

# **McCurtain County Tourism Authority Grant Application Guidelines**

## Introduction

The McCurtain County Tourism Authority is funded by a hotel lodging tax. This tax is 3% and is collected only by hotels or lodging facilities that are located outside of the city limits. Each city in the county has their own tourism tax that is collected within their city limits. This tax is solely generated by tourists visiting our community. The purpose of the tax is to promote, encourage, and develop tourism and recreational activities beneficial to McCurtain County.

Economic strengthening of the local economy will enhance the quality of life enjoyed by McCurtain County residents. The local economy will be strengthened by the development of tourism and recreation.

The purpose of the grants available through the McCurtain County Tourism Authority is to assist in the promotion of events and encourage the development of new events for McCurtain County that are designed to attract overnight visitors to our county.

The details of this process are:

The MCTA can help events that apply for assistance and meet the established criteria. All applications are reviewed by the McCurtain County Tourism Authority Board. Issuance of grants requires board action. The form and criteria established are for the purpose of ensuring that all applications are considered on an equal basis. Generally, those entities seeking assistance must demonstrate that their event or project will result in overnight stays within the McCurtain County area. The MCTA grant program is an avenue of monetary assistance for events that generate overnight stays only.

## Guidelines and Criteria for Funding

Assistance through the grant process is available to support a planned event or project. Assistance is also available to help with promotional aspects in the beginning stages of new events. This is not a source of permanent funding. It is

expected that events that become regular or annual events will develop a sponsor base and grow to no longer need this assistance. The McCurtain County Tourism Authority cannot make multi-year financial commitments. All projects, events, festivals etc. must be nonprofit and have a valid EIN number before funding can be approved. Must submit a w-9 form. Must use McCurtain County logo where possible.

Successful grants will adhere to the following:

- All grant applications must be submitted by mail or email by May 13<sup>th</sup> for the May 25<sup>th</sup> Grant Proposal meeting held annually. If mailing please mail eight (8) copies of your application to the meeting.
- You are applying in May for the events in scheduled from July 1, 2023 through June 31, 2024.
- Any printed flyers, brochures, or other promotional items must be submitted to the McCurtain County Tourism Authority office a minimum of 30 days prior to the beginning date of the event for distribution. (If your marketing plan does not include printed promotional items, submit one page summary with listing of activities planned and detailed information that can be passed along to potential participants or visitors)
- Please email digital information to [bchamber@pine-net.com](mailto:bchamber@pine-net.com) to be forwarded to area cabin operators and to be used on [www.visitmccurtaincounty.com](http://www.visitmccurtaincounty.com) as soon as possible.
- If your plan includes digital advertising, please provide screenshots or mockups of what ran, when and where.
- All events receiving grants are required to include the logo of the McCurtain County Tourism Authority on all printed material and digital flyers.
- The monetary assistance of MCTA grants will be in the form of reimbursement for promotion and publicity type expenses only.
- MCTA will not reimburse for T-Shirts, banners or items that will be handed out at the event.
- We will not reimburse for building of billboard, however we may for the monthly rental of one.
- We will not reimburse for any in kind services.
- We will not reimburse for the purchase or rental of computers, software, projectors, or other similar equipment.

- Advertising and marketing to solicit funds for special project or sponsorships.
- We will not reimburse for reception materials.
- We will not reimburse for lodging, mileage, transportation costs, telephone expenses, postage, office type supplies.
- We will not reimburse for personnel costs and or salaries.
- We will not reimburse for any items for resale or promoting sponsors- MCTA will not reimburse for programs or items that contain sold advertising within them.
- MCTA will not reimburse for programs or items that contain sold advertising within them.
- Plan must include 85% of advertising plan to promote event outside of McCurtain County. If your marketing plan has some in county advertising, we will approve as long as the out of the area element is included.
- MCTA will not approve a grant that only included in county advertising because the purpose of this grant program is to bring awareness outside of the county to come to our county for your event.

MCTA will reimburse for all the costs spent advertising the event outside of McCurtain County up to \$5,000. If the event is requesting more than \$5,000, any additional amount up to \$10,000 will half of those costs will be reimbursed. MCTA must have a W-9 for the organization.

An Event Wrap-Up Report and an Invoice Summary of all expenses must be sent directly to the McCurtain County Tourism Authority office. Copies of invoices or receipts must be attached show the total amount spent and that they have been paid. Invoices must be turned in no more than 60 days following the event. And expect another 30 days before getting a reimbursement grant check.

Bring eight (8) copies of the Event Wrap-Up report, Invoice Summary with bills, and any copies of press releases, brochures, ads ran, or any other promotional materials you may have. We need copies of packing slips and shipping slips for anything that may have been shipped to you that is promotional and advertising related.

## How to Apply

A fully completed application, together with supporting documentation, must be submitted ten days prior to the McCurtain County Tourism Authority office prior to the special meeting held each May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 8:30 a.m. at the Forest Heritage Center in the meeting room. The McCurtain County Tourism Authority's Request for Event Support is a very detailed form requiring documentation of your event's funding and marketing plan.

Once approved, the Event Wrap up Report form and other documentation should be submitted to the McCurtain County Tourism Authority Office no later than 90 days following an event. It is required that this detailed report be completed in full for reimbursement to be processed. A copy of the form is issued with the application so that organizations can be prepared for process. Proof of payment on all invoices must be included.

All forms must be completed in full with appropriate documentation for any request to be successfully processed. Applicants are fully responsible for the completion of all MCTA Grant request and accountability forms. Incomplete submissions will not be accepted or reviewed for acceptance. The McCurtain County Tourism Authority office will be happy to provide the appropriate forms and guidance for those soliciting this financial assistance. However, the responsibility for completing the application requirements and supplying the necessary documentation is the applicants.

**McCurtain County Tourism Authority**  
**Request for Event Support Form**

Organization Name:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Contact Person: Title:

Telephone

Fax: Email:

Date (s) of Event:

Federal I.D or EIN:

Today's Date:

Number of Years Event Held:

Total Number of participants expected:

Total Number of out of county guests expected:

Please provide a brief summary of your event:

How will your event add to tourism development in McCurtain County?

Specifically tell us how your event or project will result in overnight stays within the McCurtain County area?  
(Please list the following two questions on a separate sheet of paper and attach it to this form)

Please list all avenues you plan to use to promote your event and give the total amount you plan to spend for each.

Please list specifically, what this requested funding will be used for.

Total Advertising Budget \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of Funding Requested \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Event Operating Budget \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**McCurtain County Tourism Authority**  
**EVENT WRAP-UP REPORT**

Organization Name:

Date:

Date(s) Event was Held:

Contact Person:

Phone:

Estimated total number attending event:

Estimated total number of out-of-county guests:

If known, where the out-of-county guests came from:

How did you arrive at the attendance numbers?

Did the attendance numbers increase or decrease from previous year?

Give reasons why?

Please provide a brief summary of the outcome of your event:

How did your event add to tourism development in McCurtain County?

\_\_\_\_\_ Attach an invoice summarizing your expenses for reimbursement.  
Provided on that list is the name of vendor, type of promotion, total cost, and amount  
requested that MCTA pay. Attach copies of invoices and receipts.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_