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**Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC)   
2023 Virginia Special Events & Festivals Sponsorship Program**

**Terms and Conditions**

# READ THIS FIRST SECTION THOROUGHLY AND REFER BACK TO THIS CHECKLIST BEFORE SUBMITTING YOUR FINAL APPLICATION!!!!

**IMPORTANT!** PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS A RELATIVELY **NEW** PROGRAM. IT IS SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT THAN VTC’S MARKETING LEVERAGE AND DMO GRANT PROGRAMS. THIS A REIMBURSEABLE SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM THAT ALLOWS FOR CERTAIN MARKETING AND EVENT PRODUCTION COST REIMBURSEMENTS. FAILURE TO EXECUTE THE SPONSORSHIP DELIVERABLES CONTAINED IN YOUR MARKETING AND PRODUCTION PLANS COULD RESULT IN DENIAL OF YOUR REIMBURSEMENT REQUESTS.

APPLICATIONS ARE OPEN TO EVENTS, DMOs, BUSINESSES, ATTRACTIONS, ORGANIZATIONS, LOCALITIES, AND NON-PROFITS.

THIS PROGRAM WILL **NOT** FUND START-UP SPECIAL EVENTS & FESTIVALS. THIS PROGRAM WILL NOT FUND EVENT/CONCERT SERIES THAT ARE ONLY ONE NIGHT A WEEK, SERIES THAT ARE ONCE-A-WEEK, OR SERIES THAT OCCUR INTERMITTENTLY OVER THE COURSE OF A MONTH OR A SEASON. THE VTC MARKETING LEVERAGE PROGRAM IS A BETTER FIT FOR CONCERT SERIES WHERE PERFORMANCES ARE HELD WEEKLY OR INTERMITTENTLY OVER THE COURSE OF A MONTH OR A SEASON.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND FESTIVALS FUNDED UNDER THIS PROGRAM MUST:

* BE AT LEAST TWO **CONSECUTIVE** DAYS
* BE HELD AT LEAST TWICE SINCE **2017**
* BE TOURISM ORIENTED
* HAVE SIGNIFICANT VISITOR EXPERIENCE
* BE A SIGNIFICANT DRIVER OF VISITATION, AND IN PARTICULAR, OVERNIGHT VISITATION
* MUST BE BASED IN VIRGINIA

**APPLICANTS MAY ONLY DO ONE APPLICATION PER CYCLE** FOR THIS PROGRAM. APPLICANTS WHO HOST MULTIPLE LARGE MINIMUM TWO-DAY SPECIAL EVENTS OR FESTIVALS **MUST CHOOSE ONLY ONE SPECIAL EVENT OR FESTIVAL** FOR WHICH TO APPLY. WE RECOMMEND THAT APPLICANTS CHOOSE THEIR MOST SIGNIFICANT SPECIAL EVENT OR FESTIVAL WITH THE HIGHEST PROJECTED VISITATION AND HIGHEST ECONOMIC IMPACT.

**READ THESE GUIDELINES AND MAKE SURE THAT YOU HAVE ADDRESSED EVERY ASPECT CONTAINED IN THE GUIDELINES**. FAILURE TO MEET THESE GUIDELINES WILL RESULT IN EITHER A LOWER SCORE OR INELIGIBILITY OF YOUR APPLICATION. BELOW IS A CHECKLIST FOR YOU TO USE IN REVIEWING YOUR APPLICATION BEFORE FINAL SUBMISSION. ALSO, BE SURE TO **READ THE HELPFUL TIPS** CONTAINED IN THE WORD VERSION OF THIS APPLICATION FOR ADDITIONAL WAYS TO STRENGTHEN YOUR APPLICATION!

* Have you read all instructions, Word version of this application, and helpful tips?
* Is the event listed on Virginia.org? Events must be listed on Virginia.org to qualify for reimbursements. However, the event listing does **not** need to be completed at the time of application.
* Have you completed the CONTACT INFORMATION section including Federal Employer Identification Numbers (FEIN)? The FEIN is used to confirm eligibility.
* Have you indicated the dates of your special event or festival? Is the special event or festival a minimum of two days with **robust visitor experiences** on both days?
* Have you indicated the amount of your requested funds and does that amount correspond to your marketing plan budget?
* Have you provided a thorough description of your event, event names, event coordinator, event location, and two years’ prior attendance data?
* Do you understand the liability insurance requirement and that Virginia Tourism Corporation must be listed as an interested party on the policy? Failure to do so will disqualify your application for reimbursement.
* Have you specified what you want to accomplish with this specific program?
* Have you indicated how this VTC funding will increase overnight visitation?
* Have you connected with partners to create special event or festival travel packages? Have you thoroughly explained those partnerships and packages?
* Have you identified your DMO and locality where the event takes place?
* Have you identified your TARGET MARKETS? Have you indicated what research you have to validate these as your target markets? Have you indicated the target demographics within these target markets?
* Have you clearly stated what is your CASH and/or in-kind MARKETING match, and what is the estimated value of that marketing match?
* Have you clearly stated what is your CASH and/or IN-KIND EVENT PRODUCTION MATCH, and what is the ESTIMATED VALUE of that event production match? Applicants are encouraged to include more than the minimum match in their application.
* Have you provided detailed MARKETING PLANS, including MEDIA CHANNEL/VENDOR NAME, PLACEMENT DATES, TARGET DEMOGRAPHICS, AND BUDGET AMOUNTS?
* Have you provided *detailed* PRODUCTION PLANS, including VENDOR NAME, PLACEMENT DATES, TYPE OF EQUIPMENT/SERVICE, AND BUDGET AMOUNTS?
* Have you indicated the number of days your special event/festival is open to the public with robust visitor experiences? Have you thoroughly described the visitor experiences on each day? Have you projected your special event attendance and indicated the research, info or data you used to make that projection?
* Have you indicated how many attendees spend at least one night in the locality where the event takes place, how many attendees are day trippers, and how many attendees are locals? Have you indicated the research, info, or data you used to make that projection?
* Have you clearly stated two additional PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES including baseline measures where you were during your last event, and where you want to be for this special event or festival?
* **BONUS POINTS** - Does your program activate and incorporate the “VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS” brand and marketing opportunities?

**Please go back over your application to make sure all sections, tables, and forms are complete. Use this checklist to help evaluate your application. You will NOT be able to make amendments to your application after submitting your application or after the due date!**

Applications are due **by 5:00 PM on Tuesday, February 28, 2023**

**NO EXTENSION OF THIS DEADLINE WILL BE ALLOWED!!!**

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**What is the Virginia Special Events & Festivals Program?**

The Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) announces that applications are now open for the Virginia Special Events & Festivals Program. The Virginia Special Events & Festival Program purpose is to assist with marketing and production of **established** overnight Virginia special events and festivals.  Preference is given to special events and festivals that have a significant and positive economic impact on the Virginia local community. THIS A REIMBURSEABLE SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM THAT ALLOWS FOR CERTAIN MARKETING AND PRODUCTION COST REIMBURSEMENTS. FAILURE TO EXECUTE THE SPONSORSHIP DELIVERABLES COULD RESULT IN NO REIMBURSEMENT.  
  
**PLEASE NOTE:** This is a relatively **NEW** program and differs significantly from past VTC Marketing Leverage Program applications and past Virginia Music Festival Sponsorship applications. Below is an overview of the changes:

* Different online application process than in the past.
* Two funding levels:
  1. $10,000 for special events and festivals with under 20,000 attendees.
  2. $20,000 for special events and festivals with over 20,001 attendees.

While the applicants will project estimated attendance, those projections/estimates must be backed up by research, data, and information.

* No requirement for a cash match; **however, a 50% cash and/or in-kind marketing and production match value is required. The in-kind match must be at least 50% of your requested funding amount. Applicants are encouraged to list more than the minimum required match.**
* State/Federal agencies are not eligible to apply for this funding. However, tourism-oriented state or federal owned attractions, museums, or parks may be listed as a marketing partner on your application.
* Only one application per applicant is permitted.
* DMO Requirements: Recognized Virginia Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) may apply for this program. If you are not a DMO, you should let the DMO where the special event or festival will be held know you are applying for this funding program. A list of recognized Virginia DMOs is available at <https://www.vatc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/DMOlist.pdf>.
* **Applicants are required to:** 
  1. **Include the Virginia is for Lovers brand in the marketing campaign. Logos requests and a list of approved logos can be found here:** <https://www.vatc.org/marketing/advertising/vifl-logo-request/>

**Applicants are encouraged to:**

* 1. **Incorporate a VTC Brand campaign into your marketing plan. Info can be found here:** [**https://www.vatc.org/marketing/advertising/brandinitiatives/**](https://www.vatc.org/marketing/advertising/brandinitiatives/)
  2. **Incorporate of VTC PMAP/Welcome Center opportunities in your campaign. Info can be found here:** <https://www.welcomeva.com/>
* **Competition for this program will be STRONG**. The more complete your application, the better you will score. Please follow ALL directions and answer as completely as possible.
* Awardees of prior VTC funding program grants or who have received extensions on prior funding program applications may also apply.
* Due to the anticipated number of applications, and to expedite application approval, a draft review of applications will NOT be possible.
* Only online applications will be accepted.
* Do **NOT** send – via email or regular mail – any attachments or supplemental materials. These materials will NOT be reviewed. Only submit the requested and required information via this online application!
* The final application must be submitted via the online application no later than **February 28, 2023 by 5:00 PM**. No other application delivery formats will be accepted. Grading of applications is expected to be completed and award/denial notifications made by mid-April 2023.

1. **IMPORTANT: Do not wait until the last minute to submit your application!** Waiting until the last minute does not allow VTC to diagnose any online submission problems and does not allow time to complete your application properly! No extensions on the deadline will be allowed.

**The Rules**

## Applicant and Partners

Applicant and partners may consist of Virginia towns, cities, counties, convention and visitors’ bureaus, planning district commissions, chambers of commerce, other local or regional destination marketing organizations (DMO), private businesses, museums, attractions, cultural and other events, and other tourism-related entities. **The Federal Employer Identification number (FEIN) must be included for the applicant**.

DMOs are *not required* to be a partner; however, all applications must indicate the DMO and locality where the special event or festival is located and applications must include a letter of support from the local or regional DMO. If the area is not covered by a DMO then a letter of support from the locality where the event is held will be accepted. A list of DMOs can be found at <https://www.vatc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/DMOlist.pdf>

Programs that are regional in scope are encouraged. If you have non-Virginia partners, you MUST indicate a minimum of two **Virginia** partners. In addition, your special event or festival must be located in Virginia, and drive visitation to Virginia. Applications that will lead to increased overnight visitation are encouraged and preferred. State/federal agencies are not eligible to apply for this funding.

All applicable partners in the application must be listed on <http://www.Virginia.org> and must provide a reciprocal link to <http://www.Virginia.org>. The applicant will administer the program the reimbursement payments will be made to the applicant only. Applicants can only submit one application to this program.

**Potential vendor of services** **(i.e., advertising agency, PR firm, printer, web developer, podcasters, influencers, etc.)** **for, or to, the application program cannot be a partner in the application.** Applicants are encouraged to seek services through a competitive bid process and are encouraged to utilize SWAM (Small Business, Women, or Minority-Owned) vendors, when possible. For more information about SWAM certification, please visit <https://www.sbsd.virginia.gov/certification-division/swam/>.

This program is not intended to be a sustainable funding source for your special event or festival. The use of VTC funds must be clearly specified in the application.

Partial funding may be awarded in some cases and applicants who accept the partial funding award will need to make adjustments to their marketing and production plans based on the partial award amount.

Please approach your application carefully. Think about how this funding can take your marketing to new target markets, target new demographics, and/or support new businesses, itineraries, or travel motivations and how this funding can expand your production budget to add additional special event or festival space, stages, comfort stations, or book new talent, or rent high quality A/V services. Current research on tourism in Virginia can be found at: <https://www.vatc.org/research/>

Events that are cancelled or rescheduled due to circumstances beyond the event organizer’s control may still be eligible to revise their marketing and production plans and qualify for reimbursement. However, applicants must contact the VTC Grants Team as soon as possible to discuss the cancellation and circumstances. Event cancellation insurance is strongly encouraged. Rescheduling events further out than 90 days from the original event date is considered an extension of your program deadline and final reports will be due 60 days after the new date.

**Rescheduling events beyond 90 days from the original special event or festival date will mean that your award is terminated and the funds will revert back to program.**

**Moving events from one locality to another will disqualify an awarded special event or festival due to the specific legislative requirements that fund this program.**

## Scoring

There are limited funds for this program, therefore funding will be awarded on a merit scale. Awarding of funding is based upon information contained in the application and will be scored based upon the Virginia Special Events and Festivals Scoring Guidelines (shown below). Since awards are determined from these scores, the application must be as complete as possible. Do not assume that the review team is familiar with your area, or program, so be sure to include all requested information. Actual award may or may not equal amount requested and is based on available funds at the time of award. Maximum award for this program is $20,000.

In making decisions on funding applications, the Virginia Tourism Corporation may consider such factors as type and scope of the applying organizations, campaign audience and message, the organization’s additional resources, past awards to – and applications from – the applying organizations, the impact and priority of the proposed program, the timetable, the number of applications received, the dollar amounts of the applications received and most importantly, the impact of the program’s ability to drive visitation, and visitor revenue in the program coverage area.

### The following points are assigned to sections in determining your application score

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **APPLICATION SECTION** | **POINTS** |
| Program Marketing Goals | 15 points |
| Visitor Experience | 15 points |
| Partnerships (Modified Hub & Spoke) | 10 points |
| Target Markets | 20 points |
| Marketing & Production Plans, Calendar, and Budget | 30 points |
| Performance Outcomes | 10 points |
| BONUS - VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS Activations | 5 points |
| **Total Possible Points** | **105 points** |

### The Funds

There are two levels of funding in the Virginia Special Events & Festivals Sponsorship Program.

Tier One: $10,000 for special events and festivals with less than 20,000 projected attendees.

Tier Two: $20,000 for special events and festival with over 20,001 projected attendees.

* Funds will be disbursed on a **reimbursement basis** for your qualifying marketing and event production plan items upon receipt from the Applicant by VTC of copies of vendor invoices showing the actual costs, proof of payment of invoices, proof of product or ad campaign (tear sheets, examples of printed and digital materials, copies of audio or video footage, etc.), and/or screen captures and active web addresses for website related programs. Funding payment requests must include the Virginia Special Events & Festivals Sponsorship Program Reimbursement Request form provided after award notification.
* Applicants must provide a certificate of liability insurance where VTC is listed as an interested party. Failure to do so will result in disqualification of reimbursements.
* **REIMBURSEMENTS: Only ELIGIBLE items covered by the Virginia Special Events and Festivals Program (see Pages 9-11) will qualify for reimbursements.**
* **IN-KIND MARKETING & PRODUCTION MATCH VALUE: You will be required to provide a 50% cash and/or in-kind marketing and production match. The in-kind match must be at least 50% of your requested funding amount.** In considering your in-kind marketing and production match items and value, be aware that you can use your existing marketing and production budget as match. In addition to your PAID MEDIA match components, you may use YOUR OWNED AND/OR EARNED MEDIA VALUE in determining your in-kind marketing match value. Please refer to the application instructions on how to value your owned and earned media assets. **NOTE:** Non-marketing and production value, such as office space and staff wages CANNOT be used as in-kind value match. ONLY eligible in-kind MARKETING and PRODUCTION values may be used for match.
* Eligible expenses that have occurred six months prior (August 1, 2022) to the due date of February 28, 2023 can be used as part of your marketing plan and may be reimbursable upon successful award notification.
* VTC realizes that changes may need to be made to your marketing or production program. Any changes in the applicant’s program that arise after notification of award must be submitted in writing and approved in writing by VTC.
* All programs should be completed within 60 days after the event date**.**
* VTC must report on the effectiveness of the Virginia Special Events & Festivals Program to our stakeholders. We must show a return on investment of the program. To that end, you will be required to provide a brief final report on the effectiveness and outcomes of your programs.
* A final report must be submitted to the VTC within 60 days after the event detailing the results of the program, including return on investment, performance outcome results based upon your Performance Outcomes and other supporting data. The final report is a simple, two-page summary of the results of your Performance Outcomes and other outcomes of your program.
* Failure to provide the final report, or failure to meet guidelines stated in the application, may result in partners being in default and any funding awarded to date may be refundable to VTC.

**What the Virginia Special Events & Festivals Program Will Fund**

VTC will implement a variety of marketing campaigns over the next several months. Using VTC campaign templates and tie-ins are not required but are encouraged. Based on your timing and marketing goals, you may choose which campaign(s) would be most beneficial for you to join our efforts. Information on the VTC Virginia is for Lovers campaigns is available at <https://www.vatc.org/marketing/advertising/brandinitiatives/>.

VTC also encourages partners to review the Virginia Industry Advertising Co-Op program that offers simple, affordable, and flexible advertising opportunities with strategic partners. You will need to indicate on your application if your marketing campaign items are Co-Ops opportunities. Info on Co-Ops can be found here: <https://vatc.org/marketing/advertising/partneradvertising/>

VTC also encourages partners to review the Virginia PMAP/Welcome Center program that offers simple, affordable, and flexible advertising opportunities at Virginia Welcome Centers and Safety Rest Areas. You will need to indicate on your application if your marketing campaign items are PMAP/Welcome Center opportunities. Applicants for this program are encouraged to look at the PMAP/Welcome Center Special Event & Festivals option. Info on the PMAP/Welcome Center opportunities can be found here: <https://www.welcomeva.com/>

You MUST include the Virginia is for Lovers logo in your marketing. Logo requests and approved logos can be found here: <https://vatc.org/marketing/advertising/vifl-logo-request/>

Although you are not required to creatively activate the Virginia is for Lovers brand, campaigns, and opportunities in your marketing, by doing so you can receive up to 5 bonus points on your application. Think about how you can provide creative opportunities, beyond the required logo usage in your marketing, in your campaign to activate the Virginia is for Lovers brand. Examples might include temporary banners on stages and throughout the event space, videotaped interviews disseminated via social media with performers wearing Virginia is for Lovers apparel, press passes, VIP access, behind-the-scenes filming or photography opportunities, comped or discounted lodging during photography or videography, or other creative ways to include the brand in your marketing.

Virginia is for Lovers branded items, such as apparel, banners, and other promotional items, must be purchased from the Image Group through the VA Store. Partners are eligible to set up wholesale accounts. Information can be found here: <https://vatc.org/about/merchandise/>.

**IMPORTANT**: **FAILURE to incorporate Virginia is for Lovers logo in your marketing will result in reimbursement requests being denied. Exceptions: 30 second radio advertisements, web banner advertisements, and 1/12 page or smaller advertisements are not required to have the VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS and/or campaign logos.** Please visit <https://www.vatc.org/marketing/advertising/vifl-logo-request/> **to request the VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS logo. Also refer to the VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS Creative Resources Guide for more information. The Guide can be found at** <https://www.vatc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/creative_resources_guide_03262020v3.pdf>.

**Eligible Items**

* Placement of Advertisements – (includes print ads, digital, radio, television, etc.). Ads must promote the applicant’s area to visitors. Applications that more fully integrate the “VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS” Industry Advertising Co-Op and/or PMAP Program will score higher. If the proposal includes media outlets that are not part of the VTC Advertising Opportunities, justification should be included as to why the proposed media outlet is used. Please visit <https://www.vatc.org/advertising/partneradvertising/> for more information on VTC Partnership Advertising Opportunities.
* Outdoor advertising through paid billboards.
* Creative services including agency fees.
* Printed Materials – Travel related printed materials including brochures, media kits, group tour publications, meeting planner publications and other printed information materials designed to promote the partner’s area as a travel destination. Such programs **MUST** include a marketing/distribution mechanism and plan for promoting the availability of such printed materials.
* Website Development – Development and/or expansion of websites to promote the applicant’s area are eligible. Maintenance fees for websites are NOT eligible. Websites must include the “VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS” logo and must provide a reciprocal link to <http://www.Virginia.org> from the partner’s website. Website development programs must include a marketing mechanism and plan for promoting the awareness and availability of such websites. NOTE: Costs associated with programming of your current website to allow data share with Virginia.org is an eligible expense. More information on VTC Datashare is available at <https://www.vatc.org/marketing/digital-marketing/datashare/>.
* Participation in the VTC LOVEworks RENTAL Program. For more information, please refer to <https://www.vatc.org/LOVEartworkapplication>
* Participation in the Virginia Travel Guide. For more information, please refer to <https://www.vatc.org/marketing/advertising/guideadvertising/>
* Digital Marketing – Search engine optimization, banner and website advertising, and other electronic marketing initiatives.
* Creation of mobile marketing applications (“Apps”) so long as they are measurable.
* Social media marketing initiatives, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, etc.
* Influencer and Podcaster Marketing – Use of Influencer and Podcaster Marketers. To read and review our Best Practices for Influencer Marketing, please refer to <https://www.vatc.org/marketing/public-relations/prbestpractices>/. NOTE: This is a password protected page. Information on requesting a password is available at the link above. Please note that travel expenses, such as transportation, lodging, and meals for influencers are eligible, but alcohol expenses are **not** eligible.
* Production of photography and video marketing materials:
  + All photography and video marketing materials created using a VTC funding should include usage rights for VTC in perpetuity. You can secure those rights for Virginia Tourism corporation in one of two ways:
    1. When creating your for-hire contract, include language that allows you to transfer usage rights to partners (like VTC). Not only is it a great way to maximize your marketing dollars, but it is a practice VTC has been implementing for years. It is what allows us to share our photo assets with partners like yourself.
       - For an example of the language we use in our contracts, see section 3 in our [licensing terms & conditions](https://www.vatc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Licensing-Assets-Terms-Conditions.pdf). Please feel free to copy and adapt this language for your own contracts.
    2. You can have the copyright owner complete our [photo & video release form](https://www.vatc.org/marketing/advertising/video-and-photo-requests/photovideoconsent/). This MUST be completed by the copyright owner, not by the licensing entity.
  + For information on planning your photo shoot, please see our [How to Plan a Photo Shoot](https://www.vatc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/How-to-plan-a-photoshoot-08032020-V4.pdf) document. Here, we break down our planning process while giving recommendations and tips on maximizing your budget, staying organized, and considering the details.
    - Note: The cost of purchasing equipment for photographic and video production is NOT an eligible expense.
    - Note: The costs of food and other props during a photo shoot are NOT eligible expenses.
  + High resolution photography and b-roll may be delivered to Sarah Atkins. Please contact her at [satkins@virginia.org](mailto:satkins@virginia.org) with assets and any questions.
* Participation fees in VTC domestic sales trade show opportunities. Travel expenses, including accommodations, and transportation, are NOT eligible.
* Participation fees in a sales mission with VTC Domestic Sales to target markets for Tour and Travel, Meetings & Conventions or Sports Marketing. Travel expenses, including accommodations, and transportation, are NOT eligible.
* Travel and Trade Show Booth Rental/Participation Fees – Fees associated with registration at travel and trade shows are eligible. Travel expenses, including accommodations, and transportation, are NOT eligible.
* Dues and Memberships – Fees that are required to participate in marketing initiatives or travel trade shows are eligible. Such membership fees shall not exceed 10% of your total marketing budget.
* Tradeshow Displays – Design and production of display units that will be used in conjunction with travel promotions at travel and tradeshows are eligible.
* Participation costs in the VTC Virginia Welcome Center Partnership Marketing and Advertising Program (PMAP). More information on PMAP is available at <https://www.welcomeva.com/>.
* Fulfillment Costs – Fees associated with mailing collateral materials as a result of the marketing programs are eligible.
* The cost of doing research **DIRECTLY RELATED TO YOUR PROGRAM**. Research may be up to 15% of your overall marketing budget. Research programs funded by the Virginia Special Events & Festival Program must share the research results and any reports with the VTC Research Department.
* Costs of promotional items (such as pens, pencils, t-shirts, hats, general merchandise, stickers, on-site or local banners, signs, glassware, etc.) NOT to exceed 10% of your total marketing budget.
* The cost of music licensing fees for concerts, performances, or use in video content. Music licensing fees may be up to 10% of your overall marketing budget. Examples of music licensing fees include fees charged by ASCAP, BMI, SESAC and other licensing companies.
* The cost of event cancellation insurance and/or event liability insurance. Up to 10% of your overall marketing budget may be used for insurance policy costs. However, VTC must be added as an interested party to the required event liability insurance policy **AND** a copy of the policy must be submitted for reimbursement.
* The cost of Wi-Fi Internet fees as part of hosting an event, meeting, or convention. Up to 10% of your overall marketing budget may be used to cover these costs.
* Event production costs including temporary stage and tent costs, temporary comfort station/restroom costs, temporary fencing costs, A/V equipment rentals, and performer booking fees.

### INELIGIBLE ITEMS: What the Virginia Special Events & Festival Program will *NOT* Fund

The following will **NOT** be funded by the Virginia Special Events and Festivals Program:

* ***Programs that do not contribute to increased visitation to Virginia and Virginia destinations will not qualify.***
* ***Programs or special events/festivals that promote and market cannabis will not qualify.***
* ***Programs or special events/festivals that are related to political activities, private family events like family reunions, weddings, birthday parties will not qualify.***
* **Administrative and Office expenses** including office space, business cards, stationery, salary and personnel costs, office supplies, office equipment, normal office postage, other administrative costs, cost of doing business and overhead costs, vehicle costs; are NOT eligible expenses.
* Maintenance fees (such as hosting and ongoing maintenance) for websites are NOT eligible.
* The cost of purchasing computers/equipment (such as iPads, Point of Sale devices, drones, etc.) are NOT eligible expenses.
* Production of items such as books, art, music, etc. are NOT eligible expenses.
* Programs that focus on a tangible product’s marketing (such as books, art prints, etc.) are NOT eligible expenses.
* Sponsorship costs not directly related to marketing activities are NOT eligible expenses.
* FAM/Media Tours costs associated with travel (transportation, lodging, meals, etc.) are NOT eligible expenses. Development of media kits and/or other collateral marketing materials are eligible expenses.
* Programs that focus exclusively on a RESEARCH project, will not qualify. **SUCH APPLICATIONS MUST INCLUDE EXTENSIVE MARKETING INITIATIVES AND NOT JUST FOCUS ON RESEARCH.** The

Research cost must be directly associated with the marketing program. Research costs not directly associated with the program are NOT eligible expenses.

* Programs that focus exclusively on a BRANDING project will not qualify. **SUCH APPLICATIONS MUST INCLUDE EXTENSIVE MARKETING INITIATIVES AND NOT JUST FOCUS ON BRANDING**. The branding initiative must be directly associated with the marketing program. Branding costs not directly associated with the program are NOT eligible expenses.
* The costs of signage, vehicle wraps, and signage - including production and installation - are NOT eligible expenses except as noted below:

**EXCEPTIONS:**

* + (1) Costs associated with posters, banners, and signage to assist with relaying information and changes due to COVID-19 *ARE an eligible signage cost*.
  + (2) Costs associated with Virginia is for Lovers posters, banners, and signage as part of a PMAP/Welcome Center program when those posters, banners, and signage are temporary will be displayed at the Virginia Welcome Center or Safety Rest Area or at a grant-funded event or festival.
  + (3) Costs associated with Virginia is for Lovers posters, banners, apparel and signage that will be displayed on-site or worn at an event by event staff and performers are not eligible for reimbursement beyond 10% of the applicant’s total award, but may be counted as part of your cash and/or in-kind match.
* Customer service and industry training programs are NOT eligible expenses.
* Ongoing maintenance and hosting fees for websites are NOT eligible expenses.
* Travel expenses, including accommodations, and transportation, are NOT eligible expenses.
* Costs to construct any **permanent** staging, fencing, comfort stations, or restrooms are NOT eligible expenses. However**, rentals of such equipment are permitted**, but must be moveable.
* Costs for event security is NOT an eligible expense.

**DEADLINE INFORMATION**

* **Applications are due by 5:00 PM on Tuesday, February 28, 2023.**
* **NO extensions to this deadline will be possible.**
* Applicants will be notified of awards by mid-April 2023.