



Tourism Funding Application for
_____ Chamber of Commerce
Fiscal Year 2025: July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

The Office of Southern Delaware Tourism (SDT) looks forward to a productive and successful year for tourism in your region as we collaborate to drive visitation to Sussex County. Together, we will work as a team to market and promote the fantastic assets of Southern Delaware. Please review this application with your FY 2025 Tourism Representative(s) from your chamber of commerce.

Our goal, as The Destination Marketing Organization for Sussex County, is to market the county and your region as a year-round destination. This requires year-round commitment and communication from your chamber of commerce. As we venture into fiscal year 2025, we must remind your chamber of commerce of the bylaws required to receive tourism funding through Southern Delaware Tourism. Please keep a copy of the current SDT Bylaws and refer to them as needed when completing this application. Below are highlighted principles and guidelines that should be followed throughout the course of the year:

Southern Delaware Tourism Mission Statement: To support and encourage the identification, development and promotion of sustainable, year-round tourism in Southern Delaware that contributes to economic growth and improves the quality of life.

Southern Delaware Tourism Board of Directors:

Representation:

Your FY 2025 Tourism Representative(s) serves as your chamber of commerce's voting member on the Southern Delaware Tourism Board of Directors. Your Tourism Representative(s) should work and be active in the tourism / hospitality industry.

Quorum/Attendance at SDT Meetings:

In order for our meetings to obtain quorum and proper voting procedures, it is imperative that your representative(s) attend all Southern Delaware Tourism Board Meetings. Board Members are required to attend no less than seventy-five percent (75%) of Board meetings. If your representative misses more than two (2) meetings, a letter will be written to the Chamber to suggest a replacement.

Once again, we look forward to a productive and successful year. Please provide this signature page with your chamber's completed Tourism Funding Application. By signing below, you acknowledge the terms of this agreement. Your signature designates a binding agreement.

Signature: _____

Chamber Director _____ Chamber of Commerce DATE: _____

Signature: _____

Southern Delaware Tourism Representative _____ Chamber of Commerce DATE: _____

Signature: _____

Southern Delaware Tourism Representative _____ Chamber of Commerce DATE: _____

**Southern Delaware Tourism (SDT)
FY 2025
Tourism Funding Application**

Application Summary

This application is used to fund tourism marketing and tourism initiatives of eligible chambers of commerce in Sussex County, Delaware. It covers the general instructions and requirements needed to complete the FY 2025 application. The eligible recipients are:

Bethany-Fenwick Area Chamber of Commerce	Milton Chamber of Commerce
Rehoboth Beach-Dewey Beach Chamber of Commerce	Lewes Chamber of Commerce
Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce	Western Sussex Chamber of Commerce
Greater Georgetown Chamber of Commerce	
Chamber of Commerce for Greater Milford	

Duration

Funding approved as a result of this application will cover the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

Funding

Annual funding will be allocated upon approval of the application.

SDT Fiscal Years

FY 2024 refers to July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024 and FY 2025 refers to July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025.

Application Due Date

SDT MUST receive all funding applications by close of business on **August 2, 2024**.

Please email, mail or deliver your completed application along with the required corresponding materials to:

Scott Thomas
Executive Director
Southern Delaware Tourism
827 East Market Street
Georgetown, Delaware 19947
ScottT@VisitSouthernDelaware.com

Questions and Comments

Direct any questions or comments to Scott Thomas at 302-856-1818,
ScottT@VisitSouthernDelaware.com

CAUTION: If your application is submitted late, funding for your Chamber will be delayed and forfeited for the First Quarter.

Application Review

SDT will review each application for compliance according to SDT's By-Laws and Policies & Procedures Guidelines within this application. Chamber of commerce directors and/or a chamber representative must attend the Application Review Session at the SDT office in Georgetown. **These sessions will be scheduled at the July 18, 2024 SDT Board Meeting and take place in late August 2024.** Other interested parties may attend this review under strict compliance with the review session requirements. The review session will last no longer than 1.5 hours and will start on time at the agreed scheduled meeting time. The SDT Executive Director and chamber of commerce applicant will use one hour of the allotted review time for application review, questions, explanations and final approval. Other attendees may comment in the remaining half hour of the meeting time at the end of the session. This session is to ensure complete understanding of the SDT Tourism Funding Application. In addition, the review session will assist SDT in aligning its marketing strategy and plan with that of each applicant Sussex County chamber of commerce's marketing plan and vice versa.

Application Approval

The SDT Executive Director, Board Chairperson and Co-Chairperson will review and approve each funding application. Any discrepancies or adjustments needed within the application will be identified and communicated back to the applicant chamber.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Submit your application as outlined on the following pages.

Information to be Included in the Application

Please use the form included in the next section

I. Tourism Narrative

This is an Executive Summary of your chamber of commerce's commitment to tourism in Sussex County, Delaware. Summarize the general structure and focus of local tourism efforts that include your visitor demographics and targeted markets.

II. FY 2024 and FY 2025 Programs - Briefly describe your tourism initiatives/projects, major successes and any obstacles encountered in your FY 2024 program. Highlight any changes that will be made in the FY 2025 program to overcome these obstacles. Please be prepared to share any relevant marketing material (advertisements, publications, reports) that may be specifically requested by SDT prior to the funding application review meeting. Your tourism program initiatives should be included in the following categories:

- **Regional Advertising** (Must target visitors and show data-driven results that document a return on investment). At least 25% and up to 100% of your total SDT allocation amount may be used.
- **Special Events** (drawing from an audience 50 miles+). Up to 50% of your total SDT allocation amount may be used.

- **Tourism-Driven Publications** (visitor guides, maps, etc.). Up to 50% of your total SDT allocation amount may be used. These are publications directly produced by your chamber of commerce.
- **Website Development** focused on tourism / overnight visitation to your area. Up to 50% of your total SDT allocation amount may be used.
- **Chamber personnel for tourism-related duties.** Up to 25% of your total SDT allocation amount may be used.
- **Capital Investments: Defined as expenditure of money to promote long term growth of the chamber; can refer to chamber's acquisition of permanent fixed assets that promote tourism marketing and fit within their approved funding application requirements. Requests for these initiatives must be preapproved in writing by the SDT executive committee.**

III. SDT Expenditure (Excel) Spreadsheet

Please complete the attached Excel spreadsheet, listing your chamber of commerce's FY 2024 Tourism Program expenditures per program category. **Expenditures and budget columns C, D and F relate to direct SDT Funding Only. In columns E and G, list SDT-utilized funds plus additional chamber funds should any apply. Your chamber's FY 2024 total SDT funding allocation is highlighted at the top of Column D and should equal the total expenditures listed in that column labeled "SDT Funds Only."** Please be prepared to share corresponding expenditure receipts that may be specifically requested by SDT prior to the funding application review meeting.

In addition, please estimate your projected SDT-allocated costs / budget for FY 2025 per category in Columns F and G.

If a chamber must carry unexpended surplus funds into the next year, they will have until the end of the next fiscal year to expend the funds and provide documentation. If funds are not expended and/or reports are not approved by the end of the fiscal year, the money reverts to the SDT general fund.

General Guidelines for Regional Advertising

- **Must target visitors and show data-driven results that document a return on investment.**
- Advertisements that are funded in part by Southern Delaware Tourism must show the Southern Delaware Tourism logo whenever possible unless it appears with a Delaware Tourism Office (DTO) or SDT co-op advertisement. You can access the logo under "Sponsor Logos" in the Advertising Section of the SDT marketing toolkit at:

Commented [BG1]: Eliminated 50 mile requirement

<https://visitsoutherndelaware.com/partner-marketing-toolkit>

Use the password: sdtmktg

- Should be used with overnight visitation to your area in mind.
- Please inform us of the specific advertising outlets (publications, television/streaming, paid social, online search, websites, newspapers, apps, etc.) that you are using to market your area. This communication will eliminate duplication of marketing and create cooperative initiatives with chambers and tourism partners who may have the same goals for our region.
- Chambers that do not have lodging accommodations are encouraged to partner with nearby Sussex County towns that do, and encouraged to work with Southern Delaware Tourism and Delaware Tourism Office with advertising co-op opportunities.

General Guidelines for Special Events

- As an official event sponsor, Southern Delaware Tourism funds can be used to fund your chamber's special events. 50% of your chambers annual allocation may be used.
- Southern Delaware Tourism sponsorship funding can be used **for tourism related special events that draw overnight visitation.**
- SDT funding may be used for promotional costs and direct operational costs for producing the event. ~~Operational costs covered by entrance or other fee-based entertainment or product and associated production cost does not qualify for SDT funding.~~
- Special events help to showcase your area while creating an economic impact for your business community. They must encourage overnight visitation while featuring your community's activities, heritage, culture, culinary and natural assets. Emphasis is placed on cooperative projects between tourism organizations, other chambers of commerce, private industry and events that result in overnight visitation.
- Marketing of events that are funded in part by Southern Delaware Tourism must show the Southern Delaware Tourism logo whenever possible on all event promotional material, posters, event programs and advertisements promoting the event in order to receive tourism funding for marketing the event. If a press release is sent to any media, the press release must indicate that the event is "funded in part by Southern Delaware Tourism".
- If a chamber wishes to create a new event for their region, funded by Southern Delaware Tourism, the event must be pre-approved by the Southern Delaware Tourism Board during the Tourism Funding Application process

Commented [BG2]: Added ROI requirement and eliminated 50miles

Commented [BG3]: Eliminate to provide chambers with more spending options

- Chambers will be required to justify their spend for special events by using the Destination's International Impact Calculator administered by SDT.

Commented [BG4]: Instead of mandating surveys, we want to use this new tool to calculate ROI

- For ticketed events that have a registration component, the registration data must include the zip code of the registrant.

- **OPTIONAL SURVEYS:** The audience / attendees at Southern Delaware Tourism funded events must be surveyed starting with the first year of the event. Once a new event reaches its third year, annual surveys and other visitation data will determine if the event will continue to receive funding. **An event survey report must be attached to the Tourism Funding Application for review.**

Commented [BG5]: Surveys are optional, but impact calculator is required

Special event audience surveys must include the following at a minimum:

- Respondent's zip code
- How did you find out about the event?
- Did you stay overnight?
- Accommodation used (hotel, motel, B&B, condo, Airbnb, friend, family)?

Surveying the event audience / attendees should be a built-in function area of your event planning effort and surveying methods should be confirmed in effort to achieve the largest random sample possible.

In addition, hotels/motels in the chamber area are to be contacted to determine the impact of occupancy during the date(s) of the event and reported to SDT.

Events funded by Southern Delaware Tourism that do not draw from at least 50 miles away from the Chamber area, or do not encourage overnight visitation, will not be funded through SDT. Survey results and communication with accommodations will determine this factor.

General Guidelines for Publications

- Up to 50% of your SDT funding allocation may be used for tourism promotional publications based on the criteria stated in this section.
- Publications that are funded in part by Southern Delaware Tourism must display the Southern Delaware Tourism logo whenever possible.
- **Publications must be used for tourism fulfillment and distribution. If using third party distributors, a distribution schedule must be provided.**

Commented [BG6]: Removed 50 mile and 50% distribution requirement. Added third party requirement

- For a brochure, map, visitors guide, etc. containing paid advertising promoting lodging or

attractions in another state, the total amount of revenue received from the out-of-state advertising must be deducted from the 50% allowable expense.

- Area maps and walking maps may be included as long as they include accommodations information, SDT logo. ~~and 50 percent or more are distributed outside of 50 miles.~~
- Chambers of commerce should produce, at a minimum, a publication that features tourism attributes in their area including activities, historical, cultural and natural attractions.
- Chamber of commerce member directories are not funded through SDT.
- Calendar of events and other items that promote overnight visitation may be included.

Commented [BG7]: Removed to add broader scope for distribution

General Guidelines for Websites

- Up to 50% of your SDT funding allocation may be used for chamber websites based on the criteria stated in this section.
- Websites that are funded in part by Southern Delaware Tourism must display the Southern Delaware Tourism logo and be linked to www.VisitSouthernDelaware.com
- Chambers of commerce should produce, at a minimum, a website that features tourism attributes in their area including activities as well as natural, historical and cultural attractions.
- Calendar of events and other items that promote overnight visitation may be included and linked to SDT's online calendar.
- Website components **that qualify** for use of SDT funds include calendar of events, accommodations listing, mobile apps, hotel packages, specials, and **monthly hosting fees.**
- ~~• Website components that **do not** qualify for use of SDT funds include membership directories, job listings and monthly hosting fees.~~

Commented [BG8]: Added broader definition and removed subsequent bullet to allow for more spending options

General Guidelines for Salaries

- Up to 25% of your allocation may be used for administrative salaries towards tourism-related duties. Your chamber must show expenses in two or more categories listed above to qualify.

Other Expenses

- There may be other allowable expenses that do not fit into any of the above categories. To qualify, any expenses in the “other” category must be pre-approved. This should be presented in your Tourism Funding Application and discussed at your SDT application review meeting.



APPLICATION FORM

Tourism Funding Application for _____ Chamber Fiscal Year 2025

I Tourism Narrative

Executive Summary of your Chamber of Commerce's Commitment to tourism in Sussex County, Delaware.

II. **FY 2024 and FY 2025 Programs:** Tourism initiatives and projects. Describe your achievements and obstacles encountered in FY 2024 and highlight changes that will be made in FY 2025 that will overcome obstacles. Let us know if SDT can assist with obstacles. Your program must consist of investments in two or more of the following categories:

- **Regional Advertising**
- **Special Events** (drawing from an audience 50 miles+). Up to 50% of your total SDT allocation amount may be used.
- **Tourism-Driven Publications** (visitor guides, maps, etc.). Up to 50% of your total SDT allocation amount may be used.
- **Website Development** focused on tourism / overnight visitation to your area. Up to 50% of your total SDT allocation amount may be used.
- **Chamber personnel for tourism-related duties.** Up to 25% of your total SDT allocation amount may be used.

III. **Please complete the Southern Delaware Tourism Expenditure Spreadsheet attached to the email message whereby listing your FY 2024 tourism expenditures and projecting your FY 2025 tourism budget.**