



Local Sports Destination Enhancement Grant Application

GRANT APPLICATION COVER PAGE

Requested Amount: \$ 50,000 _____

Organization Name: Gator Water Polo INC _____

Authorized Contact Name and Phone Number: Carlos Ramirez – 352-281-2804 _____

Board President Name and Contact Number: David Huelsman – 352-358-4272 _____

Project / Activity Name: Gator Water Polo Events 2026 _____

Project / Activity Dates: October 2025 – September 2026 _____

Mailing Address: PO BOX – 13313 _____

City: Gainesville _____

State: Florida _____

Zip Code: 32604 _____

Email Address: carlos@gatorwaterpolo.com _____

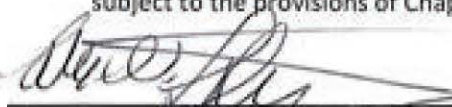




Local Sports Destination Enhancement Grant Application

Please initial next to each item below, signifying that you have read and understand the conditions of the Local Sports Destination Enhancement Grant program.

- DH I attest that all information in the application is accurate and that the events and activities to be considered for funding are in compliance with the Alachua County Code of Ordinances and grant program criteria.
- DH I attest that if awarded, the funding provided by way of this program or agreement will 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.
- DH I attest that if awarded, the funding will not support or include discriminatory acts or practices, including discrimination based on race; color; national origin; religion; sex; marital status; age; disability; sexual orientation; gender identify or expression.
- DH I understand that all printed and/or digital collateral and advertisements must include the Visit Gainesville, Alachua County, FL logo as one of the event sponsors and on any and all advertising/marketing materials, the event website (with link to VisitGainesville.com), programs, and any newsletters or email notifications promoting the event.
- DH I understand that the event will credit Visit Gainesville, Alachua County, FL at the level equal to the award amount. For example, if the award is \$15,000.00 and that is a gold level sponsor, Visit Gainesville Alachua County is to be listed as a gold sponsor.
- DH Tickets for the appropriate level sponsorship must be provided to Visit Gainesville, Alachua County, FL for promotional activities.
- DH I understand that all reporting requirements must be satisfied to receive reimbursement funding.
- DH I understand that the event must be ADA accessible.
- DH I understand that a statement on letterhead that the applicant is a governmental entity or a copy of the Organization's Active Status from Sunbiz.org must be attached to be eligible for funding.
- DH I certify that my event is within the boundaries of Alachua County.
- DH I acknowledge that this application and grant documents submitted to the County, become public records subject to the provisions of Chapter 199, F.S., Florida Public Records Law.


Signature of authorizing official (Board Chair)


Signature of Contact Person

Merit and support



History of the organization/contribution to sporting activities in Alachua County:

Gator Water Polo (GWP) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our program is about growing the sport of water polo in Gainesville, Florida. The program started in 2013 with 0 kids involved and has grown to 150 in 2023. Our membership now comprises athletes in age divisions: 10/12u, 14u and 18u. GWP was able to establish a High School team at GHS in 2016. The first year, the team went 2-8 and by the second year, was participating in the District Tournament. GWP offers opportunities for male and female athletes. The GHS boys water polo team became district champions for the first time in history in 2019.

GWP organizes our summer event with Barcelona International Water Polo Academy (BIWPA), an international water polo academy in Barcelona that staffs professional and Olympic coaches and has experience delivering top-level water polo events and tournaments internationally. This variety of professional expertise guarantees a well run, cost effective tournaments that is a growth opportunity for all athletes. Our partners all participate in the promotion. The excellence of the tournaments is a reflection of a staff that is well versed in many areas.

Several entities have given us different types of support and collaborated with us in 2025. All of these contributions have helped with the logistics of the event. The City of Gainesville lends chairs and tables, and allows us use of their amazing facilities, The Holiday Inn University Center made arrangements to make the athlete's stay a successful one, and a private donor gave us a scholarship for two of our athletes that could not afford to attend. Thanks to the Local Sports Destination Enhancement Grant, we were able to market our events at a national and international level, bringing athletes and families from all over the world to Gainesville.

In 2019 GWP developed its own swim academy. Swim academy has served athletes from several schools ages 4-10 from elementary schools in Alachua County.

Swim academy will give the opportunity to every kid in Alachua county to learn how to swim and how to be safe in the water. At the same time, swim academy will teach youth athletes to develop their potential swim skills to compete at high school.

Besides branching out and growing at the local high school level, GWP in 2019 organized the first international water polo event on the east coast and the largest international event in the US. The event was led by Professional and Olympic

Coaches from Barcelona, Spain (2019 World Champion Men's and Women's Silver Medal Winners) and was open to boys and girls ages 12-18. Alachua county athletes also participated. Alachua athletes would have had to travel to California or Europe to experience anything like this programming. National and international athletes were able to appreciate our city and state while making friends from other regions and cultures. A total of 140 athletes from 12 different countries and 8 states attended our event. Countries represented were: USA, Czech Republic, Hungary, the Netherlands, Spain, Germany, South Africa, Australia, Peru, Colombia, Puerto Rico, and Canada. States included: Florida, Tennessee, Georgia, Washington St, Maryland, New York, Maryland, and California.

In 2021 we were able to successfully run our Saturday tournaments (twice a month), UF's annual tournament, and our international summer event. All of them brought athletes and families from outside Alachua county to Gainesville spending money in our hotels and restaurants.

GWP Saturday tournaments brought teams from different parts of Florida (Orlando, Venice, Jacksonville, Tampa, and Miami) and Georgia.

UF's collegiate tournament brought athletes and families from New York, California, West Virginia, Connecticut, North Carolina, Georgia, Washington DC, and other parts of Florida.

Our international summer event brought 260 athletes to Gainesville from all over the US as well as Puerto Rico and The Bahamas. Even though we had petitions from athletes from other countries, COVID restrictions did not allow them to enter the US at the time.

In 2022, we were able to continue to run our tournaments as we did in 2021, adding our spring tournament hosting teams from Florida and Georgia.

Our international summer event was again a success, having over 320 athletes among the 3 tournament days. International athletes from Colombia, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Canada, The Bahamas, and Spain were able to compete against athletes from the US (New York, California, Pennsylvania, Colorado, Washington, Texas, Maryland, Georgia, Tennessee, and Florida).

In 2023, we were able to continue to run our tournaments as we did in 2022, adding our spring tournament hosting teams from Florida and Georgia, as well as the collegiate tournament hosted at UF pool.

Our international summer event was a success, having over 360 athletes among the 3 tournament days. We brought to Gainesville athletes and teams from 4 of the 5 continents. Only Asia was not represented in 2024. International athletes from South Africa, Egypt, Australia, Guatemala, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Canada, Trinidad and Tobago, and Spain were able to compete against athletes from the US (New York, California, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Colorado, Texas, Maryland, Georgia, Tennessee, and Florida).

In 2024, we were able to continue to run our 12U and 14U tournaments as we did in 2023, our Florida/Georgia Tournament, and our 3 summer tournaments. Our three summer tournaments were as successful as in 2023. We had about 280 athletes from outside Gainesville participating. Athletes and teams came from all over the US (Florida, Ohio, Illinois, Florida, California, Washington, New York, Connecticut, Virginia, Georgia, Tennessee, and Texas) as well as different countries around the world (Spain, Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Tobago, Colombia, Netherlands, Mexico, Canada, England, Scotland, and Australia).

It was an excellent international experience for everyone. Athletes, officials, coaches, and staff were hosted at the Holiday Inn, University Center during the 3 weeks of the summer event. They all had dinner at the UF dining hall. They also had time to visit around Gainesville (shops, restaurants, campus life...). A good number of families stayed through the week at different hotels in town.

In 2025, we were able to run our Florida Series Tournament, and our 3 summer tournaments.

Our three summer tournaments were as successful as in 2024. We had about 320 athletes from outside Gainesville participating. Athletes and teams came from all over the US (Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, New Jersey, California, Texas, Washington, New York, Connecticut, Virginia, Georgia, Tennessee...) as well as different countries around the world (Brazil, Canada, England, Spain, Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Tobago, Bahamas, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, and Australia).

It was a great international experience for everyone. Athletes, officials, coaches, and staff were hosted at the Holiday Inn, University Center during the 3 weeks of the summer event. They all had dinner at the UF dining hall. They also had time to visit around Gainesville (shops, restaurants, campus life...). Families stayed through the weeks at different hotels in town.

Our Florida series tournament was also a success having 12U and 14U teams from different places in Florida. It was an excellent opportunity for our athletes to play at home against other athletes with high levels of WP. An excellent tournament for them to learn. Athletes came to Gainesville with family members, and were able to enjoy our restaurants and recreation activities.

In 2026 we expect to keep growing in numbers of athletes for our summer international event and tournaments since they have become well known both nationally and internationally.

We also expect to increase the number of teams coming to Gainesville for our Florida Series tournament and weekend tournament events.



Gator Water Polo - 2026

Detailed project

Gator Water Polo Club has planned to host and run several water polo events during 2026.

These events will bring athletes, family members, and friends to Gainesville from other parts of Florida (Tampa, Orlando, Miami, Jacksonville), other US States, and other countries around the world. As an example, during 2025, we had athletes and teams competing in Gainesville from 4 different continents (Europe, America, Asia, and Australia).

Waterpolo Events

Summer 2026 Tournaments

- **Host 3 single day tournaments: June 26th, July 3rd, and July 10th.**
- Our summer tournaments have become very popular in the past few years. We usually have athletes and teams from all over the US (New York, Connecticut, California, Colorado, Illinois, Maryland, Texas, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida...) and International locations (Netherlands, Colombia, Mexico, Australia, Puerto Rico, Spain, Canada, Trinidad and Tobago, Bahamas, Guatemala, among others) to compete in Gainesville on those specific three days. Teams from other parts of Florida such as Jacksonville, Tampa, Orlando, and Miami will join our 3 days of summer tournaments.
- We expect 450 athletes to attend our tournaments.
- Athletes will be both, boys and girls, 12 to 19 years of age
- 1,800 spectators expected during these 3 tournament days
- Tournaments to be held at The City of Gainesville's Northeast Pool

Totals for 2026: 2,250 attendees. About 90% from outside Alachua County

Florida Series Tournament – 12U and 14U

- September, 2026
- 12 teams 12U and 14U – Boys and girls
- 180 athletes and 720 spectators are expected
- Tournament to be held at The City of Gainesville's Northeast Pool

Total for 2026: 900 attendees. About 90% outside Alachua County

Weekend Tournament Events

- Host teams from other parts of Florida and Georgia monthly (January to September).
- Our purpose is to allow our GWP athletes to have regular competition throughout the year. We will host tournaments twice a month, bringing teams from Jacksonville, Tampa, Orlando, Miami and Atlanta to Gainesville. Athletes will come to Gainesville with families and friends to spend time and money in our town.
- 10 match days in Gainesville with approximately 4 games on each day
- 120 athletes aged 8 to 18, both boys and girls.
- 1,200 athletes expected during 2026
- 3,600 spectators expected during 2026

Totals for 2026: 4,800 attendees. About 75% from outside Alachua County

Gator Waterpolo - 2026

Marketing Plan



	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Areas of influence</u>	<u>Cost</u>
RF Waterpolo Email Blasts	15.1.2025	Reaches WP athletes all over the US	\$4,000.00
	1.15.26	Reaches WP athletes in 4 European countries	\$4,000.00
	3.15.26	Reaches WP athletes Central, South America, and the Caribbean	\$4,000.00
	5.15.26	Reaches WP athletes all over the US	\$4,000.00
Facebook/Instagram campaigns	1.15.26	Reaching South East zone (Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, NC, SC, Tennessee) WP athletes	\$850.00
	3.15.26	Reaching South East zone (Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, NC, SC, Tennessee) WP athletes	\$850.00
	5.15.26	Reaching South East zone (Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, NC, SC, Tennessee) WP athletes	\$850.00
Banners/Flyers	Jan- June	Banners and flyers to be distributed throughout Florida in different events and facilities	\$1,200.00
			TOTAL \$19,750.00

Gator Water Polo Club - 2026 Event Budget - Marketing and Operational Expenses



Marketing Expenses

Out of County Marketing

Summer Tournament Events	\$14,250.00
Florida Series Tournament/weekend tournaments	\$5,500.00
Total	\$19,750.00

Grant- At least 25% of grant amount will go toward out of county marketing expenses

Operational Expenses

Pool rentals	\$12,000.00
Officials	\$15,000.00
Video board rentals	\$8,000.00
Events staff	\$15,000.00
Equipment rentals	\$6,000.00
Transportation rentals	\$10,000.00
Total	\$66,000.00

Grant- 75% of grant amount will go towards operational expenses



Local Sports Destination Enhancement Grant Application

Attendance (40 Points)

- Attendance Ratio Score Calculation (see chart below). (34 points)
- Detailed explanation of how attendance estimates were determined. (2 points)
- Attendance over previous two years with evaluation report of how attendance is tracked and verified based on ticket sales, research, surveys, etc. (4 points)

Attendance Ratio Score

Funding request divided by attendance = Ratio Score

4.0 and below = 34 points | 4.1 – 9.9 = 30 points | 10-14.9 = 25 points | 15 and higher = 20 points

Examples:	<u>Funding Request</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Ratio</u>	<u>Points</u>
	\$10,000	20,000	.5	34 points
	\$50,000	50,000	1	34 points
	\$35,000	6,000	5.8	30 points
	\$25,000	2,000	12.5	25 points
	\$10,000	500	20	20 points
	\$5,000	100	50	20 points
Calculate Your Ratio Score Here:	<u>50,000</u>	<u>7,950</u>	<u>6.28</u>	<u>30</u>
	Funding Request	Attendance	Ratio	Points



Gator Water Polo Club
Events 2026
Attendance

Detailed explanation of how attendance estimates were determined:

Gator Waterpolo 2024 total revenue was \$290,565.

The attendance ratio for our 2026 events is expected to be 6.28, which should give us 30 points according to the chart in the application form.

Ratio was calculated by dividing the amount of funding request (Maximum request since our 2024 total revenue was over \$200,000) by the expected attendance (adding athletes and athlete's family members).

Funding request (\$50,000) /Expected attendance (7,950 attendees) = 6.28 ratio.

GWP 2024 990 revenue is \$290,565. The funding request will be the maximum \$50,000, since our revenue is over \$200,000.

Attendance was determined by adding the number of total attendees (athletes, and athlete's family members) attending our events in 2026. We are expecting 90% of those families to be from out of Alachua county. They will come to Gainesville and spend at least one or two nights at our hotels and/or spend money in our restaurants.

Total athletes:	1,830
Athlete's family members	6,120
Total, attendance	7,950 attendees