

EVENT GRANT RULES – FISCAL YEAR 2025

Part of the City of Waterloo Hotel-Motel Tax Grant process

Experience Waterloo, on behalf of the City of Waterloo, is accepting grant requests for event-related projects that will have a positive impact on the tourism industry in Waterloo during the second half of Fiscal Year 2025 (January 1, 2025 – June 30, 2025).

This bi-annual grant program is aimed at bringing events that have a positive economic impact to Waterloo.

Applications should specifically show how the event brings visitors to Waterloo, with a focus on overnight guests. Grants aren't intended to provide long-term, operational support or support "rainy day funds," but are intended to support marketing and event efforts that help make economically significant events possible.

APPLICATION STANDARDS

- Visitor Event Grants may apply for no more than \$20,000.
 - Visitor Event Grants are defined as events that draw **greater than 50%** of its attendance from outside of Black Hawk County.
 - If it is a first-time event, the applicant must outline intent to track/measure out-of-county attendance.
 - If reoccurring or previously held event, applicant must outline method and result of tracking/measurement of out-of-county attendance. Experience Waterloo will confirm attendance by utilizing Placer.AI.
- Community Events may only apply for a maximum of \$6,000 in funding through this grant.
 - Community Events are defined as events that are based in Waterloo, drawing **less than 50%** of its attendance from outside of Black Hawk County.
 - Events are allowed to apply in the Community Event category for only three years. After that time, the event must apply under the Visitor Event category if they are to receive funding through this program.
- The Experience Waterloo Board reserves the right to assign funding levels in any grant cycle based on the total number of applications, total funds requested and total funds available.
- Event grants will be issued biannually. The application deadline is:
 - March 31st, 2025 (*for events happening between July 1, 2025 – December 31st, 2025*)

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Applicants must have a Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) to apply.
- For-profit applicants should provide specific information demonstrating how grant funds will increase economic activity for the City of Waterloo.
- All project printed materials, signage or advertising must contain a logo provided by Experience Waterloo.
- If the event(s) included in an application "materially change" from the original application, said application will be re-scored by the Experience Waterloo Board and funding will be adjusted appropriately based on the revised scoring percentage and how similarly scored applications were funded during the initial annual funding distribution.
 - A material change will be defined as a change to the economic impact of more than 25%. However, if the economic impact is greater than 25% but less than \$50,000, no adjustment will be made to the award.
- Applicants must show matching funds of 50% or more for the project. The grant will fund no more than 50% of the total project cost. Only funds directly involved with the project may be used as matching dollars. Organization's operational funds may be used to match the grant funds.
 - If the total project cost is less than what is provided in this application, the approved grant payment will be reduced and would fund no more than 50% of total project cost.

- Applicants must provide available sponsorship solicitation if available and assign Experience Waterloo at appropriate level upon grant award.
 - Events must provide PDF version of existing budget.

POST-EVENT RULES

- Grant funds will be paid after the project has occurred and reimbursable expenses are confirmed with Experience Waterloo staff. Copies of invoices and proof of payment must be provided electronically.
- Funds may be used solely for fundable items defined within this document. Any use of grant money for non-fundable items, as listed below, will result in total funding being reduced by the amount spent on non-fundable items. Non-fundable items may be used as “match” dollars.
- Funding must be used for the project designated on this application or funding may be forfeited. Any changes in the project must be approved prior to the project occurring.
- Funding is for events that occur between the dates of July 1st, 2025 & December 31st, 2025.

FUNDABLE ITEMS

- Advertising and marketing (Print/Electronic/Billboard).
- Direct mail campaign expenses related to the event/project. Includes materials, design and postage.
- Entertainment related to the event/project.
- Honorariums for speakers, officials, etc.
 - Travel expenses (including hotel rooms and mileage) may be included as allowable honorarium payments with prior approval from Experience Waterloo. Food and beverage costs are not allowed.
- Printed materials that promote visits to the event/project prior to the event occurring.
- Prize funds and/or purses
 - Prize money paid in cash must be acknowledged in writing by the recipient(s) to qualify for reimbursement. No exceptions will be allowed.
- Bid money for events, tournaments, conventions, etc.
- Basic facility rental costs
- Event-related security and safety services.
- Marketing and design services.
- Transportation to and around Waterloo for the event.

NON-FUNDABLE ITEMS

- New construction, renovation, restoration, installation of new fixtures and other capital projects that are not event specific.
- Annual operating expenditures.
- Third-party professional services (non-marketing).
 - Includes legal, engineering, accounting, auditing, consulting or other services not expressly listed as fundable.
- Salaries, wages or administrative fees.
- Travel expenses of staff and guests are not expressly listed as fundable.
- Tangible personal property, including copy/fax machines, computer equipment, other office equipment or furniture, light fixtures, musical instruments, permanent collections and exhibits.
- Program books, trophies, medals, plaques, bumper stickers, table tents, shirts, hats, banners, flags, stationery, etc.
- Toll-free phone numbers, in-house postage, or material inventory.
- Membership solicitation materials and donations/contributions to sponsors.
- Prizes for fundraisers, raffles, or events (including electronics, gift certificates, etc.).
- Interest or reduction of deficits or loans.
- Anything contrary to state or federal law or local ordinance.

- All food and beverage.
 ** Project-related expenses that are non-fundable may be shown as matching funds **

FUNDING SCALE BASED ON ECONOMIC IMPACT

Funding caps for “Visitor”, “Shared Community” will be established based from the projected economic impact as calculated by the Destination’s International Economic Impact Calculator. Board members of Experience Waterloo will still “score” each grant request, and that cumulative percentage will be used against the total eligible cap to calculate the total grant award.

PROJECTED ECONOMIC IMPACT	VISITOR EVENT	COMMUNITY EVENT
\$1,00,000+	\$20,000	\$15,000
\$800K - \$1M	\$15,000	\$10,000
\$600K - \$800K	\$10,000	\$5,000
\$400K - \$600K	\$4,000	\$2,000
\$125K - \$400K	\$1,000	\$1,000

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Grant applications are online at experiencewaterloo.com. The online application must be used, or the application will not be considered. The application should be completed and submitted based on the deadlines listed below. Reimbursement forms and proof of payments must be submitted through Experiencewaterloo.com before repayment can be made.

TIMELINE

March 1, 2025	Applications available on experiencewaterloo.com
March 31, 2025	Applications due to Experience Waterloo
April 2025	Board meets and makes recommendations to City Council
May 2025	Partners notified of funding results
July 2025	Funds available after completion of project
30 Days Post Project	One electronic copy of evaluation form/final report

Note: Awarded grant money will be distributed in full from the City of Waterloo approximately one month following the recipient’s submission of one hard copy and one electronic copy of the completed project evaluation form for the funded project. Evaluations are to be returned within 60 days of the completion of the event or project. Failure to provide this final report within 180 days will result in the delay or loss of grant funds. Failure to utilize grant funds for the use(s) provided in this grant application may result in funding being disallowed, reduced or delayed. Use of approved funds for non-fundable items will result in funding being disallowed or reduced.