



**Haywood County Tourism Development Authority,
operating as Visit NC Smokies**

**Legacy Event Sponsorship Guidelines
FY 2024-2025**

Legacy Event Sponsorship

Haywood County is home to a rich collection of long-standing events that have become an important part of our community's character. From cultural celebrations to festivals, these events draw in visitors, showcase our unique appeal, and contribute significantly to our local economy. Recognizing their enduring value, Visit NC Smokies proudly presents the Legacy Event Sponsorship program.

This program goes beyond simply sustaining these respected traditions. We seek to ignite their continued evolution and growth. We're looking for innovative approaches, impactful enhancements, and exciting new features that will propel these events to even greater heights. Whether it's incorporating cutting-edge technology, expanding accessibility, or forging deeper connections with local communities, we encourage bold ideas that will reinvigorate these events for future generations.

By fostering innovation and supporting change, the Legacy Event Sponsorship program aims to ensure that Haywood County's valued events continue to thrive, captivate audiences, and generate lasting economic and cultural impact.

Legacy Events must meet the following criteria:

- The event must have been held in Haywood County for at least 10 consecutive years (exceptions may be granted for Covid gaps in production.)
- The event must have a proven track record of attracting both local and broader audiences. This includes:
 - Minimum attendance of at least 1,000 attendees per event
 - At least 25% of attendees coming from outside Haywood County based on historical data or verifiable estimates.
- The event must be open to the public.
- The event must take place entirely within Haywood County.
- The event must demonstrate a positive contribution to Haywood County's tourism economy and reputation as a destination. This could include factors like:
 - Increased lodging occupancy
 - Increased spending in local businesses
 - Positive media coverage and promotion of Haywood County

- The requested sponsorship amount must be no more than 25% of the total event budget.
- Applications must be submitted electronically by the specified deadline.
- The event must take place during the July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 fiscal year.
- Eligible applicants include Haywood County non-profit organizations, for-profit businesses, museums, attractions, cultural events, governmental agencies, and other tourism-related entities.

Below are examples of projects that will not be considered:

- Family reunions
- Fundraising events such as banquets, annual galas, etc.
- Church or religious activities
- Local school programs
- Community-specific programs
- Political events, lobbying, or legislative activities

We want to help Haywood County's legacy events spark new excitement, attract visitors, and benefit our community. These are the key areas we'll consider when awarding sponsorships:

- **Impact on Tourism:** How the event promotes Haywood County as a visitor destination to a wider audience than our local market.
- **Economic Impact:** The potential impact on lodging occupancy, tax generation, and direct spending through increased travel and tourism activity within Haywood County.
- **Innovation:** Whether the event showcases innovation, enhancements, or new features.
- **Community Benefit:** The overall benefit the event provides to the Haywood County community including demonstrated strong partnerships with local businesses or organizations.

Application Process:

- Complete the Application Form: Access the application form from the Haywood County Tourism Development Authority website at <https://haywoodtda.com/grants/>
- Submit by the Deadline: Applications must be submitted electronically through the online portal by May 15, 2024 by 5PM.
- Required Information:
 - All required fields must be completed accurately and truthfully.
 - The application must be signed by a representative with the authority to bind the applicant organization.
 - Provide the requested financial information, including event budget, projected revenue and expenses, and any available historical financial data.
 - Clearly describe any sponsorship opportunities and benefits offered to potential sponsors (if applicable).

Recognition

Grant recipients must agree to acknowledge Visit NC Smokies' support in all relevant public relations activities, printed materials, and digital platforms. This checklist outlines acceptable proof of Visit NC Smokies' recognition for your Legacy Event Sponsorship. Please ensure you include at least **three (3)** of the following items:

- *Visual Recognition:*
 - **Logo:** Prominently display the Visit NC Smokies logo on all promotional materials (e.g., flyers, posters, website, social media).
 - **Signage:** Include Visit NC Smokies branding on event signage throughout the venue.
 - **On-Site Presence:** Feature Visit NC Smokies representatives or materials at the event location.
 - **Photos:** Share high-resolution photos showcasing Visit NC Smokies branding during the event.
- *Verbal Recognition:*
 - **Announcements:** Mention Visit NC Smokies' support in event announcements, speeches, or emcee introductions.
 - **Presentations:** Acknowledge Visit NC Smokies' sponsorship during presentations or informational sessions.
 - **Interviews:** Mention Visit NC Smokies' role in media interviews or press releases related to the event.
- *Digital Recognition:*
 - **Website:** Include the Visit NC Smokies logo and link to the website on your event website.
 - **Social Media:** Tag @VisitNCSmokies in event-related social media posts and use their designated hashtags.
 - **Email Marketing:** Acknowledge Visit NC Smokies' sponsorship in event-related email communications.

Recipients will be required to submit proof of compliance. Failure to meet these recognition requirements may result in withholding of grant funds or disqualification from future grant programs.

Additional Notes:

- Visit NC Smokies reserves the right to request additional information from any applicant.
- All material submitted as part of an application will be a matter of public record, subject to Chapter 132. G.S. 132-1 of NC laws.
- Applications are reviewed by the Product Development Committee (PDC) based on the criteria outlined in the "Legacy Event Sponsorship Awards" section. PDC recommendations are then forwarded to the HCTDA Board for consideration.
- All funding decisions ultimately rest with the Haywood County Tourism Development Authority Board. Depending on funding available and applications received, we may award less than the requested amount, offer alternative support, or not award funding at all. Projects that best align with our criteria will be prioritized.
- Grant applicants will be notified of the decision via email by June 28, 2024.

- Grant applicants are fully responsible for following these guidelines and meeting deadlines outlined herein.
- We reserve the right to modify or adjust our grant programs at any time. While we strive to be transparent and communicative, please be aware that program details are subject to change.

Accessing Awarded Funds:

To ensure smooth access to your awarded funds, please follow these guidelines:

Event Completion and Documentation:

- Funds are reimbursable and will be disbursed **only after the event has concluded** and all related activities are completed.
- **Within 45 days** of the event's conclusion, submit the following documentation to Visit NC Smokies:
 - Request for Payment Form & Final Evaluation Report: This report should detail the event's execution, successes, challenges, and overall impact. It is mandatory for future funding eligibility.
 - Recognition Verification: Three (3) forms of proof of Visit NC Smokies' recognition as required in the grant agreement (e.g., logos, mentions in promotional materials, etc.).
 - Digital Submission Required: All of the above must be submitted digitally via JotForm.

Failure to meet these event evaluation requirements may result in withholding of awarded funds or disqualification from future programs.

Contact:

If you have any questions regarding the documentation process or fund disbursement, please contact Visit NC Smokies at 828-944-0761 or email Hayley Printz, Administrative Assistant, at Hayley@VisitNCSmokies.com