

DOUGLAS COUNTY
VISITOR IMPROVEMENT FUND
GRANT GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION
2019-2020

Application Submission Instructions:

E-mail complete application, including attachments, in PDF format to:

VIFgrants@douglascounty-ne.gov

Applications are due no later than **Friday, April 26, 2019, 4:00 pm**

Contact for questions:

Catherine Hall, Assistant County Administrator

(402) 444-6416

catherine.hall@douglascounty-ne.gov

GUIDELINES

1. Any visitor attraction in Douglas County, owned by the public or legally recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, whose primary purpose is to operate the visitor attraction, is eligible for fund allocation. The organization applying for the grant must act as its own fiscal agent. Only one application from an entity (as defined by tax ID number) will be accepted each grant year.
2. Visitor Improvement Fund grant funds shall be used for the purposes of expanding and improving facilities at any existing visitor attraction, acquiring or expanding exhibits for existing visitor attractions, constructing visitor attractions, or planning or developing such expansions, improvements, or construction.
3. Grant funds may not be used for promotion, marketing or advertising costs to promote, encourage, and attract visitors.
4. Requests for general operating expenses and any other financial assistance that does not conform to the intent of the Visitor Improvement Fund will not receive consideration. Grant funds may not be used to fund cash prizes or organizational general operating expenses, such as employee salaries or an organization's ongoing day-to-day operations. Grant funds may be used to fund organizational expenses specifically designated for an organization's qualified event, program or project.
5. Fund applicants must complete the attached ***Visitor Improvement Fund Application*** outlining use and benefits of requested funds. Failure to complete the entire application may result in the rejection of your funding request.
6. **All Visitor Improvement Fund applications, including required attachments, must be submitted electronically in PDF format to VIFGrants@douglascounty-ne.gov by 4:00 PM, Friday, April 26, 2019.** Faxed, mailed or hand-delivered applications will NOT be accepted. Per Board of Commissioners' 2012 Resolution No. 429, it is Board policy that late filings will NOT be considered. Applications, including any required attachments, must be complete and legible at time of submission.
7. Requests for funding will be reviewed and evaluated by criteria including, but not limited to, consideration of diversity and inclusion, volume of overnight visitors drawn from outside Douglas County, and potential for special impact, such as a new or expanded event.
8. During application review, any applicant may be asked to provide additional information about its request or may be invited to make a brief presentation.
9. Applicants will receive notification of award status in approximately July 2019. Before receiving award funds, recipients shall enter into an agreement with the county outlining award expectations. The award agreement will be distributed to recipient by e-mail for electronic signature after awards are announced.

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10. Grant awards will be distributed in equal quarterly installments (October, January, April, June) unless determined otherwise by the Douglas County Finance & Budget Director. Recipients may elect to authorize electronic disbursement of grant funds via ACH.
11. All grant funds allocated in 2019-2020 must be encumbered no later than July 1, 2020. Any monies that your organization has not encumbered by this deadline shall be returned to the Douglas County Visitor Improvement Fund.
12. If your organization has been awarded Visitor Improvement Funds in a previous year, Douglas County requires an audit of those expenditures.

To comply with the audit requirement, a detailed listing of the expenditures on the attached **Exhibit #1** must be supplied.

In addition to Exhibit #1, documentation substantiating grant award expenditures must also be submitted. Documentation may include:

- a. copies of receipts,
- b. cancelled checks and corresponding invoices,
- c. fully executed contracts signed by all parties,
- d. bank account website copies,
- e. credit card transaction copies.

Past Visitor Improvement Fund recipients must also complete the attached **Exhibit #2**, explaining the impact of last year's grant on your organization. Please include information on revenue generated and attendance, if applicable.

Failure to provide Exhibits #1 and #2 may result in the rejection of future funding requests. Exhibits #1 and #2 should be submitted with your 2019-2020 application, when possible. If the previous year's grant award has not been spent or encumbered at the time of application, Exhibits #1 and #2 may be submitted to the Douglas County Board of Commissioners' Office separate from the grant application, but no later than September 30, 2019.

2019-2020 VIF grant monies will not be released until this audit is completed.

APPLICATION

APPLICANT INFORMATION

1. Contact Information

Organization Name _____

Tax ID Number _____

Contact Name _____

E-mail Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Street Address _____

City _____

Zip Code _____

County _____

Website _____

Authorized Signatory Name (if different from Contact, above) _____

Authorized Signatory E-mail Address (if different from E-mail Address, above)

If your organization applied for funding in any prior year under a different organizational name,
please provide the name(s) _____

2. Please state your organization's primary mission:

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3. Please select applicable description(s) of your visitor attraction and explain:

- Educational
- Cultural
- Historical
- Artistic
- Recreational
- Entertainment

4. Please select applicable descriptions of your organization:

- Publicly owned
- 501(c)(3) Nonprofit
- A visitor attraction with facility we own and operate
- A performing arts group
- A festival or event
- Other (please explain below)

5. Is your attraction open to the public? Yes No

6. Please complete the following attendance table:

	2018	2017	2016
Annual attendance to your event(s)/ facility			
% of visitors from outside Douglas County			
% of visitors staying overnight in Douglas County			

7. Please describe method used to determine attendance figures provided in question 6:

8. Applicants are encouraged to cooperate with the Omaha Convention and Visitors Bureau (402-444-4660), which may provide assistance in estimating overnight visitors or economic impact, as well as promotion efforts. Does your organization use the Omaha Convention and Visitors Bureau as a resource? Yes No

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9. Please attach the following required documents for your organization:
- a. Copy of determination letter from the IRS confirming tax exempt status
 - b. List of Board of Directors
 - c. Schedule of Board meetings
 - d. Copy of bylaws
 - e. Current financial statement of all revenues and expenditures
 - f. Statement outlining your organization's internal control over cash (relating to receiving and disbursing cash and bank reconciliations), including policies in place to ensure proper segregation of duties and names and positions of persons involved in the process.

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PAST AWARD AUDIT DOCUMENTATION REPORT

15. Did you receive Visitor Improvement Funds in a previous year?

Yes No

If "Yes," please proceed through question 16.

If "No," this section is not applicable.

16. Have all of the previous year's award funds been spent or encumbered?

Yes No

If "Yes," please complete Exhibits 1 and 2.

If "No," will they be spent or encumbered by July 1, 2019? Yes No

If complete Audit Documentation Report (Exhibits #1 and #2) is not included with your application, please provide brief explanation why it is not included (e.g., event has not taken place at time of application) and indicate the projected date of submission to the Commissioners' Office.

Note: Any awarded 2019/2020 VIF grant monies will not be released until the Past Award Audit Documentation Report (Exhibits #1 and #2) is complete.

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EXHIBIT #1

Please supply a detailed listing of all award expenditures below.

Description of Improvement, Exhibit or Performance	Date Paid	Check Number	Vendor	Amount
Total Paid				

(Applicant may attach additional page(s), if necessary)

In addition to Exhibit #1, you must include documentation that substantiates grant award expenditures. Documentation may include:

- a. copies of receipts,
- b. cancelled checks and corresponding invoices,
- c. fully executed contracts signed by all parties,
- d. bank account website copies,
- e. credit card transaction copies.

EXHIBIT #2

If exhibit or performance:

Revenue Generated: \$ _____

Attendance: _____

Please explain the impact of last year's grant on your organization:
