

**PURPOSE** The Nassau County Board of County Commissioner (BOCC) and the Amelia Island Tourist Development Council (TDC) believes that special events, projects and programs are vital to the successful development of Amelia Island as a year-round tourist destination. A significant role of the TDC’s marketing effort is developing new offerings that enhance this mission. In general, the TDC may support events/projects/programs whose primary purpose is the generation of additional room nights at Amelia Island lodging facilities and/or support of the Amelia Island brand. The collection of additional Tourist Development Taxes (TDTs) generated by overnight stays, along with additional sales tax collected on meals, retail items, admissions, etc. enhances the local economy. Sponsorship of an event/project/program does not limit the TDC’s ability to conduct separate marketing for said event/project/program or to conduct marketing for events/projects/programs which may not receive a sponsorship.

**POLICY** This policy sets forth the guidelines for requests for sponsorship from TDTs. Applications for TDT sponsorship will be accepted from qualified organizations that plan to invest in projects in the destination, and that have been shown to attract out-of-town publicity or have the potential to attract visitors who will occupy overnight accommodations on Amelia Island. Events/projects/programs may also include a subsection of sports related events/projects/programs where the event/project/program producer resides either inside or outside of Nassau County, but the event/project/program will take place on Amelia Island or within Nassau County.

Section 125.0104 5(A)3, Florida Statutes states, if tax revenues are expended for an activity, service, venue, or event, the activity, service, venue, or event/project/program must have as one of its main purposes the attraction of tourists as evidenced by the promotion of the activity, service, venue, or event/project/program to tourists.

### **I. RELATIONSHIP OF THE TDC AND THE CVB**

The TDC is an advisory board appointed by the BOCC to recommend expenditures within the special taxing district of Nassau County, Florida, and to continuously review that TDT expenditures comply with Section 125.0104(5). The Amelia Island Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB), a 501(C) 6 non-profit corporation, through a contract with the Nassau County Board of County Commissioners performs the destination marketing activities on behalf of the TDC and is the County’s Tourism Promotion Agency pursuant to Section 125.0104 (9), Florida Statutes.

### **II. RELATIONSHIP OF THE BOCC AND TDC**

Nassau County, a political subdivision of the State of Florida, was created for civil and political purposes and acts under powers given to it by the State. The County’s governing authority is the Nassau County Board of Commissioners.

### **III. ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS**

Organizations or governmental entities hosting events/projects/programs that showcase tourism drivers and attributes of Amelia Island such as nature, culture and heritage, culinary, beach, wellness, performing arts or sports, are eligible to apply for support. TDC will consider funding requests from organizations identified by Section

125.0104, Florida Statutes as legitimate expenses for bed-tax funds. Agreements between an organization and the BOCC will define the performance requirements.

#### **IV. CONDITIONS FOR FUNDING**

In those cases where TDC support is recommended for direct sponsorship, the following conditions apply and shall be incorporated into a final sponsorship agreement, as applicable and as set forth in such separate Sponsorship Agreement:

1. Before receiving TDC funds from the BOCC, the event/project/program host/organizer should demonstrate that they have secured ancillary revenue required to meet the revenue budget outlined in the application. To assist the event/project/program host/organizer in securing the sponsorship funds and other financial support to meet this threshold, the TDC recommendation for funding will be approved by resolution. Please note, any funding commitment is not assured until the BOCC has approved an agreement for such funding.
2. If the event/project/program host/organizer fails to achieve ancillary revenue as established by the Sponsorship Agreement between the BOCC and the event/project/program host/organizer, the BOCC reserves the right to modify and/or revoke its support and financial commitment to the event/project/program without recourse against the BOCC.
3. Other Conditions for Consideration
  - a. Event/project/program host/organizer must be previously established for a minimum of two (2) years with proven track record of success in hosting /organizing events/projects/programs.
  - b. The event/project/program must take place on Amelia Island, in Nassau County, within local driving markets or have a major impact on Amelia Island lodging facilities.
  - c. The event/project/program must occur during targeted periods of the year or “need periods”. The highest consideration will be given to those events/projects/programs occurring in August and September. Events/projects/programs occurring in January, February, and October through December will be considered as mid-level. Lowest priority will be given to events/projects/programs occurring in March through July.
  - d. If the event/project/program has received support in the past from the TDC, the event/project/program host/organizer shall submit the most recent final attendance and document final lodging reports for reconsideration.
  - e. Advertising and promotion shall take place in areas outside of Nassau County. This is to ensure that funds will be used to attract visitors who reside outside of Nassau County and who may stay at least one night in local lodging.
  - f. A Sponsorship Agreement must be executed between the event/project/program host/organizer and the BOCC defining additional requirements.
  - g. Event/project/program attendees must be encouraged to utilize Amelia Island hotel rooms.
  - h. At least one Amelia Island hotel or lodging must be promoted on the event/project/program website.
  - i. Event/project/program must show a direct economic impact on the local commerce.

- j. Event/project/program must show marketing efforts by promoting the event/project/program to tourists as defined by Section 125.0104 (2)(b)2, Florida Statutes: “Tourist” means a person who participates in trade or recreation activities outside the county of his or her permanent residence or who rents or leases transient accommodations in Nassau County.”
- k. Sponsorship funding for an event/project/program shall not preclude the BOCC, TDC, or CVB from providing any separate marketing for the event/project/program at their separate expense.
- l. Event/project/program host/organizer must demonstrate that the event/project/program will directly contribute to the promotion of tourism and attraction of overnight visitors to Amelia Island.
- m. Upon request by the BOCC or CVB, the event/project/program host/organizer must designate space for County promotions at events (booth or table).
- n. The Amelia Island logo or name shall be included as per the Sponsorship Agreement.
- o. If an event/project/program host/organizer provides tickets, or equivalent, for an event/project/program, to the TDC as part of the Sponsorship Agreement the tickets shall be provided to the CVB for tracking and auditing purposes.
- p. The event/project/program host/organizer must submit a Post Event/Project/Program Report within forty-five (45) days from the final date of the event/project/program. Failure to do so may impact future sponsorship requests.

## V. FUNDING CATEGORY GUIDELINES

**1. Experience Events/projects/programs Sponsorships: (up to \$25,000 per event/project/program).** May be recommended by the TDC Managing Director to the TDC Board. The TDC Board shall execute a Resolution memorializing the Board’s recommendation. The TDC Resolution will be attached to a separate Resolution that will be presented to the BOCC for approval. Signature authorities for sponsorship agreements shall follow County procurement policies.

- Drives overnight lodging and enhances the visitor experience
- Must be able to generate awareness of Amelia Island out of the local market
- Events/projects/programs that showcase attributes of Amelia Island
  - Eco-tourism Community
  - Culture / Heritage
  - Culinary Community
  - Beach/Active Lifestyle
  - Performing Arts
  - Sports

**2. Signature Events/projects/programs Sponsorships: (up to \$49,999 per event).** May be recommended by the TDC Managing Director to the TDC Board. The TDC Board shall execute a Resolution memorializing the Board’s recommendation. The TDC Resolution will be attached to a separate Resolution that will be presented to the BOCC for approval. Signature authorities for sponsorship agreements shall follow County procurement policies.

- Large multi-day events/projects/programs, two (2) or more days

- Generates awareness outside of Amelia Island to attract overnight visitors
- A percentage of tickets sales are tied to packaging with lodging partners or can clearly demonstrate overnight lodging. Discounted tickets must be made available to lodging partners for packaging purposes, if applicable.
- Secures sponsors throughout the community, if applicable
- Can quantify success through room nights (retail sales and media coverage may also be considered)

**3. Events/projects/programs seeking a sponsorship of \$50,000 or more**

Events/projects/programs seeking a sponsorship of \$50,000 or more shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and may require additional supporting information, terms and conditions, or other items as separately negotiated. The TDC Board shall execute a Resolution memorializing the Board’s recommendation. The TDC Resolution will be attached to a separate Resolution that will be presented to the BOCC for approval. Signature authorities for sponsorship agreements shall follow County procurement policies.

<b>Event/Project/Program Type</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Approvals</b>	<b>Other Terms</b>
Experience Events/projects/programs	up to \$25,000	TDC Managing Director TDC Board Resolution	BOCC Resolution and approved agreement	
Signature Events/projects/programs	up to \$49,999	TDC Managing Director TDC Board Resolution	BOCC Resolution and approved agreement	Multi-day events or projects
Special Events/projects/programs	\$50,000 or more	TDC Managing Director TDC Board Resolution	BOCC Resolution and approved agreement	Negotiated terms

**VI. APPLICATION PROCESS**

Each event/project/program host/organizer applying for sponsorship will be required to submit the Event/Project/Program Sponsorship Funding Application during the annual sponsorship application process. The deadline for applications is June 30 for consideration of support in the next fiscal year (October 1 through September 30). All applications shall be reviewed by the CVB during the months of July and August. The application must be submitted to the TDC Managing Director by e-mail ([billing@ameliaisland.com](mailto:billing@ameliaisland.com)) or mailed/hand delivered to 1750 South 14<sup>th</sup> Street Suite 200, Amelia Island, FL 32034.

The application may contain the following information:

1. Name and address of applicant (who must be the host/organizer of the event/project/program).
2. Name and address of contact person authorized to act on behalf of the event/project/program.
3. Names and addresses of all persons, firms, and corporations with a financial interest in the event or participating in the control of the event/project/program.

4. Detailed description of the event/project/program that includes: a narrative of the proposed goals, objectives, and economic impact; to include dates of the event/project/program including set up and tear down (if applicable); anticipated attendance; audience demographic; and projected overnight visitation or overnight visitor engagement.
5. Event organizers should include a logistics outline, including but not limited to location/site plan; parking/shuttle and traffic plan; security; sanitation; health and safety plans; special needs requirements; and any other logistical information.
6. Proposed media plan for the event/project/program that includes: an advertising schedule; public relations activities; proposed creative materials (including but not limited to display ads, banner ads, websites, fliers, posters); promotional activities to support the event/project/program and the related expense budgets for the marketing activities.
7. A proposed budget for the event/project/program that includes: the amount of money being invested into the event/project/program by the event/project/program host/organizer; an expense budget for producing the event/project/program, the amount of the support requested from the TDC and its intended use; additional sponsorship revenues; anticipated revenues from ticket sales; anticipated revenues from ancillary sales; and any other revenue expected to be generated by the event/project/program.
8. The TDC and CVB shall disclose any associations to individuals, events/projects/programs seeking sponsorship. If a conflict of interest exists, such conflict shall be disclosed.

The TDC Managing Director may recommend certain limited events/projects/programs for sponsorship outside of the annual application process based on TDC Managing Director's determination that such event/project/program shall meet an extraordinary need of the TDC. Such additional explanation shall be provided as part of any recommendation to the TDC Board for review.

## **VII. RECOMMENDATION AND APPROVAL**

After receipt and initial review of completed applications, the TDC Managing Director may recommend approval of the funding request to the TDC Board. If a recommendation is approved by the TDC Board, the TDC Board shall execute a Resolution recommending approval to the BOCC. The Resolution shall then be attached to a separate Resolution to be presented to the BOCC to approve the recommendation of the TDC Board. The BOCC shall execute the Resolution if it approves the TDC Board's recommendation, or in the alternative may deny the recommendation or request additional information be provided at a later date.

An applicant disappointed by the decision of the TDC Managing Director may appeal to the TDC. The TDC Managing Director will schedule an opportunity for the applicant to make a presentation at the next possible TDC Meeting. At the meeting, the applicant will present first and TDC Managing Director will respond. The TDC may approve the application for recommendation to the BOCC, ask the event/project/program host/organizer to make changes to the application, or reject the application. *Although the TDC may provide recommendations, all requests for funding require BOCC approval and an agreement with the County.*

Note: Nassau County reserves the right to cancel any event/project/program Sponsorship Agreement at any time. Decisions made by the TDC and/or the BOCC are final and cannot be appealed. However, Applicants may reapply during the next annual application process.

#### **VIII. SPONSORSHIP AGREEMENT**

Notwithstanding approval of a recommendation for an application by the TDC, neither the applicant nor any third person shall be entitled to rely upon the support which is the subject of the application until a written Sponsorship Agreement between the applicant and the BOCC is entered into incorporating the terms of this policy, and such other terms and conditions as may be appropriate. Among other terms and conditions, the Sponsorship Agreement shall provide that:

1. Nothing in this Policy or in the Sponsorship Agreement shall be construed to make the TDC, BOCC, or CVB a partner or joint venture with the applicant, or to create the impression the TDC, BOCC, or CVB shall have any control over the planning and conduct of the event/project/program itself.
2. Funding shall be contingent upon the applicant obtaining all permits and insurance required by law to host the event/project/program and complying with all applicable laws in connection with the event/project/program.
3. If any material changes occur in the scope (format, audience, attendance, budget, etc.) or marketing (content, placement, or strategy) of the event/project/program, the BOCC reserves the right to withdraw its support and financial commitment to the event/project/program without recourse against the BOCC.
4. In addition to the foregoing, additional conditions may be required in the Sponsorship Agreement. The BOCC/TDC may reserve a specified portion of the financial support provided to the applicant for purpose of conducting an Economic Impact Analysis of the event. The research study will be conducted by the TDC or third-party firm in a method and manner consistent with other TDC research studies.
5. If funding, in whole or in part, is to be provided in any subsequent TDC fiscal year, the Sponsorship Agreement shall state that such subsequent funding will be subject to legislative appropriation without recourse against the BOCC or TDC in the event funding is not recommended by the TDC or approved by the BOCC in the TDC Plan of Work and Budget for that subsequent fiscal year(s).

#### **IX. STANDARD OF REVIEW**

The mission of the TDC is to generate visitation to Amelia Island and its public facilities, attractions/special events/projects/programs /activities, and tourism related businesses, thereby increasing tax revenues, including sales taxes and those imposed on the hospitality industry. In turn, those tax revenues may be used to improve the quality of life for the citizens of the community, provide the support necessary for beach renourishment, and ensure a viable hospitality industry.

To that end, the TDC maintains a strategic plan for the local tourism industry at large. Within budgeted limits, applications will be evaluated on the extent to which a project is marketed (including but not limited to advertising and other activities for which support is requested) will complement the TDC marketing plan; the effect the event/project/program will have upon the image or perception of Amelia Island as a destination; and the potential or proven economic benefit to the community, in particular, needed incremental room nights.

Due to the inherent nature and art of managing a destination, and the subjectivity of brand considerations(image), the TDC's decision whether to provide recommendations to expend its limited resources to support a particular event/project/program will necessarily require subjective and even aesthetic determinations. Accordingly, the BOCC and TDC reserves the right in its unfettered discretion to grant or deny in whole or in part an application for project support, operational support, or development of public facilities as defined in Section 125.0104, Florida Statutes.

#### **X. EXPEDITIED SPONSORSHIPS**

In certain very limited cases, an event/project/program may qualify for expedited approval. In those cases, all terms of this Policy shall still apply, however, except as modified below:

1. Expedited Sponsorships requests shall not exceed \$10,000.
2. Upon receipt of a completed application, the TDC Managing Director shall review the application for compliance with this Policy. Following the compliance review and approval, the TDC Managing Director shall submit the application to the TDC Board Chairman for approval. If the TDC Board Chairman approves the application then the TDC Board Chairman shall document said approval in writing.
3. The written approval by the TDC Board Chairman shall be presented to the County Manager's and County Attorney's offices with the completed application, check request and Sponsorship Agreement.
4. The sponsorship check request and Sponsorship Agreement shall require approval and execution by the County Manager.
5. As soon as possible, the TDC Board shall execute a Resolution ratifying and memorializing the recommendation of the TDC Board Chairman and the funding of the sponsorship.
6. The TDC Resolution shall then be attached to a separate Resolution that will be presented to the BOCC for ratification of the sponsorship.
7. The event/project/program host/organizer shall be bound by this policy including all post event reporting requirements to be eligible for future funding considerations.