



## **MOORE COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

### **Tourism Enhancement & Area Marketing (T.E.A.M.)**

### **Grant Program**

### **2026-27 Grant Guidelines**

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The **Purpose** of the **Tourism Enhancement & Area Marketing (T.E.A.M.)** grant program is to encourage creation or expansion of multi-day events, meetings and conventions, tourism enhancements/wayfinding/beautification and public art projects that will showcase Moore County's unique offerings and will attract overnight visitors from outside a fifty (50) mile radius, thus generating overnight stays and creating economic/destination impact for Moore County.

**The Moore County Tourism Development Authority (MCTDA)** aka Visit Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen (VPSPA) is the legislatively mandated entity responsible for collecting occupancy tax for all paid accommodations in the county and determines by law the allocation of those dollars to drive overnight visitation. The MCTDA collects a 6% occupancy tax and invests those funds in a variety of tourism marketing efforts.

**All Grants will be awarded to Projects and are defined as follows:**

All grants will be awarded on a competitive basis, with primary consideration given to applications that focus on the following:

- Must be located within Moore County.
- Any applications under the multi-day event category must be open to the public to attend, participate, or spectate.
- Any funding to be used for marketing must be spent outside of a 50-mile radius in order to encourage visitors to Moore County. Funding cannot be used for local marketing purposes.
- Must acknowledge Visit Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen in all advertising and promotions.
- Marketing plan(s) using funding for multi-day events must be submitted to Visit Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen for approval. Once approved, the recipient is responsible for booking the marketing/advertising, providing all creative (including VPSPA logo and messaging where applicable) to the media outlet, and handling payment. Once final receipts are received, the applicant must submit the receipts for review and reimbursement.

- Must provide VPSPA with copies of paid invoices from the media outlet along with ad copy/proof of performance.
- All funding must be exhausted by June 30, 2027. Any dollars not spent will be relinquished and cannot be “carried over” beyond the deadline date. Any violation of this clause could result in disqualification for future grant opportunities.
- Maximum grant awarded under the TEAM grant program is \$25,000.00.
- Only one (1) grant application permitted per group and/or organization.

#### **All awarded T.E.A.M. funding must be used by June 30, 2027**

The MCTDA cannot guarantee that all applicants will be awarded funding. Funding may be awarded for less than the amount requested or not at all. Limited funds may not allow all projects to receive funding. Preference will be given to the projects that best demonstrate the above criteria. Final decisions regarding the award of grant funds are at the sole discretion of the T.E.A.M. Committee, and ultimately the MCTDA Board of Directors. Once granted, awarded funding may still be dependent upon achieving certain project milestones. An extension of the project timeline may be considered, but not guaranteed. Any extensions would need to be approved by the CVB Board of Directors.

#### **Who is on the T.E.A.M. Review Committee?**

The T.E.A.M. Review Committee will be comprised of three (3) members. Three (3) of those members will be composed by TDA Board Members.

#### **Who is eligible to apply for a T.E.A.M. grant?**

- Non-Profit Organizations
- Governmental Organizations
- Municipalities
- Large, multiple-day events that can show a significant amount of visitors attendance and likely overnight stays

#### **Who is ineligible for to apply for a T.E.A.M. grant?**

- Political events or political affiliations
- Church or religious functions
- Fundraisers
- Family reunions
- Local or county school programs, events or fundraisers, or capital projects
- General administrative operating expenses

#### **What are examples of the type of eligible projects?**

- Multi-Day Festivals and Special Events
- Meeting & Conventions with 100+ attendees staying overnight. Uses can include guest speaker, A/V requirements, transportation, or event space.
- Wayfinding or signage that will enhance the tourism experience (i.e. trail signage), or beautification in highly public spaces that visitors will appreciate as well as residents.

- Public art projects that will be located in highly trafficked areas in towns, or other visible public spaces. More consideration will be given to projects that amplify the TDA’s “home” campaign.
- Other projects that will expand, strengthen and sustain local tourism and create opportunities for overnight stays from visitors to Moore County.

## **What are the OTPF grant opportunities?**

### **1. Multi-Day Festivals and Special Events**

For the purpose of TEAM grant funding, multi-day festivals and special events are defined as organized public events that take place over the course of two or more consecutive days and are designed to attract visitors from outside a 50-mile radius to encourage overnight stays. These events must include a series of scheduled activities, performances, or attractions that promote cultural, recreational, or community engagement and have a demonstrable impact on local tourism and overnight stays. To be eligible for TEAM grant funding under this option the applicant must:

- Span at least two (2), or more consecutive days. Must be two actual event days, not a registration on day 1, then the event on day 2. That is a one-day event and will be disqualified.
- Be open to the public, either free or ticketed.
- Have a cohesive theme or purpose (i.e. music, food, heritage, seasonal celebration, or sporting event).
- Include a published schedule of events or programming.
- Present an out-of-market promotional plan aimed at potential visitors.
- Positively affect tourism-related economic activity such as lodging, dining, retail and area activities.

### **2. Meetings and Conferences**

Meetings and conferences that bring more than 100 overnight visitors/100+ or more room nights to Moore County. These events may include industry or professional conferences, conventions, symposiums, training seminars, or other organized gatherings that promote Moore County and enhance visibility as a destination for business and organizational events.

TEAM grant funding cannot be used for lodging. Funding could be used for event setup, event space, A/V purposes, transportation, speaker fees, or to provide marketing materials for attendees. For any awarded groups, a copy of the official VPSPA destination guide must be provided to each attendee in their welcome packet.

### **3. Tourism Improvement/Enhancement/Wayfinding/Beautification**

Tourism-based investments made to improve the quality and appearance of facilities, grounds, trails, buildings, etc. that improve and/or enhance the visitor experience. These projects are intended to make areas of Moore County attractive to visitors and increase opportunities for local businesses to be successful.

NOTE: Only governmental agencies, state associations and municipalities are eligible for this specific TEAM grant.

#### **4. Public Art Projects**

Public Art Projects will be considered on a case-by-case basis and must be submitted by either a municipality or qualifying non-profit organization. These projects are intended to enhance the visual attractiveness of an area and can include murals, sculptures and other fixed visual community improvements. This does NOT include art shows, temporary art displays, or exhibits. Stronger consideration will be given to projects that amplify the TDA's "home" campaign. Examples of this support would include artwork that spells out the word H-O-M-E in some way and in any medium that can be resilient to external weather conditions and be a permanent, or a fixture that can last for a minimum of five (5) years. Examples of mediums could include metal, ceramic, murals, or any that can withstand weather and external conditions.

To be eligible for this type of grant, public art projects must:

- Be in a space accessible by the public.
- Must fall within the framework of any Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) established by a municipality requiring one. Grant recipients will be responsible for submitting all COA forms and absorbing associated fees.
- Adhere to any historic district rules and guidelines.
- Present a full color rendering of the project for review by the TEAM grant committee.
- Grant recipients must acquire and pay for all needed permits and approvals prior to beginning project.
- No political statements or art that would cause controversy or division.
- Install a final product that is intended to remain in place for a minimum of five (5) years.

#### **How do you apply for a TEAM grant and what is the timeline?**

- Applications will be available at <https://homeofgolf.com/team-grant/>
- Application period: July 15, 2026 through August 28, 2026.
- Applications can be sent to [TEAMGrants@homeofgolf.com](mailto:TEAMGrants@homeofgolf.com) or dropped off in person to the MCTDA at 155 W. New York Ave., Suite 300, Southern Pines, NC. Attn: Phil Werz, President & CEO.
- All applications will be reviewed by the MCTDA TEAM Grant Review Committee and approved by the TDA Board of Directors. A grant award announcement will be made on September 30, 2026.
- TEAM Grant Review Committee may request in-person presentation if they feel they need to learn more about a specific grant application.
- Failure to meet the deadline will result in the application not being considered for funding during the grant cycle.
- All material submitted as part of an application will be a matter of public record, subject to Chapter 132 G.S. 132-1 of NC laws.

#### **How will the grant application be evaluated?**

- **Project information:** includes timeline, strength of application, thoroughness, and tourism impact of an event, or project. Details are a must.
- **Financial Strength:** includes stability of organization, strength of business plan, and rationale about how this will increase visitors/tourism to Moore County.
- **Project impact:** includes expected room nights generated, size of market to be served, and expected community impact.

**Send Fully Completed Applications to:**

Attn: Phil Werz  
 Moore County Tourism Development Authority (MCTDA) aka  
 Visit Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen  
 155 W. New York Ave., Suite 300  
 Southern Pines, NC 28387  
[TEAMGrants@homeofgolf.com](mailto:TEAMGrants@homeofgolf.com)

**Disclaimer:**

The Moore County Tourism Development Authority (MCTDA) reserves the right to accept or reject an application if it doesn't meet the requirements. All decisions are final.

**Glossary:**

**Occupancy Tax:** A tax paid by guests staying in a paid overnight accommodation such as a hotel, motel, vacation rental or bed and breakfast. Guests visiting Moore County pay 6% occupancy tax.

**Out-of-Market:** A term used to describe guests who reside outside of the Moore County market. The MCTDA defines out-of-market as someone living more than 50 miles away. Nearby out-of-markets include: Raleigh-Durham, Greensboro, High Point, Winston-Salem, Charlotte, and Wilmington. Further markets include: Atlanta, Washington, DC, Charleston, Richmond, and Tidewater area of Virginia.

**Room Nights:** One room night is defined as a single night spent in one room in a traditional lodging property or one night in a vacation rental, or short-term rental. If there are two or more guests staying in the room, vacation, or short-term rental, it's considered one room night.