



**Ripon Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors  
Tourism Grant Program  
Effective January 1, 2017**

**Statement of Purpose:**

The purpose of this program is to offer organizations financial support for Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development opportunities as defined by Wisconsin Act 55: Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development that are significantly used by transient tourists and reasonably likely to generate paid overnight stays at more than one establishment where a tax may be imposed.

Financial support given to organizations is determined by the Ripon Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors which has been recognized by the City of Ripon as a "Tourism Entity" and therefore can distribute room tax funds on the city's behalf.

**Eligibility Requirements**

All organizations must operate in the Ripon Area and be aligned with Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development according to Wisconsin Act 55.

**About the Tourism Grant Program**

The City of Ripon has instituted a hotel/room tax to raise revenue towards tourism development and promotion. The Ripon Chamber of Commerce receives 70% of this room tax generated on a quarterly basis. Three thousand dollars each year is reserved for the Tourism Grant Program.

**Grant Deadlines**

Applications must be received by the first of the month. Applications must also be submitted at least 90 days prior to the first day of advertising that will be paid using the grant fund; for example if your first grant funded ad runs on November 15, your application should be submitted by August 1. It is permissible to submit applications via email but the time/date stamp on the email must show it was received by midnight on the first of the month. For applications being considered the Ripon Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors may request that a representative come present at the soonest directors meeting following the submission of the application.

For all grants awarded, the Board expects a follow-up summary outlining how the event went, as well as actual numbers on what was determined through tracking activity. One item you are required to report is the number of attendees at your event/project. This summary must be provided within 60 days following the event, along with all receipts for expenditures.

**Payment and Re-Payment of Awarded Grant Funds**

For all grants awarded, it may be requested in the application process that 50% of the awarded funds be disbursed to the applicant at least 30 days prior to the event/project. The remaining 50% will be awarded once the reporting requirement is met which is required to be submitted within 60 days following the completion of the event/project. Payment of these funds may take up to one month so it is advantageous to submit your report as soon after the event/project as possible. If the event/project does not take place it is expected that 100% of funds disbursed to applicant be repaid to the Ripon Chamber, within 30 days of when the event/project was scheduled to be completed.

## Grant Requirements and Details

The Ripon Chamber reserves the right to fund or deny all grant requests submitted. If grant funds are awarded they may be awarded in full or partial (1% up to 100%) of the requested amount of a project's marketing related costs. Priority will be given to Ripon events, the board will judge on a case by case basis for all applications received, however applicants must demonstrate that the funds requested will impact hotel stays and tourism in Ripon, WI. No organization or event may receive funds for more than three years in total. For multiple year events, granting funds may be subject to a sliding scale for subsequent years. All grant recipients are required to fill out a new grant application for each subsequent grant they wish to receive beyond the first year. No grant applications will be carried over into subsequent years. To be funded, projects must show that they will generate an increase in visitors and make a positive economic impact in the local area. The advertising plan must target markets beyond the local area, outside of a 25 mile radius. We encourage projects that are creative and beyond the scope of what are normally offered. A qualified candidate may apply for a grant at any point in its development whether it is a concept, promotion, first-year event or event that has been running for years. The Tourism Grant Program provides the means to assist in the development of marketing initiatives.

Examples of eligible Tourism Grant Program promotional expenses include e-mail marketing campaigns, magazines, newspapers, radio, TV, internet, direct mail, PR/media kits, professional marketing/consulting services and billboards, etc.

Examples of expenses the Tourism Grant Program will not reimburse: operational costs (staff salaries, travel costs, facility rental, insurance, etc.), local advertising, posters and flyers that are not direct-mailed or street banners.

Applications for Tourism Grant Program are requested to be submitted in essay format and must include a cover sheet as well as the following information:

- Date of Application
- Event/Project Title
- Name and dates of project or event
- What type of project or event is this
- Name of Applicant Organization
- Applicant's phone, cell phone, mailing address, email, website, and fax (if available)
- Federal Identification Number of Applicant Organization
- Purpose of Applicant Organization
- Person in charge of project or event
- Contact information for person in charge of project or event
- Person filling out application
- Contact information for person filling out application
- Name of advertising agency used (if any)
- Amount of funding requested

In addition, applications must include the following:

- A detailed project description -What is the event/project purpose.
- Description of the event/project.
- Please add visuals if they will aid in the project description.
- Was a market analysis completed to determine need, if so, please provide.
- Describe how the event/project will be marketed to the visiting public
- What are your target markets?
- What kinds of sales, advertising and promotions will you do at the event?
- What will a visitor experience look like, when there? How long will they stay?
- Is it unique to Ripon or Wisconsin?

Budget outline, including:

- Promotional budget (with ad schedule, size, insertion dates, mockups, media and PR plan)
- Operational budget
- Other contributions received

- How will you raise other funds to complete your event/project?
- Anticipated income and expenses
- Estimated net income(loss)
- What impact will the event/project have on the tourism economy and community
- Estimate how many people will be attracted to the area with this event/project
- How do you intend to estimate dollar amount of trackable visitor spending, hotel stays, or economic impact following the event.
- How many overnight stays will it generate in years 2 and 3? What growth do you anticipate?
- Are there other community organizations, groups or attractions with which you will collaborate with? If yes, will they be raising funds during this event/project? What is the projecting amount they will raise, and what will happen with these funds?

Recipients of grants will be required to include the “Ripon Chamber of Commerce Tourism Grant Program” as a sponsor of the event/project.

- How will you recognize the support of the Tourism Grant Program?

For all grants awarded, the Ripon Chamber Board of Directors expects a follow-up summary outlining how the event/project went, as well as actual numbers on what was determined through tracking activity in regards to outcomes, # of attendees, estimated room stays and economic impact. This summary must be provided within 60 days following the event/project, along with copies of all receipts for expenditures in order to receive the second half of granted funds. The directors may request copies of tracking sheets and calculations of stated impact, however, reporting should clearly illustrate this process.

- Do you have any questions with this reporting requirement? Please ask at time of application.
- If grant funds are awarded, 50% of the awarded amount may be requested at least 30 days prior to the start of the event/project. The remaining 50% of the awarded funds will only be dispersed once the follow-up reporting/tracking requirement is met. Please indicate that you understand the disbursement process and if you request 50% upfront.
- One reporting requirement of your grant funding is to report the number of people attending the event/project, how do you intend on recording this information?