

Tourism Investment Fund Guidelines

Burlington Economic Development and Tourism (BEDT) is committed to supporting and growing the economic and social benefits generated by hosting events in the community. The Tourism Investment Fund provides direct assistance to organizations to host premium events in Burlington that drive overnight stays.

Timing

Organizations are encouraged to apply for grants throughout the year. Burlington is a four-season community and BEDT wants it to be vibrant year-round. It will prioritize applications that activate during off-peak seasons, like Winter, and preferably support mid-week hotel stays.

Cash and In-kind Funding

BEDT supports organizations through cash and/or in-kind opportunities. Cash will be limited to an amount to help organizers leverage additional funding sources. Funds are not meant to generate revenue for the applicant nor be the total of all funding.

In-kind promotion to the community, partners and potential attendees may occur through any of the following: inclusion in newsletters, listing on our website, promotion through social media, and advocacy and guidance from Tourism staff on how to navigate City of Burlington permitting processes as required. Tourism does not organize or co-organize any events directly.

Eligible Applicants

Both non-profit and for-profit organizations are eligible to apply. Events must generate a minimum of 20 hotel night stays in Burlington-based hotels. Applicants may only apply for 1 grant per calendar year. If you are applying in subsequent years, the application must demonstrate a significant additional economic and tourism impact year over year, showing growth in areas such as programming, room nights, or attendance.

Eligible Events

- Regional, provincial, nation or international tournaments or events or festivals
- Conferences, symposiums, AGMs etc. – as long as they are more than one day

Priorities

The following activations will be prioritized:

- free indoor or outdoor inclusive events organized in non-peak seasons, in particular events that engage and welcome equity-deserving communities;
- conferences, AGMs or similar meetings more than one day long across any sector;
- sporting or leisure events;
- events with the ability to leave a legacy such as through the purchase of equipment left to a Burlington organization, hosting of a clinic, use of the event to grow a sport or hobby locally, for example; and
- the possibility of continuing the event or hosting additional events in the future.

Note: All funding decisions by Burlington Economic Development and Tourism are final.

Requirements of Funding Recipients

Fund recipients must sign an agreement with BEDT accepting the fund's terms and conditions which include:

- Acknowledgement of BEDT on the organization's/event's website, social media and all promotional materials related to the event
- Distribution (digital and/or hard copy) of BEDT promotional materials to attendees
- Providing BEDT with at least three (3) high-resolution photos of the event for use in current and/or future marketing efforts
- Providing space at the event for a BEDT display, tent or other promotional opportunity
- Tickets and/or invitations to the event
- Collecting tracking data

Final Report

Fund recipients must submit a final report to BEDT within 60 days after the completion of the event that includes:

- Written confirmation from the Burlington accommodations noting the actual number of revenue-generating room nights from the event
- The total number of attendees
- The percentage of attendees who travelled over 40km one way to attend the event
- Description of the event's ability to leave a legacy in Burlington
- Description of the additional events that influenced the event's economic impact
- Samples of marketing materials to illustrate recognition of BEDT

Tourism Investment Fund Criteria

Focus/genre: BEDT aims for a comprehensive tourism investment portfolio across all sectors that will generate overnight visits to Burlington. Events is a general term that can refer to indoor or outdoor festivals & events, conferences, symposiums, AGMs, sporting events at the regional, national or international level or leisure activities and the like.

Burlington as a Destination Proposals must describe why Burlington is the preferred location to host an event and what advantages your organization would have in being in our city. They must provide examples of how organizers would showcase Burlington as a destination through promotion and implementation of an event. Events and hotel stays must take place within Burlington city limits.

Sustainable Tourism encourages sustainable practices from all of its event organizer partners. In addition to demonstrating adequate resource capacity for producing a quality experience, event organizers must demonstrate how environmentally sustainable practices are incorporated in their activation or onsite.

Target Audience The event's target market must be described in as much details as possible for BEDT to track and understand its multiple audiences. In particular we want to know how many overnight visitors are from 40km or more away.

Placement & Branding Proposals must provide opportunities to promote Burlington and/or BEDT in all collateral materials, event web site, event signage, etc. The grant must enhance the market leadership qualities and prestige of the 'Burlington' or the 'BEDT' brand as well as emphasize its uniqueness.

Partnerships BEDT does not require nor seek exclusivity as a funder. In fact, it encourages multiple partnerships and community involvement and/or other revenue sources.

Economic & Social Impact The event should have measurable economic and social impacts on the local community such as hosting a dinner at a local restaurant, team-building activities, visits to local attractions, walking tours, engagement with local communities and the like.

Overnight Stays The intent of the TIF is to generate overnight stays in any or all of Burlington's 19 hotels. A minimum of 20 paid hotel nights is required.

Legacy Ideally the event will leave a legacy in Burlington, such as equipment donated, investment in local assets, clinics held for local audiences, school or other non-profit visits, local growth of a sport of activity or other.

Data Collection We're looking for concrete ways to partner with organizers to collect relevant data. Sharing of hometowns, distances travelled, other onsite activities visitors participated in, approximation of amount of money spent in the city via aggregate data sharing or inclusion of registration or post-event survey questions are some examples.