



# ALACHUA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

# SPECIAL EVENT SPONSORSHIP APPLICATION

Alachua County Visitors and Convention Bureau  
33 North Main Street  
Gainesville, Florida 32601  
(352) 374-5260 - info@visitgainesville.com  
Revision Date: February 23, 2026

## Purpose

To support and enhance Alachua County as a culturally interesting and vibrant destination, the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners has allocated a portion of the Tourist Development Tax revenue to aid in the operations and promotions of events that have, as one of their main purposes, the attraction of tourists as evidenced by the promotion of the event to tourists.

Use of Tourist Development Tax Revenue are set by the state under the Local Option Tourist Development Act, F.S. 125.0104. An eligible event is one that its main purpose is the attraction of tourists as evidenced by the promotion of the activity or event to tourists. A tourist is a person who participates in trade or recreation activities outside of the county of his or her residence, or who rents transient accommodations as provided in the Act.

## Definition

For the purposes of this application, a special event is defined as a new or existing organized concert, performance, exhibition, festival, or fair which is of interest to the public and is promoted to tourists. The number and extent of sponsorships is contingent on the availability of funds. Special events are required to draw audiences and in-person attendees to their activity.

## Eligibility

Applicants must check the boxes below to signify that you fulfil the following eligibility requirements:

- Be a legally established entity. Individuals are not eligible.
- The event, activities and paid lodging accommodations must be within the boundaries of Alachua County.
- The proposed event has as one of its main purposes the attraction of tourists as evidenced by the promotion of the event to tourists.
- A complete application packet must be submitted at least 60 days prior to the event.
- Applications will not be accepted from library districts, public or private schools, school foundations, student groups, colleges or universities, hospitals, medical centers or healthcare entities.
- Events must have a minimum estimated attendance of at least 250 participants.
- The event must be new or existing organized concert, performance, exhibition, festival, or fair which is of interest to the public and is promoted to tourists.
- Entities may request up to 2 (two) sponsorships per Alachua County fiscal year for a maximum of \$20,000 total.

## Ineligible Events and Activities

- Applications will not be accepted from organizations who have applied for Tourist Development funding through the Gainesville Sports Commission, Nature and Culture Destination Enhancement Grants, Local Sports Destination Enhancement Grants, Arts Council Grants, Billboard Grants, Small Cities and Towns Grant and/or Conference Grants in the same year.
- Applications will not be accepted for organizations to re-grant or provide funding to individuals or organizations.
- Discriminatory acts or practices are prohibited. The organization shall not discriminate on the basis of any characteristic protected under applicable federal, state, or local law.
- **An 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.**
- Events that are political in nature, including those that promote, oppose, or are affiliated with a political party, candidate, ballot initiative, or legislative agenda, are not eligible for funding, even if political activity is not the primary purpose of the event.
- School events; including school fundraisers, student groups or clubs, or events sponsored or planned by colleges or universities.
- Benefits and projects planned primarily for fundraising purposes; including fundraising events, galas, auctions, banquets, golf tournaments and 5K walks/runs, and health fairs.
- Member-only, private, or invitation-only events, including camps, workshops, trainings, league meetings, or events not open to the general public.
- Regular weekly or monthly performances conducted without a defined, limited event window at restaurants, coffee shops and other similar businesses.

## Application Submission

**The applicant is solely and fully responsible for submitting all required documentation at least 60 days prior to the event's start date. Applications that do not meet this deadline will be ineligible for funding. Exceptions to the 60-day requirement may be granted only with approval from the Tourist Development Director or their designee. Only one application will be accepted per event, and it must be submitted by the event's primary organizing entity. Applications from co-hosts, vendors, venues, exhibitors, performers, or partners for the same event will not be considered.**

Applicants must notify us immediately if the event is canceled or if there are any significant changes to the event dates or program. All modifications must be approved by the Alachua County Tourist Development Director. Events may not have significant changes or substituted with a different event after approval.

## Credit Attribution Requirement

**All sponsored activities must include the Visit Gainesville, Alachua County, FL logo and "Sponsored in part by Visit Gainesville, Alachua County" on all promotional event materials, including but not limited to social media, print brochures, flyers, programs, posters, website, digital, radio, television, billboards, and promotional items. Radio and television advertisements must include "Sponsored in part by Visit Gainesville, Alachua County".**

**Events that omit the Visit Gainesville, Alachua County, FL logo and recognition on event advertising and promotional materials will not be eligible to receive funding or reimbursement under this sponsorship.**

## Public Records

**Upon receipt by the County, applications and records pertaining to the sponsorship become public records subject to the provisions Chapter 119 F.S., Florida Public Records Law. All communications, emails, invoices, and materials are public records.**

## Acceptance/Rejection of Applications

Alachua County reserves the right to reject any application which may be considered irregular, show serious omission, or unauthorized alteration of form. The County reserves the right to deny funding to any event which it deems is not in the best interest of the County.

Alachua County reserves the right to accept or reject 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.

## Reimbursement

All funds are available on a reimbursement basis only after the conclusion of the event. Copies of paid invoices, credit card statements, cancelled checks, printed samples or other backup information which shows proof-of-payment must accompany all requests for funds.

**Invoices for events should be submitted within 60 days of the conclusion of the event.**

**For reimbursement you must provide:**

1. Post event report
2. Invoice to Visit Gainesville, Alachua County for the sponsorship reimbursement request amount.
3. Copy of paid invoice(s) for advertising or other allowable expenses.
4. Proof of payment (credit card statement, canceled checks, etc.).
5. Proof of performance (printed samples of materials, advertisements, photo of promotional items, radio scripts with run dates, etc.).

## Allowable Expenditures

Event sponsorships are intended to supplement the organization's budget. They are primarily provided for promotion, marketing and paid advertising/media placed outside of Alachua County, and event production and technical expenses, site fees/costs.

- **Paid Marketing (Must have credit attribution with Visit Gainesville, Alachua County logo and "Sponsored in part by Visit Gainesville, Alachua County")** examples: Social media ads, radio ads, television ads, etc.
- **Operating examples:** Event venue rental; equipment and barricade rentals; performer fees; portable restroom rentals; security services; and the development of marketing collateral such as photography, video production, and websites, etc.

## Non-Allowable Expenditures

1. Salaries, benefits, travel, or expenses of personnel. Artist or performer fees and travel expenses are permissible.
2. Payment of any bills of a personal nature, such as rent, mortgage, utilities, personal vehicles.
3. Real property; capital projects and improvements, including but not limited to new construction, renovation, restoration, installation or replacement of fixtures, and tangible property.
4. Interest or reduction of deficits or loans, fines, penalties, or cost of litigation.
5. Expenses incurred outside the funding period, defined as up to 120 days prior to the event start date through the event end date.
6. Making payments or reimbursements for goods or services purchased for previous or other events.
7. Advertising, printing, or other expenses that omit the Visit Gainesville, Alachua County, FL logo and/or recognition.
8. Prize money, scholarships, awards, plaques, trophies, certificates, donations, or fundraising contributions.
9. Alcohol.
10. Expenses for events outside of Alachua County.
11. Any expenditure not authorized by Alachua County Code of Ordinances.

## SPECIAL EVENT SPONSORSHIP APPLICATION CONTACT PAGE

**Organization Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Event Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Event Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Event Date(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Event Time(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Brief Description of the Event:**

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**1. Event Category:**

Choose which category your special event falls under:

- Concert:** A live musical performance where artists or bands perform in front of an audience.
- Performance:** A live presentation, such as a play, dance, or other artistic display.
- Exhibition:** A public display or show of artistic, cultural, or educational items. Examples: Art exhibitions, trade shows, museum exhibitions, or public displays of products or services.
- Festival:** A cultural, artistic, or musical event that celebrates a specific theme, region, or type of art or music. Featuring a variety of performances, activities, and attractions.
- Fair:** A public event that typically includes various forms of entertainment, displays, and activities. Often includes attractions such as amusement rides, games, and food vendors.
- Other** (Please Specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Please outline the paid marketing plan with estimated budget amounts.** 25% of sponsorship award funding must be spent on paid out-of-county marketing (out-of-county = distribution of at least 51% of the marketing outside of Alachua County), i.e. Social media ads, radio ads, television ads, etc.

**3. Please attach itemized estimated revenues and expenses in the event budget for the Alachua County event.** Do not include: Potential event sponsorship funding in your event budget amount, budget amounts for expenses for events or activities outside Alachua County, Organizational budget amounts for expenses unrelated to the production and execution of the event in Alachua County. *\*Refer to example event budget on last page\**

**4. Event History:** Has this event been held in Alachua County before?

- Yes     No

Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**5. Attendance Information:**

Estimated Attendance for this year: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Year's Attendance (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Explain how you calculated your attendance estimate: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 6. Event Type & Funding Request Calculation

### STEP 1: EVENT TYPE CLASSIFICATION

Select **one** event type that best describes your event. All criteria must be met, and *final classification is subject to staff review*.

**1. Signature Large-Scale Events**

**Definition:** Multi-day events with a proven track record of generating significant tourism impact and overnight stays.

**Must meet the following criteria:**

- Minimum **50 verified hotel room nights** within Alachua County
- Minimum **estimated attendance of 5,000**
- Event duration of **two (2) or more consecutive days**
- Event must have been held **annually or regularly for at least three years with verified attendance**

**Maximum Base Funding:** \$20,000

**2. Established Tourism Events**

**Definition:** Recurring events with demonstrated tourism impact and consistent visitor draw, but not at the signature level.

**Must meet the following criteria:**

- Minimum **estimated attendance of 2,500**
- Event must have been held **for at least two consecutive years with verified attendance**

**Maximum Base Funding:** \$15,000

**3. Emerging Tourism Events**

**Definition:** Newer or growing events with measurable tourism potential and a clear growth trajectory.

**Must meet the following criteria:**

- Minimum **estimated attendance of 1,000**
- Event must have been held **at least one prior year**

**Maximum Base Funding:** \$10,000

**4. Developing Tourism Events**

**Definition:** Smaller-scale events that demonstrate early tourism impact and the ability to attract out-of-county visitors but are still building attendance and market presence.

**Must meet the following criteria:**

- Minimum estimated attendance of **500**

**Maximum Base Funding:** \$5,000

**5. Community & Specialty Events with Tourism Potential**

**Definition:** Community-based or niche events with limited scale but a defined strategy to attract out-of-county visitors.

**Must meet the following criteria:**

- Minimum estimated attendance of **250**

**Maximum Base Funding:** \$2,500

**6. Marketing-Only Tourism Support Events**

**Definition:** Small-scale events that meet minimum attendance requirements and demonstrate tourism potential but are not eligible for operating support.

**Must meet the following criteria:**

- Minimum estimated attendance of **250**

**Funding Restrictions:**

- Funds may be used **only for paid out-of-county marketing and advertising**
- Operating, production, and event execution expenses are **not eligible**

**Maximum Base Funding:** \$1,000

**STEP 2: BASE FUNDING REQUEST**

Based on the event type selected above, enter your requested base funding amount (not to exceed the maximum listed for that category).

**Requested Base Funding Amount:**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

(Maximum \$20,000)

**STEP 3: HOTEL ROOM BLOCK INCENTIVE (OPTIONAL)**

Events that can demonstrate a **confirmed hotel room block of at least 50 room nights** within Alachua County may be eligible for additional funding.

Yes, our event has a confirmed hotel room block of **50 or more room nights**

No

If yes, attach documentation of the hotel room block agreement.

**Hotel Room Block Incentive Calculation:**

\$15 × total verified room nights, up to a maximum of **\$5,000**.

**STEP 4: TOTAL FUNDING REQUEST CALCULATION**

Use the formula below to calculate your total funding request.

Base Funding Request: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Hotel Room Block Incentive (if applicable):

Estimated Room Nights (minimum 50) \_\_\_\_\_ × \$15 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Maximum \$5,000)

Total Funding Request: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**(Maximum Possible Award: \$25,000)**

**7. Expense Breakdown:** Your requested funds must be allocated as follows:

- **75%** — Operating Expenses = \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **25%** — **Required Out-of-County Marketing Expenses** = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Event Budget:** Provide an estimated budget for your event, reflecting the **total cost of producing the event**. Do not include potential sponsorship funding or organizational costs unrelated to the production of this event.

Please enter **estimated costs** for each category below. If a category does not apply, enter **\$0**.

<b>Expense Category</b>	<b>Estimated Cost (\$)</b>
Space Rental	\$ _____
Food & Beverage	\$ _____
Audio / Visual	\$ _____
Internet	\$ _____
Security	\$ _____
Other Services	\$ _____
Additional Costs (please specify below)	\$ _____
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED EVENT IMPACT COSTS</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>

If you list **Additional Costs**, please briefly describe them here:

**Please initial next to each item below, signifying that you have read and understand the conditions of sponsorship program.**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 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 Event Sponsorship criteria.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 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.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 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.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Applicant will comply with all federal, state and local laws, ordinances, and regulations, including these grant/program requirements. Failure to comply may subject the applicant to loss of funding or removal of participation in this or a future County tourism development tax funded grant/program.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 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.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 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.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tickets for the appropriate level sponsorship must be provided to Visit Gainesville, Alachua County, FL for promotional activities.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that all reporting requirements must be satisfied to receive reimbursement funding.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the event must be ADA accessible.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 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.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I certify that my event is within the boundaries of Alachua County.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 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.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that I should complete and submit the Sponsorship packet at least 60 days prior to the event date.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that I am required to submit my event to the Visit Gainesville event calendar and provide tickets for giveaways.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the county is permitted to take promotional videos and photographs at the event for County purposes, without prior notice of the applicant or event sponsor.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that 25% of the total funding amount must be used for paid out-of-county marketing which includes the Visit Gainesville, Alachua County logo and credit attribution.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the County is permitted to table or provide outreach at the event for no extra cost.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand Alachua County reserves the right to accept or reject any application in whole or in part that best serves the interests of the County.

Signature of Authorizing Official

Signature of Primary Contact

## Additional Application Documents

Please attach the following supporting documents:

- Organization's W-9 tax form
- A statement on letterhead that the applicant is a governmental entity or a copy of the Organization's Active Status from Sunbiz.org
- Event promotion materials (i.e. brochures, flyers, programs, etc.)
- Sponsorship packages

## Post-Event Submittal Requirements

At the conclusion of the event, you are required to submit the following for reimbursement:

- Post Event Report
- Invoice for the approved sponsorship amount to Visit Gainesville, Alachua County
- Invoices for all marketing and operating expenses which you wish to receive reimbursement
- Proof of payment for each invoice (Credit card statement, canceled check, etc.)
- Proof of performance for each invoice (Print materials, Radio ad script, Digital ads, etc., all required to have credit attribution to Visit Gainesville, Alachua County)