



Tourism Investment Program

2019 Program Guide

Louisiana's Cajun Bayou Tourism Mission:

To position Louisiana's Cajun Bayou as a regionally, nationally, and internationally recognized year-round tourist destination by developing quality marketing programs and events to attract visitors and stimulate economic development and growth.

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This procedural guide does not provide rights to the applicant, but is provided as a general guide to the procedures and requirements of the Tourism Investment Program.

1.0 Introduction

Louisiana's Cajun Bayou Tourism is pleased that you are interested in applying for funding from the Tourism Investment Program. We are excited to work with you and play a role in the development of projects that have the potential to significantly impact the tourism industry, as well as benefit the entire community. The Tourism Investment Program was created for the purposes of expanding tourism opportunities and economic impact in Lafourche Parish. The specific criteria by which Tourism Investment Program funding decisions are made are outlined in this Tourism Investment Program Guide. Please carefully review the requirements and criteria for evaluation.

If you have any specific questions about the application process, contact Timothy Bush, President & CEO, by phone at 985-537-5800 or by email at tbush@lacajunbayou.com.

Thank you for your interest in the Tourism Investment Program.

1.1 Mission Statement

Louisiana's Cajun Bayou Tourism's mission is to position Lafourche Parish as a regionally, nationally and internationally recognized year-round destination by developing quality marketing programs and promoting events that attract visitors and stimulate economic development and growth.

The Tourism Investment Program seeks to aid in the development, growth, and enhancement of tourism and conventions in Lafourche Parish, including but not limited to product development, sports, festivals, and other special events including the arts and humanities.

1.2 Eligibility Requirements

The Tourism Investment Program is available to Lafourche Parish applicants only. An application must be completely filled out and must be in compliance with the procedures of the Tourism Investment Program. All required documentation must be submitted with the application. The Board of Directors of Louisiana's Cajun Bayou Tourism is the governing body that will approve an application.

1.3 Purpose of Funding

A Tourism Investment Program project must support growth of the tourism industry in Lafourche Parish. Emphasis will be given to projects that will directly and indirectly maximize the number of visitors to the Parish, especially for overnight stays. Projects showing the fastest and highest return on investment and improvement to the overall quality of life for the citizens of Lafourche Parish will be given the highest priority.

1.4 Funding Size

There is no monetary restriction on the dollar amount of funds that can be made to one applicant. Each year, the amount of Tourism Investment Program funding available for projects is determined through the budgetary process and approved by the Board of Directors of Louisiana's Cajun Bayou Tourism.

1.5 Louisiana's Cajun Bayou Destination Brand Promise

Our brand is rooted in an authentic Cajun lifestyle unlike any other. This unapologetic culture is all up and down the Bayou, and is filled with outdoors experiences like fishing and swamp tours, along with regular celebrations such as food, music and festivals. The creation of a brand promise gives us direction and intent to our message. It gives us measurements for marketing development and execution, as well as allowing the brand to be singularly focused, truthful, aspirational, inspirational, and differentiating in order to meet the expectations of visitors.

As a result, Louisiana's Cajun Bayou Destination Brand Promise is: Louisiana's Cajun Bayou Tourism **seeks to be a destination where life is inspired, nurtured, and defined by the Bayou; so experiences are full of flavor and more personal.**

If you are awarded Tourism Investment Program funding, your organization will be required to work with Louisiana's Cajun Bayou Tourism to ensure your employees and/or volunteers deliver the Louisiana's Cajun Bayou Brand Promise to visitors, including the following marketing activities;

- Distribute Louisiana's Cajun Bayou's visitor guide at your location
- Display a reciprocal web link to lacajunbayou.com
- Ensure your staff knows and understands the Louisiana's Cajun Bayou Brand Promise
- Source in-bound groups requiring 10 rooms or more per night for meetings, groups or events through Louisiana's Cajun Bayou's sales department

2.0 General Guidelines

This program provides funds for qualified applicants who meet program qualifications. All funding decisions will be made with the best interests of enhancing and developing tourism in Lafourche Parish. An applicant awarded funds for a project in one year does not guarantee that a request for the same project will be funded in future years. Awards may differ from the amount of funding that is requested.

Funds that are awarded must be used for the projects submitted and approved by the Board of Directors of Louisiana's Cajun Bayou Tourism. Reallocation of funding other than those

specified in the project shall require prior written approval by the Board of Directors of Louisiana’s Cajun Bayou Tourism.

2.1 Application Process

Applicants should review program guide and application process prior to submission to ensure they are capable of providing the necessary information required.

The application is a comprehensive form that requests applicants to provide information pertaining to project description, financials, business plans, feasibility studies, and other pertinent data. The submission deadline for the application is **January 18, 2019 at 5:00 PM CST**. Applicants will be notified on or before **January 25, 2019** regarding the amount of funding they will be awarded. Applicants may be asked to provide additional information to the Tourism Investment Committee during the application process.

TIP Program Guide & Application available for download	November 15, 2018
Information Session for interested applicants	December 6, 2018
Application Due	January 18, 2019
Grantees Announced	On or before Monday, February 25, 2019

3.0 Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation of the application shall be undertaken in accordance with the standards and requirements that are specified in this Tourism Investment Program Guide. Applications that meet the requirements set forth in the Tourism Investment Program Guide and approved by the Tourism Investment Program Committee will be submitted to the Louisiana’s Cajun Bayou Tourism Board of Directors for final approval.

The decision to award funding will be based on the project’s contributions toward enhancing and developing tourism in Lafourche Parish. Funding to local applicants will be based on:

- **Generator of New and Incremental Room Nights**
The room night impact of a proposed project will be assessed on whether the project is drawing new visitors to the area, or simply pulling from existing visitors in Lafourche Parish while not increasing the number of new room nights.
- **Matching Funds**
Applicants with matching funds will be given priority consideration.
- **Strength of Sales and Marketing Plans**

Sales and Marketing Plan for projects will be evaluated upon the level of investment budgeted for these activities and the likelihood they will succeed in drawing visitation to the destination.

- **Association with an Identified Need Period**

Projects that draw visitors to the destination specifically during identified periods of need for hotel room nights may receive more consideration than those that draw visitors exclusively during peak and established visitation periods.

- **Size of Market to be Served**

Projects that target large audiences capable of filling many area hotel rooms are valued, but projects that draw new and untapped niche markets to Lafourche Parish may also be worthy of consideration.

- **1-to-1 Funding Match Exceeded**

While it is a requirement for applying organizations to have secured a funding match equal to the amount for which they are applying from the Tourism Investment Program, projects that exceed the 1-to-1 requirement may receive particular consideration.

- **Uniqueness and Innovation of Project**

Attractions and activities which are new to the region or not available to visitors living in key feeder markets for the destination may be valued more highly than those which duplicate offerings already available to visitors.

- **Strength of Brand Alignment**

Projects will be evaluated on whether they are consistent with the Louisiana's Cajun Bayou destination brand and provide additional support for the brand promise.

- **Projects Already Funded**

Projects that have previously received Tourism Investment Program funding may apply, but the application should be for a new project scope with additional incremental room nights.

3.1 Approval and Funding Procedures

An application for funding requires approval by the Tourism Investment Program Committee, prior to being submitted to and passed by majority vote by the Board of Directors.

Organizations awarded Tourism Investment Program funds will be required to complete a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement outlining the project scope and deliverables. The Cooperative Endeavor Agreement will need to be completed prior to Tourism Investment Program funds being released. Cooperative Endeavor Agreements are to be returned to the attention of President & CEO, Timothy Bush.

Upon returning the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement, seventy-five percent (75%) of the approved Tourism Investment Program funding will be issued to applicant. The final twenty-five (25%) of the approved Tourism Investment Program funding will be released at the completion of the project and final reports are submitted to the Tourism Investment Program committee. Reports must be submitted within 45 days of the completion of the project.

3.2 Review and Follow-Up

Questions:

For assistance, please contact:

Timothy P. Bush, President & CEO

Louisiana's Cajun Bayou Tourism

(985) 537-5800

tbush@lacajunbayou.com

3.3 Information Session Workshop

An information session will be held to explain the process and provide assistance to interested applicants.

Date: Thursday, December 6, 2018

Time: 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Location: Louisiana's Cajun Bayou Visitor Center

3.4 Glossary

Definition of terms used in the application materials:

Average daily room rate (ADR) – The average hotel or motel room rate paid by guests over a given period of time in a given market. This rate does not include taxes and fees paid by the guest. Louisiana's Cajun Bayou Tourism receives ADR data for hotels and motels in Lafourche Parish via a subscription from Smith Travel Research, an international provider of lodging market data.

Demographics – A description of a particular audience based upon certain segmentation characteristics, including age, household income, educational level attained, gender, and the presence of children at home.

Occupancy tax – A tax paid by guests staying in paid accommodations such as hotels, motels, vacation rentals, and bed and breakfasts. The tax is not applied to religious organizations, educational organizations, and summer camps. Guests in lodging properties in Lafourche Parish pay a total of 4% occupancy tax (in addition to applicable state sales tax).

Out-of-market – A term used to describe guests who reside outside of the Lafourche Parish market. This term is used to indicate different geographic areas, including guests living outside of Lafourche Parish; outside of the Lafourche Parish metropolitan area (Terrebonne, St. Mary, St. James, and St. Charles parishes) those living outside the local television market New Orleans/Southeast Louisiana/South Mississippi television market area. (Louisiana’s Cajun Bayou Tourism uses the term “out-of-market” to refer to visitors living outside of the local television market area.)

Room nights – One room night is defined as a single night spent in one room in a lodging property. Even if there are two or more guests staying in the room for one night, it is considered to be one room night.

New or Incremental Room Nights— “New” room nights are defined as those which are truly new to the market—that is, attracting new visitors to Lafourche Parish who would not have otherwise visited and who stay overnight in paid accommodations. “Incremental” room nights are room nights generated by visitors extending their stay by at least one night directly as a result of a new project.