



## **Tourism Technology E-Challenge Grant**

The Georgia Tourism Foundation (GTF) understands that rapid changes in technology are having an immediate and evolving impact on Tourism in our state. In order to assist communities, sites and attractions in adapting to these emerging e-dynamics, the Tourism Foundation is offering the **E-Challenge Grant** program.

**Eligible Organizations:** The E-Challenge Grant will help your organization secure long-term improvements in and support for emerging technology related to the travel and tourism industry. Awards will be made to CVB's, DMO's, DDA's, tourism attractions, city or county municipalities, and other nonprofit entities with a 501c status. Non-profit organizations must be in existence for a minimum of eighteen (18) months, in which the primary goal is to attract and retain additional visitors and tourists to Georgia through tourism promotion. (EXAMPLE: associations, attractions, recreation or festival/event organizations).

1. Applicant organization must have been in existence for at least eighteen (18) months, and have conducted a festival/event or have promoted their area, prior to requesting funds.
2. All applicants must provide proof of their Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) as registered with the Internal Revenue Service. Applicant's Federal ID number and their 501(c) non-profit status must carry the same in-state organization name.

Documentation that proves non-profit status is required. Projects should range in amount from \$500 - \$6,000. The E-Challenge Grants will be a 50% match based on your organization's total project commitment. Grants will range from \$250 - \$3,000. In-kind matches will be considered on an individual basis. GTF reserves the right to limit the number of grants awarded in a fiscal year.

**Activities supported:**

Entities may use the E-Challenge funds to meet emerging or ongoing technology-related costs as related to visitor attraction or retention. Examples of eligible projects include:

- Creation of pod casts to market your destination
- Costs associated with streaming video for websites
- Photo Libraries
- Press Rooms
- Interactive travel planning features
- Costs associated with keyword optimization and meta searches
- Creation of wifi hotspots
- Geo specific collectable items that may be used for Geocaching
- Approved website upgrade
- Creation of new websites

Where clearly related to visitor experience improvements, direct expenditures from E-Challenge grant awards are allowable. Such expenditures, however, must be for items that have inherent longevity such as:

- Materials that enhance web content such as photos, web content and other approved improvements.
- Construction or renovation of facilities to include various technology hardware or software equipment, and other interactive improvements approved by GTF.

Direct grant funds may also be used for bridging support, where the E-Challenge Grant provides seed money and can be used to bridge funds from outside sources to match another e-granting source or to establish an endowment income.

**Activities not supported:**

E-Challenge grant funds may not be used for:

- Direct expenditures for operations or programs
- Recovery of indirect costs
- Staff payroll
- Support for projects where coop marketing funds have been awarded
- All consultant/ agency commissions are ineligible for reimbursement

**Core Stipulations**

- The primary focus of all funded projects must be to promote Georgia tourism.
- Any marketing material produced should provide Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility information on all properties and attractions promoted.

- Organizations receiving an E-Challenge grant must have a reciprocal link on their Web site to [www.Exploregeorgia.org](http://www.Exploregeorgia.org) Web site. Consumer must be able to reach [www.Exploregeorgia.org](http://www.Exploregeorgia.org) Web site in one click.
- The Georgia logo must appear on all materials and meet all identity standards. All materials must be reviewed prior to publication. Please submit materials to Vickie Sanders at [vsanders@georgia.org](mailto:vsanders@georgia.org) or Cornelia (Neil) Bowen at [cbowen@georgia.org](mailto:cbowen@georgia.org). Please allow 3 business days for each approval.
- In addition to the Georgia logo appearing on all materials, we must receive commensurate recognition as given to other major sponsors.
- GTF reserves the right to determine the acceptability and value of all graphic and visual material as to its content and appropriateness for the general public and for the state's effort to promote tourism. All use of the Georgia logo must comply with the Georgia Brand Standards Guidelines.
- GTF reserves the right to adjust requested fundable amount.
- GTF reserves the right to adjust funding parameters in accordance with the number of proposals received and available funds.
- Applicants who do not comply with all deadlines and procedures may be disqualified as eligible to receive GTF monies for one year.

### **Fund-raising**

E-Challenge Grants assist institutions in developing sources of support for E-tourism programs, and fund-raising is an integral part of the long-term planning required by the program. You must outline your source of funds. Grant money will be awarded once the matching component is determined and documentation of the funding source is submitted and approved.

### **Timeline**

- Applications due July 31, 2008
- Grant notification during the week of August 20, 2008
- All projects must be completed within the calendar years ending August 20, 2009
- The dates required to start and complete your project must be indicated on the [Project Application Form](#)
- If you are unable to complete the project within the period required, a written request for time extension must be submitted for approval.

### **Award notices**

- Applicants will be notified on the week of August 20, 2008.

### **Applications:**

1. An applicant shall apply for tourism E-Challenge Grant on forms supplied by the GTF or on exact computer duplicates. Electronic versions of the application may be requested via email to [lbreland@georgia.org](mailto:lbreland@georgia.org).
2. An applicant may only apply for ONE E-Challenge grant per fiscal year.
3. The applicant may only submit an application for ONE project per grant cycle.

4. GDEcD/GTF may request such additional information as it determines necessary to evaluate any application, including, but not limited to, financial and budgetary information related to the application or to the applicant or to any partners to the application.
5. Failure to provide the required application information, or failure to provide such additional information as GTF reasonably requests by a specific date, in order to evaluate any application, GTF reserves the option to disqualify the entire application if information is not submitted as requested.
6. GTF reserves the right to reject any application on the basis of the amount of funding sought, to request the applicant to revise an application to a lower or higher level of funding, or to award more or less than the full amount requested in the application. The GTF also reserves the right to require brand identification
7. The applicant and all partners shall disclose in the application any financial benefit that will be received, if the application is approved, by any entity in which the applicant or partner organizations, its representatives or its employees have an ownership interest. The applicant and partner(s) shall also disclose any other employees or representatives of the applicant or partner organizations may have with a vested interest that is not otherwise described as part of the project. The applicant and partner(s) shall also disclose if they are presently in compliance with all state, federal and local laws, including but not limited to, Hotel/Motel tax and payments to Workers' Compensation and Unemployment Compensation. The applicant and partner(s) shall also disclose if they are presently involved in a bankruptcy proceeding, and who within their organization may be contacted for details of the bankruptcy proceeding. Involvement in bankruptcy proceedings is not automatic disqualification from the grants program, but the GTF reserves the right to request additional information regarding any bankruptcy proceedings to insure the state's money is being granted appropriately. Failure to disclose this information shall result in the cancellation of any grant to the applicant organization previously approved by the GTF and the disqualification of the applicant and partner organizations and their representatives from future grant awards.
8. The period of service for all submitted invoices shall fall within the grant period as approved by GTF. Activities that are a part of the grant project may not precede the grant's approval date by GTF.

#### **Application Review and Evaluations**

1. GTF shall review all applications for completeness and conformance to the guidelines. GTF reserves the right to deny or to defer consideration of any incomplete application or of any application that fails to conform to the appropriate rules and guidelines.
2. GTF shall establish a subcommittee of professionals to evaluate and prioritize all applications that are complete and conform to guidelines.
3. Eligible and complete applications shall be evaluated and given priority by the subcommittee, using the following criteria:
  - a. The project utilizes new or existing technology to attract and promote tourism and visitation.
  - b. The project demonstrates potential for a strong positive return on investment and is well researched.
  - c. The project promotes a viable tourism destination, attraction or festival.
  - d. The project is a part of the applicant's overall marketing plan.
  - e. The project includes repeat marketing efforts and the results from those efforts justify repeat funding.

- f. The geographic advertising markets appear reasonable and based upon research.
- g. The project demonstrates how it will increase visitation, length of stay and/or tourism expenditures from outside 50 miles, or in a major out of state market or outlines a strategy to retain current visitation levels.
- h. The project includes tracking and evaluation measures.
- i. The project will have a significant impact on the area's overall tourism efforts.

**Audit & Compliance:**

- 1. GTF reserves the right to review/audit an applicant's and/or partner's records, including financial statements and supporting records, relating to the project. Records, including financial statements and supporting records, must be retained by the applicant and all partners for a minimum of three years after the close of the project.
- 2. GTF may terminate any project agreement upon discovery of any violation of the terms of the agreement, these rules, or state or federal law by the applicant or by any partner to the grant application.
- 3. Approved grant recipients shall provide to the GTF a final written evaluation of their funded program within thirty (30) days of the completion of the program.
- 4. If the grantee determines that program changes are necessary to improve the overall effectiveness of the project, the grantee may submit a letter of request for program changes to the GTF. The letter of request shall clearly be identified as an **“E-Challenge Modification Request”** and shall contain a description of the proposed changes; a narrative describing why the changes would improve the overall effectiveness of the project; the original grant award number, the date and amount of the original award. GTF shall consider **no more than three letters of modification** per grant. Modification requests that involve the movement of media purchases may be granted at the discretion of GTF. A modification request for an extension of the ending date of not greater than six months may be granted at the discretion of GTF, provided that said modification is submitted no later than thirty days prior to the ending project date. No modifications shall be granted after the end of the grant period.

**Project Agreement/Application**

- 1. A signed application constitutes an agreement with the applicant, including, but not limited to the following:
  - a. That the information provided within the grant is true and correct, and that the applicant has read and understands this guidelines;
  - b. An agreement to comply with the brand standards outlined in GDEcD's Brand and Logo Standards Guidelines;
  - c. An identification of the grant amount;
  - d. A promise by the applicant and partners that only in-kind services as outlined in the original application were utilized;
  - e. The irrevocable promise of the applicant and partners to pay the approved expenses within the funded program and subsequently request up to 50% those expenses;
  - f. A promise by the applicant not to assign or transfer any of the rights, duties or obligations of the applicant without the written consent of GTF;
  - g. A promise by the applicant not to amend the grant without the written consent of the Tourism Foundation;

- h. The project must be completed by the ending project date, unless a written request for an extension is submitted no later than 30 days prior to the ending project date;
- i. The project agreement shall require the applicant and partners to indemnify and hold harmless the State of Georgia, GTF for any liability arising from the agreement.

**Final Report**

**A final report of the project must be submitted within 30 days of the completion of the project or by August 20, 2009, whichever occurs first.**

**The final report must include:**

- A 1-2 page typed summary of the results of your project and the impact it had on tourism. Include attendance figures, as appropriate, as well as any tracking or documentation of the results of your project.
- A comparison of your original budget to actual (Please note that you are expected to document the “Total Budget of the Project” as shown on your application.).
- A summary of all expenditures and all revenues generated by your project (sponsorships, grants, gate receipts, concessions, etc.).
- Samples of advertising and promotions from the completed project.
- Documentation of using the Georgia Department of Economic Development brand elements in accordance with the department’s to the brand guidelines.

*(All funds must be used for expenses directly related to the project. **Projects must be completed as approved. Any substantial changes made to the project that alter its approved format may result in your organization not being eligible for future grants or funding.***

Please submit your final report to:

**Attn: E-Challenge Grant  
Georgia Tourism Foundation  
Georgia Department of Economic Development  
75 Fifth Street, NW, Suite 1200  
Atlanta, GA 30308  
(404) 962-4000**



**E-CHALLENGE GRANT  
APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

Reference No.: - \_\_\_\_\_  
(Do Not Write Above This Line)

**PROJECT TITLE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of project and description of the type of technology that will be utilized or enhanced:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Beginning Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_      Completion Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Project Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

APPLICANT (Organization's legal name): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Tel. (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_\_

Individual to be contacted: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ E:mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Level of Support Desired: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Matching funds:**

If application is approved, the grantee must raise matching challenge funds. Please outline the amounts and organization(s) providing the matching funds.

Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount \_\_\_\_\_

### **OUTLINE OF PROPOSED PROJECT**

Reason Project is Needed:

Objective:

How objective will be attained:

Expected results:

Additional comments:

Provide a brief statement on how success of the project will be measured.

## BUDGET

- All grants are for one year only. Applications due July 31, 2008.
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Please give an itemized account of all proposed expenditures.

ITEM/DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT

Attach additional sheet(s) if needed

Total Costs of Project \$ \_\_\_\_\_