

Indiana Dunes Tourism's Promotion Grant Program

Guidelines and Requirements

Please carefully read all of the information to ensure that you qualify for the grant program, you understand the timeline, the match, what is funded, what is not funded, and what information is required to receive approved funding.

Purpose of program: Grants will be awarded to events and projects that bring in visitors from outside of Northwest Indiana (Lake, Porter, and LaPorte Counties), help visitors book hotel rooms, and have a positive economic impact on other businesses and attractions.

Grant deadline: *All grants are due Friday, January 12, 2018 by 4:00pm* to Sandy Remijas, Operations Director. 1215 N. State Road 49, Porter, IN 46304. Sandy@indianadunes.com

Grant approvals: The Indiana Dunes Tourism Board of Directors will vote on the grant recommendations given by the grant committee on Thursday, February 15, 2018.

1. There are five (5) grant application categories, which include:
 - a. Conventions, meetings, and seminars
 - b. Festivals and special events
 - c. Marketing
 - d. Product development
 - e. Sports sponsorships

2. Here are the types of projects funded for each grant application category:
 - a. **Conventions, meetings, and seminars:** this grant supports conventions, meetings, and seminars that are hosted within Porter County, have a large number of attendees, are longer than one day, have participants from outside of Lake, Porter, and LaPorte counties, and encourage overnight stays in our local lodging.

 - b. **Festival or special event:** this grant supports festivals or special events that are hosted within Porter County, have a theme that will attract a sizable number of attendees—including people from outside of Lake,

Porter, and LaPorte Counties—are longer than one day, and encourage overnight stays in our local lodging.

- c. **Marketing:** this grant supports marketing projects that utilize marketing tools to attract visitors from outside of Lake, Porter, and LaPorte counties to experience a Porter County community, a special aspect of a Porter County community, etc. These criteria are not date specific. For example, a city park department may seek a grant to market all of their programs to outside visitors for a particular year.

The marketing tools we cover include website development, digital advertising campaigns (Facebook ads, banner ads, content placement ads, search engine optimization, etc.), traditional marketing tools zoned outside of Northwest Indiana (direct mail, print ads, radio ads, TV ads, and other broadcast media), and print or digital brochures. Our organization favors marketing projects that are driven from a marketing plan and utilize a variety of marketing tools.

We are less likely to fund a brochure or website being developed that does not advertise to visitors outside of Northwest Indiana.

- d. **Sports:** this grant supports state, regional (Midwest states), national, and international sporting events or tournaments that take place within Porter County, attract a sizable number of participants and spectators, are longer than one day, and encourage overnight stays in our local lodging. This grant does not support local sports groups or events nor any sporting event or tournament that draws mainly local participants.
 - e. **Product Development:** this grant supports development of new products or the enhancement of existing products within Porter County or sites located on the Beaches and Beyond Outdoor Adventure Trail that will attract visitation from outside of Lake, Porter, and LaPorte counties, compliment our destination, and be supported by local residents. Examples of product development projects include: constructing a birding tower, enhancing or developing a trail for visitor engagement, assisting with a feasibility study to develop a new attraction, etc.
3. Indiana Dunes Tourism does not award grant money for seasonal or holiday events celebrated by most communities (Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc.) or one-day athletic events (running races, biking events, etc.) that primarily have a local draw. If it can be demonstrated that a seasonal event has unique characteristics that will attract a sizable number of attendees from outside of Lake, Porter, and LaPorte Counties, the grant committee and board of directors will review and consider the event for funding.

4. Applications are due Friday, January 12 by 4:00pm. Applications **WILL NOT** be accepted after this deadline. Exceptions are made for brand new events, festivals, sporting events, marketing projects, and product development projects established after the grant deadline. Staff will review each situation on a case-by-case basis.
5. Businesses and organizations can only apply for grant funding for the same festival, event, meeting, seminar, convention, and marketing projects for three years. After the third year, your festival, event or marketing project will no longer be eligible for funding. The purpose of the grant program is to get festivals, events and projects established so they can successfully sustain themselves in the future.

IMPORTANT: a festival or event CANNOT apply for a festival or event grant for three years and then after the third year, apply for a marketing grant for that same festival or event. For example, if you received a festival or event grant for three years for the ABC festival, in year four you cannot apply for a marketing grant for the ABC festival.

6. This grant program is a 50% matching, reimbursable grant. For example, if you are approved for a \$2,500 grant, you must spend \$5,000 in qualified marketing to receive the \$2,500. Also, you will only be reimbursed for your expenses after your event or project is completed.

The grant dollar amounts available per category are:

- a. Marketing: \$2,500 (first year); \$1,500 (second year); \$1,000 (third year)
 - b. Festivals and events: \$2,500 (first year); \$1,500 (second year); \$1,000 (third year)
 - c. Meetings, conventions, and seminars: \$2,500 (first year); \$1,500 (second year); \$1,000 (third year)
 - d. Sports sponsorship: \$3,000 maximum
 - e. Product development: \$5,000 maximum
7. Successful grant applicants may receive a grant in an amount less than requested.
 8. Each event is limited to one grant per year.
 9. A new application must be submitted each year and there is no carryover in the application process.
 10. All applicants will be notified in writing of the Indiana Dunes Tourism Board of Directors decision on grant funding.

11. Significant alterations to the project following approval requires notifying Indiana Dunes Tourism and will require reconsideration of the entire application.
12. **All marketing materials such as brochures, advertisements (digital and traditional), flyers, posters, etc. must display the Indiana Dunes Tourism logo.**

Indiana Dunes Tourism should NOT be listed as a sponsor of any kind, but rather should be listed as a financial supporter.

Logos are available online or via email. Please contact Sandy Remijas for logo information. Misuse of the logo, use of the incorrect logo, or a missing logo will result in a reduction of grant reimbursement.

All marketing materials must be submitted to Indiana Dunes Tourism within the specified timeframe to qualify for full funding.

13. **All grantees receiving funding must distribute the Indiana Dunes Tourism Activities Guides at their event.** Large quantities of Activities Guides can be obtained at the Indiana Dunes Visitor Center, 1215 N. State Road 49 in Porter. Contact Sandy Remijas at 219-926-2255 or sandy@indianadunes.com to order the supplies. Failure to obtain Activities Guides may result in a reduction of funding. **It is the responsibility of the grant recipient to obtain these supplies from Indiana Dunes Tourism.**
14. The total amount requested must not exceed 50% of the cost of the project. **In-kind contributions cannot be considered a part of an organization's match.**
15. Projects cannot have taken place prior to written notification and final approval from Indiana Dunes Tourism.
16. **Grant funds CANNOT be used for the following:**
 - a. Marketing efforts within Porter County, unless the promotional campaign is directed to the residents to encourage visitation from their friends and relatives who live outside of Lake, Porter, and LaPorte Counties.
 - b. Annual operating expenditures of the event, festival, or sporting event.
 - c. Salaries, wages, or employee benefits.
 - d. Prize money, scholarships, awards, plaques, t-shirts, certificates, buttons, or newsletters.
 - e. In-kind contributions.
 - f. Events or attractions restricted to private or exclusive participation.
 - g. Applications are evaluated by the Indiana Dunes Tourism grant committee, which is comprised of members of the Board of Directors, the executive director, the assistant director, and the operations director. The

grant committee's recommendations are given to the full Board of Directors for their approval. The Board of Directors will make the final decision on all applications. The board may choose to deny, fund, or fund portions of a request. A board member applying for funding under the program shall excuse themselves from the discussion and the vote.

17. Copies of paid invoices, separate copies of checks or receipts with check numbers indicated, all promotional or marketing materials, ***and the post-event evaluation form will be due within 60 days after the event or by December 14th, 2018***, whichever date comes first. The copies of canceled checks will be shredded upon review. ***Reimbursement materials submitted after this date will result in a \$500.00 forfeiture.*** These policies are put in place to allow unused money to be put back into the current year grant fund. Please contact Sandy Remijas at (219) 926-2255 or 800-283-8687, ext. 225 or sandy@indianadunes.com with any questions.
18. The Indiana Dunes Tourism's fiscal year (January – December) is subject to County Council approval in October of most years and therefore funding for the Tourism Promotion Grant may be denied based on this fact.