

## 2021 Event Sponsorship Program

### Program Overview:

The Visit South Walton Event Marketing Support Program is intended to support, grow and promote local special events that have the ability to generate overnight stays, strengthen the Visit South Walton brand and enhance the South Walton vacation experience. Applicants whose events are accepted into the program will receive a combination of marketing support and reimbursement funds that are intended to achieve the above-listed objectives.

It is the intention of Visit South Walton to support event partners whose events and marketing plans align with the Visit South Walton brand and target demographic (affluent travelers, \$175K+ household income).

### Eligibility:

In order for a special event to be considered for approval into this program, it must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Event must take place in Walton County between October 1, 2019 and September 30, 2020.
- The event must be made accessible to the public and disabled persons.
- A complete application and all supporting documentation must be submitted prior to the application deadline.
- Applicant must show proof that all required county and/or local permits are secured prior to the event date.
- A post event report must be completed and delivered to Visit South Walton no more than 45 days following the event.
- Multiple events by the same applicant require separate applications.
- Eligible events must be willing to comply with the South Walton brand inclusion standards.

### Process and Timeline:

- **January 8, 2020:** Applications will be made available at [visitsouthwalton.com/partners](https://visitsouthwalton.com/partners).
- **February 14, 2020:** Completed applications and all supporting documentation due to Visit South Walton.
  - Online applications will be available via [visitsouthwalton.com/partners](https://visitsouthwalton.com/partners).
- **February 17 – February 21, 2020:** Applications and all supporting documentation will be reviewed for completeness and satisfaction of eligibility requirements by Visit South Walton staff.
- **February 24 – February 28, 2020:** Event applications and all supporting documentation will be independently scored by a TDC committee.
- **March 2 – March 6, 2020:** Visit South Walton staff will review and compile the score sheets completed by a TDC committee to determine which events have been accepted into the program and at what levels of support.
- **March 13, 2020:** All final information provided to Executive Director for inclusion in TDC packet.
- **April 7, 2020:** The Walton County Tourist Development Council will meet to approve the events selected to be a part of the program.

- **April 14, 2020:** The Walton County Board of County Commissioners will meet to approve the events selected to be a part of the program.
- **April 15, 2020:** All applicants will be notified via email of whether or not they will have been accepted into the program and, if so, at what levels of support.

#### **Event Classifications:**

##### **Signature Event**

- Large-scale, multi-day events (large-scale events must take place on each day);
- Ability to generate a significant amount of paid, overnight lodging in South Walton County;
- Demonstrates a historical track record of event attendance and rooms nights generated in South Walton County;
- Marketing plan demonstrates significant efforts to promote event on a regional or national level;
- Provides strong opportunity for regional, national or international exposure for South Walton;
- Enhances the visitor's South Walton vacation experience.

##### **Experience Event**

- Mid-sized events generally having one day of significant event activity;
- Ability to generate paid, overnight lodging in South Walton County;
- Demonstrates a track record of event attendance and room nights generated in South Walton County;
- Marketing plan demonstrates a significant effort to promote the event on a regional level;
- Provides an opportunity for regional exposure for South Walton;
- Enhances the visitor's South Walton vacation experience.

##### **Special Circumstances:**

- Certain event partners whose primary business is event production that have a yearly calendar of consistent but changing event programming may qualify for a yearly support program at the Signature Event level to be used to promote multiple events throughout the year.
- These circumstances will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

#### **Program Benefits:**

##### **Event Responsibilities**

###### **Marketing**

- Provide a detailed Marketing Plan with an invoice for payment
- VSW Logo on the following
  - Ads
  - Website
  - T-shirts
  - Programs
- Tiered Ticket Approach
  - Signature
    - 20 tickets

- 4 VIP
- Experience
  - 16 tickets
  - 2 VIP

#### Communications

- VSW named in all press releases;
- SW is named as the location of the event;
- Media tickets should be made available to the TDC on request in addition to marketing tickets;
- Allow SW the opportunity to host a meal with any event-hosted media.

#### **Visit South Walton Responsibilities**

##### Marketing

- Will provide proper VSW logos for event use;
- Create a signature/experience event on VSW website with photos and content provided by event;
- Create an online campaign based on timing request of event;
- Provide reports to event based on online campaign.

##### Communications

- Pitch event as part of communications process

#### **Scoring Criteria:**

All events will be scored by a TDC committee with a maximum score of 100 based on a combination of responses to the Application Questionnaire, the event's Marketing Plan and the Event Description Narrative. Members of the committee will vote to determine if an event qualifies as a Signature or Experience event. Events receiving an aggregate score below 85/100 will not be accepted into the program.

#### **Funding Amounts:**

Event qualifying as a Signature Event will receive the following:

Eligible for \$20,000 in sponsorship money

Event qualifying as an Experience Event will receive the following:

Eligible for \$10,000 in sponsorship money