

# Northern Ireland | Made for Events

Guidelines for Applicants  
National Tourism Events  
Sponsorship Scheme  
2020/21



tourism  
northernireland

[tourismni.com/events](https://tourismni.com/events)

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# Introduction

Events are powerful tools. They have the ability to give Northern Ireland a competitive advantage benefitting the image, economy, tourism performance and future potential of the region. They can enhance Northern Ireland's reputation as a destination to live, work, visit and study. Events can also stimulate the economy, generating new jobs, business and training opportunities whilst attracting visitors at times of the year when there is surplus capacity in the accommodation sector.

A Tourism Event is classed as an event occurring on 1 day or over a period of several consecutive days (**there must be no break in days**). It will attract visitors to travel to and stay in Northern Ireland and offer an authentic Northern Ireland experience. The event will attract additional spectator and participant spend, increase the occupancy rate of local accommodation, provide a positive image of Northern Ireland, give the visitor a true Northern Ireland experience and leave a lasting legacy.

**Tourism NI operates two schemes within this programme:**

- **National Tourism Events Sponsorship Scheme**
- **International Tourism Events Fund (see Guidelines for Applicants International Tourism Events Fund 2020/21)**

The two schemes complement each other and run concurrently, maximising the benefits to Northern Ireland.

The National Tourism Events Sponsorship Scheme is open to eligible events taking place between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021.



## 2.0

# What We Want to Achieve

The primary aim of the National Tourism Events Sponsorship Scheme is to support the delivery of the Events Strategic Vision to 2020. Paramount to this is delivering an excellent visitor experience and encourage the growth of visitor numbers and visitor spend.

**The key objectives of supporting events will be to maximise opportunities to:**

- **Enhance the visitor experience**
- **Generate economic benefits for Northern Ireland through increased visitor numbers and spend**
- **Enhance the appeal and profile of the area**
- **Elongate the Tourism Season**
- **Address Regional spread**

The Tourism Event Funding Programme is designed to act as a catalyst and motivator for the events industry. It does not provide long-term or core funding. Applications to the National Tourism Events Sponsorship Scheme must be of at least national significance in order to maximise the value of support from Tourism NI.

## 3.0

# Setting the Scene

Tourism NI's role is to work collaboratively with our partners to accelerate the growth of the Northern Ireland tourism industry. We do this through supporting tourism businesses, developing world class products, experiences and events as well as promoting Northern Ireland as a must see destination to those markets which offer the greatest potential for growth.

Events have the potential to play a role in the overall visitor experience and economic benefit for Northern Ireland. They present the visitor the opportunity to immerse themselves in local culture, heritage and tradition.

National Tourism Events should be aligned to visitor motivations of key markets, animate Northern Ireland with particular authentic or exclusive experiences and encourage visitations/ enhance the quality of the visitor experience especially in shoulder seasons.

Tourism NI will seek to provide financial support for National Tourism Events which give an authentic visitor experience. The events must be able to demonstrate how they will create a memorable Northern Ireland experience, how they will attract visitors and ultimately generate an economic benefit for Northern Ireland.

## 4.0

# National Tourism Events Sponsorship Scheme

## 4.1 Definition

Tourism Events will showcase Northern Ireland's regions and destinations allowing our visitors to get closer to our authentic people, places and personality through experiencing the real Northern Ireland. These events will cover a wide range of themes and areas such as activities, music, culture, food, art, theatre and certain events will appeal to niche markets and appeal to the 'visitor segments'. National events will endorse geographical spread and exploration of all destinations and enhance off peak times where there is surplus capacity in our tourism industry.

## 4.2 Parameters

The National Tourism Events Sponsorship Scheme 2020/21 will offer financial support to eligible events taking place between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021.

Events must satisfy the parameters below to apply for the National Tourism Events Sponsorship Scheme:

- Total visitor numbers greater than 1,000
- Events must have a minimum income of £50,000 through ticket sales, private sponsorship, other public sector, merchandise etc. (prior to receiving monies from Tourism NI)
- Events must have an overall minimum expenditure of £50,000 (prior to receiving monies from Tourism NI)
- Sponsorship available for events up to £30,000 inc. VAT
- Tourism NI support cannot be included as part of the minimum income requirement
- In-kind support is not included in the budget

## 4.3 Requirements

Tourism NI will appraise your application to the National Tourism Events Sponsorship scheme by taking account of the areas detailed below.

**New for 2020/21** Northern Ireland's new brand 'Northern Ireland - Embrace a Giant Spirit' was launched in November 2019. The brand focuses on the experience of Northern Ireland that we offer visitors. It creates an opportunity for us to work together to create unforgettable visitor experiences.

### 1. Visitor Experience

The applicant will need to demonstrate the authentic Northern Ireland experience on offer. (In Consideration of 'Northern Ireland - Embrace a Giant Spirit')

### 2. Tourism Economic Impact

Does the event generate additional expenditure within a defined area as a result of staging the event?

### 3. Finance

Is the budget appropriate for the activity that is planned?

### 4. Marketing

Does the marketing plan clearly identify your target audience and will it deliver?

### 5. Equality of Opportunity and Accessibility

Does your event promote equality of opportunity?

### 6. Address Regional Spread

Encourage attendance of out of state visitors / visitors who are already in Northern Ireland to move around Northern Ireland.

### 7. Seasonality

Events to take place outside the traditional bank holiday period and tourism season and more of a spread throughout the year, i.e. in the shoulder seasons .

Appendix A gives further detail on the requirements.

## 5.0

# Who can Apply

The application process is open to all.

Event organisers may only submit one application per event to **either** the National Tourism Events Sponsorship Scheme or the International Tourism Events Fund, **not both**. Any financial award offered will depend on the overall budget available to Tourism NI and the number of applications received.

What type of events are not eligible to apply?

- Conferences/Exhibitions
- Community Festivals

## 6.0

# How to Apply

Please refer to [tourismni.com/events](http://tourismni.com/events) for full application details.

Applications will open on Tuesday 14th January 2020 at 10am and close automatically on Monday 10th February 2020 at 12 noon.

An online application will be available for all applicants during the open call. It is important that applicants demonstrate, by example and evidence, how their event meets the 5 requirements and the additional 2 priorities described in Appendix A. **Please note, it is not enough to replicate text in the guidance notes.**

The application form will request applicants to state if they have ever been declared bankrupt, or are awaiting any criminal or civil proceedings against them, or if they have any unspent criminal or civil convictions. Applicants must also state if they have any outstanding court judgements against them. If an applicant answers 'Yes' to any of these areas they will be required to provide detailed evidence to support their application.

Once assessed, all applications will be brought before an independent decision making panel which will include representation from Tourism NI.



## 7.0

# Sponsorship Award

### **Sponsorship Agreement**

Successful applicants will be issued with a sponsorship agreement. The agreement will include a tailored benefits package for Tourism NI.

The value of the package can range from £6,000 to £30,000 (inclusive of VAT).

### **Sponsorship Award**

- Package A up to £6,000 incl. of VAT
- Package B up to £12,000 incl. of VAT
- Package C up to £18,000 incl. of VAT
- Package D up to £24,000 incl. of VAT
- Package E up to £30,000 incl. of VAT

The value of the package offered will be linked to:

- Visitor Experience
- Tourism Economic Impact
- Marketing
- Regional Spread
- Seasonality
- Benefits to Tourism Northern Ireland

You will be asked to demonstrate what benefits to tourism your event will bring, which may include:

- A new element to grow the event
- Enhance the media coverage
- Improve event capacity
- Improve the visitor experience

## 8.0

# Payment

Payment will be made in one instalment and must be claimed 10 weeks after the event.

This is a simple post event reporting process, details of which will be included in the Sponsorship Agreement.

Payments are made using budget from Central Government. If Tourism NI do not receive adequate budget to cover the National Tourism Events Sponsorship Scheme, we can suspend, end or reduce the amount we offer.



## New for 2020/21

Northern Ireland Embrace a Giant Spirit was launched at World Travel Market in November 2019 to the worlds travel trade and media. It creates an opportunity for us to work together and create unforgettable visitor experiences. For the events industry it is an invitation to create high quality



experiences that are distinctively Northern Irish.

There are key characteristics aligned to the brand that we want our visitors to discover, think about and talk about during their experiences and long after:



Being Big Hearted means that you put the people of Northern Ireland and their warmth approach to visitor's front and centre in your experience. The people your visitors meet and the stories they encounter of our people past and present should all reflect big- heartiness. Our generosity and down to earthiness.



Thinking creatively about the experience you can offer and not simply copying what other do. Include something unusual, quirky, humorous or characterful. Participating in imaginative and creative activities.



It's in our amazing stories from deep myths, to modern fantasies, internationally renowned writers to emerging talent, and national heroes to 'local legends'. Encountering local everyday heroes.



It's in our spacious, open landscapes and wild rugged seascapes, our rivers, mountains and loughs and our changing, sometimes challenging weather. It's back to nature, escape, adventure, simplicity and tranquillity.



Underpinning these characteristics we have identified 7 key experience categories to help you recognize the experiences that your event can deliver.



Embrace the great outdoors (and indoors) a playground to immerse yourself in and get hands on whether that's high octane or just trying your hand at a new craft or activity. You'll never know till you give it a go.

### Key to Experience Categories



Discover a big hearted, creative, industrious & resilient people their distinctive traits, humour, language, arts, crafts, traditions and cuisine where a warm welcome is second nature. A people who seek out the craic (trad music/festivals). And who celebrate those with imagination trail blazers who see & do things differently.



Embrace 540km of epic coastline, steeped in history and featuring one of the world's most scenic drives, golden beaches, a unique geological wonder and home to a glorious maritime heritage including the Titanic.



Embrace a vivid, mythic land steeped in history rich with stories, bards, chieftains, warriors, castles & knights from ancient fables and folklore, to tales of medieval castles, trickery, romance and heroism; big houses and hard times, to modern legends (including GOTS) which continue to shape us.



Immerse yourself in NI's trendy cities, architecture and nightlife. From stunning street art and busking musicians to chic coffee houses, bistros and hotels, there's many ways to soak up the vibe. Cool spaces and places to explore and connect with modern Northern Ireland.



Embrace a land shaped by giant forces, to produce a unique mix of stunning rugged landscapes, lush greenery, majestic mountains, and serene Lakelands nature that nourishes, replenishes and invigorates body, mind & soul. And hosts a unique array of local flora, fauna and local food produce.



Experience warm hospitality and our world-class food and drink produced from pure lush pastures and coastlines, pristine rivers and lakes, Meet the framers, fishermen, growers, brewers, artisans and culinary creators using the finest natural, fresh, local fare – and savour our culinary traditions, from ancient recipes to modern marvels.

### Consider whether your experience includes

- Local traditions, culture and heritage
- Special aspects of Northern Ireland
- Stories of local history, local people and sense of place
- Stories that highlight the history of Northern Ireland
- Local food and/or drink





# Appendix A

## What we are looking for

### 1 Visitor Experience

Tourism NI's objective is to increase the growth in visitors to Northern Ireland. National Events must be able to demonstrate how they will attract visitors through their event content and how they will enhance the visitors experience when they are here in Northern Ireland.

This is your opportunity to demonstrate how your event can deliver on this.

In this requirement you must clearly provide the reader with sufficient detail for them to understand what each day (or a typical day) of the event will consist of.

- Detail the event content/programme
- Please detail how your event programming will motivate and encourage attendance of out of state visitors /visitors who are already in Northern Ireland to attend
- What experience will you offer that is memorable, unique and authentic.
- How will you provide a seamless visitor journey e.g. information online, ticket, transport links, car-parking, food and drink, accommodation, and other things to see and do in the area?
- Identify the experience categories your event will deliver aligned to Northern Ireland Embrace a Giant Spirit.

### 2 Tourism Economic Impact

The tourism economic impact of an event refers to the total amount of additional expenditure generated within a defined area as a direct consequence of staging the event. For most events, spending by visitors and participants from outside the town/city where the event is taking place (and in particular on accommodation) is one of the biggest factors in generating economic impact.

However, spend by event organisers is another important consideration and local businesses can benefit from an event taking place as well as job opportunities and upskilling the local work force.

Requirement 2 is split into two sections:

#### 2a Visitor and Participant Numbers

##### 2b Bednights

It is important to provide a separate breakdown of visitors and participants. We ask that you are realistic with your numbers and do not over inflate the visitor/participant numbers and bednights.

If participant costs are subsidised it is important to enter this total.



## 2a. Visitor and Participant Numbers

Events applying to the National Tourism Events Sponsorship Scheme must demonstrate:

- Visitor numbers greater than 1,000
- The event's ability to attract visitors and participants from outside the town/city where the event takes place
- The event's ability to deliver visitor spend and participant spend to the economy

It is important to be open and honest when submitting the projected number of visitors and participants who will attend the event.

**Please ensure that you keep your visitor numbers and participant numbers separate.**

You will be asked to demonstrate the events potential to attract visitors and participant to areas of Northern Ireland, during and / or after the event.

You will be asked to enter the total visitor and participant number projected for your event and then asked for a percentage breakdown of where visitor/participants will come from.

It is important to be open and honest when submitting the projected numbers of visitors and participants who will attend the event. You will be asked to provide the methodology you use to calculate the percentage breakdown.

Your explanation should take into account whether your event is ticketed or free to watch:

### **Ticketed Event:**

- Measuring attendance at ticketed events can be monitored by ticket sales or tickets surrendered on entrance to gain admission. You also need to take account of complimentary tickets and ensure this all tallies with your ticket income.

### **Free Event:**

- Measuring free events are more difficult to measure as people can chance upon or drift in and out. Suggested considerations when measuring attendance at non ticket events are:
  - Venue capacity
  - Number of entrances to the event
  - Can people watch from different locations?

### **Other ways of measuring your attendance:**

- Surveys from previous event (Please provide details on survey size, year of survey, etc.)
- Benchmark against similar event
- Police estimates

For participants you need to give a clear breakdown of the participant roles and number for each subgroup.

### **What is classified as a 'visitor' for tourism events?**

For tourism events, a visitor is classified as someone who comes to spectate or attend the event. They can either buy a ticket to attend the event or gain free entry.

### **What is classified as a 'participant' for tourism events?**

For tourism events, a number of people outside spectators/visitors will attend and these people are classified as participants. These are principally people participating in or running the event. For example, typical subgroups of participants will include:

- Team participation
- Media
- Officials
- Delegates
- Volunteers
- Organisers
- Artists

## **2b. Bednights**

In this section you will be asked to provide the methodology you used to calculate the bednights generated as a result of your event. Enter the number of bednights for each type of accommodation and then enter the average number of days that visitors and participants will stay overnight as a result of the event.

We are keen to know all type of bednights available to the visitor/participant, e.g:

- Commercial Bednights ( Hotel, B&B, Guest House, Self-Catering)
- Camping
- Motor Homes
- Family and Friends

Clearly record the following:

- Number of visitors staying overnight
- Number of nights visitors will stay
- Number of participants staying overnight
- Number of nights participants will stay
- Methodology used to capture the numbers

We ask that you are realistic with your numbers and do not over inflate the bednight figures.

### 3 Finance

Events must have a minimum income of £50,000 through ticket sales, private sponsorship, other public sector, merchandise etc. Tourism NI support cannot be included as part of the minimum income requirements.

Events must have an overall minimum expenditure of £50,000 prior to receiving monies from Tourism NI.

You will be asked to provide a budget breakdown for your event. It is important not to inflate your budget figures. Please note, Tourism NI is not a core funder.

Applications that do not provide a budget may be ineligible and may not be scored.

Please note: 'in kind' support is an important element in the delivery of events but should not be included in your budget breakdown. If applicable, you will be asked to complete a table for any 'in kind' support.

The assessor will contact the event organiser for further clarification if required. If clarity is not provided, the application's score may be reduced.

### 4 Marketing

A comprehensive marketing plan is compulsory for the delivery of a successful event and will help you answer key questions to grow your event and focus your marketing efforts. The right marketing plan clearly identifies what you are hoping to achieve, who your target audience is, what your event needs to deliver to attract this audience, how you will market the event to them, how much it will cost and how you will know if it is a success.

To help the panel assess your event marketing plan, you will be asked to complete a series of questions about the following:

#### 4.1 Target Audience

#### 4.2 Benefits to Tourism Northern Ireland

#### 4.3 Marketing Action Plan

#### 4.4 Marketing Budget

#### 4.5 Marketing Monitoring and Evaluation Plan





## 4.1 Target audience

In this section of the application you will be asked who you are trying to attract to your event. Please outline the profile of visitors which may include:

- Age
- Gender
- Socio economic group
- Interests, etc.

Please give as much detail as you can with any relevant research you conducted to help you reach this conclusion.

Please note, it is not enough to simply list various target markets and visitor segments. It is important that you clearly indicate how you decided on your target audience with any research you conducted or previous event evaluations that you carried out.

## 4.2 Benefits to Tourism Northern Ireland

In this section of the application you will be asked what benefits the marketing plan will bring to the promotion of tourism in Northern Ireland. National Tourism Events should encourage attendance of out of state visitors / visitors who are already in Northern Ireland. It is important therefore, that you explain how your marketing plan will achieve this.

You should also include details of your event branding and the key messages you will use across the whole marketing plan to encourage attendance at your event. Clearly identify what makes your event unique to Northern Ireland. Your messages should also clearly identify how you will encourage visitors to attend your event and enhance the quality of the visitor experience; especially in the shoulder seasons.

### **Benefit Examples:**

- We will partner with the local tourism industry to market the event to a wider audience, particularly those in the Republic of Ireland and overseas.
- We will work with the visitor information network to include event information within visitor-inspired itineraries to highlight what the local area has to offer.

### **Branding:**

- High quality, visual imagery will be used to position Northern Ireland as a short break destination.
- We will include Discover Northern Ireland branding on all marketing collateral
- We will include the hashtag #discoverni in all social media activity to encourage content curation and sharing.

### **Key Messages:**

- We will include the 'Plan and book your short break...' call to action (CTA) in all marketing activity.
- We will include visitor information in all marketing communications to enable attendees to plan and book their short break with ease.
- We will provide information to the local industry to include details of the event in their itineraries.

### 4.3 Marketing Action Plan

In this section you will be asked to upload your marketing action plan (a template is provided). You will be asked what marketing, PR and digital channels you will use to promote your event, when this will happen, how you plan to reach your targeted audience and who will deliver the plan.

**Marketing, PR & digital channels:** You will be asked specific details of which marketing channels will be employed and with what frequency (include specific details of the channel type and how often it will be used). For example, media advertising, digital & online, publicity & PR and partnerships/ collaboration.

**Dates/timings:** You will be asked to include specific timings for the marketing plan and for each marketing channel employed in all markets. For example, launch date, dates when adverts will be placed in press, dates posters will be distributed, dates of TV/Radio coverage, dates when the social media adverts will be promoted, dates when the digital advertising will be live etc.

**Reach:** You will be asked to tell us what the expected reach the marketing, PR and digital channels will give the event. For example, newspaper readership on allocated day, TV coverage audience reach, impressions, social media engagements, etc.

**Who will deliver:** You will be asked to detail who is going to deliver the marketing action plan. For example, in-house, agency, etc.

### 4.4 Marketing Budget

In this section of the application you will be asked to upload budgetary information related to the marketing plan. Applicants should ensure that costs included within the budget are accurate, realistic and achievable.

When completing your marketing budget make sure you think about any associated costs that could arise from employing each channel.

## 4.5 Marketing Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

In this section you will be asked how you will evaluate whether your marketing plan has been successful. It is not enough to simply evaluate the event after it is over. It is very important that you track and monitor your event marketing plan as it is being implemented so you can identify early on if the plan is not working and/or what is working well and make any necessary adjustments as you go. You will need to tell us what methods and tools you will use to measure what worked well and what didn't work.

These may include:

- Social media analytics
- Google analytics
- Feedback forms
- Surveys (at event or online)
- Visitor numbers

Please note: It is not enough to state what opportunities were achieved in the most recent event (if applicable). You may refer to the previous marketing achieved as evidence for confirmed / guaranteed marketing for the event. It is also not sufficient to state that any activity is budget dependent or reliant on support from Tourism NI.

## 5 Equality of Opportunity and Accessibility

Specific pieces of legislation will be relevant to event organisers, especially with regard to paid employment, volunteer programmes and access to events, for example:

- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Equal Pay Act (NI) 1970
- Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976
- Race Relations (NI) Order 1997
- Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order 1998
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2003
- Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2006

We have listed examples of current legislation. You should note that equality and anti-discrimination law may be changed or updated. The law is also complex and can require interpretation.

Please note that this list is not designed to be either prescriptive or exhaustive. Please feel free to contact The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland if you need clarification or guidance on what the law means.



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