

TOURISM ATTRACTION FEASIBILITY STUDY MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

WHO MAY APPLY?

Eligible Applicants

The only entities eligible to apply for financial assistance for a tourism attraction feasibility study are:

- Incorporated Cities
- Counties

Unincorporated cities or communities must seek county sponsorship of the study. Of course, incorporated cities may submit a joint application with counties or other incorporated cities for the sponsorship of the study.

Ineligible Applicants

The following may not make application for the Tourism Attraction Feasibility Study Grant Program:

- Chambers of Commerce
- Regional Tourist Associations
- Advertising and Promotion Commissions
- Convention and Visitors Bureaus
- Colleges and Universities
- Other private non-profit corporations, foundations, clubs or organizations
- Any other private entity

Only one grant per fiscal year will be allowed per applicant unless a county is applying on behalf of separate cities. Only one grant per project will be allowed during the life span of the project.

HOW MUCH MAY WE APPLY FOR?

Applicants may apply for up to \$15,000 in reimbursable matching funds. The applicant must be able to match the grant amount with a like amount of cash. In-kind contributions are ineligible as a match. Other state funds received by a city or county qualifying or utilizing funds under this program are also ineligible as a match. Grant awards will be made to eligible applicants on the basis of available appropriated funds. Each grant will be given on a matching one-for-one basis. For example, if a city applies for \$15,000 in matching funds, it must be able to match the grant with \$15,000.

WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS MAY WE APPLY FOR?

Only tourism attraction feasibility studies can be funded through this program. A tourism feasibility study is defined as research conducted for the purpose of determining the possibility and potential of a specific tourism attraction within the city or county boundaries.

The feasibility study must include information on market area, the projected market support for the project, demographics of the market, estimated attendance by tourists, travel trends, economic impact of the project on the area, and a conclusion as to whether or not the project would be suitable for the area and be able to support itself financially. Tourism attraction means cultural or historical site, recreational or entertainment facility, area of natural phenomenon or scenic beauty, theme park, amusement or entertainment park, indoor or outdoor play or music show, botanical gardens, or cultural or educational centers.

WHEN IS THE APPLICATION DUE?

There will be three grant award periods per fiscal year with a maximum of \$15,000 per grant being awarded. ***The deadline for receipt of applications is 5:00 p.m. on the last Friday in July, the last Friday in September, and the last Friday in November.*** All applications must be received in the Tourism office by these dates. The fiscal year for Arkansas Tourism is July 1 through June 30.

WHERE TO SEND THE APPLICATION

Tourism.Grants@arkansas.gov

HOW THE APPLICATION CAN BE PREPARED

The application can be prepared locally or by consultants (grant preparation cannot be paid for with grant funds). The Tourism Development staff will be available to assist with any questions about the grant application.

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN THE APPLICATION

All requests for state grant funds under this program should be submitted on the attached application form. Each applicant must submit a statement of the minutes or administrative order from the governing city or county board approving the matching fund grant request and a statement affirming the amount of funds held by or committed for the project. Each city or county should appoint an agent to act as a coordinator between the city or county and Arkansas Tourism. The agent's name, mailing address, and phone number should be listed on the application form.

A statement of procedures that will be used by the party conducting the study should be submitted with the application. In addition, a summary of how the study will be utilized and benefit the grantee should be submitted. When the study is contracted to a vendor outside of the city or county governmental operation, the name of the professional firm, a brief history and list of clients and experience, and the procedures it will use to perform the study should be presented with the application.

HOW TO FILL OUT THE APPLICATION FOR FUNDING FORM

This form is attached and must be completed in full. The directions for completing this form are listed below.

In Section A

For the applicant, list the name of the city or county submitting the application. List the project's title. For the agent, list the person on staff at the city or county who will be acting as the agent between the city or county and Arkansas Tourism. List the mailing address, phone number and fax number of the city hall or county courthouse. List the agent's e-mail address if applicable. List the county where the project will/does exist

In Section B

List the amount of matching funds requested for the project. The amount of matching funds requested can total no greater than 50%, up to \$15,000, of the total cost of the study. List the total cost for the tourism attraction feasibility study.

In Section C

List the entity that will be conducting the feasibility study. Answer yes or no as to whether the entity conducting the study is part of the city or county governmental operation or is an outside firm. If the entity conducting the study is an outside firm, list the firm name, mailing address, phone number and fax number. Also attach a brief history and a list of clients and experience for the outside firm conducting the study.

In Section D

The applicant's Chief Executive Officer must complete this section, including his or her signature, printed name, title and the date signed. The applicant's Chief Executive Officer may be the mayor, city manager, or county judge. If this is a joint application, all parties involved must sign the form. A statement of the minutes or administrative order from the governing city or county board approving the matching fund grant request and a statement affirming the amount of funds held by or committed for the project must be attached. Also, a statement of the procedures that will be used by the entity conducting the study and a summary of how the study will be utilized must be attached.

In Section E

This section must contain the name of the person who prepared the application, including a complete address and phone number.

WHAT ARE THE DEPARTMENT'S OBLIGATIONS?

The Tourism Director will appoint a panel to review and approve qualifications of all grant applications. Recommendations by this panel will be made to the Tourism Director or his appointee for the awarding of the grants within fifteen (15) days of the application due date.

All feasibility studies must be completed within 120 days/4 months of the awarding of the grant, or they may be considered void and canceled. The Tourism Director or their appointee may approve an extension of the completion date, but in no case may the completion date be extended beyond June 30 of the fiscal year in which the grant is awarded. Matching funds may only be expended for the purpose as reported in the application and approved by the Tourism Director or his appointee.

In some instances, the Department may require standard or special procedures to be used in completing grants. In such cases, these procedures will be issued before the grant is approved, accepted, and made a part of the application.

A copy of the tourism attraction feasibility study should be submitted to the Arkansas Tourism within thirty (30) days after its completion. In addition, a summary of how the study will be used should be submitted.

REQUEST FOR PAYMENT

Within thirty (30) days of completion of the study, the city or county must submit the following:

- 1) A completed, legible Request for Payment Form verifying that the city or county has completed and spent at least one-half of the grant amount or total project cost from funds provided by the city or county.
- 2) Copies of itemized invoices reflecting the total cost of the project.
- 3) A copy of the city or county's canceled checks (front and back) or cashier's check reflecting that one-half or more of the grant amount has been expended as required in the application.
- 4) A copy of the tourism attraction feasibility study and a summary of how the study will be used.

HOW TO FILL OUT THE REQUEST FOR PAYMENT FORM

This form must be completed and turned in to Arkansas Tourism within thirty (30) days of the completion of the feasibility study.

List the name of the applicant as it should appear on the payment voucher from Arkansas Tourism. List the agent's name – the payment voucher will be sent to this person's attention. List the mailing address, phone number, and fax number for the city hall or county courthouse. List the e-mail address of the agent if applicable. List the county where the project will/does exist.

List the name of the project for which the feasibility study was conducted. List the total cost of the feasibility study for the project. List the matching share claimed – this amount can total no greater than 50%, up to \$15,000, of the total cost of the study.

The applicant's Chief Executive Officer must provide his or her signature, printed name, title and date signed. The applicant's Chief Executive Office may be the mayor, city manager, or county judge.

Attach a copy of the itemized invoice from the entity conducting the feasibility study, photocopies of the grantee's canceled checks (front and back), a copy of the feasibility study, and a summary of the study's usage.

TOURISM ATTRACTION FEASIBILITY STUDY GRANT PROGRAM – APPLICATION FOR FUNDING

A. Applicant: _____ County: _____

Project Title: _____

Agent's Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

B. Amount of Funds Requested: _____

Total Feasibility Study Cost: _____

C. Who will be conducting the study?

Firm Name: _____

Firm Mailing Address: _____

Firm Phone: _____ Firm Email: _____

Is the firm/person conducting the study outside of your city/county governmental operation? Yes / No
If yes, attach a brief history and a list of clients and experience for the firm conducting the study.

D. CERTIFICATION BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

"I hereby certify that the information contained on this form and the attached documents is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that this application will be rated on the basis of the information submitted and that the submission of incorrect data can result in this application being withdrawn from consideration for funding. Attached is a statement of the minutes or administrative order from the governing city or county board approving the matching fund grant request and a statement affirming the amount of funds held by or committed for the project. Also attached is a statement of the procedures that will be used by the party conducting the study and a summary of how the study will be utilized."

Signature: _____ Title: _____

Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

E. Application Preparer's Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ |

E-Mail: _____

F. Submit to: tourism.grants@arkansas.gov

Questions: 501-682-1088