

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM EVENTS FUND 2026-27

Guidelines for Applicants



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Before you begin

This fund supports events that attract visitors from outside Northern Ireland, deliver measurable economic impact, and strengthen our international profile. Our objectives focus on enhancing the visitor experience, driving regional and seasonal spread, and promoting inclusivity and sustainability, and ensuring additionality meaning Tourism NI funding should enable outcomes that would not otherwise be achievable.

These guidelines will help you understand the purpose of the fund, the key objectives, and what is required to submit a strong application. They outline eligibility criteria, mandatory templates, scoring considerations, and supporting documentation. **Please read them carefully in full before starting your application to ensure compliance and avoid delays.**

1 Overview

1.1 Introduction

Why events matter

Events are powerful drivers of tourism, boosting Northern Ireland's reputation as a destination while generating economic benefits through visitor spending, job creation, and business opportunities. Events also provide authentic experiences that connect visitors with our culture, heritage and people.

Tourism Northern Ireland (Tourism NI) works in partnership with event organisers to grow the tourism economy by supporting the development of world-class products, experiences and events. One way we do this is through the International Tourism Events Fund (ITEF).

Purpose of the International Tourism Events Fund

The ITEF provides financial assistance to eligible events that attract visitors from outside Northern Ireland. Supported events must deliver measurable economic return and strengthen our international profile. Events supported through this fund should offer compelling, distinctive reasons for visitors to travel here, stay longer, and explore more of the North.

1.2 Vision and objectives

Our vision is to support a portfolio of distinctive, high-quality tourism events that tell a compelling story of Northern Ireland to the world. These events should reinforce the North's reputation as an authentic, welcoming destination and deliver measurable benefits to the tourism economy.

This vision also ensures Tourism NI fulfils its statutory duty to promote good relations in accordance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. All applications will be considered in line with these statutory obligations.

Objectives of the International Tourism Events Fund:

- **Enhance the visitor experience and increase opportunities to spend:** Events should create memorable experiences that encourage visitors to stay longer and spend more, adding value to the overall tourism offering.
- **Leverage other funding sources:** Events should demonstrate the ability to generate growth by ensuring maximum financial support from other sources which should support the long-term sustainability of the event. Tourism NI is not a core funder of events but aims to support development and enhancement.
- **Promote partnership working:** Tourism NI works collaboratively with organisers from the public, private and voluntary sectors to maximise event success.

- **Deliver events of international significance:** All funded events must attract visitors from outside the North and contribute to our international profile.

Events supported through the International Tourism Events Fund should align with the principles of inclusivity and good relations, as set out in the [Tourism Vision and Action Plan](#), and reflect the values of the [Embrace a Giant Spirit](#) brand.

1.3 Definition and expectations of an International Tourism Event

An international tourism event is one that attracts visitors and participants from outside Northern Ireland, where the event itself is the primary reason for their visit. These events should motivate visitors to travel, stay overnight, and experience the North's culture and attractions.

Events supported through the International Tourism Events Fund are expected to:

- **Generate measurable economic impact:** This includes additional visitor spend, increased bednights in paid accommodation, and wider benefits for local businesses.
- **Showcase the North on a global stage:** Events should highlight our authentic people and places, iconic landscapes, and cultural assets, supported by strong media coverage across TV, print, digital and social channels.
- **Deliver a strong visitor experience:** The event should offer distinctive, high-quality content that cannot be replicated elsewhere, creating compelling reasons for visitors to attend.
- **Achieve a minimum return on investment of £10:£1:** This is calculated using Tourism NI's Event Impact Model based on visitor and participant spend.

2 Details and parameters of the funding scheme

2.1 Scheme parameters

The International Tourism Events Fund aims to support events that attract significant numbers of visitors to Northern Ireland and generate international media coverage. Events must deliver measurable economic benefits and enhance the North's reputation as a destination.

To be eligible, events must meet the following criteria:

- **Event timing:** The event must take place between **1 April 2026 and 31 March 2027** and run over consecutive days without breaks. **Multi-year funding is not available under this scheme. Funding applies to the 2026-27 financial year only.**
- **Visitor numbers:** Minimum 10,000 in-person visitors
- **Out-of-state visitors:** At least 10% of visitors must come from outside Northern Ireland (ROI, GB, Overseas)
- **Economic return:** Minimum return of £10:£1 on Tourism NI's investment
- **Financial threshold:** Minimum income of £200,000 and expenditure of £200,000 (excluding Tourism NI funding). In-kind support should **not** be included in these figures
- **Funding limits:**
 - Maximum Tourism NI funding request: **£100,000**
 - Minimum award: **£30,000**

- Tourism NI funding will not exceed **50% of eligible costs**
- **Media exposure:** Events where media coverage is a key driver must achieve a positive media matrix assessment.
- **Financial viability:** Events must demonstrate a viable budget and realistic planning.
- **Measurable outcomes:** Applicants must identify and deliver on clear, measurable objectives.
- **Strategic alignment:** Events should contribute to regional balance and seasonal spread in line with the Tourism Vision and Action Plan.

2.2 Available financial support

Tourism NI's ability to provide financial support through the International Tourism Events Fund depends on the overall budget allocated to the scheme.

Important points to note:

- All awards are subject to confirmation of Tourism NI's annual budget.
- The amount awarded may differ from the amount requested. Funding decisions are based on the strength of the application and available resources.
- If Tourism NI does not receive adequate budget to cover the event grant scheme or other strategic challenges arise, we can, at any stage of the process, suspend the scheme, withdraw or reduce the amount of financial support we offer, or choose not to operate the scheme. If an award is made it will be subject to confirmation of budget, with funding award levels to be informed by the final budget available.

Any offer of funding will be conditional and confirmed only when a formal Letter of Offer is issued and accepted.

2.3 Eligible and ineligible costs

Under the legislation governing the International Tourism Events Fund, only certain costs are deemed as eligible. The lists below provide examples but are not exhaustive. If you are unsure about a specific cost, please contact the Tourism NI Events Unit for clarification.

Important notes:

- Eligible costs will be agreed in advance of any Letter of Offer being issued and spend evidenced against these costs as part of your post-event claim.
- Ineligible costs cannot be claimed, even if they are essential to event delivery.
- For staffing or external resource support, "interim" means short-term or fixed-term roles created specifically for event delivery and not part of your permanent organisational structure.

Example eligible costs

- **Marketing:** activity targeting audiences outside the host town or city, with a focus on out-of-state markets (ROI, GB, Overseas).
- **Performance fees:** artist or appearance fees (excluding travel, food and accommodation).
- **Health and Safety:** first aid, stewarding.
- **Venue:** hire, preparation, restoration, marquee hire.

- **Production:** staging, sound, lighting, equipment hire, communication (e.g. radios), toilet hire, waste management.
- **Volunteer Support:** training costs, Investors in Volunteers accreditation.
- **Security:** event security services.
- **Independent Evaluation:** subject to prior approval of content and methodology.
- **Bidding Costs:** including host fees.
- **Freight:** transport of event-related materials.
- **Staffing or External Resource Support:** for development of commercial opportunities and marketing only, subject to prior approval. These posts must be interim and demonstrate clear added value.

Example ineligible costs

- Accommodation and travel (flights, car hire, public transport).
- Prize money, awards, trophies, medals.
- Licence and permit fees.
- Stationery, postage, gifts (including goodie bags).
- Promoter or event management fees.
- Professional fees (accountancy, audit, legal).
- Bank charges, interest, corporation tax.
- Capital expenditure (e.g. computers, cameras).
- Hospitality, rates, fuel, electricity, rent.
- Membership fees, phone bills, charitable donations.
- VAT repayments (where reclaimable).
- Insurance (including vehicle insurance).
- Liquor licences.
- Cash payments.
- Staff salaries and consultancy fees (except as noted under eligible costs).

3 Application Process

Tourism NI aims to make the application process as straightforward as possible. **Please read these guidelines carefully before starting your application.**

3.1 Who can apply

Applications are open to legally constituted organisations or individuals in the public, private, and voluntary sectors. Charitable organisations are eligible to apply; however, if the event generates a surplus, this cannot be used as a charitable donation.

Key points to note:

- Financial assistance from Tourism NI will not exceed 50% of an event's eligible costs.
- Event organisers may submit one application per event.

- Previous funding from Tourism NI does **not** guarantee future support or funding at a similar level.
- Awards depend on available funds and how the event scores against the published criteria.
- Successful applicants are **not** guaranteed the full amount requested. Funding decisions are based on the strength of the application and available resources.

The following are not eligible to apply:

- Conferences
- Community festivals
- Exhibitions (unless they can demonstrate a travelling international perspective exclusive to Northern Ireland within ROI, UK and/or Europe)

If successful, applicants must comply with all terms and conditions, including requirements relating to good relations, conduct and reputation. For further details, contact the Tourism NI Events Development Team.

Tourism NI commits to treating all event organisers with respect and courtesy and expects the same in return across all communications, in-person and online. **Tourism NI reserves the right to discontinue engagement with any applicant or representative who fails to maintain courtesy, respect and professionalism in all communications.**

3.2 How to apply

Steps to apply:

- **Check eligibility and ensure your event meets all essential criteria:**
 - Event dates between **1 April 2026 and 31 March 2027**.
 - Minimum **10,000 in-person visitors**.
 - At least **10% out-of-state visitors** (ROI, GB, Overseas).
 - Minimum income and expenditure of **£200,000** (excluding Tourism NI funding).
 - Alignment with the **Embrace a Giant Spirit** brand.
 - Marketing plan targeting out-of-state audiences.
- **Complete the online application form:**

The form will ask for:

 - Event details (name, dates, location, mission statement).
 - Visitor and participant projections.
 - Budget information (using the provided template).
 - Marketing plan (using the provided template).
 - Accessibility and sustainability measures.
 - Declaration of compliance with statutory requirements.
- **Upload supporting documents:**
 - Detailed budget (template provided).
 - Marketing plan (template provided).
 - Most recent signed accounts.
 - Accessibility questionnaire.

- Any other requested documentation.
- **Submit by the deadline:**
Applications must be submitted online by **Monday 12 January 2026 at 12 noon**. Late applications will not be accepted.

Important:

- Applications that do not meet all essential criteria will be deemed ineligible and will not be assessed.
- Tourism NI reserves the right to verify information and request additional documentation.

3.3 Compliance with UK Subsidy Control Act

Tourism NI operates the International Tourism Events Fund in full compliance with the UK Subsidy Control Act 2022. All funding decisions are assessed against the seven statutory principles to ensure subsidies are lawful, proportionate, and deliver clear public benefit without distorting competition. Applicants must demonstrate additionality, showing that Tourism NI funding will enable outcomes that would not otherwise occur and provide evidence of financial viability.

As part of this compliance, you must declare any requests for, or offers of, funding from other public bodies in your application. This includes grants, sponsorship, or other financial assistance from government departments, agencies, or local authorities. Failure to disclose this information may result in withdrawal of funding offers. Tourism NI reserves the right to verify declarations and adjust awards to prevent duplication of public support.

3.4 Equality of Opportunity, Accessibility and Good Relations

Tourism NI is committed to promoting equality, accessibility and good relations in all funded events. Applicants must comply with all relevant equality and anti-discrimination legislation, including but not limited to:

- Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997
- Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Orders
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006

What this means for your event:

- Events should be inclusive and welcoming to all communities and visitors.
- Applicants should demonstrate how their programming, content and operations reflect this vision and go beyond minimum legal requirements where possible.
- Funded events must align with Tourism NI's statutory obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 to promote good relations and equality of opportunity.

4 Assessment and scoring

All eligible applications will be assessed against published criteria to ensure fairness, transparency, and alignment with Tourism NI's objectives. The process considers both the information provided in your application and supporting documents, as well as Tourism NI's knowledge of the wider tourism landscape.

Applications will be scored competitively based on:

- The quality and distinctiveness of the visitor experience.
- The projected tourism economic impact, including visitor numbers, out-of-state visitors, and commercial bednights.
- Financial viability and the evidence of additionality.
- Marketing and programming activity aimed at attracting out-of-state visitors.

Certain requirements, such as Governance, delivery capability, and evaluation plans, accessibility, environmental sustainability, and social impact, are assessed on a pass/fail basis.

Tourism NI reserves the right to verify information and may commission independent reviews or appraisals as part of the assessment process.

4.1 Areas of assessment

All eligible applications will be assessed against the following. These reflect Tourism NI's priorities for delivering international tourism impact and ensuring public funds are used effectively.

Assessment Areas:

- **Event Visitor Experience:** Quality and distinctiveness of the event programme, unique selling point (USP), visitor journey and alignment with the Embrace a Giant Spirit brand.
- **Tourism Economic Impact:** Projected visitor and participant numbers, percentage of out-of-state visitors (minimum 10%), commercial bednights generated and return on investment (minimum £10:£1).
- **Finance:** Financial viability, robustness of the budget, level of income and expenditure (minimum £200,000), proportion of Tourism NI funding requested.
- **Additionality:** How Tourism NI funding will deliver outcomes beyond what would occur without support. Applicants must demonstrate clear added value such as enhanced scale, quality, reach or strategic alignment.
- **Event Programming and Marketing Activity:** Strength of marketing plan targeting out-of-state audiences, marketing budget allocation and evaluation measures.
- **Event Delivery, Oversight and Evaluation:** Governance and management structure, financial oversight, and monitoring processes.
- **Accessibility:** Completion of Accessibility Questionnaire.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Measures to reduce environmental impact and promote sustainability.
- **Social Impact:** Contribution to local communities through employment, volunteering, and skills development

In addition to the scored sections above, Tourism NI will also consider how your event contributes to the overall balance of our funded portfolio. This ensures public investment supports a diverse range of events that deliver strategic benefits across the North.

We look at how your event helps achieve Tourism NI's strategic priorities, including:

- **Regional Spread:** Distributing tourism benefits across Northern Ireland.
- **Seasonality:** Encouraging visitation during off-peak periods.
- **Diversity of Event Type:** Adding variety (e.g. music, sport, cultural, food and drink).
- **Strategic Alignment:**
 - Driving international tourism impact and attracting out-of-state visitors.
 - Strengthening the North's international profile through media coverage and brand alignment.
 - Supporting inclusivity and good relations in line with Section 75 obligations.
 - Reflecting the *Embrace a Giant Spirit* brand values (authenticity, originality, cultural storytelling).
 - Demonstrating environmental responsibility and long-term sustainability.

4.2 Scoring

All eligible applications will be assessed against the published criteria. Each section of the application form is scored based on the quality, clarity, and credibility of the information provided. Scores range from 0 to 5, with higher scores awarded for responses that are detailed, realistic, and supported by evidence.

Scoring Scale

- 0 – No evidence provided or response lacks credibility.
- 1 – Minimal detail, vague or aspirational.
- 2 – Some relevant content but lacks clarity or feasibility.
- 3 – Generally credible with some supporting evidence.
- 4 – Strong evidence and clear delivery plan.
- 5 – Fully substantiated response with robust evidence and proven capability.

Confidence Weighting

In addition to the base score, assessors apply a confidence weighting (0–5) to reflect the credibility and deliverability of your response. This considers:

- Evidence provided (data, research, past performance)
- Realism of assumptions (e.g. visitor numbers, bednight projections)
- Clarity of methodology
- Track record and capacity to deliver

A strong application combines ambition with deliverability. Responses that look good on paper but lack substance or rationale will score lower on confidence weighting.

Points Allocation

Assessment Area	Description	Points Allocation (including confidence weighting)
Event Visitor Experience	Quality and distinctiveness of the event programme, USP, visitor journey, and alignment with Embrace a Giant Spirit brand.	Up to 125 points
Tourism Economic Impact	Projected visitor and participant numbers, % out-of-state visitors (minimum 10%), commercial bednights and return on investment (min £10:£1).	Up to 100 points
Finance	Financial viability, robustness of budget, income/expenditure (minimum £200k), proportion of Tourism NI funding requested.	Up to 75 points
Additionality	Evidence of benefits and impact enabled by Tourism NI funding (scale, quality, reach, strategic alignment, legacy benefits).	Up to 100 points
Event Programming & Marketing Activity	Strength of marketing plan targeting out-of-state audiences, marketing budget allocation, evaluation measures.	Up to 75 points
Portfolio Fit	Contribution to regional spread, seasonality, diversity of event type, and strategic alignment.	Up to 25 points

Other requirements

The following sections are assessed on a **pass/fail** basis and must be completed.

- Event delivery, oversight and evaluation
- Accessibility
- Environmental Sustainability
- Social Impact

Important

Applications that do not meet minimum eligibility criteria (visitor numbers, out-of-state percentage, return on investment threshold) will **not** proceed to scoring.

5 Application Timeline

- **Opening date:** Monday 8 December 2025 at 10:00am
- **Closing date:** Monday 12 January 2026 at 12:00 noon

Important:

- Late applications **will not** be accepted under any circumstances.
- All applications must be submitted online through the Tourism NI grant management system.
- Supporting documents (budget template, marketing plan, accounts, accessibility questionnaire) must be uploaded by the deadline with the main application.

5.1 Assessment and decision process

- All eligible applications will be assessed against the criteria and scoring framework.
- Recommendations will be presented to a decision-making panel, which will include senior representation from Tourism NI and may include Tourism Ireland.
- Tourism NI reserves the right to commission independent consultants to review or appraise applications.
- Applicants will be notified of the outcome, whether successful or unsuccessful, by email following the assessment process.

6 Successful applicants

If your application is successful, you will receive an email notification confirming the outcome and the proposed funding award, subject to confirmation of available budget.

6.1 Offer stage

- The initial email notification will outline the award amount and key conditions.
- This is an offer only and does not yet constitute a contract.

6.2 Letter of Offer

Successful applicants must attend a call with the Tourism NI Events Development Team before the Letter of Offer is issued. This meeting ensures clarity on funding conditions and key requirements.

The meeting will cover:

- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** review of deliverables and measurement criteria.
- **Funding allocation:** confirmation of the specific cost categories that Tourism NI funding will be applied to, as outlined in the application and assessment feedback.
- **Budget and compliance checks:** verification of financial details and alignment with scheme requirements.
- **Additional conditions:** discussion of any specific requirements or obligations attached to the funding.

A formal Letter of Offer will follow, setting out:

- The agreed funding amount.
- Agreed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and deliverables based on your application.
- Terms and conditions, including compliance with statutory obligations and Tourism NI policies.

6.3 Acceptance

You must sign and return the Letter of Offer within 14 days of issue. Failure to do so may result in withdrawal of the offer.

6.4 Funding conditions

All offers are subject to:

- Confirmation of Tourism NI's budget allocation for the scheme.

- Compliance with conditions outlined in the Letter of Offer.
- Delivery of your event as described in your application.

Should your application to the ITEF be successful, the grant award is based on the budget submitted at application stage. Should event income or expenditure significantly decrease before or after the Letter of Offer, the award will be reviewed and may be reduced.

Tourism NI also reserves the right to reduce or withdraw funding if:

- KPIs or agreed deliverables are not met.
- The event fails to comply with statutory or contractual obligations.

7 Appeals

Tourism NI operates an appeals process for applicants who believe their application has been treated unfairly.

Key points:

- Appeals can only be made by applicants who have received notification that their application was **unsuccessful**.
- The appeals process does not apply to the amount of funding awarded. If your application is successful, you cannot appeal the level of funding offered.
- Appeals must be submitted in writing within the timeframe specified in your unsuccessful notification email.

8 Post Event

8.1 Post event evaluation

If your event is funded through the International Tourism Events Fund, you must complete a Post-Event Evaluation (PPE) to support your claim. Tourism NI will provide a template for this.

The evaluation will ask you to report on:

- How your event delivered against the commitments in your application.
- Performance against the key objectives agreed in your Letter of Offer.
- Compliance with all conditions outlined in the Letter of Offer.

You will also need to provide:

- Evidence of all income sources
- A completed claim form with supporting documentation (including invoices and bank statements).
- The final event budget, independently verified by an auditor or accountant.
- A Tourism Economic Calculator using actual event data (visitor numbers, participant numbers, bednights, income and expenditure) will be completed by the Tourism NI Case Officer.

8.2 Claim payment

- Payments are made after the event.
- Claims can only be submitted after the event, once full evidence of spend is provided. Eligible costs must match those agreed at application stage and confirmed in the Letter of Offer.
- All claims must be submitted within four months of the event.

9 Guidance for completing your application

This section is designed to help you provide all the information required for your application. It is your responsibility to ensure that every part of the form is completed and all supporting documents are uploaded.

The questions in the application form relate directly to the areas that will be assessed and scored, as outlined in these guidelines. Make sure your answers are clear, detailed and supported by evidence where requested.

Section 1: Applicant Screening

This section checks for any legal or financial issues that could affect your eligibility for funding. Please read carefully before answering:

- **Bankruptcy**

If you (or your spouse, if applying as an individual) have never been declared bankrupt, type "No". If you have, provide brief details. This will not automatically disqualify you, but it may be considered during assessment.

- **Criminal or Civil Proceedings**

If you are not awaiting any criminal or civil proceedings and have no unspent convictions, type "No". If you do have proceedings or convictions, provide details. This information is required for due diligence.

- **Outstanding Court Judgements**

If you have no outstanding court judgements, type "No". If you do, provide details including the nature of the judgement and any repayment arrangements.

Important:

Answering "Yes" to any of these questions does not automatically mean your application will be rejected. However, it may influence the decision and could require further clarification.

Section 2: Applicant Contact Details

Provide accurate details for the primary applicant and any partner organisations. Ensure email and phone details are monitored regularly, as all correspondence - including your Letter of Offer - will be sent to these contacts.

Question	Guidance
Primary Applicant Details	Provide the full legal name of your organisation or, if applying as an individual, your personal details. Include your main contact person for this application.

Question	Guidance
Joint Applications	If applying in partnership, select “Yes” and provide partner details. If not, select “No”.
VAT Registration	Indicate whether your organisation is VAT registered.
Special Communication Needs	State any specific communication support required (e.g. large print, alternative formats).

Section 3: Event Details and Overview

This section provides the basic information about your event. Accuracy is essential, as these details will be used throughout the assessment process.

Question	Guidance
Event Name	Enter the full name of your event as it will appear in all marketing and communications.
Event Dates	Provide start and end dates. Events must run over consecutive days. If dates are provisional, indicate this.
Venue / Location	State the main venue or location. If multiple towns/cities, list all clearly.
Town/City and Local Authority Area	Provide the town or city name and select the correct local authority area from the list provided. If multiple locations, state the primary one in which the event takes place.
Constituency	Select the relevant constituency for your event location.
Recurring Event	Indicate whether this is a recurring event (e.g. annual festival) or a one-off event.
Event /Festival Type	Choose the category that best describes your event (e.g. music, sport, cultural, food and drink).
Mission Statement	Provide a short statement summarising the purpose and vision of your event. This should reflect your event’s identity and objectives.

Section 4: Event Visitor Experience

Focus on how your event will deliver a high-quality experience for visitors, particularly out-of-state visitors. Responses should be clear, detailed, and supported by evidence.

Question	Guidance
Provide a concise overview of your event and its programme, including key highlights and timings.	<p>Provide a concise but comprehensive overview of your event and its programme.</p> <p>Include key highlights, timings and any unique features that make the event appealing.</p> <p>Avoid vague statements – be specific about what visitors can expect.</p>
Why will visitors from out-of-state travel to your event? What is its unique selling point and how does it relate	<p>Explain what makes your event distinctive and why it will attract visitors from outside Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Highlight cultural, experiential, or international appeal. We recommend using Tourism NI’s ROI priority segments as a good starting point for identifying key visitor motivations. These segments</p>

Question	Guidance
to the motivations of key tourism visitor segments?	<p>are based on research into what drives travel decisions in the Republic of Ireland market, which is the most accessible out-of-state audience and provides a strong foundation for attracting visitors from GB and international markets.</p> <p>More information can be found on the Tourism NI website.</p> <p>Use evidence such as past visitor demographics, media coverage, or partnerships to strengthen your answer.</p>
How will the event encourage visitors to stay longer and experience local attractions and experiences?	<p>Describe how your event will encourage visitors to stay longer and explore local attractions.</p> <p>Include strategies such as linked itineraries, partnerships with local businesses, or extended programming.</p>
Put yourself in the shoes of the first-time visitor who is travelling from outside of Northern Ireland. Describe the end-to-end journey of their event experience.	<p>Imagine the experience of a first-time visitor travelling from outside the North.</p> <p>Describe their journey from discovering your event to attending and enjoying it.</p> <p>How will they find out about your event?</p> <p>What tools and information will help them plan?</p> <p>Explain how you make it easy to reach the venue, access transport links, and navigate the event when they arrive.</p> <p>Show how you provide clear, timely information before, during, and after the event.</p>
How does your event align with the Northern Ireland – Embrace a Giant Spirit brand to offer an authentic local experience that showcases Northern Ireland’s people, culture and places?	<p>Demonstrate how your event reflects one or more of the <i>Embrace a Giant Spirit</i> brand pillars:</p> <p>Big-hearted (warmth and hospitality)</p> <p>Original (distinctive and imaginative)</p> <p>Legends and Stories (cultural narratives and heritage)</p> <p>Land, Water and Sea (connection to landscapes and sensory experiences)</p> <p>Use the Embrace a Giant Spirit Toolkit for guidance.</p>

Section 5: Tourism Economic Impact

This section measures the economic benefit your event will deliver to Northern Ireland. It focuses on visitor numbers, participant numbers, bednights and overall economic impact. Your answers must be accurate, evidence-based and clearly justified.

Tourism NI funding is designed to enable growth and deliver measurable economic impact. To assess this, we need to understand:

- Your baseline performance (actual visitor and participant numbers from the previous event, if applicable)
- Your projections with and without Tourism NI funding

This comparison shows the added value that our support will create – such as attracting more out-of-state visitors, increasing overnight stays, and boosting participant engagement. These figures

help us calculate return on investment and ensure public funding delivers tangible benefits for the North's tourism economy.

Tourism NI will complete a tourism economic calculator based on the information provided.

Tourism NI uses the Event Impact Model to calculate the return on investment based on the figures you provide.

Your event must deliver a minimum return on investment of £10:£1. This means for every £1 of Tourism NI funding, your event should generate £10 in economic impact.

Visitor and Participant Numbers

Definitions

- **Visitor:** Anyone attending or watching the event (whether ticketed or free).
- **Participant:** Anyone involved in delivering or taking part in the event (e.g. performers, athletes, officials, volunteers, organisers, artists, media).

Important: Present visitor and participant numbers separately.

Question	Guidance
Visitor and participant numbers	<p>Give your visitor and participant numbers from the previous year (2025-26) or the last time your event took place. If no figures are available, enter zero (0).</p> <p>For your 2026-27 event, provide two sets of projections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WITH Tourism NI funding: the numbers you expect to achieve if your application is successful • WITHOUT Tourism NI funding: the numbers you expect if you do not receive Tourism NI support. <p>This comparison helps us understand how funding will increase visitor and participant numbers, attract more out-of-state visitors, and generate additional economic impact.</p> <p>You must also show the percentage breakdown by origin (local area, elsewhere in Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Great Britain and/or overseas) for both visitors and participants.</p> <p>Minimum requirement:</p> <p>Visitor numbers must be at least 10,000.</p> <p>At least 10% of visitors must be out-of-state (ROI, GB or overseas).</p>
Enter the average number of days that each visitor will attend the event.	<p>Provide the estimated average number of days each visitor will attend your event. Base this on ticketing options, programme length, and past attendance patterns. If your event spans multiple days, consider whether visitors typically attend for the full duration or select specific days.</p>
Explain how you calculated these figures, including data sources, assumptions and verification checks.	<p>Explain how you worked out your visitor numbers and breakdown. Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Sources: Identify where your visitor projections come from such as ticketing data, previous event attendance, market research, surveys or confirmed bookings.

Question	Guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assumptions: State any assumptions applied for projections, such as expected conversion rates from marketing campaigns, historical attendance patterns, or capacity limits. • Calculation Process: Show how you arrived at the total and percentage split. For example: <i>“Projected 15,000 visitors based on 12,000 advance ticket sales and 3,000 estimated walk-ins. Breakdown: 9,000 local (60%), 4,500 GB/ROI (30%), 1,500 international (10%).”</i> • Verification: Mention any checks or supporting evidence used to validate your estimates (e.g. benchmarking against similar events, accommodation booking data, or postcode analysis). <p>Be clear and transparent - assessors need to understand how your visitor numbers were calculated and why they are credible.</p>
Enter the average number of days that each participant will attend the event.	<p>Provide the estimated average number of days each participant (e.g. performers, speakers, exhibitors) will be involved in the event. Base this on your programme schedule and participant commitments. If some participants attend for the full duration and others for shorter periods, calculate a realistic average rather than assuming all will stay for the entire event.</p>
Explain how you calculated these figures, including data sources, assumptions, and verification checks.	<p>Explain the approach you used to calculate the total number of participants and the percentage breakdown (e.g. local, out-of-state, international). Your methodology should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Sources: Ticketing records, registration forms, previous event data, or confirmed bookings. • Assumptions: Any estimates applied for unconfirmed participants or anticipated attendance. • Calculation Steps: How you arrived at the total figure and the percentage split. • Verification: Any checks or supporting evidence used to validate your numbers. <p>Be transparent and provide enough detail for assessors to understand how your figures were derived.</p>
Do you subsidise participant costs, excluding accommodation costs? If yes, provide details on subsidised value and type of subsidy.	<p>If your organisation provides financial support or subsidies for participant costs (excluding accommodation), you must detail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of subsidy: e.g. travel allowances, meal vouchers, appearance fees, equipment hire, or other participant-related expenses. • Total monetary value: provide the overall amount allocated to these subsidies, not just individual rates. • Calculation method: briefly explain how you arrived at the total (e.g. number of participants × subsidy amount). <p>This information helps Tourism NI understand the full economic impact of your event and assess transparency in participant support.</p>

Bednights generated as a result of the event

Your answers should be clear and easy to follow. Use real data where possible and explain any assumptions you make.

Question	Guidance
Break down the type of bednights for visitors and participants generated by your event.	<p>Tourism NI funding should enable measurable growth in overnight stays, which are a key driver of economic impact. To assess this, you must provide actual bednight figures from 2025-26 or your last event and two sets of projections for 2026-27:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WITH Tourism NI funding: the number of bednights you expect if your application is successful. • WITHOUT Tourism NI funding: the number you expect without Tourism NI support. <p>Break down bednight figures by accommodation type for both visitors and participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial (hotel, B&B, guesthouse, self-catering) • Camping • Motorhomes • Staying with family and friends <p>If there are no bednights for a category, enter zero (0). Be realistic and avoid overinflating figures. Assessors will look for credible, evidence-based projections.</p>
Explain how you calculated the number of bednights figure for visitors.	<p>Explain how you estimated overnight stays (bednights) for visitors. Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Sources: Identify the basis for your estimates such as ticketing data, postcode analysis, previous event attendance, accommodation booking reports, or market research. • Assumptions: State any assumptions applied, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Average length of stay per visitor (e.g. 2 nights for international visitors, 1 night for GB visitors). ○ Percentage of visitors likely to stay overnight based on past trends or research. • Calculation Process: Show the steps you used to arrive at the total. For example: <i>"Projected 5,000 out-of-state visitors × 70% staying overnight × average 2 nights = 7,000 bednights."</i> • Breakdown by Type: Explain how you allocated bednights across accommodation types (e.g. hotels, camping, family/friends) using survey data or historical patterns. • Verification: Mention any checks or benchmarks used to validate your figures (e.g. comparing with similar events or regional tourism data). <p>Be transparent and realistic - avoid overinflating numbers. Assessors will look for credible, evidence-based projections.</p>

Question	Guidance
<p>Explain how you calculated the bednights figure for participants.</p>	<p>Describe how you calculated the projected participant bednights for your event. Your methodology should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Sources: Indicate where your figures come from - such as confirmed participant bookings, contracts, registration data, or previous event records. • Assumptions: Outline any assumptions applied, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Average length of stay per participant (e.g. 3 nights for international performers, 2 nights for GB participants). ○ Percentage of participants requiring overnight accommodation versus those commuting locally. • Calculation Process: Show the steps used to arrive at the total. For example: <i>"Projected 150 participants × 80% staying overnight × average 3 nights = 360 bednights."</i> • Breakdown by Type: Explain how you allocated bednights across accommodation types (e.g. hotels, self-catering, family/friends) based on contracts, preferences, or historical data. • Verification: Mention any checks or supporting evidence used to validate your estimates (e.g. comparing with previous editions of the event or similar events). <p>Be clear and realistic. Assessors will expect credible, evidence-based projections rather than inflated figures.</p>
<p>Do you subsidise participant accommodation costs? If yes, provide detail on total subsidised value.</p>	<p>Indicate whether your organisation provides financial support or subsidies for participant accommodation costs.</p> <p>If you subsidise participant accommodation costs, provide the total monetary value of the subsidy. This should include all forms of support (e.g. direct payments, reimbursements, negotiated discounts covered by the event). Use actual figures or realistic estimates based on confirmed arrangements.</p>
<p>Enter the total number of trade stands/exhibitions/concessions at your event.</p>	<p>Enter the total number of trade stands, exhibitions, and concessions that will be present at your event. Include all confirmed and projected stands, such as food and drink concessions, merchandise stalls, exhibitor spaces, and trade displays. If the number is an estimate, base it on previous event data or confirmed bookings to ensure accuracy.</p>
<p>Out of the total entered above, how many traders / stand owners are registered in Northern Ireland?</p>	<p>Provide the number of traders or stand owners whose business is registered or primarily operates in Northern Ireland. This helps Tourism NI assess the local economic benefit of your event.</p> <p>Use confirmed bookings or historical data where possible.</p> <p>If figures are estimates, base them on realistic assumptions and previous event patterns.</p> <p>Do not include traders who are temporarily operating in Northern Ireland for the event but are registered elsewhere.</p>

Question	Guidance
Out of the total entered above, how many traders / stand owners are based outside Northern Ireland?	<p>Provide the number of traders or stand owners whose business is registered or primarily operates outside Northern Ireland (including Republic of Ireland, Great Britain, or overseas). This information helps Tourism NI understand the event's wider economic reach and international profile.</p> <p>Use confirmed bookings or historical data where possible.</p> <p>If figures are estimates, base them on realistic assumptions and previous event patterns.</p> <p>Do not include traders who are registered in Northern Ireland, even if they occasionally trade outside Northern Ireland.</p>

Section 6: Finance

This section demonstrates the financial viability of your event and how Tourism NI funding will be used responsibly. It ensures that:

- The event meets the minimum income and expenditure threshold of £200,000 (excluding Tourism NI funding).
- The budget is realistic, balanced, and aligned with the event programme.
- Tourism NI is not a core funder of events but an enabler for growth and additionality.
- Applicants show transparency in financial planning and compliance with funding conditions.

Question	Guidance
Budget submission	<p>You must complete and upload the official budget template provided with the application form. This template ensures consistency and allows Tourism NI to assess your financial viability accurately.</p> <p>Your budget must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous year's actual income and expenditure: (e.g. 2025-26 or last event). This helps assess trends and financial stability. • Projected budget for 2026-27: Include all income and expenditure for the event, clearly itemised. You will be asked if the income is confirmed and, if not, when you expect to receive confirmation. • Tourism NI grant request: Ensure this figure matches the amount stated elsewhere in your application. • Be as detailed as you can in your budget breakdown. You will be asked to indicate amounts that will be covered by Tourism NI funding. This will help us assess how you plan to use potential funding. The more detailed breakdown, the stronger your application. <p>Important:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgets submitted in any other format will make your application ineligible. • Do not include in-kind support in your financial breakdown. List this separately in the relevant section.

Question	Guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure figures are accurate and consistent across your application. • Provide assumptions behind projections (e.g. ticket sales, sponsorship commitments).
<p>Provide the total expenditure spent within Northern Ireland to deliver your event.</p>	<p>This figure should reflect actual or projected spend for the 2026-27 event.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not include in-kind support. List that separately in the relevant section. • Ensure this figure aligns with your uploaded budget and is consistent with other financial details in your application. • Include all categories of spend such as production, marketing, staffing, logistics, and venue hire, provided they are paid to Northern Ireland-based entities. • If figures are estimates, base them on realistic assumptions and previous event patterns.
<p>Provide the total expenditure spent outside of Northern Ireland to deliver your event.</p> <p>Note: total of the two figures should match the total expenditure in your uploaded budget.</p>	<p>Enter the total amount of expenditure that will be spent outside Northern Ireland to deliver your event. This includes payments to suppliers, contractors, venues, or service providers based outside Northern Ireland (e.g. Republic of Ireland, Great Britain, or overseas).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This figure should reflect actual or projected spend for the 2026-27 event. • Do not include in-kind support. List in-kind support separately in the relevant section. • Include all relevant categories such as artist fees, marketing agencies, production services, or logistics sourced outside Northern Ireland. • If figures are estimates, base them on realistic assumptions and previous event patterns. • Double-check that the combined total of inside Northern Ireland and outside Northern Ireland expenditure equals the total expenditure shown in your uploaded budget.
<p>Outline the in-kind support you have secured for your event in FY2026-27, including type of support, the provider and its estimated monetary value.</p>	<p>In-kind support refers to non-cash contributions provided to your event, such as goods, services, or resources offered at no cost or at a discounted rate. Examples include free venue hire, volunteer staffing, marketing services, equipment, or technical support.</p> <p>What to include in your response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of support: Clearly describe the goods or services provided (e.g. free marquee hire, volunteer hours, marketing assistance, equipment or technical support, security or health and safety services, accommodation or transport provided by partners). • Provider: Identify the source of the support (e.g. local business, council, partner event). • Financial value: Assign a realistic monetary value to each contribution (e.g. if venue hire worth £5,000 is provided for free, record £5,000).

Question	Guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership details: Highlight any collaboration with local businesses, local authorities, or other events. <p>Important:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be transparent and realistic when assigning values. Overstating in-kind contributions can undermine credibility. • If no in-kind support has been secured, enter N/A. • Use previous agreements or market rates to calculate financial equivalency. • Group similar contributions together for clarity (e.g. volunteer hours, technical equipment).
Upload a copy of your most recent Accounts.	<p>You must provide a set of Accounts for the most recent event or financial year, where available.</p> <p>Tourism NI uses this information to confirm that your event is financially sustainable and that funding will be used appropriately.</p> <p>These accounts help Tourism NI assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The financial health and viability of your organisation. • Your ability to manage funding responsibly. <p>Ensure the accounts are complete and accurate, showing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income and expenditure • Any reserves or retained profits • Liabilities and assets

Section 7: Additionality

What is Additionality?

Additionality refers to the extra impact that Tourism NI funding will deliver beyond what would occur without this support. It is about demonstrating that the funding is not simply replacing existing investment but creating new value and enabling activities that would not otherwise happen.

Tourism NI funding should act as a catalyst for growth and innovation. Applicants must demonstrate how this support will help attract out-of-state visitors and increase economic return. Your response should also show how funding will deliver strategic benefits such as regional and seasonal spread, enhanced media coverage, and long-term legacy.

Why is Additionality important?

Tourism NI funding is designed to enable growth and strategic uplift, not to maintain the status quo. Public investment must show clear added value by enabling outcomes that would not happen otherwise. This is critical for:

- **Driving international tourism impact:** attracting out-of-state visitors, increasing bednights and boosting visitor spend.
- **Strengthening Northern Ireland's destination profile:** positioning the North on the international stage.
- **Supporting long-term development:** building capacity and creating legacy benefits for future years.

These questions help us to understand how Tourism NI funding will provide demonstrable benefits for your event and ensure funding decisions are based on measurable impact and strategic alignment.

Question	Guidance
State the total amount of funding you are requesting from Tourism NI. Ensure this matches the figure provided in your uploaded budget template.	Enter the total amount of funding you are requesting from Tourism NI. This figure must match the amount shown in your budget template. Ensure the request reflects the costs associated with delivering additional value as outlined in your application.
Enter the cost Categories the funding will be payable against. You will be asked to provide evidence post-event that funding was spent on these activities.	<p>List the spend across the specific cost categories you intend to use Tourism NI funding for. These should align with your event growth objectives and the examples provided (e.g. out-of-state marketing, programming and participants, production).</p> <p>Your total across all categories must equal the grant request entered above. You will need to provide evidence post-event that funding was spent on these activities.</p>
Provide evidence that these enhancements would not be achievable without Tourism NI funding. Explain why these specific elements cannot be delivered through existing event revenue, sponsorship or alternative funding routes.	<p>Tourism NI funding must deliver outcomes that would not otherwise occur. This question ensures applicants demonstrate that the proposed enhancements are genuinely dependent on Tourism NI support, not something that could be achieved through existing revenue or sponsorship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain why the enhancements cannot be funded through current income streams, sponsorship or other grants. • Identify any financial or operational constraints preventing delivery without Tourism NI support. • Show that the proposed changes are not part of your standard delivery model. • Be specific about gaps in current funding and why they cannot be bridged. • Focus on the unique role of Tourism NI funding. • Demonstrate that the enhancements are contingent on this support.
Describe the type of uplift Tourism NI funding will enable – whether through enhanced scale, elevated quality, expanded reach or strengthened alignment with Tourism NI priorities. Explain how this represents clear evolution beyond current event delivery,	<p>Tourism NI wants to fund events that evolve beyond their current delivery, whether through scale, quality, reach or strategic alignment. This question helps assess ambition and innovation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the type of uplift Tourism NI funding will enable such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scale: Increased duration, expanded footprint or larger audience capacity ○ Quality: Improved production values, headline acts or enhanced visitor experience. ○ Reach: New markets, extended marketing campaigns, or international partnerships.

Question	Guidance
not maintenance of existing standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include any investment in assets or resources. • Make clear how this represents evolution, not maintenance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use clear examples of what will change and why it matters ○ Highlight any sustainable investments that reduce future costs
Detail the measurable international tourism outcomes this enhancement will achieve. How will it increase international visitor appeal, strengthen Northern Ireland's positioning on the international stage, or reach new international audiences. Provide specific indicators that will demonstrate this impact	<p>Tourism NI funding is aimed at driving international tourism outcomes. This question ensures applicants clearly state how enhancements will increase out-of-state appeal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify specific international tourism outcomes enabled by funding such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase in out-of-state visitors ○ Growth in bednights and visitor spend ○ Improved return on investment and economic impact • Explain how enhancements will attract new international audiences or markets. • Include indicators or targets (e.g. media coverage, marketing reach, partnerships). • Provide realistic, evidence-based projections. • Show clear links between enhancements and international appeal. • Avoid vague aspirations - focus on measurable impact.
How will the improvements funded by Tourism NI contribute to your event's ability to grow and attract international visitors in future years?	<p>Tourism NI wants to invest in events that build capacity and create lasting benefits. This question assesses financial and commercial sustainability and future positioning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how funding will contribute to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Future growth and competitiveness ○ Commercial sustainability benefits (e.g. physical or digital reusable assets, skills development, recurring programming) ○ Capacity building for organisers and partners (e.g. improved systems, expertise or resources) • Highlight how enhancements will position your event as a long-term driver of international tourism. • Include any plans for leveraging assets or partnerships beyond this funding cycle. • Show ambition for future years, not just 2026-27

Section 8: Event Programming and Marketing Activity

This section must clearly set out the marketing activity you will undertake for your event. You are required to demonstrate how your marketing will target international markets and optimise opportunities to grow out-of-state visitors while maximising all appropriate channels.

Question	Guidance
Marketing Plan	<p>You must complete the Marketing Plan template provided in the application form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Download the template, save it locally, complete it, and upload it with your application.• Marketing plans submitted in any other format will not be accepted and will render your application ineligible. <p>Your Marketing Plan should detail all activity aimed at attracting visitors, using all available channels (digital, print, PR, partnerships etc). It must show how you will reach out-of-state audiences and grow your international visitor base.</p>
What steps are you taking to ensure your event programme aligns with Tourism NI's and Tourism Ireland's priority visitor segments and will target international visitors?	<p>Explain the steps you are taking to ensure your event programme aligns with Tourism NI's and Tourism Ireland's priority visitor segments. This should include:</p> <p>Programme design: How specific elements of your programme such as headlines acts, themes, or experiences, are tailored to appeal to these segments.</p> <p>Research and insights: Any audience research, previous evaluations, or market intelligence you have used to inform programming decisions.</p> <p>Targeting international audiences: What are you doing in your marketing strategy to attract out-of-state visitors. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Messaging that resonates with priority segments in international markets.• Partnerships or channels chosen to reach these audiences effectively.• Programme highlights that provide international standout and appeal. <p>Be specific and, where possible, provide examples of programme features and marketing tactics that demonstrate this alignment.</p>
What percentage of your budget will be allocated to out-of-state marketing and why have you chosen the channels listed in your marketing plan?	<p>Indicate the percentage of your overall event budget that will be allocated specifically to out-of-state marketing. This should reflect your commitment to attracting international visitors. Then explain why you have chosen the marketing channels you plan to use. Justify your choices based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audience Insight: How these channels effectively reach your identified international target audiences.• Market Research: Any data or previous evaluations supporting your decision.• Impact Potential: Why these channels will deliver the best return on investment for growing out-of-state visitors.

Question	Guidance
	Be specific and, where possible, link your rationale to measurable outcomes (e.g. reach, engagement, conversion).
<p>What evidence or data have you used to decide which marketing channels to invest in, and why does this data support your funding allocation?</p>	<p>Explain the data or evidence that informed your decision to invest in the proposed marketing channels. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience Insights: Ticketing data, visitor surveys, or demographic analysis showing where your target audiences engage. • Previous Performance: Metrics from past campaigns (e.g. conversion rates, engagement levels) that justify channel selection. • Market Research: Industry benchmarks or third-party reports indicating effectiveness of specific channels for international reach. • Digital Analytics: Website traffic, social media insights, or paid media performance data supporting your approach. <p>Be specific and reference actual figures or trends where possible (e.g. "Previous campaigns on Instagram delivered 40% of international ticket sales" or "Research shows 70% of our target audience uses this platform").</p>
<p>How will you monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of your marketing plan? Describe how you will assess whether your campaign met its objectives in attracting out-of-state visitors.</p>	<p>Describe the methods you will use to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of your marketing plan. Focus on how you will measure whether your campaign achieved its objectives in attracting out-of-state visitors. Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking Tools: Analytics from ticketing systems, website traffic, social media engagement, and paid media performance. • KPIs: Metrics such as reach, impressions, click-through rates, conversions, and geographic breakdown of ticket sales. • Visitor Data: Post-event surveys, postcode analysis, and accommodation data to confirm out-of-state attendance. • Benchmarking: Compare results against targets set in your marketing plan (e.g. % increase in out-of-state visitors, engagement levels). • Reporting: Outline how you will compile and present findings to demonstrate impact and learnings. <p>Be specific and include the tools, data sources, and frequency of measurement (e.g. "Monthly tracking of campaign performance via Google Analytics and ticketing data").</p>

Section 9: Event Delivery, Oversight and Evaluation

This section demonstrates your event's ability to deliver successfully and manage public funding responsibly. Tourism NI needs assurance that your event has strong governance, clear accountability, and systems to monitor progress and manage risks. Strong delivery capability is essential for maintaining confidence in your application and ensuring compliance with funding conditions.

Your responses should:

- Show who is responsible for key decisions and oversight.
- Explain how you plan, coordinate, and manage operations.
- Detail financial governance and accountability measures.
- Highlight contingency planning and risk management.

Question	Guidance
Describe your event's governance structure and management team. Who is responsible for overseeing and monitoring the delivery of the event?	Outline the structure of your organisation and event team. Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key roles and responsibilities (e.g. Event Director, Finance Lead, Operations Manager).• Decision-making hierarchy and reporting lines.• Any committees or boards providing oversight.• Make clear who has ultimate accountability for delivery and compliance.
What administration systems are in place to ensure the smooth running of the event? Include operational planning, stakeholder coordination, and contingency management.	Describe the systems and processes you use to manage the event effectively. Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operational planning: Scheduling tools, project management systems, timelines.• Stakeholder coordination: Communication protocols, regular meetings, partnership agreements.• Contingency management: Risk assessments, emergency plans, backup suppliers. Tip: Highlight any technology or software used (e.g. project management platforms) and reference previous successful implementation if relevant.
Outline your governance and financial management policies and procedures. How do these ensure transparency, accountability, and compliance with funding conditions?	Explain the policies and controls you have in place to manage finances and governance. Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial controls: Budget monitoring, approval processes, segregation of duties.• Governance policies: Compliance with procurement rules, anti-fraud measures, audit procedures.• Reporting: How you track spend and report against Tourism NI funding.• Mention any external audits, board oversight, or adherence to recognised standards (e.g. Northern Ireland Public Procurement Policy).
Budget oversight	Explain the systems and procedures you use to ensure effective financial control from planning through to post-event evaluation. Your response should cover:

Question	Guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Monitoring: How you track actual spend against the approved budget (e.g. monthly reviews, financial dashboards, or accounting software). • Variance Management: Processes for identifying and addressing overspends or underspends, including escalation and approval protocols. • Reporting: How you will report on Tourism NI funding specifically. Detail the frequency, format, and evidence you will provide (e.g. invoices, reconciliations). • Mention any internal controls such as dual sign-off for payments, segregation of duties, or oversight by a finance committee. • Highlight any external audits or compliance checks that strengthen accountability. • If you use recognised standards or procurement policies (e.g. NI Public Procurement Policy), include this for credibility.
How will you monitor progress against your event objectives?	<p>Explain the processes you will use to track progress throughout planning and delivery. Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Monitoring: How you will measure progress against objectives (e.g. visitor numbers, marketing reach, financial targets). • Tools and Systems: Project management tools, dashboards, or reporting templates. • Frequency: How often you will review progress (weekly, monthly). • Responsibility: Who is accountable for monitoring and reporting.
Describe how you will gather data on an ongoing basis (e.g. visitor feedback, media reach, economic indicators).	<p>Outline the data collection methods you will use during the event lifecycle. Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor Feedback: Surveys, interviews, digital feedback tools. • Marketing Metrics: Social media engagement, website analytics, campaign performance. • Economic Indicators: Ticket sales, accommodation data, spend tracking. • Operational Data: Attendance counts, capacity monitoring.
How will you conduct a post-event evaluation? What methods will you use to assess success, impact and legacy?	<p>Describe your approach to evaluating the event after delivery. Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation Framework: How you will measure success against objectives and KPIs. • Methods: Post-event surveys, economic impact analysis, media coverage reports. • Legacy Assessment: How you will capture long-term benefits (e.g. skills development, repeat visitation, partnerships). • Reporting: How findings will be compiled and shared with Tourism NI. Tip: Mention any independent evaluation or benchmarking against industry standards for added credibility.

Section 10: Accessibility

People with accessibility needs often face challenges when planning trips because information about accessible facilities and services is not always easy to find. This applies not only to wheelchair users but also to people who are deaf or have hearing loss, those with sensory or cognitive impairments, older visitors, families with young children, and others.

To help address this, you must complete an Accessibility Questionnaire for your event. This questionnaire has been developed by VisitBritain and VisitEngland, based on extensive research into accessible and inclusive tourism, and Tourism NI has adopted this approach.

The questionnaire is designed to help you identify the key accessibility features at your venue or event location. These features have been highlighted through robust consumer research as the most important factors influencing trip decisions and increasing bookings and visits.

How to complete the questionnaire:

- Download the Accessibility Questionnaire template provided in the application form.
- Save it locally, complete all sections, and upload it with your application.

Section 11: Environmental Sustainability

Environmental change is a major challenge for the events sector. Organisers are expected to deliver events that are sustainable and environmentally responsible, and to take proactive steps to reduce negative impacts. As an applicant, you must:

- **Identify** the potential environmental impacts of your event.
- **Explain** the mitigation measures you will implement to minimise these impacts.
- **Show** how your event supports Northern Ireland's sustainability ambitions and makes a positive contribution.

Question	Guidance
Do you currently hold any sustainability accreditation?	Indicate whether your event or organisation holds any formal sustainability accreditation. Examples include ISO 20121 (Sustainable Event Management), Green Tourism, or other recognised certifications. If you do not hold any accreditation, simply state "No" or "Not currently." If you are in the process of obtaining accreditation, mention this and provide details in the next question.
If YES, what accreditation do you hold and what organisation(s) are you accredited with?	Provide the full name of the accreditation, the accrediting body, date of accreditation and certification level if applicable (e.g. bronze, silver, gold). If you hold multiple accreditations, list each one clearly. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accreditation: ISO 20121• Accrediting Organisation: International Organisation for Standardisation.• Date: January 2025
Detail the sustainability measures that are in place for the event that	Provide a clear description of the specific actions and practices your event has implemented to meet the requirements of your sustainability accreditation. Include:

Question	Guidance
<p>led you to achieve this accreditation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational Measures: Waste reduction strategies, recycling systems, energy efficiency initiatives. • Supply Chain: Use of local suppliers, sustainable sourcing of materials, low-carbon transport options. • Venue and Infrastructure: Measures such as water conservation, renewable energy use, or eco-friendly materials. • Visitor Engagement: Initiatives to encourage sustainable behaviour among attendees (e.g. reusable cups, public transport incentives). • Monitoring and Reporting: How you track and verify compliance with accreditation standards. <p>Be specific - avoid generic statements like “we recycle.” Instead, detail the scale and impact of your measures.</p> <p>If your accreditation required audits or assessments, mention these.</p>
<p>If NO, are you currently seeking to achieve any sustainability accreditation?</p>	<p>If you do not currently hold sustainability accreditation but are working towards one, provide details of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation Target: Name the accreditation you are aiming for (e.g. ISO 20121, Green Tourism). • Accrediting Body: Identify the organisation that issues the accreditation. • Current Status: Explain what stage you are at (e.g. initial application, audit scheduled, implementing required measures). • Actions Taken: Outline steps already completed, such as policy development, staff training, or operational changes. • Timeline: Indicate when you expect to achieve accreditation. <p>Tip:</p> <p>Be realistic and specific. Avoid vague statements like “we plan to get accredited.”</p> <p>If you have supporting documentation (e.g. confirmation of application or audit date), mention this for credibility.</p>

Section 12: Social Impacts

This section provides an opportunity to outline how your event contributes to local communities, beyond economic benefits. Tourism NI wants to understand the social value your event creates - through employment, volunteering, skills development, and community engagement. Strong social impact demonstrates inclusivity, supports local capacity building, and enhances civic pride.

In this section, outline the measures your event will take to create a positive impact on local communities. Examples include temporary job creation (full-time or part-time), training programmes, diversity and inclusion initiatives, and engagement with hard-to-reach socio-demographic groups.

Social impact is a vital requirement of the scheme. You must clearly explain the opportunities your event will bring and how these will deliver social benefits.

Question	Guidance
Outline the number of people your event employs.	<p>Complete the table to provide accurate figures for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-Time Employees • Part-Time Employees • Volunteers • Contractors <p>Use confirmed staffing plans or previous event data for estimates.</p> <p>Include only roles directly related to event delivery (not year-round organisational staff unless they work on the event).</p>
Demonstrate the social impacts and benefits your event brings to the area in which it is being held.	<p>Describe how your event creates positive social outcomes. Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Opportunities: Temporary jobs for local residents. • Volunteering: Roles that provide skills and experience. • Community Engagement: Partnerships with local groups, schools, or charities. • Skills Development: Training for staff or volunteers. • Inclusivity: Initiatives that make the event accessible and welcoming to diverse audiences. • Civic Pride: How the event enhances the reputation and vibrancy of the host area. <p>Use examples and, where possible, quantify impacts (e.g. number of volunteers, hours contributed).</p> <p>Highlight any legacy benefits such as ongoing skills or community partnerships.</p>

Section 13: Declaration

This section confirms that you understand and agree to the terms and conditions of the International Tourism Events Fund. It ensures compliance with legal, financial, and governance requirements and protects both the applicant and Tourism NI. By completing this section, you certify that all information provided is accurate and that your event will adhere to relevant legislation and funding conditions.

Read all statements carefully before confirming your declaration.

By signing, you confirm:

- You have read and understood these Guidelines for Applicants and the scheme criteria.
- You agree to comply with all statutory requirements, equality and accessibility obligations, and good governance practices.
- You will provide any requested documentation (e.g. financial statements, HMRC compliance, insurance certificates).
- You accept that Tourism NI may share your proposal with external consultants for appraisal and may request additional information.
- You acknowledge that funding is conditional and only confirmed when a Letter of Offer is issued and accepted.

Important: False statements can result in prosecution.

Your declaration also confirms adherence to relevant public health guidance and acknowledges that failure to comply may result in withdrawal or reduction of funding.

Complete the declaration by typing your name and ticking the confirmation box in the application form.

Thank you for taking the time to review these guidelines. We look forward to receiving your application and learning more about your event. Your commitment to delivering exceptional experiences and attracting international visitors is vital to the North's success as a global destination.

10 TOURISM NI CONTACT DETAILS

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