

City of Fountain Inn Hospitality Tax Grant: Information & Application



FOUNTAIN INN
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City of Fountain Inn
200 North Main Street
Fountain Inn, SC
29644

864-862-4421
www.fountaininn.org

Information

The City of Fountain Inn, in 2009 established a local hospitality tax for funding the operation and maintenance of current tourism-related facilities and to fund projects and events that promote quality of life, tourism and recreation. As part of this, the City makes grant funding available to nonprofit organizations hosting events within the Fountain Inn city limits.

Grant funding is available to nonprofit organizations through a competitive application process. Grant awards are finalized by City Council in March to be spent at the start of the new fiscal year (July). Additional information about the City of Fountain Inn's Hospitality Tax, including the grant application, can be found at <https://www.fountaininn.org/budgets-and-finances.html>

This document includes all information necessary to learn about and apply for a Hospitality Tax grant. Please review the information carefully prior to submitting a grant application.

I. Hospitality Tax Law

According to the South Carolina Local Hospitality Tax Act, the revenue generated by the hospitality tax must be used exclusively for the following purposes (Section 6-1-730):

- (1) tourism-related buildings including, but not limited to, civic centers, coliseums, and aquariums;
- (2) tourism-related cultural, recreational, or historic facilities;
- (3) beach access and renourishment;
- (4) highways, roads, streets, and bridges providing access to tourist destinations;
- (5) advertisements and promotions related to tourism development; or
- (6) water and sewer infrastructure to serve tourism-related demand.

NOTE: A **tourist** is defined as a person who does not reside in, but rather enters temporarily for reasons of recreation or leisure, the jurisdictional boundaries of a municipality for a municipal project or the immediate area of the project for a county project. (Section 6-1-760).

II. Eligibility Criteria

Non-profit organizations are eligible to receive grant funding. Applicants must provide a letter from the IRS confirming nonprofit status **OR** confirmation of registration with the South Carolina Secretary of State's Office as a nonprofit organization.

Grant funding is available only for events located within Fountain Inn city limits. There is currently a moratorium on the approval of any requests for events outside of the City of Fountain Inn.

The City of Fountain Inn **WILL NOT** award Hospitality Tax funds to individuals, fraternity or sorority organizations, religious organizations, or organizations that support and/or endorse political campaigns.

III. Funding Guidelines

The primary purpose of the application **MUST** be tourism. Priority will be given to projects that:

- Promote dining at restaurants and other eating/drinking establishments in the City of Fountain Inn.
- Promote and highlight the City of Fountain Inn's historic and cultural venues, recreational facilities, and events.

Promotional materials for the event/project (including, but not limited to, brochures, flyers, advertisements, etc.) must include a statement that “Funding assistance provided by City of Fountain Inn Hospitality Tax Funds.”

IV. Application Process

Nonprofit organizations interested in applying for Hospitality Tax grant funding must complete a formal application and provide required supporting documentation. Applications for grant funding must be submitted on the City’s current Hospitality Tax Grant Application; submissions made on any other form will not be considered. Incomplete applications will not be evaluated. Applications are accepted via email, mail or in-person by close of business on the specified due date.

All applications for funding will be reviewed by the City Administrator and the Finance Director. Staff will make recommendations for grant funding to City Council who ultimately make the final determination of grant funding.

Applicants may be required to make a presentation to City Council. Council meetings are normally held on the second Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at City Hall. Applicants will be notified if such a presentation is required.

V. Grant Payments

Hospitality Tax grants are reimbursable awards. The City of Fountain Inn issues grant award checks after the submission of a reimbursement request form documenting all related expenses with copies of receipts, invoices and cleared checks. City staff will review all reimbursement requests and documentation against the original grant application and award criteria. Expenses not previously identified in the application will not be reimbursed.

After the reimbursement request form has been approved by the City, a check will be issued to the organization for reimbursement. Project/event vendors will **NOT** be paid by the City of Fountain Inn; checks will be written only to the approved applicant. The approved applicant must submit an IRS Form W-9, Statement of Assurance, and complete income and expense statements for the project on file to receive reimbursement. The process of receiving a reimbursement grant check, after receipt and review of reimbursement form, takes approximately 10-15 business days.

If an organization is found to have unspent funding or has spent funding in any other way than as described and approved per the application, the funds must be returned to the City of Fountain Inn. All requests for grant reimbursement must be submitted by June 30th.

VI. Reporting Requirements

Within 30 days following completion of the project or event, the applicant must submit a final project report. The report must include:

- Number of people that attended the event
- Number of attendees from outside the City of Fountain Inn
- How the attendance number was determined (i.e. sign-in log, zip code request, etc.)
- Complete income and expenses
- Copies of all advertisements or promotional materials associated with project
- Up to five photographs of the project/event, including one photo exhibiting acknowledgment of the City of Fountain Inn through receipt of Fountain Inn Hospitality Tax Funds



Hospitality Tax Application

Applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. Thursday February 27, 2020.

Please review the full Hospitality Tax Grant Information and Application packet prior to submitting an application. To apply for a grant:

- 1. Complete and sign the Hospitality Tax Application.**
Incomplete applications will not be evaluated.
- 2. Provide the following required attachments:**
 - Letter from IRS confirming nonprofit status OR confirmation of registration with the South Carolina Secretary of State as a nonprofit organization
 - List of current board of directors
 - Copy of liability insurance
 - Copies of financial statements for the last three years or for the period of time for which the organization has been in operation
- 3. Provide the following optional attachments:**
 - One additional page for project description
 - One additional page for budget justification of grant expenditures
- 4. Submit three copies of the application and attachments:**
 - Secure each application with a paper or binder clip (no report folders, please)
 - Email, mail or hand deliver the application:
 - E-mail: shawn.bell@fountaininn.org and naomi.reed@fountaininn.org
 - Mail: City of Fountain Inn
Hospitality Tax Grant Application
200 North Main Street
Fountain Inn, SC 29644
 - Hand deliver: Fountain Inn City Hall, 200 North Main Street Fountain Inn, SC

For questions regarding the application process, please contact Naomi Reed:
864-862-4421 ext. 6474 or naomi.reed@fountaininn.org

City of Fountain Inn Hospitality Tax Grant Application

Project Information	
Project Name:	
Project Address/Location:	
Project Date(s):	Amount Requested:

Organization Information	
Organization:	
Mailing Address:	
City/State/Zip:	
Phone:	Alternate Phone:
Fax:	E-Mail:
Executive Director:	
Contact Person (if other than Executive Director):	
How many years has this organization been in existence?	

Project Description

Tourist Information

Estimated number of **total attendees** to be attracted by this project:

Estimated number of attendees **from outside of Fountain Inn** to be attracted:

Explain how the number of tourists will be calculated (surveys, forms, license plates, etc.):

Explain how the requested dollars will increase tourism, financially impact tourism-related businesses in the City of Fountain Inn, and how this impact is being determined:

Statement of Assurances/Certification

The applicant has reviewed the full Fountain Inn Hospitality Tax Grant Information and Application document and understands the hospitality law, eligibility criteria, funding guidelines, application process, payment process and reporting requirements set forth. The applicant hereby certifies that the information submitted as part of this application is accurate and reliable. Any change/and or variation must be reported immediately, otherwise funding may be withheld.

If awarded, the applicant agrees:

- Promotional materials for the project (including, but not limited to: brochures, flyers, advertisements, etc.) must include a statement that “Funding assistance provided by City of Fountain Inn Hospitality Tax Funds.”
- Revenue generated by the project must benefit a community or organization within the Fountain Inn city limits.
- Financial records, support documents, statistical records, and all other records pertinent to Hospitality Tax funding shall be retained for a period of three years. All procurement transactions, regardless of whether negotiated or advertised, shall be conducted in a manner that provides maximum competition. The grant recipient shall establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that has the appearance of being motivated by a desire for private gain for themselves or others. All expenditures must have adequate documentation. All accounting records and supporting documentation shall be available for inspection by the City of Fountain Inn upon request.
- Unspent funding or funding that has spent in any other way than as described and approved per the application must be returned to the City of Fountain Inn.
- No person, on the basis of race, color, or national origin, should be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under the program or activity funded in whole or in part by Hospitality Tax funds.
- Employment made by or resulting from Hospitality Tax funding shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant on the basis of handicap, age, race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.
- None of the funds, materials, property, or services provided directly or indirectly under Hospitality Tax funding shall be used for any partisan political activity, or to further the election or defeat of any candidate for public office.
- That the organization carries liability insurance in the amount of \$_____ and agrees to include the City of Fountain Inn as a named insured for purposes of this project. The organization assumes full legal responsibility for any suit or action at law or equity, and any or all claims arising from this project/activity, and do hereby indemnify and hold harmless the City of Fountain Inn and its staff from any liability in any action at law or equity associated with its support for this project/activity.
- A Final Report of the project will be submitted upon project conclusion including the items as outlined in section VI of the 2019 Information and Application document.

Board Chairperson Signature:

Board Chairperson Name (printed):

Date:

Executive Director Signature:

Executive Director Name (printed):

Date: