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**VisitErie Tourism Matching Funds for Cooperative Marketing
July 2019 – December 2019 Guidelines and Application**

**Deadline: 4:00 pm Thursday, February 28, 2019**

**Mission Statement:**

VisitErie is the leader for marketing Erie’s tourism industry and promoting its economic growth.

**Purpose:** The dollars from VisitErie are to be used as a match fund for cooperative advertising initiatives by VisitErie partners for the purpose of increasing tourism’s economic impact in Erie County, Pennsylvania. The program goals are to encourage cooperative programs between local tourism-related businesses (accommodations, restaurants, attractions, retailers, festivals/events, performance/cultural arts, sports and conventions) that will nurture relationships and broaden the message to potential visitors. It will also serve to attract tourists and visitors from outside Erie County encouraging overnight stays and day trips. Awards are granted on the basis of merit as determined by the established criteria.

**Funds Available:** A total of $30,000 is available for the program which runs July 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019. Fund requests ranging from $2,000 to $15,000 will be considered. Funded Cooperative Marketing applications will receive a dollar for dollar match from VisitErie.

***Example:*** *If two or more tourism related properties develop a campaign that promotes overnight stays and day trips in Erie County costing $10,000; VisitErie will provide $5,000 for the campaign with the other $5,000 coming from the other cooperating partners.*

**Eligible Applicants:**

* 1. Applicants must be a Business ($250), Corporate ($1,000) or Executive ($5,000) level partner of VisitErie.
	2. In addition to VisitErie, the proposed program must involve no less than two (2) participants (current VisitErie partners) directly related to the travel industry.

**Workshop**: A matching funds workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, January 15, 2019 from 3-5 pm at the Intermodal Center, 2nd floor meeting room, 208 East Bayfront Parkway. This is an opportunity to meet VisitErie partners who can become co-op partners. RSVP to Emily Beck by Friday, January 11 at ebeck@visiterie.com or 454-1000 ext. 124 if you plan to attend.

**Guidelines:**

* 1. The maximum amount of a request accepted for a co-op program is $15,000.
	2. The minimum amount of a request accepted for a co-op program is $2,000.
	3. Only one proposal per applicant will be accepted.
	4. If the application is approved, a Tourism Matching Funds for Cooperative Marketing Agreement will be signed by VisitErie and participating partners to allow the applicant to move forward with the program.
	5. 80% of the Cooperative Marketing Funds shall be paid to the applicant within 10 days after the creative (print, radio, TV, online, outdoor, etc.) portion of the program has been approved by VisitErie. The remaining 20% shall be paid to the applicant after the Final Report is received by VisitErie.
	6. A for-profit business that receives a grant may be required to treat the grant as income and is responsible for paying any necessary taxes applicable thereto.
	7. Once approved, programs must be completed and dollars spent as specified in the Matching Funds Agreement.

**Criteria:**

* 1. Funds may be used for marketing purposes only. Advertising including radio, television, online, email, social media, print advertising, printing, outdoor, public relations, direct mail, production and trade show participation are eligible program activities and expenses. The dollars may not be used for administration, web site design, overhead or brick and mortar projects.
	2. The program being funded must involve no less than two (2) participants directly related to the travel industry (accommodations, restaurants, attractions, festivals and events, performance and cultural arts and sports), in addition to VisitErie. All participants must be current VisitErie partners.
	3. Programs must be geared to overnight or day trip target markets outside of Erie County. Any program with a primary target market of Erie County will not be considered.
	4. Total production costs should not exceed 20% of the budget. Examples: ad design, radio and TV commercial production etc. If production costs exceed 20% of the budget explanation in the narrative is required.
	5. Co-op programs within VisitErie’s current advertising campaigns or publications will not be considered. Dollars for this program will not be allocated toward advertising in any existing VisitErie publications or any other VisitErie cooperative advertising program. Examples include, but are not limited to: Erie Adventure Guide, Sales Missions, familiarization tours, site inspections.
	6. Participant contributions must be in cash, not trade. In-kind expenditures are not eligible.
	7. Programs must be completed by Friday, December 6, 2019.
	8. Priority will be given to applications that:
		1. Have the potential to generate the greatest overnight business.
		2. Have the potential to generate off-peak business (midweek, non-holiday, off season, Jan-April).
		3. Impact the greatest number of tourism -related businesses.
		4. Are ready for implementation.

**Creative:**

* 1. All creative (print, radio, TV, online, outdoor, etc.) must be approved by VisitErie in order to receive funds.
	2. All creative (print, radio, TV, online, outdoor, etc.) must use VisitErie logo and link to [www.VisitErie.com](http://www.VisitErie.com) . To ensure effective branding of VisitErie use the following logo guidelines:
		1. **Print:** When using the VisitErie logo with your own logo and/or other partner logos, the VisitErie logo should always be at the same scale.  Logo size should be determined by the final product size. A good general rule is to keep the logo between 2” and 1.25” for print. Logos smaller than 1.25” are unreadable.
		2. **Electronic:** For web materials, the logo should be sized somewhere between 100 pixels and 145 pixels wide. The logo should never appear smaller than 100 pixels wide.
		3. **Digital/social media:**  VisitErie must have visibility on 15-20% of any image deployed either digitally or on social media.  Creative must be reviewed and ultimately approved by VE personnel or its agency.
		4. **Partner web site**: Place VisitErie logo and link on partner landing page for the duration of the program. Continued use of VisitErie.com logo and link on partner web page is encouraged.
		5. **TV, radio**: VisitErie logo on TV and mention of VisitErie on radio commercials required.
	3. Failure to comply with these requirements will impact future funding assistance.

Applications are due **Thursday, February 28, 2019 by 4:00 pm** and can be submitted as attachments to Emily Beck at ebeck@visiterie.com. Applications will be reviewed by VisitErie’s Matching Funds for Cooperative Marketing Review Panel for consideration.

If the funds are not exhausted for the Cooperative Marketing application period ending February 28, 2019 additional applications may be solicited.

Requests for extensions of the Cooperative Marketing Program must be submitted via email to Emily Beck at ebeck@visiterie.com and will be accepted on or before December 6, 2019. Extensions may be granted up to a completion date of February 20, 2020.

**VisitErie Tourism Matching Funds for Cooperative Marketing
July 2019 – December 2019- Guidelines
Deadline: Thursday, February 28, 2019 by 4:00 p.m.**

Please follow this outline when submitting your Cooperative Marketing fund request. The application should be typed on your business/organization’s letterhead and is not to exceed one page for Matching Funds Program Cover Sheet, no more than three pages for the narrative and one page for the budget plus supporting documentation.

**NEW**: VisitErie is changing from a fiscal year (July 1 - June 30) to a calendar year (January 1 - December 31). The Matching Funds Program will cover campaigns running from July 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019. See the application for more details.

Applications are to be submitted electronically to Emily Beck at ebeck@visiterie.com by **4:00 p.m. Thursday, February 28, 2019.** Incomplete applications will not be accepted for consideration. Applicants are encouraged to meet with Emily Beck in advance of due date to discuss your program.

**Matching Funds Program Cover Sheet**

**Applicant**Business name:

Contact person/coordinator:

Address:

City: State: Zip:

Phone: Fax:

Web Address:

Email Address:

**Collaborating Partners/Business Name:** The program being funded must feature no less than two (2) participants directly related to the travel industry that are partners of VisitErie. Include with your application a letter of commitment from each collaborating participant.

**Program information:**

Project Name

Start Date: Completion Date:

Amount Requested: $ \_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Total Project Cost: $ \_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_

**VisitErie Tourism Matching Funds for Cooperative Marketing cont.**

**Narrative**

* 1. **Target Market**What demographic and geographic markets would your program target*? (Example demographic: women age 25-60, men age 20 – 50, fishermen age 18-65, etc. Example geographic: Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Buffalo, Eastern Ohio, Ashtabula, Western New York, Jamestown, Southern Ontario, Niagara Falls, Hamilton.)*
	2. **Regional Promotion**

How will your marketing/advertising program promote Erie County as a destination to bring more overnight or daytrip visitors to the region?

* 1. **Program Goals**What do you hope to accomplish? Please be as specific as possible and use numbers whenever possible. *(Example; “increase room nights by 10 % from 1000 to 1100”, “increase paid admissions by 40% from 2000 to 2800”, “increase number of packages sold by 5% from 1000 to 1050”.)*
	2. **Program**How will you spend the money to achieve your goals? Explain the elements of your program.
	(*Example: ad creation, advertising, media plan/placement, program activities, public relations activities)*.
	3. **Timetable**Provide a timetable for the proposed program including anticipated start and end dates.

**Budget**

Provide a total revenue and expense budget. Include your sources for all revenue/co-op partner contributions and the amount you are requesting from VisitErie. Include your projected expenses for all planned media insertions and production costs. Total production costs should not exceed 20% of the budget, examples: ad design, radio and TV commercial production etc. At least 80% of the expenses should be designated for promotion. Your total program budget may exceed the amount of your eligible request; however, VisitErie will only match up to $15,000.

***THIS IS A SAMPLE OF THE PROGRAMS SCORING MATRIX. CONSIDER THIS WHEN DEVELOPING YOUR MATCHING FUNDS APPLICATION.******POOR SCORES MAY RESULT IN REDUCED OR NO MATCHING FUNDS AWARDED TO THE APPLICANT.***

**VisitErie Tourism Matching Funds for Cooperative Marketing**

***Review Criteria and Assessment Scoring:***

Program Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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

Review committee partner: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Priority should be considered for applications that:

* + Have the potential to generate the greatest overnight business.
	+ Have the potential to generate off-peak business (e.g., midweek, non-holiday, and off season, e.g., Jan-April business).
	+ Impact the greatest number of tourism -related businesses.
	+ Are ready for implementation.

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| **PROGRAM CRITERIA** | **Excellent: 21-30 points** | **Average:** **11-20 points** | **Weak:** **0-10 points** |
| **TARGET MARKET** Clearly identifies target audience outside of Erie County. | . |  |  |
| **REGIONAL PROMOTION** Clearly defines how program brings more overnight or daytrip visitors. |  |  |  |
| **PROGRAM GOALS** Clearly identified and specific. Includes an explanation of how data will be gathered and measured |  |  |  |
| **PROGRAM** Clear and specific explanation of all elements with details (ad creation, advertising, media plan/placement, program activities, public relations activities). |  |  |  |
| **TIMETABLE CLEAR** and specific on when program begins and ends within VisitErie’s deadlines |  |  |  |
| **BUDGET** Accurate, itemized and realistic budget that reflects what is discussed in the narrative with at least 80% devoted to marketing, 20% maximum to production. |  |  |  |
| **Sub Total Points** |  |  |  |
| **Total Points** |  |