



# Tourism Development & Marketing Grant Program

## PURPOSE

To promote, market and encourage new overnight-generating business at Middleton hotel and lodging properties and promote economic development within the City of Middleton.

The first years of any event/conference can be difficult to promote, which is why Visit Middleton offers a Tourism Development & Marketing Grant program for events, conventions, conferences and meetings, hosted at a Middleton hotel or lodging property, for NEW business — those within the first three years of operation in Middleton.

Grant funds are to be used to: promote events in and beyond the City of Middleton with the goal of bringing visitors to the City of Middleton and Middleton hotel and lodging properties for paid overnight stays and extended stays; to promote the city as a desirable place to meet, stay and play. These funds may be used toward marketing, promotion, advertising, talent/speaker fees and transportation, and equipment rentals for event, and other areas designated by MTC (itemized budgets will be reviewed to assist in determining what all can qualify).

The grant funds are generated by hotel room tax collections that are managed by Visit Middleton and approved by the city of Middleton Tourism Commission (MTC) and are based on available funding per budget year.

\*Since the Wisconsin State Statute requires a minimum of one hotel representative to serve on the MTC; and since Visit Middleton does not want to discourage business at any Middleton hotel and lodging property; and since Visit Middleton does not wish to penalize any hotel representative providing service to MTC as a commissioner; Visit Middleton will allow event and meeting planners hosting/staying at any Middleton hotel and lodging facilities to apply for tourism grants, even if that facility is one at which a serving Middleton Tourism Commission hotel representative is employed; and as stated below in guidelines, Visit Middleton grant funds may NOT be applied toward facility fees, merchandise\*\*, or catering (unless part of the Meeting Planner Incentive grant). Middleton hotel or lodging employees serving a term on the Middleton Tourism Commission may not present the application on behalf of an event or meeting planner conducting business at their property and must recuse themselves from voting on said grant application.

## Application process

- Applications should be submitted at least six months prior to the first day of the event for full consideration and no less than 90 days prior to advertising for the event if applying for grant dollars toward marketing;
- An exception *may* be made if the event is a short-term booking; but then submissions must be received by the first Monday of the month for consideration in that month;
- The Director of Tourism reviews applications, assists with revisions if necessary and presents the application to the Middleton Tourism Commission for final approval;
- The Director of Tourism has discretion to deny an application where it is clear one or more criteria are not met;
- Applications are reviewed by MTC during its monthly meeting, the third Tuesday of every month;
- A written notification in the form of an email will be sent to the applicant advising of MTC's approval or denial of the application;
- Grants will not be advanced ahead of the event except in pre-approved cases;
- Applicants that have been approved for grant funds will submit receipts for approved expenses within 45 days of the close of event along with any requirements for a post-event report;
- Grant recipients are required to provide a post-event report with total overnight room stays at Middleton lodging properties, survey results and feedback/observations within 45 days of the close of event;

- The Director of Tourism will review the post event report and expense receipts. Payment of the grant will be processed within 45 days of the approved submissions;

### Eligibility

- Organizations that are for profit, not for profit or are managed by volunteers may apply;
- Must be an event in its first three years of operation in Middleton (if past its third year, please see criteria for a Destination Partnership Grant request);
- Can only receive a Tourism Development and Marketing Grant for up to three years following its first successful application and granted funds, based on need, support and available funds;
- Must generate a minimum of 50 overnight stays per day of event (excluding pre- and post-event staffing) at a Middleton hotel or lodging property in order to apply;
- May receive a Tourism Development and Marketing Grant in conjunction with a Meeting Planner Incentive (via Destination Partnership Grant Program) but no other Visit Middleton grant may be combined;
- Grant amount will be based on sliding scale of overnight-generating stays but is not limited to this scale if Middleton Tourism Commission determines identifies event/meeting as having significant impact on tourism development:
  - 50-75 overnight stays: eligible for up to \$1,000
  - 75-100 overnight stays: eligible for up to \$2,000
  - 100-150 overnight stays: eligible for up to \$3,000
  - 150-200 overnight stays: eligible for up to \$4,000 (or more at the discretion of MTC and pending available funds)
  - 200-plus overnight stays: eligible for up to \$5,000 (or more at the discretion of MTC and pending available funds)

### Application guidelines

- Grant awards are at the discretion of MTC and the amount is determined by available funds;
- Applications must be complete, signed and dated for consideration;
- MTC reserves the right to make any exception to grant amounts and criteria if MTC identifies applicant's case as having significant impact on tourism development.

### Grant specifications

- The event or project will generate significant paid overnight stays at Middleton hotel properties;
- Applicants offering multiple hotel options are required to request room blocks from Middleton properties;
- Grant awardees will submit a post-event report;
- Tourism Development & Marketing Grants may be used for the following marketing promotions, but not limited to: print, digital, social and radio marketing and advertising; poster design/printing; brochure design/printing; event signage, etc.; as well as applied toward the cost of speaker/talent fees or transportation; and equipment rentals (sound equipment, staging, etc.).
- Grants may not be applied toward facility fees, catering, or merchandise\*\*;
- Visit Middleton will be listed as an event sponsor where appropriate for events/festivals/conferences on program material, advertising, etc.; and/or listed as a contributor/donor where appropriate for Special Projects and Meeting/Event Sponsorship grants.

### Review Criteria

- Completeness of application
- Economic impact of event or project
- Multiple year booking (meetings, conventions and conferences)
- Need for financial assistance
- New or reoccurring event or project

**\*New events** are defined as events that are within their first three years in operation or hosting at a City of Middleton hotel property. An event held at one Middleton property one year and at another Middleton property its second year, is in its second year in Middleton.

**\*\*Merchandise** is defined as branded and non-branded materials for sale or distribution, excluding race T-shirts or co-sponsored giveaway items (ex. co-branded beer mug at Bockfest).