

STARKVILLE CVB SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Summary

The goal of this program is to fund tourism projects that positively impact the City of Starkville's economy, specifically those which have broad appeal targeting markets beyond Oktibbeha County.

Eligibility Requirements

Eligible applicants for funding consideration are local entities submitting applications for projects that have the primary objective of attracting tourists from markets 50 miles from Oktibbeha County and filling up our restaurants and hotels.

Selected projects may receive up to 100% of all eligible and applicable costs provided in the Starkville CVB Sponsorship Program Guidelines.

The emphasis of this program is to assist tourism events to become established and self-supporting. Funding for subsequent years will be reduced and will dissolve after the third year. The Starkville CVB reserves the right to fund a project as a sustaining grant if the project is deemed to have significant impact on the City of Starkville.

Eligible & Applicable Costs

- (1) Advertising through paid media (including newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and billboards). A media schedule is required.
- (2) Printed materials (including brochures, inserts, and direct mail pieces) for distribution outside of Oktibbeha County. A distribution list is required.
- (3) Production of an event designed to attract tourists.
- (4) Agency fees (including research, copy development, design, and layout) not to exceed 25% of project funds requested.
- (5) Development of a permanent tourist attraction.

Ineligible Costs

- (1) Administrative expenses (including travel, meals, lodging, and salaries).
- (2) Operating expenses (including maintenance, repair, rent, electricity, and telephone charges).
- (3) Office supplies.
- (4) Sales tax.

A project that financially benefits an entity will not be funded.

Process

The Starkville CVB will administer the selection process. The Starkville CVB Board is a nine-member committee formed by Mississippi Legislation, charged with the administrative responsibilities of tourism projects for the Starkville area.

All projects for consideration must be submitted to the Starkville CVB by July 16, 2010 by 12:00 p.m. at 200 East Main Street, Starkville, MS 39759.

Each applicant will be judged based on the merits of the project as it relates to Starkville area tourism. The decisions rendered by the Starkville CVB and approved by the CVB Board and VP of Tourism Development are final.

Applicants will be notified in writing of their status regarding funding within 30 days of submission.

Selection Criteria

The Starkville CVB will use the following criteria when reviewing projects for funding consideration.

- (1) The total cost is well researched and reasonable.
- (2) Demonstrates substantial potential for economic return from outside Oktibbeha County.
- (3) Methods of distribution and quantities are appropriate to project and audience.
- (4) Demonstrates creativity, uniqueness, and good design.
- (5) Targets a specific audience.
- (6) Offers overall benefit to the Starkville area tourism industry.
- (7) Demonstrates a cooperative effort between entities.

Project Requirements

All projects receiving grant funding must adhere to the following requirements. If any of these are not followed a project will be deemed ineligible, and the applicant will be responsible for returning all grant monies to the City of Starkville.

- (1) **Feature the GSDP logo.**
The Starkville CVB will provide the logo upon project approval.
- (2) **Feature the applicant organization's address and/or telephone number.**
All funded projects must display address/telephone information for general inquiries. Events will be listed on the GSDP website Calendar of Events.

Application Inclusions

The following information/materials must be included with all applications.

- (1) Project description.**
Number I in the Starkville CVB Sponsorship Program Application.
- (2) Descriptions of the project's target audience and potential for economic return.**
Number II in the Starkville CVB Sponsorship Program Application.

- (3) Marketing plan outline.**
Number III in the Starkville CVB Sponsorship Program Application.
The marketing plan must reflect the project's appeal and strength in bringing visitors to the Starkville area.

If possible, when utilizing paid media, include a media schedule (name of medium, circulation, insertion size/length, placement dates, and cost). Placements must address markets outside of Oktibbeha County.

If possible, when utilizing printed materials, include the number of pieces to be printed and a distribution list. The distribution list must address markets outside of Oktibbeha County. The Starkville CVB will distribute a portion of the applicant's choice from the Welcome Lobby of the GSDP office.

- (4) Methods for tracking/measuring the project's success, if applicable.**
Number IV in the Starkville CVB Sponsorship Program Application.
Examples include: conducting consumer surveys on site, tallying guest book entries, surveying telephone callers, and using redeemable coupons in print and/or paid media.
- (7) Project budget.**
Number V in the Starkville CVB Sponsorship Program Application.
Budget items should reflect actual costs not estimations. Documentation verifying all costs must be included.
- (8) Project Director's signature.**

Awarding of Funds

Projects will be awarded 100% of the total funding once the CVB Board approves the Final Report submitted by the Project Director.

All projects awarded grant funding must be completed within one year from the date of approval.

Applying project directors will be accountable for all monies awarded and responsible for submitting documentation verifying all expenditures. Awarded funds may only be used for budget items approved. The original budget lines may not be altered. The CVB Board and VP of Tourism Development must be notified in writing of any changes before the event is finished.

If the completed project is more costly than the approved amount, the entity will receive the amount originally approved. If the total cost of the completed project is less costly than the approved amount, the entity will receive the amount originally approved.

Questions

If you have any questions regarding the Starkville CVB Tourism Sponsorship Program Guidelines and/or application, please call Jennifer Gregory, VP of Tourism Development at 323-3322 or jgregory@starkville.org.