrier:	
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Please include Proof of Insurance Coverage in Application packet – this is mandatory)

10. Has venue/facility been secured?  Yes  No

If so, please list:	
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Is site located within Leon County?  Yes  No

Contact Name and Day Phone #:	( )
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11. Has hotel been secured?  Yes  No

If so, please list and provide a confirmation letter from hotel.	
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Contact Name and Day Phone #:	( )
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Would you like our office to contact all hotels for you to gather rates for your event?

Yes  No

**INFORMATION FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PORTION OF COMMITTEE SCORING – 25 POINTS MAX.**

12. Anticipated # of out-of-town overnight visitors

Anticipated # of attendees:	
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13. Anticipated # of Room Nights:

Date	Room Nights (# rooms x # nights)

14. Room Night History of Event (if applicable):

Dates	Hotel & Contact Name	Room Nights (# rooms x # nights)

Attach additional pages if needed.

15. How does this event contribute to the overall appeal of Tallahassee/Leon County as a preferred visitor destination? (One page maximum)
16. Attach a comprehensive marketing plan including your plans to use Tallahassee Sports Council Logo for the event in any printed or online materials.

**INFORMATION FOR EVENT EVALUATION PORTION OF COMMITTEE SCORING – 25 POINTS MAX.**

17. How does the event support your organization's mission? (One page maximum)
18. Include the event's budget. Include all expenses and income projections.
19. Describe how grant funds would be used. (One page maximum) See Section II, Item K
20. Describe how you evaluate the outcome of the event. (One page maximum)
21. Describe how you plan to document overnight hotel stays. (One page maximum)

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

22. Have you received a LCTDC grant in the past?  Yes  No

If yes, include amount, name of event, year, visitors and room nights:

Amount	Name of Event / Year	Total Visitors	Room Nights

23. Community Support

1. List any city, county, TDC, or other cash contributions from public entities for this event. (Include amount and source)

2. List any in-kind support from the community that has been committed for this event. (ie: donated facilities, volunteer/staff support, city/county services, etc.)

3. Outline any local corporate sponsorship support that has been secured for this event. Must be included in budget.

# CERTIFICATION AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

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**APPLICANT:**

I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and that I have read the Policies and Procedures of the Leon County Special Event Grants Program and will abide by all legal, financial, and reporting requirements as a condition of receiving grant funds from the Leon County Tourist Development Council. Signatures must be **original in blue ink**.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Please Print or Type

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Please Print or Type

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

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Please return the original plus four (4) copies of the Application and the Certification & Compliance Page to:

Leon County Tourist Development Council  
ATTN: Special Event Grants Program  
106 East Jefferson Street, Suite 400  
Tallahassee, FL 32301

**FOR GADSDEN, JEFFERSON, FRANKLIN, & WAKULLA COUNTY  
EVENTS**

To qualify, event must:

1. Utilize or demonstrate the potential to utilize Leon County lodging establishments.
2. Have secured a funding commitment from the home county Tourist Development Council.