



## Hitchcock County Visitors Committee Universal Grant Guidelines And Application

It is the mission of the Hitchcock County Visitors Committee to promote and facilitate the establishment and growth of quality events, attractions and amenities for the enjoyment of residents and visitors alike.

One of the ways the Visitors Committee fulfills this mission is to offer the opportunity to apply for grant funds to businesses and community organizations to assist them in hosting and promoting events and attractions.

There are two types of grants available from the Visitors Committee: Promotion and Improvement.

- **PROMOTION (\$750 cap)** grants shall be used generally to promote, encourage and attract visitors to come to Hitchcock County and use the travel and tourism facilities within the county.

**All grantees must provide at least a 25% match.** At least half (12.5%) must be cash spent towards the project, the other half (12.5%) can be in-kind services and/or donated materials; however, documentation must be provided for any in-kind match. Volunteer work is valued at \$10/hour and must be documented, including dates and lists of volunteers, the services they provided and their hours of service. Examples include:

- Radio, TV, Newspaper advertising outside of Hitchcock County
  - Brochure, flyer, poster printing
  - Social media marketing campaigns
- **IMPROVEMENT (\$2,500 cap)** grants shall be used to make improvements to existing or to create new visitor attractions and facilities in Hitchcock County. Improvement fund grants shall be used to improve the visitor attractions and facilities owned by the public or any non-profit organization in the county, except that no proceeds shall be used to improve a facility in which pari-mutual wagering is conducted. Multi-year projects will be considered for the funding through the Improvement Fund Grant program.

These grants are available to both for-profit entities and non-profit organizations. The grants are not meant to be a part of an annual operating budget for any group but rather to get a project started, or in the case of an existing event, to promote an addition to an event. Applying entities can apply for both grants for the same event or marketing campaign.

Promotion grants from the Visitors Committee are reimbursement grants. Organizations must submit invoices and proof of payment to be reimbursed for all expenses approved in the grant award. Upon submission of these forms and documentation, reimbursement will be made.

### **Deadlines**

The Hitchcock County Visitors Committee meets on the third Tuesday of every month. Applications must be submitted ten (10) days prior to the meeting to be considered. Applications failing to meet the monthly deadline will be placed on the following month's agenda. Exceptions to the deadline rule will be considered only if the applicant can show good cause for the exception. You will be notified by email when your grant application is received. If you do not receive notification, contact the Hitchcock County Visitors Bureau to confirm its receipt.

### **Purpose of Funds**

The purpose of Hitchcock County Visitors Committee grants is to provide funding for activities that promote, encourage and attract visitors to Hitchcock County. The funds available through this program are provided from the lodging tax revenue fund and are to be use for the sole purpose of promoting, encouraging and attracting visitors to and within Hitchcock County Nebraska, as Nebraska Revised Statutes §81-3701 through §81-3724 provides.

### **Applications**

Applications must be filled out completely and on time. Hitchcock County Visitors Committee board members will return all incomplete applications to the applicant for correction of any deficiencies. Members are available to answer questions and to assist in the application process.

### **Exclusions**

Ineligible events include fundraisers where funds will be passed along to a third party (i.e. American Cancer Society, etc.), political events, and any events not open to the public.

No part of the grant funds may be used for general operating expenses, for additional or current personnel salaries or in any manner that would violate the Nebraska Development Act, Nebraska Revised Statutes §81-3701 through §81-3724. , et seq. (as amended from time to time). All grants are discretionary, based upon available funds, other anticipated uses, appropriateness and anticipated effectiveness of proposed use.

Events will be ineligible for funding if not all local and state permits are obtained.

### **Crediting Requirements**

If you are awarded this grant, included on all printed material or advertising media shall be the words "Sponsored in part by a grant from Hitchcock County Visitors Committee".

### **Announcement of Grant Award**

All applicants will be notified in writing within ten (10) working days after the review of the application by the Hitchcock County Visitors Committee with the decision.

# REPORTING, ACCOUNTING AND PAYMENT PROCEDURES

## Reporting

Thirty (30) days after the grant activities are completed, the grantee must submit a report to the Visitors Committee giving final results. The report must outline if the objectives of the event were met. If not, what were the circumstances that lead to the deficiency? No money will be released until the final report and all required documentation is turned into a Hitchcock County Visitors Committee board member. Payment will not be made for unpaid invoices or invoices without proof of payment.

Final reports MUST include paid invoices and copies of proof of payment. Proof of payment may be copies of canceled checks, credit card receipts or copies of bank statements with confidential information redacted.

Final reports are due within thirty (30) days after the end of the event or the completion of the promotion project. The exact calendar date will be included in the Grant Agreement contract.

## Accounting

GRANTEES ARE REQUIRED to maintain receipts of expenditures of grant funds for auditing purposes for a period of three (3) years following the event, and to make these records available to the Visitors Committee upon request.

## Payment

Upon receipt of the final report and all required accounting documents, the Hitchcock County Visitors Committee will submit a claim to the Hitchcock County Clerk's office for the grant funds. Checks for Facility Rental grants will be sent directly to the appropriate facility. Checks for Promotion grants will be sent directly to the grantee. The check will come from the Hitchcock County Treasurer.

## Review Process

Grants are discretionary, based upon available funds, other anticipated uses, appropriateness and anticipated effectiveness of proposed use all in compliance with the Nebraska Revised Statutes §81-3701 through §81-3724. , et seq. (as amended from time to time).

Please note that funding for Promotion Fund Grants is limited. As such, even if your application is approved, funding may not be granted for your event at the full amount requested.

## GRANT APPLICATION

**Which Grant are you applying for? (Check all that apply)**

- Promotion (Must include Budget Worksheet on page 8)  
 Improvement (Must include Budget Worksheet on page 9)

Name of Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Address/City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Name award check should be made out to: \_\_\_\_\_

Address check should be mailed: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Event/Project \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Event \_\_\_\_\_ OR End Date of Project \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Requested \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide a brief description of the project/event

For each grant application, you must include this completed cover sheet, project narrative of not more than three (3) pages answering the following questions and the appropriate Budget Worksheet page.

Return to: Hitchcock Visitors Committee 71609 Road 359, Trenton NE 69044 or email to [HitchcockCountyTourism@gmail.com](mailto:HitchcockCountyTourism@gmail.com)

### Universal Grant Project Narrative

Please address all sections and bullets that are applicable to your grant request. **You are only required to answer the questions pertaining to the category of grant for which you are applying. If applying for two grant categories, please complete the Project Narrative questions for each category. Additional pages may be added if necessary.**

1. How will your project benefit Hitchcock County?

2. What other agencies or groups are co-sponsoring this project?

3. Are you applying to other organizations for grant funds for these activities: If so, name the organizations and indicate the amount you for which you are applying.

4. What are your goals and objectives for your project/event? What is your strategy (or strategies) to ensure project/event success? And how will you measure the success of your project/event?

5. Who is the target market for this event or project?

6. What is your plan for attracting visitors from farther away than 60 miles to your event?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. If this is for an existing event, what new addition are you planning to bring more people to Hitchcock County?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Provide a basic preliminary schedule of the activities on each day of the event.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. Are any of the proceeds of this event donated or passed through to another individual or organization?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. If this is an annual event, what is your plan to become financially sustainable?

11. What is the number of Participants/Attendees anticipated for current event in each of the following categories?

Origins	Participants	Attendees
Local (from within 60 miles)		
Nebraska		
Neighboring States		
National		
International		

12. If applicable please list the lodging properties that will be utilized by participants or attendees at your event. Indicate the number of rooms that are paid for either by your organization or by the individuals attending your events.

- Indicate the rooms that are being provided at no charge by the lodging property (comped rooms).
- Estimate the number of nights those attending your events will be staying in our community.

Lodging Property	# Paid Rooms	# Comped Rooms	Length of Stay
Soo-Paw Motel			
Blue Colonial B&B Inn			
Lakeview Lodge			
Peyton's Place			
Grandview			
Nel's Place			
Campsites			
<b>TOTALS</b>			

13. Has this project received funding through the Hitchcock County Visitors Committee in the past? If yes, when and how much?

14. If this application isn't funded fully, will your project still happen?

15. Complete appropriate Budget Worksheet for your grant application.

## HCVC Budget Worksheet for PROMOTION GRANT

(Include Advertising and Contractor bids if applicable)

Be specific regarding types of advertising (for example: magazine, newspaper, radio, TV, visitors guides, rack cards, brochures, web sites, travel show booth, registration fees, digital, etc.). All radio, TV, and print media advertising must be listed separately. Show radio and TV advertising by both call letters and city of origin (for example: KRVN – Lexington). Show magazine and newspaper advertising by individual publications and costs.

You must show how both the grant amount requested and the matches (both cash and in-kind) will be allocated among the activities. Remember that a 25% match is required, and that at least half of the match (or 12.5% of the match amount) must be cash. The other half of the match can be "in-kind," consisting of volunteer services and donated materials. Volunteer services should be valued at \$10 per hour.

Application/Project \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Grant)

Activity	Grant Amount Requested	Cash Match	In Kind Match	Source of Match	Total Funds
<b>Column Totals:</b>					

(Total of Grant Amount Requested + Cash Match + In Kind Match = Final Column Total)



**HCVC Improvement Fund Grant  
Budget Worksheet  
(Include contractor bids if applicable.)**

Activity	Grant Amount Requested	Cash Match	In Kind Match	Source of Match	Total Funds
					\$
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>					\$

## Hitchcock County Visitors Committee Universal Grant Application Checklist

### Application

- Completed cover page.
- Narrative answering all questions pertaining to the category of grant you are applying for.
- Completed Budget Worksheet.
- Broadcast and Print media coverage maps and bids for all applicable activities.

### Agreement

You will be required to sign a Grant Agreement contract assuring that you will comply with the following requirements:

- To use the grant only for the following purpose: To promote, encourage, and attract visitors to come to Hitchcock County and use the travel and tourism facilities within the county, or to make improvements to existing or to create new visitor attractions and facilities in Hitchcock County.
- To submit to the Hitchcock County Visitors Committee a final evaluation report within 30 days after the end of the event.
- To maintain records of receipts and expenditures for a period of three years following the end of the event, and to provide the same upon request by the Hitchcock County Visitors Committee.
- To include in all printed materials or advertising media the words "sponsored in part by the Hitchcock County Visitors Bureau".
- To include in any website the words "sponsored in part by the Hitchcock County Visitors Committee".
- Not to use any of the grant funds:
  - For items not included in the Approved Grant Application.
  - For general operating expenses.
  - For additional or current personnel salaries.
  - In any manner that would violate the Nebraska Development Act, Neb. Rev. Stat. §81-3701 through §81-3724. , et seq. (as amended from time to time).

### Reporting

- Final reports are due within 30 days following your event.
- Final reports MUST include paid invoices and copies of proof of payment. Proof of payment may be copies of canceled checks, credit card receipts or copies of bank statements with confidential information redacted. No cash receipts will be accepted for reimbursement.

UNIVERSAL GRANT AGREEMENT  
HITCHCOCK COUNTY VISITORS COMMITTEE

In consideration of a grant of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ from the Hitchcock County Visitors Committee, the undersigned **Grantee**, \_\_\_\_\_ agrees:

To use the grant only for the purpose expressed in the Approved Promotion Grant Application:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. To use the grant only for the following purpose: To promote, encourage and attract visitors to come to Hitchcock County and use the travel and tourism facilities within the county, or to offset expenses incurred in creating quality events that attract visitors to come to Hitchcock County and use the travel and tourism facilities with in the county.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. To submit to the Hitchcock County Visitors Committee a final evaluation report within 30 days after the end of the event.  
Final Evaluation Report Deadline \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. To maintain records of receipts and expenditures for a period of three years following the end of the event and to provide the same upon request by the Hitchcock County Visitors Committee.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. To include in all printed materials or advertising media the words "Sponsored in part by the Hitchcock County Visitors Committee".
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. To include in any website the words "Sponsored in part by the Hitchcock County Visitors Committee".
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Not to use any of the grant funds:
  - a. For items not included in the Approved Grant Application.
  - b. For general operating expenses
  - c. For additional or current personnel salaries.
  - d. In any manner that would violate the Nebraska Development Act, Neb. Rev. Stat. §81-3701 through §81-3724. , et seq. (as amended from time to time).
  - e. For acquiring, expanding or improving facilities or exhibits, or planning for the same.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The individual signing this Grant Agreement hereby represents that he or she is duly authorized to exercise such Agreement in the capacity in which he or she is executing the same.

Organization Name (Grantee) \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by Visitor Committee Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_

## Hitchcock County Visitors Committee Promotion Grant Award Final Report

Submit your final report within 30 days after the completion of the project/event. Final reports must include all of the following components:

1. Complete the appropriate follow-up form as follows:
  - a. Promotion Grant – Marketing Budget Worksheet
  - b. Improvement Grant – Reimbursement Request Form

Note: If activities outlined in the Marketing Budget Worksheet are not completed, the amount of the grant funds processed may be reduced accordingly.
2. Copies of vendor invoices and proof of payment: copies of cleared checks and or paid invoices showing the actual costs incurred, obligated and paid for by both grant expenses and match.
3. Final Project Report of not more than three (3) pages including the following items:
  - a. Synopsis of the project
    - i. Description of the project.

ii. Were the objectives for this project met? If not, what were the circumstances that led to the deficiency?

iii. Do you intend to continue this event and what changes will you make to increase attendance?

iv. Final lodging numbers (room nights)

Lodging Property	# Paid Rooms	# Comped Rooms	Length of Stay
Soo-Paw Motel			
Blue Colonial B&B Inn			
Lakeview Lodge			
Peyton's Place			
Grandview			
Nel's Place			
Campsites			
TOTALS			

v. Final participant/attendee numbers

Origins	Participants	Attendees
Local (from within 60 miles)		
Nebraska		
Neighboring States		
National		
International		
TOTALS		

b. How were the grant funds used?

c. Measurements of marketing effectiveness and impact (attendance counts, number of advertising-stimulated inquiries, etc.)

i. If using Social Media Marketing, include the following target information:

1. Demographics of target audience: Age, Education, Income, Male/Female
2. Interests
3. Location

**Promotion Follow Up Report**  
**MARKETING STATEMENT FORM**  
 (Marketing Activities completed and their associated costs.)

Activity	Amount	Invoice Included	Copy of Check / Check #
	\$		
TOTAL MARKETING COSTS	\$		

# Reimbursement Request Form – Improvement Grant

Hitchcock County Visitors Committee Grant: \_\_\_\_\_

Grant Amount Awarded: \_\_\_\_\_ Reimbursement Amount Requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity / Description	Visitors Committee Grant		Cash Match		In-Kind Match		Total		Documentation for Reimbursement		Miscellaneous Notes
	Proposed (re:Budget Worksheet)	Actual	Proposed (re:Budget Worksheet)	Actual	Proposed (re:Budget Worksheet)	Actual	Proposed	Actual	Invoice included	Copy of Check / Check #	
<b>Totals</b>											



## Welcome

We're pleased that you are visiting the Hitchcock County area for this event, and we invite you back for a return visit in the future! That's why we're asking you to take a few minutes to fill out this brief survey telling us about your experiences and what we could do to make your next visit event better. Thank you very much for helping us serve the needs of our visitors better by completing this important survey:

What event are you attending? \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is your home town/city of primary residence? \_\_\_\_\_ (City) \_\_\_\_\_ (State)
2. How many people (including you) are in your travel party for this trip? \_\_\_\_\_ # of Adults \_\_\_\_\_ # of Kids
3. How many nights did you spend in the Hitchcock County area on this trip? \_\_\_\_\_ (# of nights) And where did you stay? \_\_\_\_\_ Hotel/Motel \_\_\_\_\_ Campground \_\_\_\_\_ B&B \_\_\_\_\_ Friends/Relative

4. In addition to this event, what other activities did you do during your stay and what places did you visit?

5. Including lodging, transportation, food and shopping, please estimate your total expenditures or purchases that you and your traveling companions made on this trip. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

6. What suggestions do you have to help us make your next trip to Hitchcock County and this event even better?

**Thank you for completing our survey.  
We hope to see you back in Hitchcock County for another visit in the near future!**