

# SPECIAL EVENT GRANT FUNDING GUIDELINES

Special Event Grant Funding is administered by the Clay County Tourist Development Council (the “TDC”), an advisory council to the Board of County Commissioners of Clay County, Florida (the “BCC”).

Approved by the TDC: March 3, 2026

Approved by the BCC: March 24, 2026

Effective for applications received on or after April 1, 2026

## SPECIAL EVENT GUIDELINES

### 1. GRANT PROGRAM PURPOSE

This grant program supports special events held in Clay County that attract visitors from outside the County and promote tourism and economic activity.

### 2. FUNDING LEVELS

The maximum award per special event is **\$3,500**.

Funding may be awarded in the following categories:

- A. Contributes to the Quality of Life – \$1,500  
Events that showcase the character, culture, attractions, or unique experiences of Clay County and are not routine or everyday experiences.
- B. Multi-Day Event – \$1,500  
Events held over two or more consecutive days.
- C. Need Period – \$500  
Events occurring during identified tourism need months:  
January, February, June, July, August, September, and November

Submission of an application does not guarantee funding. Funding recommendations are made by the TDC and are subject to final approval by the BCC. The TDC may recommend approval, denial, or funding in an amount less than requested. The BCC reserves the right to approve, modify, or deny any funding request, including awarding an amount less than requested. All awards are contingent upon available budget. Applicants approved for funding will receive an Award Letter following BCC approval. Awarded funds are paid after the event and are contingent upon submission and approval of the required Post-Event Report and any supporting documentation deemed necessary by the County.

In extraordinary circumstances, the TDC may recommend funding above standard levels due to demonstrated exceptional tourism and economic impact. Each request will be reviewed individually and requires BCC approval.

### **3. GRANT PROGRAM INFORMATION AND ELIGIBILITY**

- A. As used herein, "Applicant" means the organization submitting the funding request.
- B. Events must be held in Clay County and be open to the public.
- C. The Applicant must be a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in good standing at the time of application and award.
- D. The Applicant must submit a completed IRS Form W-9 with its application.
- E. This grant program does not fund private or invitation-only events, including, but not limited to, weddings, reunions, or internal fundraisers.
- F. The Applicant must designate a single point of contact for all communications related to the grant program. The designated contact is responsible for submitting all required documentation. Any change in the designated contact must be provided to the TDC in writing. Failure to provide timely written notice may result in delay, suspension, or denial of funding.
- G. The TDC may, at its discretion, lend assistance or administer approved funds through advertising, public relations, or marketing vendors on behalf of the Applicant.
- H. If funding is awarded, and as applicable to the event, the Applicant shall provide at least four (4) complimentary media passes or event tickets for use by TDC staff to attend and cover the event for tourism marketing and public relations purposes.
- I. If funding is awarded, the Applicant is encouraged to include the Clay County Tourism logo on advertising and promotional materials. When appropriate, materials should also include a link to [www.exploreclay.com](http://www.exploreclay.com) and/or the statement: "For visitor information, visit [www.exploreclay.com](http://www.exploreclay.com)." The Applicant is strongly encouraged to tag the Clay County Tourism Department in social media posts related to the event and to use the hashtag #ExploreClay in promotional efforts.

### **4. MEDIA RELEASE AND USE OF MATERIALS**

- A. By submitting an application, the Applicant grants Clay County, including its officers, employees, agents, contractors, and representatives, a perpetual, royalty-free, non-exclusive right and license to use, reproduce, edit, publish, display, and distribute photographs, digital images, video recordings, audio recordings, and other related materials created at or in connection with the event, including materials that may contain the Applicant's name, logo, artwork, trademarks, or other identifying marks, for tourism marketing, promotional, public relations, advertising, and governmental purposes.
- B. Such materials may be used in whole or in part, in original or edited form, in any media now known or later developed, including but not limited to websites, social media, print materials, advertisements, and other promotional publications, without further notice or compensation to the Applicant.
- C. The Applicant represents and warrants that it has the legal authority to grant these rights and that the County's authorized use will not infringe upon the rights of any third party.

The Applicant agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the County from any claims arising out of the County's authorized use of such materials.

- D. To the extent permitted by law, the Applicant waives any right to inspect or approve the finished product and waives any claim to royalties or other compensation arising from the County's authorized use of the materials.

## **5. ELIGIBLE USE OF FUNDS**

Funds must directly promote tourism and comply with Section 125.0104, Florida Statutes. Eligible uses include:

A. Out-of-County Advertising and Promotion

Marketing placed outside Clay County for the purpose of increasing attendance and attracting tourists:

- Digital advertising (social media, geofencing, display ads, SEO/SEM, retargeting, email campaigns)
- Print advertising and direct mail
- Radio and television ads placed outside the County
- Trade show booth rental
- Public relations efforts targeting out-of-county audiences

B. Promotional Items

Items directly tied to and distributed as part of the event experience, such as items associated with a themed reception or activity.

C. Event Fees

- Audio/visual equipment rental for the event
- Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) fees associated with approved road closures, traffic control plans, barricades, signage, or required traffic safety measures related to the event
- In-county transportation or organized tours that enhance the visitor experience
- Entertainment expenses for events that are open to the public
- Other event-specific operational expenses that are directly related to the event and permitted under Section 125.0104, Florida Statutes

D. Trophies and Awards

Trophies, plaques, and other non-monetary awards associated with the event.

E. Facility Related Expenses

Facility-related expenses directly associated with the event.

## **6. INELIGIBLE USES OF FUNDS**

Funds may not be used for:

- A. Prize money, scholarships, or cash awards
- B. Travel expenses (airfare, mileage, lodging, meals, etc.)
- C. Private food, beverages, concessions, or entertainment
- D. Annual operating expenditures not directly related to the event
- E. Administrative overhead or employee salaries
- F. Legal, accounting, consulting, engineering, or feasibility studies

- G. Capital improvements or property purchases
- H. Office equipment or furnishings
- I. Website design
- J. Maintenance or ongoing operational costs
- K. Expenses outside the approved event period
- L. Advertising/promotional materials distributed in Clay County during or after the event
- M. Interest or reduction of deficits and loans
- N. Receptions or social functions other than those specifically designed for pre-event promotional purposes
- O. Sales tax
- P. Any use not permitted under Section 125.0104, Florida Statutes

**7. APPLICATION PROCESS AND DEADLINES**

Applications will be reviewed at TDC meetings as outlined in the schedule below:

- Only one application per event will be accepted.
- Applications must include, at a minimum, a description of the event, event schedule, target audience, and estimated attendance.
- Applications must clearly identify how grant funds will be used if awarded.
- Applications must be complete. “N/A” should be indicated where applicable. Incomplete applications may not be considered.
- Applications must be submitted by the deadlines set forth below. In the event an application is received after the stated deadlines such that a TDC recommendation may not be obtained, the application may be reviewed by County staff if time and funding availability permit for submission to the County Manager for a funding recommendation. Any funding recommendation remains subject to final approval by the BCC.
- If a deadline falls on a weekend or County-recognized holiday, applications are due the preceding County business day.

**APPLICATION DEADLINES & TDC MEETINGS FOR SPECIAL EVENT FUNDING\***

<b>Grant Application Submittal Deadline</b>	<b>Event Dates</b>	<b>TDC Meeting</b>
<b>August 15</b>	<b>Events held October – February</b>	<b>September</b>
<b>December 15</b>	<b>Events held March – September</b>	<b>January</b>

\*Dates are subject to change. Acceptance of applications is contingent upon available funding. All funding recommendations require final BCC approval.

**8. POST-EVENT REPORTING**

Within sixty (60) days following conclusion of the event, the Applicant must submit to the County’s Grant Department, via email at [claygrants@claycountygov.com](mailto:claygrants@claycountygov.com), the following:

- A completed Post-Event Report in the form attached to the Award Letter; and
- Any additional information or documentation requested by the County.

Payment of awarded grant funds is conditioned upon timely submission and approval of the Post-Event Report. Following its review, the County may require supporting documentation as a condition of payment; however, the County reserves the right to determine, in its sole discretion, whether such documentation is necessary. The County reserves the right to withhold, reduce, or deny payment if the Applicant fails to satisfy the reporting requirements.

Following the event, the TDC, Clay County, and the Clay County Clerk of Court and Comptroller's Office reserve the right to review and audit records related to any funded event. SUBMISSION OF FALSE OR MISLEADING INFORMATION MAY RESULT IN DENIAL OF CURRENT OR FUTURE FUNDING.

### **9. COMMUNICATION POLICY**

To ensure a fair review process:

- Applicants should only communicate with TDC staff for questions or updates.
- Applicants should not contact TDC members, the BCC, or non-TDC County staff regarding funding requests.
- Applicants are encouraged to attend in person the TDC meeting at which their application will be reviewed.

### **10. CONTACT INFORMATION**

Applicants may email, call, or schedule an in-person appointment to review their application by contacting:

Clay County Tourism  
Attn: Teddy Meyer  
477 Houston Street  
Green Cove Springs, FL 32043

Teddy.Meyer@claycountygov.com  
904-436-3008

Stephanie.Lamb@claycountygov.com  
904-529-3792