



**VIRGINIA  
IS FOR  
LOVERS®**

**VTC**  
**PARTNERSHIP**  
**MARKETING**  
**Special Events**  
**& Festivals**  
**Sponsorship**  
**Program**

**Special Events & Festivals Sponsorship Program**  
**Summer 2024 for Calendar Year 2025 Events & Festivals**



# VTC's Annual Grant Programs

- Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Program
- Special Events & Festivals Sponsorship Program
- VA250 Marketing Leverage Program
- Marketing Leverage Program
- DMO Marketing Program

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# Changes to Grant Programs

- Streamlined Application
- Reminders of Terms/Requirements
- Three Sections: Goals, Research, Marketing
  
- 75% Spend out of region (50 miles)
  
- Revised eligible items list
- Revised scoring protocol
- Streamlined Terms and Conditions
- 1,000-2,000 character limit on questions
- Only a DMO letter of support is required; no lodging letter of support required.

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**OPENING July 16, 2024**  
**CLOSING September 26, 2024**

# **SPECIAL EVENT & FESTIVALS SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM**

- **THE 2024 ROUND IS FOR EVENTS THAT OCCUR IN 2025**
- **\$800,000 Available**
- **Approximately 70 application to be funded.**
- **ONLY CERTAIN ELIGIBLE MARKETING EXPENSES AND EVENT PRODUCTION EXPENSES**

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# **SPECIAL EVENT & FESTIVALS SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM**

- **EVENT MUST BE A MINIMUM OF TWO CONSECUTIVE DAYS**
- **EVENT MUST HAVE TWO YEARS OF HISTORY BACK TO 2017**
- **OUT OF REGION/OUT OF STATE SPENDING IS REQUIRED**
- **ONLY 25% OF AWARD MAY BE USED FOR LOCAL MARKETING**

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# **SPECIAL EVENT & FESTIVALS SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM**

**PARTNERSHIPS ARE CRITICAL.  
YOU MUST IDENTIFY TWO PARTNERS (ONE  
MUST BE A LODGING PARTNER) AND TWO  
TOURISM-ORIENTED SPOKES.**

**YOUR SPONSORS CAN NOT BE PARTNERS.**

**PARTNERS AND SPOKES ARE OTHER PLACES  
TOURISTS WILL GO DURING YOUR EVENT.**

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# Why does VTC offer this program?

Virginia Tourism provides **MATCHING funding to drive event and festival related overnight and out-of-state** visitation and encouraging visitors to **stay longer and spend more** to increase revenue and jobs in Virginia.

**50% MATCH** is required, but can be **CASH OR IN-KIND** paid, owned or earned media values.

**Reimbursement** program (no money granted up front) after providing proof of ads/rentals invoices, and use of Virginia is for Lovers logo.

Your marketing initiative helps carry the **Virginia is for Lovers** brand through your marketing and your on-site use of Virginia is for Lovers banners, apparel, and promo items.

VTC is also looking for opportunities to get content, like **video and photography**, at your event or festival. You can add those opportunities to the Bonus Section.



# VTC Special Events & Festivals Sponsorship Program

- Funding pool: **\$800,000**
- Expected # of proposals to be awarded: **70 proposals**
- Match: **50%** in-kind or cash (50 cents of match for every \$1 from VTC)
- Award tiers: **\$5,000 to \$20,000 depending on attendance**
- Objective: **Increase out-of-region and overnight travel to Virginia festivals and special events.**
- Awards: **November 2024**
- Lookback Period: **Expense look back to July 1, 2024.**





# FESTIVAL EXPANSION IDEAS

## ATTENDANCE GROWTH IDEAS

- Target repeat visitors
- Target & saturate a new market
- Add an artisan marketplace with booths
- Add a food truck or concession area
- Add a VIP experience/autograph session/dinner with the performers
- Add a second or third stage
- Add a stage for local bands or slam poetry or drum circle
- Engage with local restaurants, wineries, and craft beverage purveyors to create festival food packages//picnic baskets, festival wine or beer pack
- Partner with local non-profit to do a canned food drive or school supply drive at the festival
- If family friendly festival, create a children's area with chalk, bubbles, kid's games, etc.

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# How Does Tourism Marketing Work?



## LAYER YOUR MARKETING

- Research **VTC's Welcome Center/PMAP** programs on how to advertise/marketing inside Virginia Welcome Centers and Safety Rest Areas
- Research **VTC channels, Industry Co-ops,** and **Leisure 360 buy ups** for layered marketing initiatives.
- Monitor your **regional partners** and layer in with their initiatives
- Carry that **Virginia is for Lovers** message into **your marketing** to promote your region and your business.
- Start a Virginia is for Lovers **merchandise** program

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# 2024 SPECIAL EVENTS & FESTIVALS PROGRAM PREP

- TALK TO YOUR LOCAL OR REGIONAL DMO. YOU'LL NEED A LETTER OF SUPPORT TO UPLOAD INTO THE ONLINE APPLICATION.
- LOOK AT RESEARCH/SALES DATA. WHERE ARE PEOPLE COMING FROM? WHAT ARE THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS?
- EVALUATE YOUR RESEARCH WHICH MARKETS HAVE POTENTIAL TO BE NEW VISITORS OR REPEAT VISITORS?

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# LINE-ITEM MARKETING PLANS

- IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET MARKET AND DEMOGRAPHICS
- IDENTIFY MARKETING CHANNEL, WHAT MARKETS THIS CHANNEL TARGETS, VENDOR, PLACEMENT DATES, AND ESTIMATED COST
- EXAMPLE:

SOCIAL MEDIA—FACEBOOK AD—CHARLOTTE, NC—INCOMES OVER \$100K—FAMILIES  
NOVEMBER 2024—\$1,000

PRINT MEDIA—CHARLOTTE OBSERVER  
CHARLOTTE NC INCOMES OVER 100k  
COUPLES/HOLIDAY SHOPPING—DECEMBER  
2024 \$1,000 VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS



# Tourism Economics at the Local Level

- **Tourism revenue supports** locality services
- Locally owned businesses keep profits in the **local community**
- Tourism product helps lead to traditional **economic development**
  - Our funding programs help **leverage** your dollars
- As a tourism-oriented business or organization, get a seat at the table and attend planning meetings, DMO meetings, and EDA meetings so you can **leverage partnerships** in our programs

# Finding Match

- Tourism Investment District
- Locality contribution to DMO/FESTIVAL/EVENT
- Your existing marketing budget (add that VIFL logo)
- Partnerships to create a pool of funds
- 501c organization with funding mechanism

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# POINTS TO REMEMBER

- **PARTNERSHIPS ARE KEY**
- **LEVERAGING PUBLIC TO PRIVATE DOLLARS IS CRITICAL**
- **USE THE VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS LOGO ON YOUR MARKETING & ADS**
  - **ALL ARE REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAMS**
  - **ELIGIBILITY VARIES BY PROGRAM TYPE**
- **ECONOMIC IMPACT & RESEARCH ARE IMPORTANT FACTORS**
- **READ INSTRUCTIONS, Ts & Cs, AND LIST OF ELIGIBLE EXPENSES BEFORE APPLYING**





# VATC.ORG/GRANTS

## Virginia Tourism Corporation

Information for Virginia's Travel Industry

SEARCH THIS WEBSITE

[about](#) [operations](#) [marketing](#) [grants](#) [partnership marketing](#) [research](#) [essentials](#)



# VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS

**FOR VIRGINIA TOURISM  
PARTNERS:**

Welcome to VTC's home for the Commonwealth's tourism industry. This site contains a wealth of information and assistance for the full spectrum of Virginia's travel businesses. Let us know what we can do to help you.

[Sign Up for VTC Grant Updates](#)

[VTC Marketing Leverage Program](#)

[Virginia DMO Marketing Grants](#)

[Virginia Special Events & Festivals Program](#)

[VTC VA250 Tourism Marketing Program](#)

[\(VTC\) Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Program](#)

[Tourism Development Financing Program](#)

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# VATC.ORG/GRANTS

## Virginia Special Events & Festivals Program

- › [Summer 2024 Virginia Special Events & Festivals Grant Application Template and Instructions](#)
- › [Summer 2024 Virginia Special Events & Festivals Grant Terms and Conditions](#)
- › [Summer 2024 Virginia Special Events & Festivals Grant FAQs](#)

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# BEFORE APPLYING

- RESEARCH **WELCOME CENTER/PMAP OPPORTUNITES** AT **WELCOMEVA.COM**
- RESEARCH **INDUSTRY ADVERTISING CO-OPS** ON **VATC.ORG**
- READ OVER **PROGRAM TERMS AND CONDITIONS** AND **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**
- REVIEW LIST OF **ELIGIBLE/INELIGIBLE EXPENSES** FOR THE PROGRAM
- BUILD OUT YOUR **MARKETING** and **PRODUCTION PLANS** BASED ON YOUR **MATCH** AND WHAT YOU WILL SEEK **REIMBURSEMENT** FOR IF YOU GET AN AWARD.
- REVIEW **10% FUNDING LIMITS** FOR CERTAIN EXPENSES
- **DRAFT YOUR APPLICATION** IN WORD AND THEN COPY TO THE APPLICATION PORTAL
- IDENTIFY AND GATHER DMO **LETTER OF SUPPORT**

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# LET'S WORK TOGETHER!

REACH OUT TO THE DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT TEAM

REACH OUT TO THE GRANTS TEAM

FUNDING PROGRAMS OVERVIEW: [VATC.ORG/GRANTS](https://vatc.org/grants)  
QUESTIONS?

MARKETING LEVERAGE PROGRAM, VA250 PROGRAM, MICROBUSINESS PROGRAM

[VTCMLPGRANT@VIRGINIA.ORG](mailto:VTCMLPGRANT@VIRGINIA.ORG)

SPECIAL EVENT & FESTIVALS PROGRAM

[VTCSEFGRANT@VIRGINIA.ORG](mailto:VTCSEFGRANT@VIRGINIA.ORG)

DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATION PROGRAM

[VTCDMOGRANT@VIRGINIA.ORG](mailto:VTCDMOGRANT@VIRGINIA.ORG)

