

ALACHUA COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Non-Profit Cultural Facilities Capital Projects that Promote Tourism

Submittal Deadline:

Friday, October 13, 2023 at 5:00 PM

Any response received after the above submittal deadline will not be considered.

Visit Gainesville, Alachua County
33 North Main Street
Gainesville, Florida 32601
(352) 374-5260

ALACHUA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

The Alachua County Board of County Commissioners is seeking proposals from private, non-profit entities for capital projects that meet the requirements of subsection 125.0104(5), Florida Statutes to acquire, construct, extend, enlarge, remodel, repair, improve, maintain, operate, or promote one or more cultural facilities that are open to the public, within the boundaries of Alachua County, which create opportunities to attract tourists as evidenced by the promotion of activities at the facility to tourists.

A cultural facility is a building used for the production, presentation, performance, or exhibition of arts and cultural disciplines including music, dance, theatre, visual and media arts, and museum programs or any combination of the cultural arts disciplines.

Cultural facility capital support requests may be for the acquisition, expansion, or renovation of existing buildings; or for site acquisition and construction of new buildings to be used for cultural activities.

Funding for the program is at the sole discretion of the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners.

Proposed projects must be located within Alachua County.

\$1,000,000 in Tourist Development Tax funding has been budgeted for the program. Funding may be awarded to multiple projects, with a maximum of \$500,000 per project, up to a total of \$1 million. Funding recommendations will be scaled by a multiplier if funding requests and scores exceed the \$1 million available funding. Awards may be requested in the amount of \$25,000-\$500,000 per entity.

This program does not support facilities that is, or will be, used primarily for administrative offices or for storage, which are not considered a cultural facility for this program. Funding for feasibility or market studies (financial, arts programming, site selection searches, audience surveys, operating projections) are not eligible. Projects such as visitors' centers or information kiosks are not eligible under this program.

Applicants receiving support from other Alachua County grant programs (e.g., Nature and Culture Destination Enhancement Grants or Special Event Sponsorships) are not prohibited from also applying for a Cultural Facilities grant.

Alachua County reserves the right to reject any application which may be considered irregular, show serious omission, or unauthorized alteration of form. Alachua County reserves the right to accept any application in whole or in part, to waive technicalities, or to accept applications which, in the County's judgment, best serve the interests of the County.

Applicants must demonstrate, and commit to, the following:

1. Strong administrative oversight and management practices.
2. Long-range strategic planning.
3. Show the total funds available to complete capital construction project with the additional requested grant funds (details provided below in the matching funds section).
4. Business plan that outlines the feasibility of the capital project and how the facility will be sustained.
5. Qualified, engaged, and financially supportive Board of Directors.
6. Strong community support as evidenced by letters of support.
7. Policies and practices that support and engage both local and non-local artists.
8. Marketing strategies that attract local visitors and cultural tourists.
9. Stated and demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion.
10. Awareness of regional and local civic issues that impact the lives and well-being of everyone.
11. Proof of unrestricted use of the land and buildings associated with the project.
12. Retain ownership of all improvements made under the Cultural Facilities grant.

The submitted proposals should advance and expand upon Alachua County's brand "Where Nature and Culture Meet."

Cultural and Artistic Facilities Eligibility

Non-profit organizations whose primary mission is arts and culture proposing the construction of a facility with the primary mission being arts and culture may be eligible to apply for the Cultural Facilities grant, provided that the following criteria are met:

- a. Tax-exempt, non-profit status in "good status" as a non-profit corporation in the State of Florida and 501(c)(3) tax exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).
- b. Non-profit whose primary mission is arts and culture and is incorporated in Alachua County, FL.
- c. Two (2) consecutive years of audited financial statements, or financial statements which have been reviewed and approved by the organization's board of directors as evidenced by meeting minutes, for the fiscal years of operation immediately prior to the grant application deadline date. Reports, audits, and board minutes must be provided with the application.
- d. A governing board, which meets regularly and operates under a set of bylaws. Reports of meetings convened, and copies of the bylaws must be provided.
- e. The County reserves the right to request additional documentation to verify eligibility.

Grant Restrictions

Funds may not be used for, nor may the following entities apply for funding through this project:

- Programs, projects, events, or spaces not accessible to the public.
- Grants to individuals, including artists, or to be re-granted to other organizations or entities.
- Educational institutions, including colleges, universities, public and private schools, and childcare centers, are ineligible to apply, as are organizations that are closely affiliated, or receive a significant portion of their budget from such institutions.
- Municipal projects and projects funded through CRA's, or any government entity, are not eligible.
- Chambers of Commerce are not eligible.
- Projects for which the investment is not a permanent facility available to be utilized by the public, including temporary festival staging, non-permanent exhibitions, rented spaces, or tangible property.
- Organizations whose cultural programs, in whole or in part, are designed to encourage preference of a particular religion.
- Funding for feasibility, market studies, surveys, programming, site selection searches, audience surveys, operating projections are not eligible.
- A facility which is or will be used primarily for housing administrative offices or for storage is not considered a cultural facility for the purpose of this program.

This grant will not reimburse for the following disallowable expenditures:

1. Salaries, benefits, travel, or expenses of personnel, volunteers, board members, or contractors.
2. Payment of any bills of a personal nature, such as rent, mortgage, utilities, personal vehicles.
3. Interest or reduction of deficits or loans, fines, penalties, or cost of litigation.
4. Cash reserves or endowments.
5. Tuition assistance or scholarships.
6. Expenses incurred or obligated prior to or after funding period.
7. Member-only events, entertainment, food, or beverages for private events.
8. Costs of receptions and social activities.
9. Events which are restricted to private or exclusive participation, including camps.
10. Payments or reimbursements for goods or services purchased for previous or other events or activities, invoices paid outside of contract period.
11. Advertising, printing, or other expenses that omit the Visit Gainesville, Alachua County, FL logo and/or recognition.
12. Benefits, fundraisers, and programs that benefit organizations other than the contracted applicant.
13. Benefits, fundraisers, awards programs and projects planned primarily for fundraising purposes.
14. Prize money, scholarships, awards, plaques, trophies, certificates, or contributions.

15. Political events, activities, or advocacy.
16. Alcohol.
17. Any expenditure not authorized by Alachua County Code of Ordinances.
18. Discriminatory acts or practices, including discrimination based on race; color; national origin; religion; sex; marital status; age; disability; sexual orientation; gender identify or expression.
19. In accordance with applicable law, the funding provided by way of this program or agreement may not be used in aid of a program or event whose purpose is to promote the religion of the provider, be significantly sectarian in nature, involve religious indoctrination, require participation in religious ritual, or encourage the preference of a religion.
20. Any expenditure not authorized by Alachua County Code of Ordinances

Application Restrictions

Organizations are limited to one (1) application for one (1) project proposal.

Matching Funds Requirements

Applicants are required to provide a minimum two-to-one cash match to the Cultural Facilities grant award for construction projects. Matching funds may exceed the required match but may not fall below the minimum requirement. The cash matching portion must be designated only for one grant project and may not be used for subsequent grant projects. The cash match may include applicant's cash-on-hand earmarked for this project; irrevocable contributions of cash that will be received and obligated by the end of the grant period; the cost of site acquisition if within three years of the date of application, or official assessed valuation if acquired more than three years prior to the date of application. In-kind services must be specified and related to acquisition, expansion, or renovation of existing buildings or construction of new building(s) to be used as a cultural facility.

Process

Capital Facilities Support Grant

Applications are completed and submitted online. Applications and ALL required documentation must be submitted by 5:00 pm on the applicable due date. Applications will be considered incomplete if all required documentation has not been submitted by the applicable deadline.

Incomplete applications will not be reviewed by the review panel.

The panel will evaluate each application based on:

I. Community Benefit and Potential Tourism Impact (45 points)

- a. Describe the project using all available information and details. Include location, scope, planned utilizations of the facility and how the project will benefit the community and contribute to Alachua County's reputation as an attractive destination for tourists. (15 points)
- b. Provide the completed business plan, feasibility study, operations plan, and all pertinent details that show evidence of the need of County funding for the proposed project. (15 points)
- c. Supply the marketing expenditure plan demonstrating the strategies, tactics, and budget allocation to promote the events and activities that will occur in the completed project facility. The marketing plan must be comprehensive and realistic in its ability to target and attract both local patrons and tourists. (15 points)

II. Organizational Merit (30 points)

- a. Describe the organizational capacity, financial stability and organizational actions demonstrating project readiness and planning. (6 points)
- b. Documentation of all funding and cash match sources for the project. (6 points)
- c. Provide evidence of the administrative structure and key administrative staff, board members and volunteers, that will manage the completed project and its future operations. (6 points)
- d. Describe the board's involvement in planning, effective governance, fundraising and policy development. (6 points)
- e. Provide all relevant data and descriptions of external partners, including architects, site

development and construction project team. (6 points)

III. Cultural Merit (25 points)

- f. Describe the project's long-term cultural impact, including how it will contribute new, or improved, cultural programming and services for the County and its visitors. (10 points)
- g. Explain how the project will contribute to the reputation of Alachua County as the place "Where Nature and Culture Meet" including any unique, innovative, exceptional opportunities for artistic and cultural excellence. (10 points)
- h. Description how the project will enable the organization to develop, strengthen, and expand deployment of programs to audiences, members, and subscribers. (5 points)

Review Process Staff Review: Staff will review applications for completeness and compliance with all program policies, guidelines, and requirements. Incomplete or ineligible applications will not be provided to the review panel for consideration. Official documents such as corporate status, bylaws, and board roster are checked and verified for accuracy.

Panelists Applications for Cultural Facilities grants will be reviewed and scored by a panel appointed by the Alachua County Manager.

Panel Meetings Grantees are invited and strongly encouraged to attend the public panel review meeting, although attendance is not required.

Panelists may adjust their scores up or down based on the discussion and the final overall score is based on an average of the panelists' individual score. After all applications have been discussed and rated, staff will present to the panelists a spreadsheet of all the ratings from highest to lowest for final review and at that time the panel may decide to increase or decrease the overall score of individual proposals before finalizing their recommendation.

Scoring

Panelists score applicants based upon review criteria as listed.

- If a panelist declares a conflict of interest for a given applicant, they will "abstain" from the review, prior to the panel meeting.
- Panelists will provide a point rating for each applicant for each criteria section.
- The graded sections will be compiled for each panelist and totaled for each applicant.
- The scores of the members of the panel will be compiled for each respective application, averaged, and placed in rank order with the other applicants.
- Only applications receiving a final average score of 70, or higher, may be considered recommended for funding.
- The recommended Cultural Facilities project requests will be listed in sequential order, with the ranking established by the final average score(s).

Based on the funds available in the application cycle, and in the order of the rating, each recommended project will be, and as possible, fully funded. An applicant that is "recommended," yet receiving only partial funding, may, or may not, be considered.

Funding Approval

Recommendations of the grant panel are sent to the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners for review. Funding for successful applications is not considered awarded until approved by the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners. Funding is not guaranteed until an agreement has been fully executed.

Disbursement and Payments

Payments: Funds are paid to the awardee on a reimbursement basis only after the awardee has completed the different construction phases of the project, listed below, and provides to the County

the Project Report. Reimbursements shall only be available after the awardee has satisfied its cash (funds) match obligation and provided written documentation of expenditures as proof of same to the County.

Completion Schedule 50% - Completion rate of Construction Phase

100% - Completion Construction Phase rate of Payment Schedule

First Payment: 50% of construction award

Second Payment: Final 50% of construction award and upon submission of the Project Report which is due no later than sixty (60) calendar days after the completion of the term (or project period).

Project Reporting

At the conclusion of the applicable project period, grantees are required to submit a project report updating the County on achievement of the intended outcomes of the program. Project reports are required and provide important data to communicate the impact of the County's investment in the arts and culture sector.

Insurance Requirements

If insurance is required by the County's Risk Management, the awardee shall furnish a Certificate of Insurance or endorsements evidencing the insurance coverages as specified, as incorporated as part of the agreement. Such required Certificate shall be provided prior to the awardee beginning performance of work under the agreement. The Certificate must name Alachua County as an additional insured. Please maintain the organization's coverage with your agent by keeping an up-to-date Certificate of Insurance. Failure to provide an up-to-date, or renewed, Certificate could delay the execution of the agreement, and payments, until the insurance requirements are met.

Publicity & Credit Requirements

A condition of receiving funds from Alachua County is the inclusion of the Visit Gainesville, Alachua County logo on all applicable print and digital materials relating to the grant-funded project. This includes, but is not limited to, the artist/project/organization website; printed materials, including postcards and event programs/brochures; recognition from the stage in pre-show remarks (if applicable), marketing materials, advertisements, radio announcements and commercials. Examples of these materials are a required component of the project report. In addition to recognition on all applicable print and digital materials related to the grant funded project, the grantee agrees to list applicable events on VisitGainesville.com and place the Visit Gainesville, Alachua County logo on their website.