

Explore Waterloo Region Grant Application Guidelines

Introduction:

Explore Waterloo Region has created the Festival and Events Grant program to support programming improvements at new and existing festivals and events that attract visitors for longer stays, and create great experiences for visitors.

The main objective of the program is to attract overnight visitors to the Region by providing compelling reasons for them to plan a visit. All applicants should keep our objective in mind as they consider the application process. If your event attracts primarily local attendees, you may not yet be at the stage to access funding from the program.

Your collaborating partners are very important. In order to meet our objective of driving overnight stays, you must be working with a hotel partner(s) and consider what other activities would convince visitors to plan a longer stay. Attractions, restaurants and other events happening in the area during your event are great opportunities for collaboration.

As you complete the application process, please keep in mind our objectives and think about how your event can help us achieve them. Applications will be scored based on a set of criteria that shows;

- Programming improvements that increase visitor attendance and spending
- A strategy to grow and event's visitor attendance and a rationale for the proposed programming improvements,
- **Confirmed** collaborative partnerships
- Strong organizational leadership capacity and ability to deliver the project

Definitions:

What is an event?

An annual or biennial event, festival or series of public activities organized annually or biennially within a set period of time, with specific programming developed for, marketed to, and attracting visitors.

How do you define a visitor?

An individual who travels 40 kilometres or more (one way) to attend an event. Contributors to an event (ie: performers, suppliers, vendors) are not considered tourists.

What are programming improvements?

For new events: Presentation of interactive, participatory, exhibit-based or experiential programming. For example, entertainer or performer costs.

For existing events: Improvements to existing interactive, participatory, exhibit-based or experiential programming or new programming that is specifically targeted to visitors.

General

- Deadline for submission of applications is **Monday, March 2, 2020 at 5:00 pm.**
- Applications must be submitted via email to grants@wrtmc.org
- **All applicants** must view the [Festivals and Events Grant Application Presentation](#) in order to be considered.
- Please indicate in the subject line: **Festival & Events Grant Application**
- Only events taking place after June 1, 2020 will be considered. Events must be completed by December 31, 2021.
- Successful applicants will be notified by **March 31, 2020.**

Event funding will be given **only** to those that **drive overnight stays** in Waterloo Region and where the return on investment is **measurable**.

Overnight stays must be measurable. Attendees can stay at hotels, bed & breakfasts, campgrounds or Airbnb. Aside from working with collaborating partners in order to determine if hotel rooms or campsites were used by attendees, you must have the ability to track ticket sales to determine the geographic origin of purchasers and do onsite surveys of attendees to determine where they are from and if they stayed overnight. It is important to keep in mind that when you have set objectives for the growth of your event, you are able to measure it. For example, if your goal is to increase attendance by 30%, you need to show that you have numbers from the year previous and that you have collected statistics during your event to do a comparison and show growth. These numbers will be required for your final report.

Grants provide assistance under the following categories;

- **New & Emerging Festivals & Events**
 - Operating for less than 4 years
 - Operates for one full day or a number of consecutive days
 - Must take place in Waterloo Region
 - Provides programming or services that are open to the public
 - Funding available for up to a maximum of 30% of the festival's total operating budget.
- **Established Festivals and Events**
 - Operating for 4 years or more

- Operates for one full day or a number of consecutive days
 - Must take place in Waterloo Region
 - Provides programming or services that are open to the public
 - Funding request must be used to generate **incremental** visitors and/or receipts (visitors that are new to the event/additional to attendance in past years or additional activities that generate new revenue for the event) to the event
 - Funding available for up to a maximum of 30% of the festival's total operating budget.
- **Major One-time Events**
(An event attracting over 20,000 attendees from Ontario and from other provinces and the USA.)
- Must meet with municipal staff or a major event venue prior to applying
 - Operates for one full day or a number of consecutive days
 - Must take place in Waterloo Region
 - Provides programming or services that are open to the public
 - Funding available for up to a maximum 30% of the festival's total operating budget or \$100,000, whichever is less.

Note: Increased funding may be available in extenuating circumstances.

Grants are not available for:

- Festivals or events held outside Waterloo Region
- Festivals or events owned or controlled/managed by a municipality
- One-time-only events
- Religious ceremonies
- Festivals and/or events with a predominant fundraising purpose
- Demonstrations, marches or rallies
- Commercial events (Trade shows & trade fairs, craft shows, art shows)
- Block parties, picnics or garden shows
- Sporting events
- Conventions, meetings or conferences
- Stand-alone parades
- Festivals or events not open to the public
- Retroactive expenses or accumulated deficits*
- Capital projects
- Organizations or activities that WRTMC deems may promote discrimination, contempt or hatred for any entity
- Facility rental fees, hotel fees, regular operating expenses, fund raising or financing

- **Please note:** WRTMC does not fund retroactively. If you choose to start your project before you know the funding results, please be aware WRTMC is under no obligation to support the project and the activity is undertaken entirely at your own risk.
- If the applicant is requesting funding for an existing event, there must be an **incremental** component to the event. For example, an added day, additional components to attract a different and increased audience.

Insurance

- The Terms and Conditions for this program specify that an organization must have insurance coverage that complies with the appropriate Municipality's Insurance Service requirements.
- These requirements stipulate that an organization must have comprehensive general liability insurance, and is subject to limits of not less than five million dollars (\$5,000,000) inclusive per occurrence for bodily injury, death and damage to property including loss of use thereof. **The comprehensive general liability insurance policies must name the appropriate municipality as an additional insured.**

Final Report

- A final report will be required from the applicant following the event in order to trigger final payment.
- The final report will include (and more information may be required);
 - Number of attendees/tickets sold
 - Demographics of attendees
 - Geographic origin of attendees
 - Number of volunteers & details
 - Number of paid staff & details
 - Number of hotels room nights sold & details
 - Media generated by the event
- Approved applicants will be required to enter into a contractual agreement with WRTMC.
- Approved projects will receive payment as follows;
 - 20% - Upon signing agreement or up to 6 months before the event date(s), whichever is later.
 - 50% - Upon completion of the event.
 - 30% - Upon delivery of final report.

Application specific guidelines:

1. Contact information:

Please provide the name of the organization applying for the grant, the name of the event and the name and contact information for the individual who will act as contact on behalf of the organization.

2. Type of Event

Please indicate if the event is a new event to Waterloo Region or is it existing? Does this event occur each year or on a regular basis (ie: every other year)?

3. Date(s) of the event – are the dates firm? Hours of the event?

4. Overview

For example:

This is a two day (music, art, cultural) festival targeting the 24 – 35 age demographic from the GTA area **Or** This is a three day music festival which attracts visitors from across Canada **Or** This is a one day event that happens only in Waterloo Region attracting visitors from across Ontario to stay overnight.

5. Funding Request

Indicate the amount of funding requested.

6. Collaborative Partners

In order to qualify for funding, your event **must** be working with other businesses in Waterloo Region. Some examples are Waterloo Regional Tourism Marketing Corp., hotels, university or college residences, campgrounds, event venues, restaurants, food trucks, caterer or a local sponsor. This requirement is important and will take special effort by the organizer.

7. Metrics of the Event

This refers to ensuring that your objectives outlined in your application are measurable. If your objective is to increase attendance by 30%, be sure to be able to show how much of that objective has been achieved. In order to do this, you will need actual number of attendees from last year and from the year applied for.

The most important measurement will be of those attendees coming from more than 40 kms away and staying overnight, so be sure to engage accommodation partners and surveys to help you establish this metric.

8. Only events that drive overnight stays will be considered for funding. Please indicate how many attendees are expected to attend from more than 40 kms outside of Waterloo Region and how many nights they will stay.

9. WRTMC is under no obligation to provide grant funding to any applicant. The amount requested will be considered against the outlined objectives and awarded with priority given to events driving the most overnight business to Waterloo Region.

10. Attachments

Applications that do not include the following attachments will not be considered. Please provide:

- Event budget - Overall budget for the event
- Budget use for the funding - Indicate where funding, if approved would be applied.
- Marketing plan – what are the plans for promoting the event? Include budget, target audience, timing, medium (social, radio, newspaper), geographic focus and cost.
- Strategic Plan – How do you plan to grow the event in the future?
- Governance model – ie: Volunteer Board? Paid staff? Reporting/responsibility
- History of past events (up to 5 years if available)
- Audited, signed or reviewed financial statements for the most recent year
- Proof of insurance (minimum \$5 million)
- WRTMC reserves to right to review additional materials in support of the request for funding.

Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding.

11. The deadline for receiving applications is 5:00 pm on Monday, March 2, 2020. Successful applicants will be notified by email by March 31, 2020.

Applications with attachments should be sent to;

grants@wrtmc.org

Please indicate in the subject line: **Festival & Events Grant Application**