



## Spring 2024 VTC Special Event & Festivals Sponsorship Program

### Application Template and Instructions

**The online application portal will open on Thursday, February 8, 2024, at 9 a.m.**

VTC has created this application template and instructions document to assist you in preparing your application. You can copy and paste your answers from this document into the required web portal. Applications will only be accepted via the online web portal and applications are due by 5 p.m. on Thursday, March 14, 2024

This round (that closes on March 14, 2024) is **only for events occurring in calendar year 2024 which is from January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024.**

Another round of the Special Events & Festivals program will open in mid-June 2024 and will be for calendar year 2025 events which is from January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025. The Special Events & Festivals program will then open in mid-June of each year going forward.

We recommend that you also have the Spring 2024 Special Event and Festivals Program Terms and Conditions document open and available as you fill out this application template. The Terms and Conditions document reviews applicant eligibility, eligible and ineligible expenses, and reimbursement processes. You can also review the reimbursement form and reimbursement instructions on [www.vatc.org/grants](http://www.vatc.org/grants).

These documents can help you understand which receipts, proofs of payment, invoices, and tear sheets you will need to submit to be reimbursed if you are awarded funding. Please read those documents before starting your application.

For your reference, marketing expenses are expenses related to marketing the event. Production expenses are expenses related to producing the event, such as stage rentals, fencing rentals, performer fees, etc. Be sure to check the Terms and Conditions for what types of marketing and production expenses are eligible. This program has very strict requirements and you will not be reimbursed for ineligible expenses AND your award, if you qualify, may be reduced if ineligible expenses are listed in your match sections.

Once you completely submit your application you can not edit it in the web portal. However, you can stop and start your application in the web portal by saving your application url. Do not click submit until you are absolutely sure you are ready to do so.

Please note attachments are not saved when you stop and start your application. If you are having trouble submitting your application, please double check that all your required attachments are uploaded in the portal with the corresponding question.

If you need technical assistance, you can use the Technical Assistance request box on the grant application web portal or you can contact [VTCSEFGrant@virginia.org](mailto:VTCSEFGrant@virginia.org) for assistance.

## General Information Section

Being listed on Virginia.org (the state tourism website) is a requirement for reimbursement. Please visit <https://www.vatc.org/marketing/digital-marketing/webmarketing/> to set up an account or manage your listing. You must set up your account, create your listing, and then add your event to the calendar. Webinars and information are available at the link above to help with this process. You **DO NOT** need your listing to be complete at the time of application. However, it must be set up before reimbursements can be processed.

An example Virginia.org url looks like this: <https://www.virginia.org/listing/cape-charles/5128/>

<b>Is your event listed on Virginia.org?</b>	Yes/No
<b>If yes, what is the url?</b>	

VTC must know the exact location of where the event/festival will be held. This is not the physical address of the event organizer. This is the physical location where the event/festival will be held. This program is ONLY open to events and festivals that have robust visitor experiences for a MINIMUM of two CONSECUTIVE days.

<b>Event/Festival Name:</b>	
<b>Event/Festival Street Address:</b>	
<b>Event/Festival City, State, Zip:</b>	
<b>Locality where event is held:</b>	
<b>Event/Festival Start Date:</b>	
<b>Event/Festival End Date:</b>	

This program will not fund start-up events and event series. The Marketing Leverage Program is a better fit for those types of events. To qualify for this program, events and festivals must have been held at least TWICE since 2017. You will need to upload proof of attendance. This may be an Eventbrite Report, Facebook/Twitter RSVP screenshot, written attestation, ticketing report, ticket sales report, etc.

Use your attendance total for all days of the event. For instance, if you had 5,000 on Day 1, 7,000 on Day 2, and 3,000 on Day 3, your total would be 15,000 attendees.

<b>Prior year event held:</b>	
<b>Attendance that year:</b>	
<b>Prior year event held:</b>	
<b>Attendance that year:</b>	

<b>Applicant/Business/Organization Name:</b>	
<b>EIN#:</b>	
<b>Applicant Contact Name:</b>	
<b>Applicant Contact Title:</b>	
<b>Applicant Contact Email:</b>	

If the applicant is a very small locality managed DMO, please list the County Manager or Finance Officer as the secondary contact. All other applicant types should include a secondary contact from within their organization or business.

<b>Secondary Contact Name:</b>	
<b>Secondary Contact Title:</b>	
<b>Secondary Contact Email:</b>	

The program is only open to Virginia entities and Virginia-based events and festivals. Non-Virginia entities may partner with a Virginia applicant on an application, but non-Virginia entities may not be the applicant in VTC funding programs.

<b>Applicant Mailing Address:</b>	
<b>Applicant City, State, Zip:</b>	
<b>Applicant Phone:</b>	

Please refer to the program Terms and Conditions for the maximum amount you can request based on your event or festival attendance.

<b>Amount of Requested Funds:</b>	
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You must provide a liability insurance policy/certificate with Virginia Tourism Corporation listed as an interested party in order to be reimbursed through this program. If you do not yet have event/festival insurance coverage, you **do not** need to upload a policy at the time of application. VTC will send you reminders to complete this step. In addition to the requirement of an event liability policy, VTC strongly encourages events/festivals to acquire event cancellation insurance.

<b>Do you have an event liability insurance policy in place:</b>	Yes/No
<b>If, yes please upload liability insurance certificates if available.</b>	
<b>If you have event cancellation insurance, please upload that policy.</b>	

Please list your social media handles, website, and hashtags where applicable.

<b>Event/Festival Twitter:</b>	
<b>Event/Festival Facebook:</b>	
<b>Event/Festival Instagram</b>	
<b>Event/Festival Website:</b>	
<b>Event/Festival Hashtags:</b>	

### Program Marketing Goals (10 points)

Please choose the best category that best fits your event.

<b>Special Event/Festival Focus:</b>	Choose One from drop down list: Arts & Culture Culinary/Craft Beverage/Wine Equestrian Luxury Travel History Music Outdoor Recreation Sports LGBTQIA+ Holidays
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Be as detailed as possible when describing your marketing plans. We anticipate that some applicants will have been marketing their event or festival much earlier than October 1, 2023. However, the lookback period for expenses is only back to October 1, 2023.

Describe your event marketing plans:	
Start date of event marketing (no earlier than October 1, 2023):	
End date of event marketing (no later than 30 days after the event end date):	
How will VTC funding enhance your normal marketing and production activities for this event?	

Driving overnight visitation is a critical component of VTC programs. An overnight visitor is one who spend at least one night at or near the locality. A regional visitor is a day tripper who comes from at least 50 miles away. Explain how your marketing choices in this plan will help drive additional overnight visitation and additional out-of-region visitation to your event/festival. Be sure to reference research from your prior marketing campaigns, social media insights, and/or Virginia Tourism Corporation travel profiles that can be found on [www.vatc.org/research](http://www.vatc.org/research).

<b>How will these marketing and production funds drive additional overnight or out-of-region visitation to your event/festival?</b>	
<b>Projected # of out-of-state visitors to the event/festival:</b>	
<b>Projected # of out-of-region visitors (non-overnight/daytrippers) to the event/festival:</b>	
<b>Projected # of local visitors to the event/festival:</b>	

The total projected visitors to the event/festival should equal the three numbers from above. Total your projects for all three visitors types and enter your total projected visitors to the festival/event. Indicate what research you have, such as prior ticket sales and prior gate counts, to validate those projections.

<b>Total projected attendance to the event/festival:</b>	
<b>What research/data do you have to validate these projections?</b>	
<b>Is this a ticketed event?</b>	Yes/no
<b>If no, how will you track attendance</b>	

### Visitor Experience (15 points)

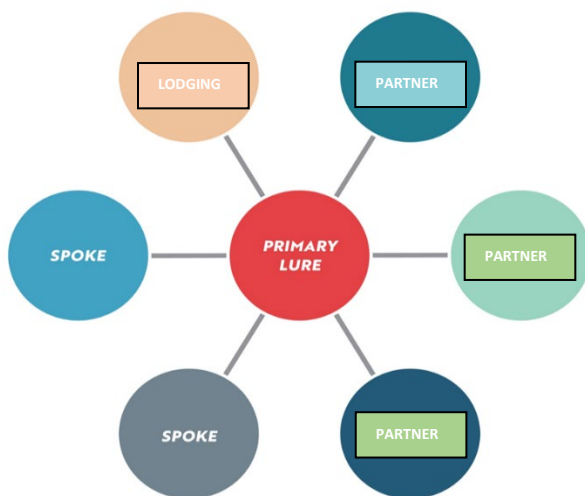
This is a critical section in your application. Fully explain your event/festival experience day-by-day so that the scoring teams can understand all of the activities related to this event and thoroughly explain how these funds will be used to grow your event/festival's attendance, activities, or footprint.

<b>List the visitor experiences for each day of the event:</b>	
<b>Will these funds allow you to expand the festival footprint (i.e. add a second stage, rent tents for vendor marketing, etc.)</b>	Yes/No
<b>If yes, please explain.</b>	
<b>Will these funds allow you to increase overall capacity (# of people) who can attend the event?</b>	Yes/No
<b>If yes, please explain.</b>	
<b>Will this event have a vendor market, food trucks, concessions or artisan area?</b>	Yes/No
<b>If yes, please describe the number of vendors and how you recruit these businesses to your event.</b>	
<b>Will these marketing and production funds enhance your marketing to diverse audiences and/or promote accessibility at the event?</b>	Yes/No
<b>If yes, please explain.</b>	

### Partner Section/Modified Hub & Spoke (15 points)

Virginia Tourism Corporation uses a Hub & Spoke itinerary and development model as pictured below. Think of your event or festival as the main lure. Where will people stay who come to your event or festival? Will they be dining out? Shopping? Engaging in outdoor recreation, visiting a museum, or

enjoying time at a local brewery, winery, or distillery? Think about your hub & spoke as a partnership model. How will you and these partners all work together to get more visitors?



Your event/festival is the Primary Lure, and the itinerary/partnership has six spokes. Three of those are partners in your marketing plan. For this program, you need to identify for your four partners and if you have created any partnerships or event/festival packages. You must use actual names of businesses in this section. Please do not list general categories such "restaurants." Instead, list exact names of businesses, such as Whistlestop Café or Joe's B&B.

New in 2024 is that every applicant must have a lodging partner in their hub & spoke model and must **upload a letter of support** from that lodging partner.

<b>Lodging Partner Name:</b>	
<b>Upload lodging partner letter of support:</b>	
<b>Partner #1 Name:</b>	
<b>Partner #2 Name:</b>	
<b>Partner #3 Name:</b>	
<b>How will these partners support the marketing and production of your event/festival?</b>	
<b>Have you created any event/festival partnerships with these partners such as lodging packages, VIP packages or other creative partnerships?</b>	Yes/No
<b>If yes, please explain.</b>	

A DMO is a Destination Marketing Organization. DMOs please select your office and please also upload a letter of support signed by your Director or CEO. These are local and regional tourism offices that are officially recognized by Virginia Tourism Corporation. A letter of support from the local or regional DMO is required for this program. Most, but not all, localities in Virginia are covered by a DMO. If your locality is not covered by a local or regional DMO, please select "Other" then a letter of support from locality leadership (i.e., county supervisor, city manager, EDA, PDC) will suffice. A list of DMOs can be found on [www.vatc.org/dmolist](http://www.vatc.org/dmolist)

Please select our nearest local or regional DMO:	
Please upload a letter of support.	

### Target Markets (10 points)

Your must choose at least TWO target markets, but you may choose THREE. Be sure to reference data from your social media insights, credit card processing data, other market research, and VTC research to justify why you selected those target markets. VTC visitor profile data and other research can be found at [www.vatc.org/research](http://www.vatc.org/research). Applicants are encouraged to spend at least 25% of their requested amount on an out-of-state target market. The drop-down box selections are: Baltimore, MD; New York, NY; Philadelphia, PA; Raleigh, NC; Boston, MA; Cleveland, OH; Columbus, OH; Harrisburg, PA; Nashville, TN; Pittsburgh, PA; Atlanta, GA; Charlotte, NC; Chicago, IL; Washington D.C.; Hampton Roads; Richmond; Roanoke-Salem; Bristol; Charlottesville; Danville; Northern Virginia; Harrisonburg; Winchester; Fredericksburg; In-State Other; Out-of-State Other; International Other.

Target Market #1	
Why did you choose this market?	
Target Market #2	
Why did you choose this market?	
Target Marketing #3	
Why did you choose this market?	

### Marketing and Production Plans (40 points)

Your marketing and production plan is a critical component of your application. Please be sure to reference the Terms and Conditions of this program for a list of eligible and ineligible marketing and production expenses. The list of eligible expenses is driven by legislation. There are no exceptions.

This section has four parts:

- Cash and/or In-Kind Match Marketing Plan —*these are marketing expenses that you are pledging to spend (or have already spent since October 1, 2023) as your match.*
- Cash and/or In-Kind Match Production Plan-- *these are production expenses that you are pledging to spend (or have already spent since October 1, 2023) as your match.*
- VTC Reimbursable Marketing Plan (must be at least 50% of requested award)—*these are marketing items for which you are going to pay for then seek reimbursement from VTC for.*
- VTC Reimbursable Production Plan (may not be more than 50% of requested award) -- *these are production items for which you are going to pay for then seek reimbursement from VTC for.*

VTC recommends that you research the VTC Co-op Industry Advertising Plan that provides some discounts with certain publications. Information on those opportunities can be found at: <https://vatc.org/marketing/advertising/partneradvertising/>

You may also want to research special event and festival advertising opportunities through the PMAP/Welcome Center program managed by VTC. You can find information on those opportunities here: [www.welcomeva.com](http://www.welcomeva.com)

Be sure to indicate the name of the vendor, such as Facebook/Meta or Instagram/Meta or Joe's Tent Rentals or Jane's AV services in your marketing plan. If you don't yet know the name of the vendor, such as an event insurance policy underwriter, then please describe the vendor/business type in that column.

This program allows for both in-kind and cash match.

For **cash** marketing and production match, simply list the vendor, items/target demographics if applicable, date, and projected dollar value

For in-kind marketing match, the following criteria applies:

**Only eligible marketing expenses** listed in the Terms and Conditions can be counted as in-kind marketing match. A summary of how to value earned and owned media is below but refer to the program Terms and Conditions for more information.

- In-kind marketing match based on owned and earned media can be calculated based on the following:  
Print editorial \$250/quarter page. \$1,000 per full page. (Must have appeared in print after June 1, 2023.)  
Online editorial \$500/quarter page. \$2,000 per full page. (Must still be hosted online.)  
Print listing \$100/each (Must have appeared in print after June 1, 2023.)  
Online listing \$200/each (Must still be hosted online.)  
Social Media Followers 10 cents each  
Owned media website clicks 10 cents each per link (Must be as of June 1, 2023.)
- In-kind marketing match should be listed in the In-Kind and Cash Match Marketing Plan as separate line items with detailed information about the articles, dates, social media channel, website, links, etc.
- Cash match should be calculated on the actual cost of the marketing activity.

For in-kind earned and owned media match, you can lookback to June 1, 2023. For in-kind **cash/paid match**, you can only lookback to October 1, 2023.

For in-kind production match, the following criteria applies:

**Only eligible production expenses** listed in the Terms and Conditions can be counted as in-kind production match. You **MUST** refer to the Term and Conditions document for a list of qualified production expenses. **Absolutely no staff time, security or EMT costs can count as**



**production match. Permanent Signage is not eligible. However, banners are eligible under the promotional items allowance.**

**For donated costs that will be counted as in-kind match, such as donated tent rentals or a performer waiving fees, list the vendor, items, dates, and projected dollar value of the donated item or service.**

**Cash and/or In-Kind Match Marketing Plan:** This is your marketing match. This grant requires a minimum of a 50% cash or in-kind match. If you are asking VTC for \$5,000 in reimbursable marketing expenses, you must have AT LEAST \$2,500 in cash or in-kind marketing match listed.

We encourage you to **list more than the minimum match**, so we are better able to understand the economic impact of these programs. Applications with more than the minimum match will score higher.

Create your in-kind or cash match marketing plan by listing eligible marketing plan items. See the Special Event and Festivals Sponsorship Program Terms and Conditions for a list of eligible marketing plan items.

Each line items must list the media channel/vendor; marketing items description including target markets, target demographics, etc; placement dates; and amount.

The VTC scoring teams will be looking at how your marketing plan choices match up to your chosen target markets and target demographics. Make sure you are looking at your marketing funnel and that you have made deliberate choices backed up by data and research.

At LEAST 50% of your requested award should be spent on marketing the event/festival. Please note that 10% allowances apply to certain expenses. Please review the Terms and Conditions for these limitations.

Example: In-Kind or Cash Match Marketing Plan

<b>Media Channel/Vendor</b>	<b>Marketing Items Description</b>	<b>Placement Dates</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<i>Example: Facebook/Meta</i>	<i>200,000 followers as of January 1, 2023</i>	<i>As indicated by Facebook Insights on January 1, 2023</i>	<i>\$2000</i>
<i>Example: Washington Post (earned media)</i>	<i>Full page editorial in Travel section in September 2022 featuring the wine festival and things to do in Our Town, Va. Using ad equivalency value full page = \$8,000</i>	<i>September 25, 2022</i>	<i>\$8,000</i>
		<i>Total In-Kind Marketing Match:</i>	<i>\$10,000</i>

**Add lines** as needed to your in-kind or cash match marketing plan until you have allocated your match. You are encouraged to include more than the minimum match. Please double check your totals as you tab through creating your marketing plan.

**In-Kind or Cash Match Production Plan:** This is your production match. This grant requires a minimum of 50% in-kind match. If you are asking VTC for \$5,000 in reimbursable production expenses, you must have AT LEAST \$2,500 in in-kind match production expenses listed. The maximum award for this program is \$20,000 and requires a minimum of \$10,000 in match. We encourage you to list more than the minimum match, so we are better able to understand the economic impact of these programs. Documentation, including invoices and proof of payment, will be required for proof of match.

Create your in-kind or cash match production plan by listing eligible production plan items that you want to count as match. See the Special Event & Festivals Sponsorship Program Terms and Conditions for a list of eligible marketing plan items.

Each line items must list the vendor; item description, rent/performance/placement dates; and amount.

The VTC scoring teams will be looking at how your production plan choices match up to your visitor experience plan for the event/festival. Make sure you are **ONLY** listing eligible production expenses as in-kind match.

Example: In-Kind or Cash Production Match Plan

<b>Vendor</b>	<b>Item Description</b>	<b>Placement Dates</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<i>Example: Joe's Tent Rentals</i>	<i>40 10x10 canopy rentals for vendor market; 50% of cost will be cash and 50% of cost is donated by Joe's Tent Rentals</i>	<i>July 4-6, 2023</i>	<i>\$12,000</i>
<i>Example: ABC Porta-John Rentals</i>	<i>16 PortaJohns for festival weekend</i>	<i>July 4-6, 2023</i>	<i>\$8,000</i>
<i>Fencing Rentals/Vendor TBD</i>	<i>Fencing to create ticketed entry points on festival grounds</i>	<i>July 4-6, 2023</i>	<i>\$800</i>
		<i>Total In-Kind Production Match:</i>	<i>\$20,800</i>

**Add lines** as needed to your in-kind or cash match production plan until you have allocated your cash or in-kind match. You are encouraged to include more than the minimum match. Please double check your totals as you tab through creating your marketing plan

**VTC Reimbursable Marketing Plan:** These are items for which you will be seeking VTC reimbursement. The total of your VTC Reimbursable Marketing Plan should be at least 50% of your requested award amount. Be sure to list only eligible marketing expenses from the program Terms and Conditions. You

will only be reimbursed up to your award amount. Partial awards may be made, and applicants must be willing to revise their marketing plans.

<b>Medic Channel/Vendor</b>	<b>Marketing Items Description</b>	<b>Placement Dates</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<i>Example: Charlotte Observer</i>	<i>Quarterly Print Ads in the Travel section; 4"x7"; targeting wine enthusiasts ages 25-64 who are interested in wine festivals who live in the Charlotte, NC area and who read the Charlotte Observer</i>	<i>Jan 2023 April 2023 July 2023 October 2023 \$3000/each placement</i>	<i>\$12,000</i>
<i>Example: The Image Group</i>	<i>Promotional items for staff during wine festival to included 20 T-shirts and one pull-up banner with Virginia is for Wine Lovers. Event marketing is targeting wine enthusiasts ages 25-64 who will see the banner and logo shirts on site.</i>	<i>July 2023</i>	<i>\$2,000</i>
		<i>Total VTC Reimbursable Marketing Plan</i>	<i>\$14,000</i>

Add lines as needed to your VTC Reimbursable Marketing Plan until you have allocated the full amount of your funding request. The maximum award is \$20,000 for this program, but awards tiers are based on attendance. Please refer to the program Terms and Conditions for the maximum award allowed for your event or festival. Please double check your totals as you tab through creating your VTC Reimbursable Marketing Plan.

**VTC Reimbursement Production Plan:** These are event/festival production items for which you will be seeking VTC reimbursement. The total of your VTC Reimbursable Production Plan should be no more than 50% of your requested award amount. Be sure to list only eligible expenses from the program Terms and Conditions. You will only be reimbursed up to your award amount. Partial awards may be made and applicants must be willing to revise their production plans.

<b>Vendor</b>	<b>Production Items Description</b>	<b>Placement Dates</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<i>Example: Joe's Rentals</i>	<i>40 tables 8x8 for vendor area including set up and breakdown</i>	<i>July 4-6, 2023</i>	<i>\$6,000</i>

<i>Example: ASCAP Music Licensing Fees for cover bands at wine festival</i>	<i>ASCAP fee for 12 hours of music performances over three days.</i>	<i>July 4-6, 2023</i>	<i>\$2,000</i>
		<i>Total VTC Reimbursable Production Plan</i>	<i>\$8,000</i>

Add lines as needed to your VTC Reimbursable Production Plan until you have allocated the full amount of your funding request. The maximum award is \$20,000 for this program. Please double check your totals as you tab through creating your VTC Reimbursable Marketing Plan.

Make sure your VTC Reimbursable Production Plan total matches up with your requested amount at the beginning of the application.

### Performance Outcomes (10 points)

You must select two performance outcomes from the drop-down box. Sources of data upon which to base your projected measures can be visitor logs, credit card data, ticket sales, overall sales, tax revenue, etc. Set reasonable baselines and goals. Increases of 3%-5% are reasonable.

Performance Outcome #1	Select from Drop Down Box # of Room Nights # of Customers/Visitors \$ Annual Sales # of Visitors # of Event Attendees	Performance Baseline	Performance Baseline Date	Performance Projection (Goal)	Performance Projection (Date)
Performance Outcome #2					
<i>Example</i>	<i>Room Nights</i>	<i>1500</i>	<i>06/01/2023</i>	<i>1575</i>	<i>06/01/2025</i>

### Bonus Section (5 points)

This section allows for you to get creative. Think about ways you could activate the Virginia is for Lovers brand at your destination, business, or event. Are there special opportunities or behind-the-scenes opportunities you could offer to journalists, reporters, photographers, and videographers? Be detailed in your descriptions and dates. Including opportunities in this section **does not** guarantee that VTC can provide staff or journalists to take advantage of those opportunities.

Select from Drop Down Box Press Passes or Tickets to Events Booth at Event Visitor Center has Virginia is for Lovers merchandise Photography Opportunity VIFL Banners at events, visitor centers VIFL apparel on staff/performers Unique "behind the scenes" opportunity	Describe the activation:	Dates of activation:
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Comp or Discount Lodging for Photography or Video Acquisition Recognition of VTC as a sponsor at events Other		
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You must accept the program Terms and Conditions to submit your application in the portal. Please double check any attachments or required questions (those with an asterisk) if you are having trouble submitting your application. The application portal will close at 5 p.m. on Thursday, March 14, 2024.