

Minority Convention Grant Program



VISITFLORIDA® The Official Tourism Marketing Corporation for the State of Florida

Minority Convention Grant Program Guidelines

VISIT FLORIDA administers the Minority Convention Grant program to assist local governments and non-profit corporations/organizations as they attract national minority conferences and conventions to Florida provided under Section [288.124, Florida Statutes](#), (see excerpt below). Minority conventions are events that primarily involve minority persons, as defined in Section [288.703](#), who are residents or nonresidents of the state. Grant funding may not be used to subsidize existing scheduled events. VISIT FLORIDA grant programs are reimbursement grants and all expenditures must be paid in full prior to requesting reimbursement.

Application Period: Opens on January 3, 2019 at 8AM EST and Closes on February 18, 2019 at 11:59PM EST.

Eligibility

Applicants must be:

1. A local government or non-profit corporation or organization; and
2. Experienced with hosting conferences or conventions.

Allocation

The total for all grants awarded under this program shall not exceed \$40,000. Multiple grants for varying amounts may be awarded. The funds will only be allocated to entities that propose an activity or promotional program whose purpose is to attract national conferences and conventions primarily involving minority persons to the state of Florida.

Grant funds awarded for these programs to applicants must be used for marketing purposes to attract national conferences and/or conventions to Florida through advertising (print, broadcast, digital, social media or out of home), direct mail, brochure production, sales videos and presentations, as well as other related projects/programs. All marketing efforts must include VISIT FLORIDA Grant Logo in compliance with logo guidelines. To review the logo guidelines, visit the Grants Toolkit at www.VISITFLORIDA.org/grants. The marketing efforts cannot include VISIT FLORIDA opportunities, i.e. Welcome Center brochure distribution, VISIT FLORIDA Co-op Programs, or VISIT FLORIDA produced publications. No applicant may be considered or receive more than one grant per year for the same project or under the same grant program. VISIT FLORIDA grant programs are reimbursement grants and all expenditures must be paid in full prior to requesting reimbursement.

All project/program expenditures must be completed during the period of July 1, 2019 through June 15, 2020. VISIT FLORIDA will not reimburse any expenditure prior to July 1, 2019.

Should you have any questions, please contact us at grants@VISITFLORIDA.org.

Grant applications will be evaluated by a Review Committee comprised of Florida tourism professionals and approved by VISIT FLORIDA's CEO and reported to the VISIT FLORIDA Marketing Council Committee and approved by the VISIT FLORIDA Board for advancement to the Department of Economic Opportunity for final approval.

Grantees awarded grant funds will receive a Letter of Agreement, which must be signed and returned to VISIT FLORIDA before the grant is activated.

Excerpts from Sections 288.124 and 288.703, Florida Statutes

288.124 Convention grants program.—Enterprise Florida, Inc., is authorized to establish a convention grants program and, pursuant to that program, to recommend to the department expenditures and contracts with local governments and nonprofit corporations or organizations for the purpose of attracting national conferences and conventions to Florida. Preference shall be given to local governments and nonprofit corporations or organizations seeking to attract minority conventions to Florida. Minority conventions are events that primarily involve minority persons, as defined in s. [288.703](#), who are residents or nonresidents of the state. Enterprise Florida, Inc., shall establish guidelines governing the award of grants and the administration of this program. The department has final approval authority for any grants under this section. The total annual allocation of funds for this program shall not exceed \$40,000.

History.—s. 5, ch. 91-218; s. 57, ch. 96-320; s. 166, ch. 2011-142.

Section 288.703, Florida Statutes
Definitions

As used in this act, the following words and terms shall have the following meanings unless the content shall indicate another meaning or intent:

- (1) "Minority business enterprise" means any small business concern which is organized to engage in commercial transactions, which is domiciled in Florida, and which is at least 51-percent-owned by minority persons who are members of an insular group that is of a particular racial, ethnic, or gender makeup or national origin, which has been subjected historically to disparate treatment due to identification in and with that group resulting in an under representation of commercial enterprises under the group's control, and whose management and daily operations are controlled by such persons. A minority business enterprise may primarily involve the practice of a profession.
- (2) "Minority person" means a lawful, permanent resident of Florida who is:
 - (a) An African American, a person having origins in any of the racial groups of the African Discent.
 - (b) A Hispanic American, a person of Spanish or Portuguese culture with origins in Spain, Portugal, Mexico, South America, Central America, or the Caribbean, regardless of race.
 - (c) An Asian American, a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands, including the Hawaiian Islands prior to 1778.
 - (d) A Native American, a person who has origins in any of the Indian Tribes of North America prior to 1835, upon presentation of proper documentation thereof as established by rule of the Department of Management Services.
 - (e) An American woman.

(3) "Certified minority business enterprise" means a business which has been certified by the certifying organization or jurisdiction in accordance with s. 287.0943(1).

(4) "Department" means the Department of Labor and Employment Security.

(5) "Ombudsman" means an office or individual whose responsibilities include coordinating with the Minority Business Advocacy and Assistance Office for the interests of and providing assistance to small and minority business enterprises in dealing with governmental agencies and in developing proposals for changes in state agency rules.

(6) "Financial institution" means any bank, trust company, insurance company, savings and loan association, credit union, federal lending agency, or foundation.

(7) "Secretary" means the secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment Security.

Grant Submission and Selection Criteria

All Grant application submissions must:

1. Clearly define program concept
The purpose of the grant program is to attract national conferences and conventions for minority persons to the state of Florida, not subsidize existing events.
2. Economic impact of the program
Quantify and estimate the economic impact of the conference or convention on the local area and also the potential for generation of future business.
3. Detail marketing strategy.
Include goals, objectives and desired outcome.
4. Describe implementation plan and budget.
Include timeline for marketing plan and detail budget expenses.
5. Clearly demonstrate ability and/or prior experience
To receive the grant the applicant must demonstrate their ability and/or prior experience of attracting/soliciting, and/or hosting national or regional conferences or conventions.
6. Illustrate local support
Show illustrated support of other local government and non-profits in the area.
7. Demonstrate a need for advertising assistance
Will this project happen without these grant funds?

EXAMPLES OF PREVIOUS GRANT AWARD PROGRAMS

- Produce and publish a multicultural visitor guide and planner for distribution to meeting planners, association executives, trade show managers and event planners. Advertising placed and press releases generated promoting the availability of the guide and planner.

Minority Convention Grant Program



VISITFLORIDA The Official Tourism Marketing Corporation for the State of Florida

- A direct mail campaign targeting African American associations, meeting planners, and other minority associations promoting an area's hotels/attractions to prospective meeting and convention planners.
- A marketing, promotion and sales initiative to promote and introduce a new convention center to minority convention meeting planners. As a result of these efforts, the Grantee has been able to attract two additional meetings to the area.

Requirements for Reimbursement

1. Grant reimbursement requests must be forwarded to VISIT FLORIDA at grants@VISITFLORIDA.org within 60 days after the completion of the event/project/program, or by June 15, 2020, whichever date comes first.
2. All marketing must include the VISIT FLORIDA Grant Logo in compliance with the Grant Logo Guidelines.
3. All project costs must be paid in full. Copies of paid invoices and proof of payment must accompany the grant reimbursement request. Proof of payment must include copy of the invoices and a) copies of bank-issued cancelled checks b) credit card receipts with credit card statement.
4. Grant reimbursement requests must include proof of performance for marketing elements outlined in the marketing plan.
 - a. The post marketing plan is documentation of the media/marketing outlined to show what was completed, when it was completed, how it was completed, and who it was completed by.
 - b. Proof of performance would include copies of advertising elements (print, broadcast, digital, out of home and social media) displaying the VISIT FLORIDA logo/tagline and any analytical reporting received, such as impressions, click throughs, or distribution.
5. Grant reimbursement requests must include ROI (Return on Investment) report that includes the results of your project/program/event.
6. Each applicant must provide impact of program upon completion.