

Introduction

The Miami Beach Visitor and Convention Authority (MBVCA) is pleased to announce the guidelines and application forms for their FY 2025/2026 Tourism Advancement Program. The objective of the program is to provide funding for activities and events with yearlong tourism promotion and programming that support and advance the mission of the MBVCA.

The MBVCA is a seven-member authority, appointed by the City of Miami Beach Commission, with the goal of encouraging, developing and promoting the image of Miami Beach locally, nationally and internationally as an outstanding tourist destination. To this end, the MBVCA strategically focuses its funding investments in a balanced manner, fostering outstanding existing programs, stimulating new activities, and encouraging partnerships. The MBVCA is committed to a careful, long-term plan for allocation of resources to help Miami Beach thrive as a destination with something for everyone.

MBVCA Mission Statement

To proactively recruit, develop, promote, and financially support and partner with events, festivals, programs and activities that are innovative, high quality and representative of our City, which garner positive or noteworthy media awareness, which enhance and augment the reputation of Miami Beach and the experience for tourists, year-round, or which significantly impact our local hospitality and culinary business.

Grant Category and Eligibility Criteria

The Tourism Advancement Program grants is awarded in the following category (**PLEASE CONTACT THE GRANTS ADMINISTRATOR FOR ELIGIBILITY**):

Tourism Partnership Grants¹ are specifically targeted towards non-profit organizations with the responsibility to develop and promote broad areas of Miami Beach's tourism industry (e.g. neighborhood associations, industry service organizations, area marketing groups), year-round. The MBVCA Board will meet once a fiscal year to determine funding for the Tourism Partnerships Grant.

Minimum Requirements are as follows: two of three must be met at the time of application submission and after the completion of the event. All criteria met at the time of application submission must be the same criteria met, POST EVENT. Qualifying criteria must be met and proven through executed contracts on the first deadline date, as noted within the Program Calendar.

Grant Category	Confirmed Hotel Room Nights in Miami Beach	Contracted Media Impressions	Engagement
Tourism Partnerships	200	650,000	2,000

¹ Admission into this grant category requires approval by MBVCA Administration
FY 2025/2026_Tourism Partnerships

Hotel Requirements

1. Hotel confirmations must be in the form of a fully executed agreement. All agreements must be entered into by the Applicant Organization or the Contracted Hotel Booking Agents. A copy of the contract between the hotel booking agent and the grant applicant organization must be provided with the fully executed hotel agreements. Third-Party hotel agreements will not be accepted.
2. Post-event hotel pick-up forms and/or reservation reports must be in the Grantee's or Hotel Booking Agent's name with the Group Name clearly stated. Hotel Pick Up Reports and/or internal reservation reports must be provided by the hotel booking agent as well. Any changes to hotel contracts used as qualifying criteria for this grant program must be submitted in writing to the MBVCA, prior to the start of the event. Failure to do so may jeopardize the award.

Media Impressions Requirements

1. Media Contracts must be fully executed in order to qualify for this grant program. PR contracts submitted to meet eligibility criteria must include a scope of services/deliverable with a breakdown of targeted media and ROI, along with a breakdown of guaranteed minimum media impressions.
2. Post-performance reports are required, post-event, from media outlets stating post media impressions; analytics reports garnered from the organization's PR Firm, or from a media monitoring/press clipping service such as **Meltwater, Critical Mention, and Agility PR Solutions**. A copy of the analytics report obtained by the PR firm when generating their report for the client/grantee, is required.

Engagement Requirements

1. Proof of a combination of confirmed Visitors/Guests (walk-ins); Website Hits; Telephone Calls; Emails, App downloads; Webpage Engagement via Website through "Contact Us Form" or Live Chat. **Third Party verification required through appropriate back up documentation. Documentation generated in-house will not be accepted.**
2. Data from the prior fiscal year must be provided for eligibility. Post-event data must be proven from the current fiscal year.

Funding Procedures

The MBVCA Board will meet in **three periods** to determine funding for TAP. The grant program is announced through published and disseminated guidelines and legally advertised deadlines. The grant program requires organizations to show evidence of matching funds from other public and private sector sources.

MBVCA grants are paid upon performance; therefore, funding is provided on a reimbursement basis. If an event is cancelled, it has a significant venue change where 50% of the events no longer taking place within the City of Miami Beach, dates change to where it no longer takes place within the fiscal year in which the grant was awarded, or other circumstance not mentioned above, the grant will be reviewed and possibly rescinded.

An MBVCA grant carries no commitment of future support. Organizations whose grants have been rescinded due to non-performance must wait a full fiscal year to re-apply. Fraudulent documentation and/or activity will suspend the organization and/or event from returning to the MBVCA for funding. Re-instatement for funding ability is Board determiniant.

To receive reimbursement, the Grantee must show proper documentation including invoices, and proofs of payment. Grantee must also have completed all paperwork, including contract, reports, and evaluations in a timely manner. The formal reimbursement requests must be completed on the "Request for Reimbursement" sheet in a cohesive, line-itemed manner. Any goods or services listed in the "Funding Restrictions" section, and/or invoices and expenses incurred prior to the grant award date will not be considered. **Note: Vendors submitted as part of a reimbursement request must be valid and active and may not be partially or wholly owned by the grantee organization.**

Financial Requirements

To apply for a grant, organizations must provide:

1. A copy of last year's income tax return with a compilation verified by an accountant, **or**
2. Reviewed and/or Audited Financial Statements for the last completed fiscal year.
 - A CPA letter of engagement is required if the review or audit is not completed at the time of application.
 - Financial statements may be prepared using Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) or Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services or prepared in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services promulgated by the Accounting and Review Services of the AICPA, for tax-basis financial statements. Note: If a CPA's letter of engagement is submitted with the grant application and the grant is awarded, the grant contract will not be released until the required financials are submitted and approved by the MBVCA Administration.
3. A fully executed grant contract must be on file prior to the start of the event for the grant to remain valid; otherwise, the grant is automatically rescinded by the Administration. All documentation must be submitted in its original format during MBVCA regular business hours (M-F, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, excluding holidays). If the required financials are not submitted and approved prior to the start of the event, the grant contract will not be released, and the grant will be automatically rescinded.

Application Instructions & Submission Process

To apply for a grant, follow these steps:

1. Register through the MBVCA Application Portal at <https://miami-beach-visitor-and-convention-authority.wizehive.app/program/tourism-advancement-program>
2. Submit required grant criteria for approval
3. Next, complete and submit a draft application for review
4. Make any required corrections
5. If approved, proceed to submit additional required application attachments and edits by the final application published deadline.

Please note that while there is not a limit to the file upload size, larger files may take longer to upload.

Important Deadlines

- All documentation must be submitted by the published deadlines.
- Late applications will not be accepted or considered by the Board.

Any application that has not met the above requirements shall not be reviewed by the MBVCA Board. All programs brought before the MBVCA Board will be evaluated on a point system that incorporates MBVCA priorities.

Changes in projects – i.e. budget, location, date, etc. – must be reported to the Administration's office immediately in writing. If the Final Project Budget incurs more than a 10% reduction as compared to the Original Project Budget submitted with the grant application and/or the grant amount decreases to below 25% of the Final Project Budget (not including in-kind), the grant will be reviewed by the Board. Project funding will be in jeopardy if procedures are not followed, and organizations will risk losing all or part of the grant award.

Please Note: All organizations must be registered as lobbyists with the City of Miami Beach City Clerk's office prior to presenting to the MBVCA Board. For more information, please call 305-673-7411 or visit www.miamibeachfl.gov.

Promotional Requirements Checklist

- Prominently display MBVCA logo in all promotional marketing materials related to the event/program including, but not limited to, advertisements, brochures, websites, e-mails, newsletters, banners, posters, event programs, and other print and/or electronic publications;
- Display the MBVCA logo hyperlinked to the website, www.miamibeachvca.com, on the event-related and/or organizational website;
- Include **WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE MIAMI BEACH VISITOR AND CONVENTION AUTHORITY** in all public announcements, press releases, programs, collateral material, print and broadcast media;
- One half page or full-page full color ad in program guide, if applicable;
- On-site signage in a prime location (if applicable), provided by grantee;
- Grantee will make every reasonable effort to create a "deal" for inclusion in the MBVCA's App, "Experience Miami Beach". The deal/promotion may include a discounted ticket price, a 2-for-1 offer, or anything deemed appropriate. The promotion will be included as part of the App, with additional promotion through MBVCA social media accounts;
- The MBVCA will include specific language/messaging provided by the grantee within its Experience Miami Beach social media accounts to include Facebook, Instagram, and X, as appropriate. In turn, the Grantee agrees to proactively socialize information, photos and details that relate to the promotion with the specific inclusion and tagging of Experience Miami Beach throughout its social media platform handles: Facebook-@ExperienceMiamiBeach; Instagram-@ExperienceMiamiBeach, and X-@EMiamiBeach. The Grantee agrees to post a MINIMUM OF six (6) pieces of content, per channel to include: 3 pieces of content with tags during their live activation in-market and in real time (2 stories and 1 in-feed post) PLUS 3 pieces of post-event content with appropriate tags within 10 days of the activation dates. All static Instagram posts must include the hashtag #experiencemiamibeach and @experiencemiamibeach should be tagged in the copy AND in the "tag" section. The grantee will also provide a topline recap of reach, engagement and any other key metrics based on performance from their respective channels within 30 days of the last posting. Proof of engagement and other key metrics must be generated from the grantees' social media platform metrics/insights, with copies provided with the grantees' respective final report documentation, post-event.

Panel Objectives/Priorities

To be eligible for the Tourism Advancement Program, the proposed program must have a compelling tourism component and demonstrated ability to attract tourists to Miami Beach.

Funding Priorities:

The panel will provide priority attention to the following tourism development objectives regarding making funding decisions:

- **Television Coverage** – programs with confirmed television coverage and viewership from a major network or cable provider.
- **Development Areas** – programs which occur during the months of June - September and during national holidays; programs which help expand the positive impact of tourism into North Beach and other under-utilized areas of Miami Beach.
- **Confirmation of Hotel Room Nights** – programs with confirmed hotel room blocks of 70 hotel room nights or more in a Miami Beach hotel.
- **Significant Impact** – programs that have a track record or a demonstrable potential to provide a significant national and/or international return for Miami Beach regarding publicity and visitorship.
- **Long-Term Planning** – year-round activities, series of events and/or entire seasons which demonstrate comprehensive and strategic approaches to building effective cultural tourism programs.
- **Accessibility to the Public** – programs, events, and activities that are open and accessible to Miami Beach visitors and residents.
- **Event Quality/Reputation** - events that attract high caliber and high-profile artists to perform in Miami Beach; events with an outstanding national or international reputation.

Program Calendar

Funding Project Activities between October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026

All grant categories, except for Tourism Partnerships, will be reviewed according to their event and/or project date(s)

Prospective Applicants must meet with MBVCA Staff by: Friday, August 8, 2025, by 4:00 pm

Project Information and Required Grant Criteria must be submitted for approval by: Monday, August 18, 2025, by 3:00 pm

Draft Application and Application Attachments must be submitted by: Monday, August 25, 2025, by 3:00 pm

Final Application Deadline: Wednesday, September 3, 2025, by 12:00 pm

Board Meeting Date: TBA in September/October 2025

The MBVCA reserves the right to revise published information. Please phone 305-673-7050 to confirm information, including but not limited to, Board meeting dates and times.

Procedural Policies

Once the panel has reviewed a proposal and funding was awarded or denied, the applicant organization cannot return to the MBVCA in the same fiscal year for the same project or proposal. **An organization may apply only once for any one project or event within a funding period. Please reference the Program Calendar for a list of funding periods.**

Non-use of the MBVCA logo is a contractual violation and may result in loss of funding support.² Given the timing of events and application review, applicants may want to obtain acknowledgement materials from the MBVCA Administrator for advance use; however, advance use of the MBVCA logo and credit line will not affect Board deliberations about the funding merits of a program. **Please check with the MBVCA Administrator for any changes to existing logos.**

Financial Policies

All programs are contingent upon the approval of the annual budget by the City of Miami Beach Mayor and Commission. Any diminution in budget funding levels to the MBVCA will reflect a reduction of the grant award in the same percentage.

The maximum grant request is one quarter of the actual project budget, up to a maximum of **\$45,000**.

The MBVCA shall not be considered the sole source of funding. Applicants must provide their entire program budget. This budget must show sponsors, who have been secured prior to seeking support from the MBVCA and indicate those funding sources in the budget portion of the application. **Applicants must demonstrate a minimum of a four-to-one funding ratio.**

An organization applying as fiscal agent for an individual or another organization may apply again in a separate grant category during the fiscal year for another project. **Fiscal agents** must fill out the 'Fiscal Agent Form' and include it as part of their applications. Forms may be obtained from the MBVCA Administrator. The fiscal agent becomes the legal applicant of record, redistributes the funds to the intended recipient, and is entirely responsible for all published requirements of the grants program. These include contracts, revised budgets, fiscal records and reports. **Fiscal Agents may only be utilized by first-time applicants. After said year, organization must be the grantee and meet all requirements as outlined within the grant program guidelines.**

In addition to applying to the MBVCA, all organizations are encouraged to explore financial support from other funding agencies such as the Miami Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs at 305.375.4634 or www.miamidadearts.org and/or the Miami-Dade Sports Commission at 305.818.7188 or www.miamisports.org.

² For the duration of the grant, the Grantee shall prominently acknowledge the participation of the MBVCA in all press releases, publications, and promotional materials presented to the media or otherwise disseminated or published material concerning the project. Failure to comply with this request may affect the applicant's future funding.
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Funding Restrictions

The following are not eligible for MBVCA funding support:

- Administrative Expenses to include payroll taxes, medical, insurance, worker's compensation, pension contributions, etc.
- Administrative Salaries must not exceed 30% of the requested/awarded amount
- Applicant Organizations with less than one year of incorporation
- Application (App) Development and/or Maintenance
- Capital expenses and permanent equipment
- Cash Prizes
- Charitable Contributions
- City Services (permit fees, off-duty police, insurance, etc.)
- Costs associated with a vendor who is partially or wholly owned by the grantee organization.
- Debt Reduction
- Events that are not open/accessible to the public
- Expenses incurred prior to grant award date or fiscal year; whichever is later
- Film Productions
- Fiscal Agents may not be used by organizations that are applying to or receiving funding from the CMB Cultural Affairs Program (CAP), during the current fiscal year
- Incomplete or misrepresented applications
- Light pole banner costs within Miami Dade County
- Local marketing and advertising costs (Miami Dade County publications) – only regional, national, and international
- Monthly/Annual Organizational Membership Fees
- Operational Expenses (utilities, office rental costs, legal fees, payroll fees, insurance, etc.)
- Organizations failing to meet Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act requirements.
- Organizations that are currently applying for or have received a grant from the CMB CAP
- Organizations that have not filed their Final Report as required for prior MBVCA funded programs
- Organizations who owe monies to venues owned and/or managed by the City of Miami Beach (Colony Theater, Fillmore at the Jackie Gleason, Miami Beach Convention Center, Miami Beach Botanical Gardens, Bass Museum of Art, etc.)
- Production Labor Costs/Labor Costs/Artist Fees/Performer Fees
- Programs or expenses for programs that do not take place within the fiscal year
- Programs that do not wholly or substantially take place within the City of Miami Beach
- Publications not directly associated with the promotion of an event
- Social/Fundraising programs
- Television, Video, or Filming Expenses
- Travel and/or Hospitality costs
- Website Design/IT Development and Maintenance

Application Attachments

Each application must have the following attachments:

- Organizations must provide a copy of last year's income tax with a compilation verified by an accountant via a signed letter, and/or reviewed or audited financial statements for their organization for their last completed fiscal year. ³
- A detailed Marketing/Media Plan for your proposed program including a breakdown of impressions (confirmed and anticipated)
- Brief resume of project director and principal staff
- City of Miami Beach Lobbyist Registration application copy and receipt from City Clerk's office or proof of Annual Lobbyist Registration renewal provided by the City Clerk's Office for past Lobbyists.
- Confirmation of hotel room nights through fully executed agreements/contracts
- Confirmation of media placement and/or coverage through signed/executed media contracts, barter agreements, sponsorship agreements, invoices, insertion orders. All agreements must include the media impressions for the publication or media source
- One-page organizational history
- Organization's Board Member list including contact information
- Questionnaire (provided by staff)
- Sample survey of tourism evaluation method
- Table of Contents (FOR ATTACHMENTS ONLY)
- Two support letters from the applicable community agency(ies) listed below
- Up to five press clips regarding the event or organization

The following attachments are required if applicable to the application:

- A copy of the previous year's completed MBVCA Final Report
- A fully executed television/cable program contract with confirmation of household ratings in hundred thousands (Please refer to the definition of a broadcast on page 1)
- Fiscal Agent Form (provided by staff)
- CPA Letter of Engagement from independent accountant for review/audit completion (If awarded, grant contract will not be released until financials are submitted). Letter must come directly from CPA Firm via email. Document is not to be uploaded to the Application Portal.
- Supporting documents from Miami Beach hoteliers
- Up to two additional letters of support

You may obtain letters of support from the following agencies as they apply to your proposed project: City of Miami Beach: Department of Tourism & Culture; Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau; Live Nation (c/o) Fillmore at the Jackie Gleason Theatre for the Performing Arts; Lincoln Road BID; Miami Beach City Manager's Office; Miami Dade County Office of Cultural Affairs; OVG360 | Miami Beach Convention Center, and the Ocean Drive Association.

³ All Financials must be submitted directly by CPA Firm via email to edelacuesta@miamibeachvca.com. Document is not to be uploaded to the Application Portal.