**Virginia Tourism Corporation**

**Summer 2025 Special Events & Festivals Sponsorship Program**

**Instructions and Application Template**

***(You can fill out this word document and then copy/paste your answers to the application portal. Please note, you will need to upload proof of attendance, letter of support from your lodging partner, and letter of support from DMO. It is best to do those uploads LAST right before you submit your application. The portal will not save attachments when you stop/start your application. This application template will NOT be accepted in lieu of an electronic application in the application portal hosted at*** [***www.vatc.org/grants***](http://www.vatc.org/grants)***. The online application portal will close at 5pm on Thursday, September 11, 2025.)***

***A link to the program’s Terms & Conditions document can be found here for reference (***[***VTC-Summer-2025-Special-Events-Festivals-Terms-Conditions.pdf***](https://www.vatc.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/VTC-Summer-2025-Special-Events-Festivals-Terms-Conditions.pdf)***)***

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**Questions marked with an \* are required in the application portal.**

**Applicant Acknowledgment**

*Before you can continue to the application, please acknowledge the following:*

(*Click the checkmark and it will turn blue)*

**I agree.\***

*I understand that this is a competitive program, and a funding award is not guaranteed and I understand that my requested award may be reduced or denied based on available funding.*

**I agree.\***

*I understand this is a 50% match program and that match can be in-kind or cash and no funds will be granted up front.*

**I agree.\***

*I understand that this program is for eligible expenses incurred between July 1, 2025, and 60 days after the end of my program. My reimbursement and final report will be due 60 days after the end of my program.*

**Program Information**

**Applicant Organization Name\***

**EIN #\***

*NOTE: Only one application permitted per EIN#.*

**Event Mailing Address\***

**Street Address**

**Address Line 2**

**City**

**Virginia Locality**

**State**

**ZIP Code**

**Event Name\***

**Start date of your 2026 special event or festival\***

**End date of your 2026 special event or festival\***

*This program is only for Calendar Year 2026 events. If appropriations continue, we will open a round for Calendar Year 2027 events in Summer 2026,*

**Event Prior Year and Attendance #1\***

*Your event must have been held at least TWICE since 2017. List at least two prior years it was held and the attendance those years.*

**Event Prior Year and Attendance #2\***

*Your event must have been held at least TWICE since 2017. List at least two prior years it was held and the attendance those years.” If the second year of your festival occurs between July 16, 2025, and December 31, 2025, please give VTC a REASONABLE estimate of your 2025 attendance.*

**Attach proof of attendance.** *This can be a Ticketmaster report, Eventbrite report, written attestation, or other ticketing report or proof of attendance. \**

**Locality where event will be held\***

*If a town or DMO, please select the county where the town is located.*

**Amount of Requested Funds\***

*Events with 500 to 4,999 attendees can request $5,000*

*Events with 5,000 to 20,000 attendees can request $10,000*

*Events with 20,001+ attendees can request $20,000*

**Applicant Contact Information**

**Applicant Organization Contact Name\***

**Contact Email \***

**Contact Phone Number\***

**Contact Mailing Address\***

**Street Address**

**Address Line 2**

**City \***

**State \***

**ZIP \***

**Event Type\***

*Please select the best category for your events/festival.*

***DMO Letter Upload:***

*Please upload a letter of support from the local or regional DMO. If there is not a DMO that supports the event location, please upload a letter of support from the locality. \**

*You can find your DMO contact information at* [*https://www.vatc.org/dmolistpdf.*](https://www.vatc.org/dmolistpdf.%20)

*Please allow your DMO ample lead time to provide the letter of support. If the applicant is the DMO, please upload a letter to that effect.*

**Goals and Partnerships (25 Points)**

**Please describe your event/festival and the visitor experience on each day of the festival.**

(2000 max characters). Fully describe the activities available at your event or festival by day. For example:

*January 2, 2026:*

*Two stages with music scheduled 10am-midnight with 8 bands contracted; food truck rodeo; vendor/artisan market open 10am-10pm; VIP tent open 5pm-midnight with autograph sessions and table service.* *Children’s play area with face tattoo artists, clowns, magicians, and stroller parking.*

*January 3, 2026:*

*Two stages with music scheduled noon-8pm with 8 bands contracted; food truck rodeo; vendor/artisan market open 10am-10pm; VIP tent open 5pm-midnight with table service and catered appetizers. Children’s play area with face tattoo artists, clowns, magicians, and stroller parking.*

**Please list any artists, musicians, or other performers that are contributing to the visitor experience.** (2000 max characters.)

**Where are the majority of these artists, musicians, or performers based?**

*Local, Regional, or Out-of-State*

*VTC is looking to see if you are booking mostly local performers, performers from other Virginia localities, or performers from out-of-state.*

**What do you want to accomplish with your requested funds? \*** (1000 max characters)

*VTC is looking to see your metrics in this section. For instance, you may want to use these funds to increase ticket sales to New York City residents by 3% and to add a second stage to your festival.*

**How will you measure your progress towards your goals? \*** (1000 max characters)

*VTC is looking to see how you are managing ticket sales, performer contracting, and other benchmarks related to event production and marketing.*

**Performance Metrics**

**Is this a ticketed event? \*** *Yes/No*

**PROJECTED EVENT ATTENDANCE:**

*Please calculate the number of visitors by visitor type and then multiple by the # of event days. Example: 50 local visitors per day x 2-day festival = 100 local visitors.*

*We will request your actual number of attendees in your final report at the end of your campaign. Failure to submit a final report by the deadline may result in denial or reimbursement of expenditures. In your final report you will explain how these funds supported your events/festival, if weather impacted attendance, metrics on your marketing, etc.*

**Projected cumulative # of local day visitors to this event** (*live within 50 miles*) \*

**Projected cumulative # of regional day visitors to this event** (*live in Virginia but more than 50 miles away*) \*

**Projected cumulative # of out-of-state/overnight visitors to this event** (*live outside of Virginia*) \*

Total **Projected cumulative attendance:**

**How are you tracking your attendance?** *(Are you using Arrivalist Data, POI Reports, etc) \**

**Estimated # of overnight attendees arriving by airline?** *(Optional)*

*This is a new data point for our programs. If you are a drive market and do not anticipate attendees flying into the destination, please put zero.*

**Hub & Spoke Itinerary**

*Using the hub-and-spoke tool below, think of unique, one-of-a-kind partners, places to eat, stay, things to do, attractions etc. that make your community a must visit! Think of the product needed in your community that will extend visitor length of stay! The partners and spokes must be tourism oriented. While we encourage you to find corporate or local sponsors for your event or festival, for the hub and spoke itinerary model please only list tourism-oriented businesses that attendees are likely to visit before, during and after your event/festival.*

A diagram of a colorful circle with white text

Description automatically generated**Partner #1** – Lodging\*

**Partner #2\*** Business/Organization Category\*

**Spoke #3\*** Business/Organization Category\*

**Spoke #4\*** Business/Organization Category\*

**Spoke #5\*** Business/Organization Category\*

**Spoke #6\*** Business/Organization Category\*

**Lodging Partner Letter of Support\*** *Max. file size: 100 MB.*

**Do you have a room block with your lodging partner? \*** Yes/No

*(A room block is a group of hotel rooms that have been reserved for people who are attending a specific event)*

**If yes, how many rooms do you have blocked?**

**If yes, what is the room rate in the block?**

**If yes, estimated number of people per room?**

*These lodging questions are new this year and are needed for our economic impact calculations. We encourage your to work with our lodging partner on room blocks, special rates or promotions for days before, during, and after your festival/event. One of our goals with this program is to encourage visitors to stay longer and spend more.*

**How will you and your partners work together to achieve your goals? \***

*Please describe in detail any financial commitment from your partners or spokes and how you will work together to cross-promote the event/festival and all the business in the hub and spoke model.*

**What marketing message will help you and your partners achieve your visitation/visitor spending goals? \***

*Articulate how you are going to encourage visitors to spend more and stay longer. Why should the visitor attend your event? What is unique about it? What message(s) will motivate the visitor to choose this Virginia event/festival over others in the state, region or nation.*

**Research/Data (25 Points)**

*Data should be driving your attendance growth plan, marketing plans and event production plans. You should be referring to multiple data points and sources in each of these sections. Use your Google analytics, credit card data, social media insights, research from your DMO, and VTC’s robust research found on* [*www.vatc.org/research*](http://www.vatc.org/research)*.*

**What research/data did you use to project your attendance? \*** *1000 max characters*

**What research/data did you use to set your goals? \*** *1000 max characters*

**What research/data did you use to develop your marketing message? \*** *1000 max characters*

**Target Markets**

*You will select one out-of-state target market and one in-state metro market. You can still target other markets, but we want your marketing plan to target attendance growth from specific markets.*

**What research/data did you use to develop your marketing message?**

**Select Out of State Target Market\***

**What research/data are you using to choose this target market? \*** 1000 max characters

**Select In-State Large Metro Target Market\***

**What research/data are you using to choose this target market? \*** 1000 max characters

**Select your target audience: Friends***, Family, Couples*

**What research/data did you use to identify demographic characteristics? \*** 1000 max characters

**What are the demographic characteristics of your target audience? \***  1000 max characters

**Marketing & Production Plans (50 Points)**

*AS A REMINDER, please refer to the terms and conditions and program instructions to correctly complete the following marketing plans. All marketing materials that count as match or reimbursement must incorporate the Virginia is for Lovers logo.. Please refer to program terms and conditions for the logo requirements.*

Where does the majority of your marketing reach? \*  Local, Regional, or Out-of-State

**In-Kind or Cash Match Marketing Plan\***

*In-Kind Marketing Plan (This is your match. This grant requires a 50% match. Use the information below to value followers media like magazine articles.) Max 30 lines*

* *Print editorial $250/quarter page. $1,000 per full page.* *(Must have appeared in print after June 1, 2025)*
* *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, 2025.)*
* *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, 2025.)*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **In-Kind or Cash Match Type** | **Vendor/Channel** | **Description, Demographics, Target Market, Links to Owned/Earned Media** | **Placement/Procurement Date** | **Amount value** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Total In-Kind or Cash Match Marketing Plan\***

**In-Kind or Cash Match Production Plan\***

*In-Kind Production Plan (This is your match. This grant requires a 50% match. Be sure to read instructions on eligible production items. You do not need production match if you have enough marketing match.) Max 30 lines*

*In-Kind production items can be eligible production items that are being discounted or provided at no charge to your organization. Please use the actual estimated value of any in-kind production costs. For cash match production items, please list the estimated amount you will be paying for these eligible production items. The following are allowable in-kind or cash match production expenses.*

* **Cost of temporary stage rentals**
* **Cost of rental of event space or parking lots**
* **Cost of temporary fence rentals**
* **Cost of tent rentals**
* **Cost of table/chair rentals**
* **Cost of porta potty restroom rentals if they are contracted and invoiced.**
* **Audio/Video services, sound engineering, and lighting services that are contracted and invoiced.**
  + - **A/V equipment, lighting purchases, and sound equipment purchases ARE NOT eligible.**
* **Performer booking fees that are contracted and invoiced.**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **In-Kind or Cash Production Type** | **Vendor** | **Description** | **Procurement Date** | **Amount value** |
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|  |  |  |  |  |

**Total In-kind Production Plan\***

**VTC Reimbursable Marketing Plan\***

*Reimbursable Marketing Plan (This is what you would like to be reimbursed for by VTC. Be sure to review the eligible expenses list. Ineligible items will not be reimbursed. Ineligible items in your marketing plan may impact your score and/or reduce your award.)*

*Please refer to the program terms and conditions for a list of eligible marketing expenses.*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Marketing Type** | **Vendor/Channel** | **Description, Demographics, Target Market, Links to Owned/Earned Media** | **Placement/Procurement Date** | **Amount value** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Total Reimbursable Marketing Plan\***

**VTC Reimbursable Production Plan\***

*Reimbursable Production Plan (This is what you would like be reimbursed by VTC. Be sure to review the eligible expenses list. Ineligible items will not be reimbursed. Ineligible items in your production plan may impact your score and/or reduce your award.)*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Production Expense Type** | **Vendor** | **Description** | **Procurement Date** | **Amount value** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Total Reimbursable Production Plan\***

**Grand Total Reimbursable Marketing + Reimbursable Production\***

**BONUS POINTS: VIFL Activation Type (5 Bonus Points)**

***How will you integrate the Virginia is for Lovers brand in your marketing and advertising materials?***

*You will select choices from the dropdown menu and will describe how you will activate the Virginia is for Lovers brand in your choices. Please note that selection content/photography acquisition and/or providing press passes/tickets does not guarantee VTC will have staff to activate that opportunity.)*

Save and Submit

VERY IMPORTANT:

*Your application information is saved on our server as you enter it.*

*If you need to leave the application, scroll to the bottom of the application and click “Save and Continue Later”.*

*You will receive a unique URL that will allow you to go back into the application to make edits. BE SURE TO COPY THIS URL SO THAT YOU CAN GO BACK TO EDIT YOUR APPLICATION!*

*You also can enter your email address and have the link sent to you. example@email.com*

*You will need to follow this procedure each time you leave the application in order to save your work.*

*Once you are ready to submit the Final Version, you will acknowledge the Acceptance of Terms.*

*A SUBMIT button will appear*

*At that point you may submit your application.*

*Please note that once you submit, you will NOT be able to make any revisions to your application.*

*If you do not receive a confirmation email within 15 minutes, please reach out to us at VTCSEFGrant@virginia.org*

*DEADLINE INFORMATION:*

*Applications are due by 5:00 PM on Thursday, September 11, 2025.*

*NO extensions to this deadline will be possible.*

*Award announcements will be made November 2025.*

**Acceptance of Terms\***

*I understand that by submitting this application that I am agreeing to the full program Terms and Conditions.*

*I have read and agree to the terms and conditions.*

**Submission Confirmation\***

*I understand that my application is not fully submitted until I see the final submission screen and receive a .pdf of my application in my inbox (usually within 30 minutes.) I will contact VTC at VTCSEFProgram@virginia.org within 24 hours if I do not receive the pdf of my application in my email inbox.*

I understand.