



VISIT BELOIT
JOINT EFFORT IN TOURISM
GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES
(Adopted July 25, 2018)

Visit Beloit Event/Experience Grant Program

A. INTRODUCTION

Visit Beloit, Inc. was created pursuant to the State of Wisconsin Statute 66.0615 and City of Beloit Ordinance Chapter 3, Article 15. Section 3. Visit Beloit utilizes the funds collected from a local room tax on occupied transient lodging sales, i.e., hotels/motels, bed and breakfasts, and vacation rental properties. The funds are designated to promote Beloit as a preferred visitor destination for leisure, business, and group travel. Visit Beloit allocates funds from its annual budget to a grant program for local groups and organizations that coordinate events or visitor experiences with a demonstrated history of visitor impact or significant potential to draw visitors to the area.

Each application will be evaluated against established criteria and historic precedent. The number and extent of these grants will be dependent upon the availability of designated funds and specific allocations. Ideally, the funds allocated by Visit Beloit will eventually be returned through an increase in transient lodging sales and the room tax generated from those sales and increased spending in the community that positively affects local sales tax revenues.

B. DEFINITIONS

A "Event" shall be defined as an organized concert, exhibition, festival, fair, conference or celebration which is conducted according to a prearranged schedule and in which public interest and demand is manifested. For this grant program, the public should extend beyond Beloit to those living outside Rock County who would consider visiting the destination and staying overnight to observe or participate.

An "Experience" shall be defined as a "tourism related product or experience" that is unique in nature, will enhance the visitors visit in Beloit and meets elements of Visit Beloit's Strategic Plan. These experiences can be interactive, participatory, or part of our historical/cultural fabric.

A "Program" means either an "event" or "experience".

C. STATEMENT OF POLICIES

1. Funds expended for the event/experience need to meet the allowable uses. Tourism grant funds that are expended for an activity, service, venue, or event shall have as one of its main purposes the attraction of tourists as evidenced by the promotion of the activity, service, venue, or event to tourists.
2. Grant funds are intended to supplement the sponsoring organization's budget and not be the sole source of funding. Higher consideration will be provided to applicants who have a lower percentage of grant dollars as part of the total revenue.
3. Grant applications will be on a biannual basis (February and August) however the time between the award and the event/product start date cannot be under 60 days to maximize advertising to potential visitors to the county. Grant awards are delivered at the end of March and September. Grant requests are not guaranteed from year to year.
4. Paid lodging secured or promoted for the event/product must be located within Beloit or South Beloit.

5. Funding shall be provided as reimbursement for approved actual expenditures upon completion of the event/experience. Proof of payment must be provided. Proof of payment may be submitted in the form of a "paid" vendor credit card receipt or a check. If a check is used, a copy of both the front and back of canceled check must be provided. Written confirmation from vendor that expenditure has been paid in full is necessary if only a copy of the front of the cleared check is provided. A detailed listing of what is needed for reimbursement is attached with Exhibit A.
6. To be eligible for final payment, a completed Post-Program Report must be submitted within 45 days of the program end. The report must include tracking statistics regarding out-of-town visitors and their overall impact on the local economy, particularly on transient lodging facilities and occupancy. Failure to submit a complete Post-Event Report will result in disqualification for support and could place future eligibility in question.
7. Any funds granted will potentially be subject to audit by both Visit Beloit and the City of Beloit.
8. Visit Beloit may choose to lend assistance or administer grant funds approved in the form of advertising, public relations, promotions, or research programs through its respective vendors on behalf of the applicant.
9. Recognition of Visit Beloit must be included where appropriate on all printed material and the organization's Web site and referred to in public relations activities. A camera-ready logo will be provided. All printed materials with the Visit Beloit logo must be presented with the Post Event Report. Failure to include the logo can be cause for disallowing reimbursement of that portion of the grant.
10. Funding is intended to support marketing and promotional efforts, venue/site rentals and costs associated with visiting artists, attractions/experiences and/or exhibits. Allowable expenses (direct customer acquisition costs) shall include the following: *Promotion, marketing, and programming expenses, paid advertising with potential to drive overnight visitation, media buys, production and technical expenses and travel expenses including lodging. Specific examples of marketing include broadcast (radio/television), digital (web-based), social media, print (newspaper/magazine), email and printing.* Higher consideration will be provided to applicants who have a lower percentage of non-promotional dollars as part of the total expense. Additionally, applicants who show more promotion in key markets targeted by Visit Beloit will receive higher consideration.
11. Funding is not intended to support administrative costs or non-public events. Unallowable expenses: *General and administrative expenses including salaries or supplements to salaries, building, renovating and/or remodeling expenses, prize money, scholarships, awards, permanent equipment purchases, debts incurred prior to grant requests, programs which solicit advertising or sponsorships, hospitality or social functions and advertising that only reaches within Rock County and its residents.*
12. Applicants should be aware that Visit Beloit may survey lodging partners and event attendees to obtain visitation data.

D. FUNDING ELIGIBILITY

The intent of the Grant Program is to provide funding assistance for events/experiences that attract overnight visitors to Beloit impacting the commercial lodging industry, hotels/motels, bed and breakfast, and vacation rental properties as well as restaurants, retail establishments and other businesses. To be considered for funding, the following criteria have been established:

1. Each application must include a signed Certification and Compliance page.
2. The event/experience must have the potential to bring or have a documented history of bringing out-of-town visitors.
3. Applicant must provide a marketing/promotion plan and provide a detailed program budget.
4. The program must use commercial lodging establishments within Beloit and/or South Beloit.

E. VISITOR TRACKING

To assess the impact of each event on the Greater Beloit transient lodging industry, Visit Beloit wants to emphasize the importance of tracking the number of overnight visitors attending the event/experience. We may intercept visitors at each event to ascertain a variety of data including party size, length of stay, reason for visit, awareness of the event, spending and other data.

In addition, it is suggested that you implement the following to help track visitors to your event:

- **Room Block & Pick-Up Reports from Lodging Properties:** Utilize Visit Beloit's website to get recommendations on lodging properties. Determine the appropriate properties to partner with to set up rate codes for your event. By promoting those properties in your marketing, you will help drive overnight business to the destination thus helping to generate more spending in the community.
- **Visitor Tracking Information:** Specific data can be tracked to be used for future marketing (zip code, email address, street address, social media address). You can gather this at the program, during a purchase process, or through other technology applications.

F. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be scored in four (4) categories with a maximum score of one hundred (100) points per applicant. If you are applying for more than one event, a separate application and distinct separate budget are required.

Total Point Scale

100 – 90 points- could receive up to 100% of requested funds

89 – 80 points- could receive up to 90% of requested funds

79 – 70 points- could receive up to 80% of requested funds

69 – 60 points- could receive up to 70% of requested funds

59 – 50 points- could receive up to 60% of requested funds

49 – 40 points- could receive up to 50% of requested funds

If you receive less than 40 points you are not eligible for any requested funds.

G. CONCLUSION

Applicants are asked not to contact members of the Visit Beloit Grant Committee/Board of Directors. Staff may be called upon at any time during the review process. Please submit the attached application form to: Visit Beloit, Attn: Grant Program, 656 Pleasant St., Beloit, WI 53511.

H. CERTIFICATION AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

APPLICANT:

I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and that I have read the Policies and Procedures of the Visit Beloit Event Grants Program and will abide by all legal, financial, and reporting requirements as a condition of receiving grant funds from Visit Beloit. Signatures must be **original**.

Name:

Organization:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return the original application to:

**Visit Beloit
Attention: Grant Program
656 Pleasant St.
Beloit, WI 53511**

Visit Beloit Grant Program Application Evaluation Metrics

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION – MAX 45 POINTS

- Has a lodging partner been secured? Multiple Properties (3); One Property (2); None (0)
- Time of year for the event (15 pts)
 - Jan – 15
 - Feb – 13
 - Mar – 11
 - Apr – 9
 - May – 5
 - Jun – 0
 - Jul – 0
 - Aug – 0
 - Sep – 5
 - Oct – 9
 - Nov – 11
 - Dec – 15
- Marketing/Media Plan targets visitors in cities/DMA'S targeted by Visit Beloit: Yes (10) No (0) Partial, (more than 3 but less than ½) (5)
- Is the event unique to the area's offerings? Yes (5) No (0) Partial (3)
- Past Research (Data is equal or greater to average) (15)
 - Length of Stay (2)
 - Visitor Spending (2)
 - % staying in paid lodging (3)
 - Party Size (1)
 - Out of Area Visitor (2)
 - Event was the main reason for visiting (3)
 - Awareness of Event Before Visiting (2)

PROGRAM INFORMATION EVALUATION – MAX 20 POINTS

- This is a ticketed event/experience. Yes (5); No (0)
- Does this event have a tourism focus? Yes (5); No (0)
- Length of Event (*hours open & programming is scheduled*) (10)
 - 0-4 hours (1)
 - 5-10 hours (3)
 - 11-16 hours (5)
 - 17+ (10)

FINANCIAL INFORMATION EVALUATION – MAX 25 POINTS

- Applicant Provides a Sponsorship Package Yes (2); Partial (1); No (0)
- Grant revenue as a part of total revenue (10)
 - 0-10% (10); 11-20% (8); 21-30% (6); 31-40% (4); 41-50% (2)
- Non-Profit: Yes (3); No (0)
- Non-promotional expenses as percentage of total expenses (10)
 - 0-10% (10); 11-20% (8); 21-30% (6); 31-40% (4); 41-50% (2)

MISCELLANEOUS CONSIDERATIONS – MAX 10 POINTS

- In-kind support from the community and demonstrates cooperation with other tourism entities to create a longer stay in the destination (5)
- Attended the Grant Workshop held by Visit Beloit (5)

VISIT BELOIT POST-PROGRAM REPORT

Event / Experience Grant Information		
Name of Event/Experience:		
Contact/Title:		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Telephone:	Awarded Grant Amount: \$	
Email:		
Make Check Payable To: (Please Note – Organization must be same as organization that was awarded grant.)		
Tax I.D. or Social Security #: (This information is required)		

To be reimbursed, please submit the following:

- 1) An invoice from your organization to Visit Beloit for payment of awarded grant amount.
- 2) Valid invoice(s) for allowable expenses. Only submit receipts amounting to the grant awarded.
- 3) Copy of proof of payments such as cleared check record showing front and back of checks, or detailed credit card receipts.
- 4) Number of visitors calculated with backup documentation.
- 5) Number of room nights tracked with backup documentation.
- 6) Copies of marketing or advertising materials, websites showing Visit Beloit logo.

EXPENSES TO BE REIMBURSED

Itemized expenses to be reimbursed by the Visit Beloit Grant funds must be allowable and match submitted invoices. Use additional pages if necessary.

Expense Item	Amount

NUMBER OF VISITORS

Provide back up (letter/communication) from the lodging properties participating with your event. Unknown or untracked is not acceptable and request for reimbursement will not be processed.

MEDIA / MARKETING

Provide summary of media exposure received (local, regional and national/ print/ television and radio) as well as examples of promotional materials (brochures, posters, programs, etc.). Please add additional sheets if needed.

I certify that the above information is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Name: _____ Date: _____

"Exhibit A"
Grant Reimbursement Guidelines

- **Have ALL COMPLETED submissions (in order) to Visit Beloit by the 10th of month.**
- **The first submission will need a copy of the completed signed grant.**
- Visit Beloit staff and immediate family are not allowed for reimbursement under the grant guidelines.
- Submissions are once a month. Have your completed submission at that time. Do not 'piece meal' it together over the course of the month.
- Have your submission in order, invoice to Visit Beloit, cleared check to vendor, vendor invoice, backup to invoice, contracts, pictures of ads, etc. Everything must be legible.
- If deemed non-reimbursable, the invoices will be returned to you.
- Provide a narrative or explanation of the event and each expense.
- Must have detailed receipts of all requests asking for reimbursement.
- Must have invoices, not just orders, but invoice.
- If purchasing media/advertisement must have copy of ad showing Visit Beloit logo as a sponsor.
- Must have copy of checks cleared from the bank.
- If paid by a credit card, need credit card statement and copy of cleared check.
- Provide copies of any contracts, agreements and or applications you are asking for reimbursement for.
- Tips, gratuities, alcohol are not reimbursable.
- Prepays are not reimbursable.
- Staff salaries are not reimbursable.
- Must have completed signed contracts and or applications with any vendor.
- Must have completed signed insurance contracts for the event, if applicable.
- Only highlight what you are asking reimbursement for (total without tips, alcohol). Make sure tax is not included for reimbursement for non-reimbursable.
- Must follow current GSA (Government Standards Act) guidelines for meals (\$59.00 per day) within Rock County. Please see <http://www.gsa.gov> this rate changes yearly.
- Mileage is not reimbursable.
- For hotels, must have detailed invoice showing ALL fees per night including all taxes. Must have list of names and affiliates for each room. Only rooms in Beloit and/or South Beloit are allowed.
- If room service charge, need to not only back out item ordered but also back out sales tax charged on the item (same for other disallowed like alcohol).
- MUST have DETAILED receipt if asking for reimbursement on room service charge.
- For meals need to list names of people, with their affiliations. Meals must be within GSA guidelines.
- Purchases for resale are NOT allowed.
- Donations are not allowed.
- All expenses that are covered by other revenue are NOT reimbursable.
- CASH receipts are not reimbursable. MUST have copy of cancelled checks. If the expense is paid with CASH then the company pays the person who paid the expense, with proper documentation. Then that cancelled check with all the proper documentation is submitted. This is no matter the amount.

- Previous disallows must resubmit with corrected back up, plus all previous backups sent. Mark as RESUBMIT on each page.
- Checks cannot be copied on top of an invoice. Each copy of check and invoice must be separate. Everything must be **legible**.
- Only checks cleared bank are allowed for reimbursement.
- NO double-sided copies allowed – must have single sided only.
- Copies need to be in color if applicable.
- REDACT (Black out) ALL account numbers, signatures on checks, social security numbers, etc.

"Exhibit B"

Key Origin Markets with a Visit Beloit advertising presence

- 1) Chicago, IL
- 2) Indianapolis, IN
- 3) Madison, WI
- 4) Milwaukee, WI
- 5) Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN
- 6) Racine/Kenosha, WI
- 7) St. Louis, MO