

Leland Tourism Development Authority Grant Program Policy



Purpose

The Leland Tourism Development Authority (LTDA) Grant Program Policy exists to ensure hotel occupancy tax funds are used in compliance with North Carolina General Assembly Session Law 2008-64. This Policy establishes clear guidelines for the appropriate use of grant funds for tourism promotion and tourism-related expenditures that support the LTDA's mission to attract visitors to the Town of Leland. The Policy applies to all organizations seeking or receiving LTDA grant funding and to all projects funded through the program.

Table of Contents

1	Introduction.....	3
2	General Grant Guidelines	3
3	Grant Funding Opportunities	4
3.1	Multi-Day Special Events and Festivals	4
3.2	Single Day Special Events and Festivals.....	4
3.3	Marketing and Promotion	4
3.4	Public Art	5
3.5	Meetings and Conferences.....	5
3.6	Tourism Capital Improvements or Fixed Assets	5
4	Application Acceptance and Review Period	5
5	Grant Contracting and Payment.....	6
6	Project Close Out	6
7	Supplemental Information	6
8	Version History	6

1 Introduction

The Leland Tourism Development Authority (LTDA) Grant Program was established to assist organizations with marketing, promotion, and execution of projects that support the LTDA's mission to develop and support activities and experiences that attract visitors to grow tourism in the Town of Leland. Per North Carolina General Assembly Session Law 2008-64, House Bill 2156, the LTDA "shall promote travel, tourism and conventions in town, sponsor tourist-related events and activities in town, and finance tourist-related capital projects in town" and "The Authority shall use at least two-thirds of the funds remitted to it under this subsection to promote travel and tourism in the Town of Leland and shall use the remainder for tourism-related expenditures."

Promote travel and tourism expenditures: To advertise or market an area or activity, publish and distribute pamphlets and other materials, conduct market research, or engage in similar promotional activities that attract tourists or business travelers to the area. The term includes administrative expenses incurred in engaging in the listed activities. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Social media marketing
- Newspaper or magazine advertisements
- Billboards
- Branded promotional items

Tourism-related expenditures: Expenditures that, in the judgment of the LTDA, are designed to increase the use of lodging facilities, meeting facilities, or convention facilities in the Town or to attract tourists or business travelers to the Town. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Capital improvements
- Public art
- Meetings and conference expenses
- Non-marketing event expenses

The LTDA Grant Program is funded by hotel occupancy tax collected by the Town of Leland and distributed to the LTDA for the purpose of growing Leland's tourism industry. The selection of projects that receive funding is based upon the estimated impact of tourism the project could bring within the Town of Leland.

2 General Grant Guidelines

Eligible Organizations:

- Non-profit organizations
- Private businesses that attract and are patronized by tourists
- Private businesses that are the primary organizer of a special event or project
- Governmental organizations

Eligible Project Requirements:

- Located within the municipal limits of the Town of Leland
- Serve as the primary organizer of the event or project
- Open to the public to attend, participate, or spectate (excluding Section 3.5)
- Promoted outside of Leland municipal limits
- Acknowledge LTDA funding support in all advertising and promotion
- Grant approval must occur prior to event or project execution
- Allow LTDA participation to photograph, video, or otherwise capture the event
- Allow LTDA to publicize the project on its website and digital media
- Allow LTDA to use attendance software to verify event attendance

3 Grant Funding Opportunities

3.1 Multi-Day Special Events and Festivals

For the purposes of LTDA grant funding, multi-day special events and festivals are defined as organized public events that take place over the course of two (2) or more consecutive days and are designed to attract tourists from outside the immediate area. These events must include a series of scheduled activities, performances, or attractions that promote cultural, recreational, or community engagement and have a demonstrable impact on local tourism and overnight stays. To be eligible for funding under this option, applications must:

- Span at least two (2) consecutive days
- Be open to the public, either free or ticketed
- Have a cohesive theme or purpose (e.g., music, food, heritage, seasonal celebration, sporting event)
- Include a published schedule of events or programming
- Show evidence of marketing efforts aimed at non-local audiences
- Positively affect tourism-related economic activity such as lodging, dining, retail, or transportation

The LTDA will provide project funding for expenses that promote travel and tourism. Available grant awards based on attendance:

- Tier One: < 1,000 attendees, maximum \$5,000 grant
- Tier Two: 1,000-3,999 attendees, maximum \$10,000 grant
- Tier Three: 4,000+ attendees, maximum \$20,000 grant

3.2 Single Day Special Events and Festivals

Special events and festivals occurring on a single day, ideally attracting the 50-mile and 6-hour drive target markets, may include cultural arts productions, artist-in-residence events, and other events open to the public that are of interest to and promote tourists from the region and state. This category also includes concerts and musical events featuring regional or national acts that are promoted regionally.

To be eligible for grants, these events must:

- Be open to the public, either free or ticketed
- Have a cohesive theme or purpose (e.g., music, food, heritage, seasonal celebration, sporting event)
- Include a published schedule of events or programming
- Show evidence of marketing efforts aimed at non-local audiences
- Positively affect tourism-related economic activity such as lodging, dining, retail, or transportation

The LTDA will provide project funding for expenses that promote travel and tourism. Available grant awards based on attendance:

- Tier One: 100-999 attendees, maximum \$2,500 grant
- Tier Two: 1,000-1,999 attendees, maximum \$5,000 grant
- Tier Three: 2,000+ attendees, maximum \$10,000 grant

3.3 Marketing and Promotion

Applicants are eligible to apply for grants that promote travel and tourism, as defined above, to attract tourists to the area or business from outside of the immediate area.

Applicants may apply once per fiscal year, which runs July 1 through June 30, with a maximum award amount of \$5,000 and will be handled on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the LTDA Board. This category does require proof of expenses as outlined in the grant contract.

3.4 Public Art

Public art intended to enhance the visual attractiveness of the Town of Leland including murals, sculptures, and other fixed visual community improvements.

To be eligible for grants, public art projects must:

- Be in a space open to the public
- May be subject to the framework of Section 4 of the Town of Leland’s Public Art Policy and follow the process outlined in the policy
- Be presented as a full color artistic concept for approval
- Not be misconstrued as signage or other building identification
- Have all needed permits and approvals prior to beginning work
- Install a final product that is intended to remain in place for a minimum of ten (10) years

The LTDA will provide project funding based on art type:

- Murals greater than 250 sq ft: Maximum \$10,000 grant
- Murals greater than 500 sq ft: Maximum \$20,000 grant
- Sculptures greater than 5 ft: Maximum \$10,000 grant
- Sculptures greater than 10 ft: Maximum \$20,000 grant
- Other permanent or rotating displays will also be considered on a case-by-case basis and may not require a 10-year life span

3.5 Meetings and Conferences

Meetings and conferences that bring non-local tourists, lodging, dining, and related tourism activity to Leland. These events may include industry or professional conferences, conventions, symposiums, training seminars, or other organized gatherings that promote travel to Leland and enhance the Town’s visibility as a destination for business or organizational events.

There is no maximum award amount, and this will be handled on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the LTDA Board.

3.6 Tourism Capital Improvements or Fixed Assets

Tourism-based capital investments made to develop or enhance infrastructure and facilities or encourage travel to Leland that attract and support tourism, include but are not limited to entertainment venues, cultural centers, recreational facilities, public squares, and wayfinding signage. They are intended to make the Town of Leland more attractive to tourists and add to the capacity of the Town to accommodate additional visitors.

Only governmental organizations are eligible for these grants. There is no maximum award amount and no match required, and this will be handled on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the LTDA Board.

4 Application Acceptance and Review Period

- Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until funds are depleted. Funds will reset on July 1 of each fiscal year.
- To ensure sufficient time for review, all grant applications must be submitted no later than thirty (30) days prior to the LTDA meeting when the application will be considered.
- If there are incomplete sections or missing documentation, staff will notify the applicant to forward the missing information. Please note that failure to provide all required materials may delay the review and processing of the grant application.
- All applicants will appear before the LTDA Board to present their application.

5 Grant Contracting and Payment

Project Execution

- If the application is approved, the applicant will enter into a contract with the LTDA.
- Applicants are required to include the LTDA logo in an approved format on all project advertising and promotional materials, announcements, press releases, social media posts, and all other materials used to promote the event or project.
- Staff must be kept informed of any changes or proposed changes in the project.
- Grantees are responsible for all project costs and cost overruns due to miscalculations or undiscovered costs.

6 Project Close Out

All grantees are required to submit a Grant Close Out form which illustrates the results of the project. Grantees are then required to attend a meeting of the LTDA for a post-grant presentation. Actual grant funding awards will be based on actual results post grant.

For grants that are dependent on attendance, staff will present software data that tracks attendance to show the LTDA Board how that compares to the applicant's attendance count. The LTDA Board is authorized to adjust the award amount based on actual attendance results from the PlacerAI software.

Generally, grants awarded by the LTDA will be reimbursement grants and will be paid out within thirty (30) days of the Project Close Out meeting. However, the applicant can request up to 50% of grant awards to be distributed prior to the event if receipts are submitted to the LTDA. This request can be made as part of the application process and will be outlined in the grant award contract.

7 Supplemental Information

The LTDA Board reserves the right to:

- Waive any irregularities therein
- Request applicants submit more details or alternate proposals
- Choose to approve or deny any application
- Cancel or modify the grant program entirely
- Allocate a percentage of available grant funding to each category of eligible grants at the discretion of the Board

Due to the statutory authority of how the LTDA may expend funds, there are projects and expenses incurred that are not eligible for grant award. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Political events
- Church functions
- Family reunions
- Local school programs
- General administrative expenses
- General operating expenses

8 Version History

Version	Revision Date	Description of Change	Author
1	03/20/2019	Initial creation	Administration
2	07/01/2025	Policy updates: added attendance requirements and thresholds	Finance

3	05/02/2026	Policy updates: adding marketing and promotional items category	Finance