



2025 Event Marketing Sponsorship Application

Visit Thief River Falls

102 Main Ave. N, P.O. Box 176, Thief River Falls, MN 56701

Phone: 218.686.9785

Email: info@visitrfr.com

Visit Thief River Falls (formerly known as the Thief River Falls Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc.) is funded solely by the *3% Lodging Tax (Statute § 469.190)* that is collected from overnight visitors at all seven hotel properties in Thief River Falls, as well as the city campground. This tax is collected by the City of Thief River Falls and 95% is passed along to Visit Thief River Falls monthly. These lodging tax dollars are used to market the entire community. There are no membership dues or fees assessed from individuals or businesses. The objective of Visit Thief River Falls shall be to promote the Thief River Falls area as a destination for conferences, conventions, events, group tours and leisure travelers; thereby enhancing the economic growth of the area.

Visit Thief River Falls is the tourism marketing organization for the Thief River Falls area. Our organization does not broker hotel rooms for leisure travelers or groups of any kind. Room block creation and communication needs to be made directly with the hotel property, as they have full decision-making control over their room reservations.

CRITERIA:

Event Marketing Sponsorship funds are to be used to attract out-of-town visitors to Thief River Falls. This funding must be used to fund marketing and promotion of events in media that reaches primarily out of town visitors. Priority will be given to events that encourage overnight visitation. Events must also be open to the public.

ELIGIBILITY:

Request must comply with the lodging tax parameters that Visit Thief River Falls must operate within.

State of MN Office of the Attorney General - Lodging Tax Statute § 469.190:

"Ninety-five percent of the gross proceeds from any tax imposed under subdivision 1 shall be used by the statutory or home rule charter city or town to fund a local convention or tourism bureau for the purpose of marketing and promoting the city or town as a tourist or convention center."

Use of Lodging Tax According to the Office of the Attorney General:

(Material below provided by the MN Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus)

"...we have been of the view that 'marketing and promoting' the city for purposes of lodging tax expenditures includes activities directly related to providing information concerning tourist or convention assets of the city to persons outside the immediate area or in directly seeking to attract such persons to the city, but does not generally include creation of such assets or the support of community betterment in general. In light of the fact that the revenue in question is raised by taxation of hotels, motels and like tourist facilities, *it is likely that the legislature intended that the restricted 95 percent be used in ways calculated to directly attract persons likely to patronize such facilities as opposed to uses which generally benefit the city as a whole.*"

“...Certainly, advertising, or similar efforts to make tourists or convention planners from outside the area aware of local events such as the fair or sporting events would appear to be legitimate marketing or promotion. *If, on the other hand, the result of the expenditures is simply to assist the event in general or in some way that would not reasonably be seen as calculated to attract additional people for tourism or convention business, they would not likely qualify.*”

Events that give political gain to any organization or individual are ineligible. Events that have already occurred are ineligible.

Being Visit Thief River Falls is funded by the *3% Lodging Tax* that is paid by out-of-town visitors (collected at all seven Thief River Falls hotels and the city campground) the event must attract out-of-town visitors.

The following marketing expenses are eligible for funding: 1) Printing & postage of promotional materials, and 2) Marketing, advertising and promotion of events in markets that have over 50% of their coverage 50 miles outside of Thief River Falls. *Local media is ineligible (For example: TRF Radio, TRF Times, Northern Watch).*

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Applications must be submitted to Visit Thief River Falls **at least 2 months prior to the event**. The application may take up to two board meetings to review. A representative of the applicant organization may be required to attend a Visit Thief River Falls Board Meeting (held the second Tuesday of each month at noon.)

FUNDING LIMIT:

\$1,000 for single weekend events. \$2,000 for multi-weekend events.

AWARD PROCESS:

The Visit Thief River Falls Board of Directors will make all funding decisions. Funding will be disbursed when the Evaluation Form is completed, and the marketing receipts & tear sheets have been submitted to the Visit Thief River Falls office. All evaluation materials are due within 45 days after the event. Visit Thief River Falls staff will then review the documents and reimburse the applicant if the expense matches the application and meets funding criteria.

Visit Thief River Falls may withdraw funding or request the return of funds for events which are substantially reduced or inaccurately portrayed in the application. In the case of an event being cancelled due to an emergency declaration or natural disaster, all reimbursement requests will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

REQUIREMENTS:

Visit Thief River Falls must be recognized as a sponsor by using their logo on ALL material that the funding is used for. (For example: If applying for funding to use in a print ad, the Visit Thief River Falls logo must appear on that print ad. If applying for funding to print posters, the Visit Thief River Falls logo must appear on the poster. If applying for radio or social media ads, the ad copy must include: "**Sponsored in part by Visit Thief River Falls.**") There will be no exceptions.

Being Visit Thief River Falls is funded by the 3% Lodging Tax collected at all seven Thief River Falls hotels and the City Campground, all lodging tax expenditures must promote all hotels equally. Therefore, all Visit Thief River Falls funded event advertisements must include the following: "**For lodging options, go to www.visittrf.com.**" The Visit Thief River Falls banner must be prominently displayed at the event.

Event Marketing Sponsorship Application Form

Please complete the following application form and submit to the Visit Thief River Falls office:

Event Name: _____

Event Date(s): _____

Event Location: _____

Legal Name of Applicant/Organization: _____

Contact Person & Title: _____

State Tax ID / Tax Exempt #: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Day Time Phone: _____

Email: _____

Application Date: _____ ****Must apply at least 2 months prior to event.***

Please describe the event for which you propose to use the requested Event Marketing Sponsorship:

Total Event Marketing Dollars Requested: \$ _____

Projected total attendance: _____ Projected per day attendance: _____

Will this event attract tourists*? YES____ NO____ If so, what percentage? _____

*The University of Minnesota Tourism Center uses the following definition of a tourist given by the U.S. Travel Association: "A tourist is defined as someone who is 50 miles or more from their primary residence."

Projected hotel rooms rented: _____

Projected campsites rented: _____

Projected revenue: \$ _____

Projected expenses: \$ _____

How will the marketing funds be used?

(Please be specific on the media type and market and include an amount breakdown.)

Please attach the following information to this application:

- 1) Event Budget:** Include a detailed breakdown of revenue vs. expenses.
- 2) Event Schedule:** Include major activities, participants and venues.
- 3) Event Management:** Outline the planning committee members.
- 4) Event Marketing:** Include a detailed marketing and promotion plan, including the specific advertising markets and medias.

Incomplete applications will not be considered for event marketing sponsorship.

Event Marketing Sponsorship Applications will be accepted up to 2 months prior to event. Applications may be submitted the following ways:

Mail: Visit Thief River Falls, P.O. Box 176, Thief River Falls, MN 56701
Fax: (218) 683-5107
Email: info@visittrf.com

Contact the Visit Thief River Falls office with any questions at (218) 686-9785 or info@visittrf.com.

Event Marketing Sponsorship Evaluation Form

Please complete the following Evaluation Report and submit to the Visit Thief River Falls office with marketing receipts & copies of advertisements **within 45 days following the event**:

Event Name: _____

Event Date(s): _____

Actual event attendance: _____

Actual event attendance per day: _____

Actual percentage of tourists: _____

Please describe the methodology used to determine the answers above (i.e. Paid gate, photos, estimation): _____

Actual revenue: \$ _____

Actual expenses: \$ _____

Do you plan to hold this event annually? _____

Requested Reimbursement Amount: \$ _____

Please attach the following information to this evaluation report:

- 1) Marketing receipts showing how much was spent and where.
- 2) Copy of actual print/radio/social media advertisement, poster, mailing, etc. *Must show date of advertisement.*

Incomplete reports will not be considered for reimbursement.

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