

1.0 Summary

The Florida Sports Foundation (“FSF”) administers grant programs to support Florida communities and host organizations in attracting and hosting qualifying sports events that advance the State of Florida’s sports tourism and economic development objectives.

This policy defines the core information that must be collected with each application to ensure the submission has sufficient data with which to make a decision.

2.0 Governance

The Foundation’s grant programs are authorized pursuant to **Florida Statutes §§ [288.1229](#) and [320.08058](#)** and are designed to:

- Generate measurable **out-of-state visitation and tourism-related economic impact**;
- Deliver a documented **Return on Investment (ROI)** to the State of Florida;
- Strengthen Florida’s statewide **sports tourism economy**;
- Enhance Florida’s **national and international visibility** as a premier sports destination; and
- Ensure responsible stewardship of public funds through **transparent, competitive, and data-driven decision-making**.

3.0 Definitions

Average Daily Spend

The estimated amount that an individual will spend during the span of a day. Each Sports Destination Partner has a table entry associated with their organization.

Economic Impact

Any of several measures of change in the local economy, including output, earnings, employment, or revenue.

Mature Events

Events that have taken place in the same location for more than three years. Exception: events that have been secured through a bid process.

Multiplier

The expected change in output, earnings, or employment for each one-dollar change (million dollar change for employment) in direct impact.

Output

The value of sales of goods and services by local businesses. The output is the increase in sales directly and indirectly attributable to the event.

Revenue

The income of local government from taxes, fees, and sales of goods and services. The revenue impact is the increase in local government income directly or indirectly attributable to the event, less any expenditures of local government funds to attract or support it.

Return on Investment (ROI)

Return on investment, per person, for this event.

Rights Holder

A person or organization that has a legal right (or rights), especially to perform, publish, film, or televise a particular work, event, etc. Generally, the professional team that is organized and registered as a business or corporation. (*Oxford Languages*, <https://languages.oup.com/>, accessed January 5, 2026)

Sports Industry Conference Assistance (SICA)

The Florida Sports Foundation's (Foundation) Sports Industry Conference Assistance (SICA) Program is designed to assist communities in attracting legitimate event rights holders to market the state of Florida and generate viable event sales leads. The SICA goal is to host Event Business opportunities throughout the State. Conferences that will be considered for assistance include tradeshows, conferences or association meetings whose attendees include legitimate event rights holders willing to conduct business in Florida.

Sports Industry Partner

The organizing body for the event who is also a contributing member of the Foundation.

Youth

An individual 18 years of age or younger.

4.0 Application Submission and Deadlines

All grant applications must be submitted online through the FSF Grants Portal. Once submitted, the applicant will receive a submission notification from the Grants Portal.

Any additional documentation or presentation materials can be attached to the applications via the Grants Portal.

4.1 Quarterly Deadlines

The following deadlines are all due by 5:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time.

- **July 10** – Events held between October 1 and December 31 of the same year. The Board will render a decision on these applications at the September Board meeting.
- **October 10** – Events held between January 1 and March 30 of the same year. The Board will render a decision on these applications at the December Board meeting.
- **January 10** – Events held between April 1 and June 30 of the same year. The Board will render a decision on these applications at the March Board meeting.

- **April 10** – Events held between July 1 and September 30 of the same year. The Board will render a decision on these applications at the April Board meeting.

Event	Deadline	Board Decision
January 1 - March 30	October 10	December
April 1 - June 30	January 10	March
July 1 - September 30	April 10	June
October 1 - December 31	July 10	September

No applications will be accepted beyond the deadline except in the case of extreme circumstances.

**Short notice events may be considered at the Foundation’s discretion.*

***If the deadline falls on a weekend, then the applications are due no later than 5 p.m. on the Friday before the deadline.*

4.2 Applicant Support & Training

FSF will conduct quarterly grant workshops to:

- Explain program requirements
- Review scoring criteria and common deficiencies
- Provide guidance on strengthening future applications

Workshops are informational only and do not guarantee funding.

FSF may, at its discretion, offer post-decision meetings after Board approval to review applications and provide feedback

5.0 Application Details

Each application must be thorough and complete. Incomplete applications may be rejected.

5.1 Contact Information

Each applicant must update or verify their personal contact information as well as their organization’s information within the Grant Portal during each grant cycle.

5.2 Event Information

Each application must contain a comprehensive description of the event. This description should be written so that it could be understood by someone unfamiliar with the event.

Additionally, each applicant must indicate the history of the last two (2) years for the event.

All questions related to the event must be completed. If they do not apply, an “N/A” must be noted.

5.3 Organizational Readiness

Each applicant must demonstrate their readiness to host the event including, but not limited to:

- Event Schedule – From planning to post-event
- Facilities – The facility can accommodate the expected capacity of participants and attendees

- Safety – Security and contingency planning (i.e., backup event planning in the event of inclement weather; training for staff and volunteers for physical security and safety.)

5.4 Needs Justification

Each applicant must provide a detailed explanation why the event would not be successful without the grant funds.

Applicants must demonstrate that "but for" the grant award, the event will not be successful.

5.5 Marketing & Florida Visibility Plan (10 points)

Key to the application is the inclusion of how the event will promote and further the mission of the Foundation and the State of Florida.

5.5.1 Required Marketing Components

The goal of providing marketing details on efforts is to inform the reader how the applicant will promote and further the Foundation and the State of Florida missions through the event, as indicated in the Scoring Rubric.

The marketing plan should include a minimum of:

- How the State of Florida will be promoted
- How the Foundation will be promoted
- How the professional sports teams license plates will be promoted

When applicable, the Grantee will agree to market and sell our Specialty License Plates, including, but not limited to, ads placed in programs and booking the [DMV FLOW Mobile](#) at the site of the event.

For each of the above, provide proof that the FSF logo and/or banner was displayed, inserted into program advertising, and/or included in any public service announcements and social media. Examples for submission include:

- URLs and screenshots from social media postings
- Digital photos of logo and banner placement
- Digital copies of program advertising
- URLs or digital recordings of any broadcast (television or internet)

If television spots for the event were part of the benefits, then a schedule of airtime should be included.

5.6 Economic Impact

A key component of the application is the calculation of the economic impact. This will require an understanding of key data.

The event must have the potential to bring out-of-state visitors that use commercial lodging establishments in the State of Florida.

5.6.1 In-State v. Out-of-State

In-state refers to those individuals who reside in Florida. Out-of-state refers to those individuals who live outside of the State of Florida. Both classifications refer to participants, fans, and, media.

5.6.2 **Participants**

Anyone who is a part of the event/competition; coaches, athletes, officials, trainers, organizers, volunteers.

5.6.3 **Fans**

Spectators of the event such as friends, family, supporters, enthusiasts, etc. (Not applicable to SICA grants.)

5.6.4 **Media**

Representatives from any media outlet such as reporters, journalists, camera operators, etc.

5.6.5 **Hotel Nights**

The total number of room nights multiplied by the average length of stay (in days).

5.6.6 **Tax Rates**

The tax rates aid in estimating the amount of taxes collected that can be attributed to the event.

Sales Tax is the sales tax rate for the county in which the event is held.

Hotel Tax (also known as Lodging Tax) refers to the lodging tax rate for the county in which the event is held.

5.6.7 **Calculations**

Calculation	Formula	Value
Direct Economic Impact of the Event	Visitors * Average Length of Stay (Days) * Average Daily Stay	Amount of Impact Generated
Lodging/Bed Impact	# of Rooms * Avg # of Nights * Avg. Room Rate	Amount of Impact Generated
Sales Tax Impact	Direct Economic Impact of the Event * Sales Tax Rate of County	Amount of Impact Generated
Lodging Tax/Bed Impact	Lodging/Bed Impact * Lodging Tax Rate of County	Amount of Impact Generated
Total Direct Impact	Direct Economic Impact + Sales Tax Impact + Lodging Tax/Bed Impact	Amount of Impact Generated
Return on Investment	Total Direct Impact / Amount Requested	Indicator of ROI
Community Support Ratio	Amount Requested / Total Community Support	Indicator of Need
Budget Expense Ratio	Amount Requested / Total Expenses	Indicator of Need

5.6.8 **Community Support**

Applicants must document any local financial support. Applicants must submit a minimum of matching funds of equal to or exceeding the amount requested in the application.

5.6.9 **Budget**

Each application must contain a detailed budget for the event.

5.6.10 Expenses

5.6.10.1 Allowable Expenses

Allowable expenses must be detailed on each application. Allowable expenses include:

- Promotion, marketing & programming
- Paid advertising & media buys
- Production & technical expenses; officials
- Site fees, venue rentals, costs (contract help)
- Rentals, insurance, rights fees, bid fees, sanction fees, non-monetary awards

5.6.10.2 Disallowed Expenses

Below are expenses that do not qualify for reimbursement.

- General and administrative expenses
- Building, renovating and/or remodeling
- Permanent equipment purchases
- Debts incurred prior to the grant award
- Programs which solicit advertising
- Hospitality or social functions including meals or banquets
- Travel expenses

6.0 Youth Engagement

Include any youth engagement initiatives **in addition to** the event, even if the event is a “youth event”. The goal of youth engagement is to promote and encourage involvement in sporting activities at an early age. Examples include:

- A clinic in addition to the event targeting children seventeen (17) years of age or under
- Pre-game activities such as tossing a ball with players or staff
- Mentoring youth
- Sports-themed activity page handout

7.0 Health & Fitness Programming

Include any health & fitness initiatives as a part of or **in addition to** the event. The goal of health and fitness engagement is to promote and encourage involvement in healthy activities at any age. Examples include:

- A clinic in addition to the event
- Engage spectators in an activity requiring them to exert energy
- Invite a local health or fitness expert to host an event or presentation

8.0 First-Time / Relocated Event

The event is brand-new and being hosted in Florida OR the event has previously been hosted outside of the state of Florida and is not previously hosted for the first time within the state of Florida.

9.0 Application Scoring & Evaluation

Each application will be scored against a corresponding rubric ensures transparency and consistency.

9.1 Core Evaluation Categories

- Economic Impact & ROI (30 points)
 - Major Events
 - Economic Impact minimum of \$5,000,000
 - ROI of a minimum \$150:\$1 for Major Events
 - Minor Events
 - Economic Impact minimum of \$500,000
 - ROI of a minimum \$100:\$1 for Minor Events
- Out-of-State Visitation (25 points)
 - Major Events
 - 4,000 Room nights
 - Minor Events
 - 600 Room nights
- Florida Visibility Strategy (10 points)
- Attendance & Community Impact (10 points)
- First-Time / Relocated Event (5 points)
- Health & Fitness Programming (5 points)
- Youth Engagement (5 points)
- Budget & Matching Funds (5 points)
- Organizational Readiness (5 points)

9.2 Bonus Points

Bonus Points are worth up to 3 points each and may be awarded for the following

9.2.1 Rural or Underserved Location

The location of the event is in a rural community. The Florida Department of Commerce [Office of Rural Initiatives](#) provides the below definition of a “Rural Community” per [Florida Statute 288.0656](#) as

1. A county with a population of 75,000 or fewer.
 2. A county with a population of 125,000 or fewer which is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or fewer.
 3. A municipality within a county described in subparagraph 1. or subparagraph 2.
 4. An unincorporated federal enterprise community or an incorporated rural city with a population of 25,000 or fewer and an employment base focused on traditional agricultural or resource-based industries, located in a county not defined as rural, which has at least three or more of the economic distress factors identified in paragraph (c) and verified by the department.
- (c) “Economic distress” means conditions affecting the fiscal and economic viability of a rural community, including such factors as low per capita income, low per capita taxable values, high unemployment, high underemployment, low weekly earned wages compared to the state average, low housing values compared to the state average, high percentages of the population receiving public assistance, high poverty levels compared to the state average, and a lack of year-round stable employment opportunities.

Please visit the [Office of Rural Initiatives](#) for exact locations and more information.

9.2.2 **Sustainability Initiatives**

Sustainability refers to initiatives to benefit the environment such as:

- Recycling Programs
- LEED Certification (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, a certification program through the [U.S. Green Building Council](#))
- Optimize Energy Performance
- Protect and Conserve Water
- Enhance the Indoor Environment
- Reduce the Environmental Impact of Materials

9.2.3 **Military Inclusion**

Including the recognition of active service or veteran members of the military can be accomplished by, but not limited to:

- Recognizing members prior to the start of a game (e.g., the announcer requests all military to rise so they can be recognized for their service)
- Military Discounts
- Recognize military personnel in the program, schedule, or other materials associated with the event

9.2.4 **Off-Season Scheduling**

Off-season is in reference to the event location's tourism cycle. Applicants are requested to provide their off-season months on the application.

Applications must meet minimum scoring thresholds to be considered for funding.

9.3 **Score Allocations**

Each criterion has a total point value assigned. Each criterion is assigned to a category of binary or non-binary.

9.3.1 **Criterion Categories and Classes**

Non-binary criteria include criteria where only two (2) options exist – yes or no. Either the criterion is present or it is not.

Binary criteria include criteria that can be divided into three classes – High, Medium, Low. Each section's value is defined as:

- **High** –
 - Total points for the criterion are assigned
 - The application reflects an excess of the minimum value for the criterion
- **Medium** –
 - The midpoint value for the criterion is assigned
 - The application reflects the minimum value for the criterion
- **Low** –
 - The minimum point value for the criterion is assigned
 - The application is lacking the minimum value for the criterion

The below scale references the High-Medium-Low allotment based on total points for the criterion. It is important to note that if the application does not meet the criterion, it will be assigned zero (0) points.

Points	High	Medium	Low
30	30	15	5
25	25	13	5
10	10	5	1
5	5	3	1
3	3	2	1

Further scoring detail is supplied in the [Scoring Matrix with High-Medium-Low](#) document.

10.0 Metrics

Metric	Type	Data Source
Applications per Cycle	#	Fluxx

11.0 Related

Include any related or reference policy, procedure, help document, etc.

12.0 History

Revised	February 27, 2026	Division	Grants
Effective	March 30, 2026	Owner	Maicel Green

Document any changes to this procedure, including reviews, below.

Date	Contributor	Comments
12/26/2025	Maicel Green Charlotte Cowen Pamela Manley	Initial draft
2/19/2026	Charlotte Cowen Pamela Manley	Clarification added
2/27/2026	Pamela Manley	Score Allocations explained