

Iowa Meeting and Event Incentive Program  
APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

**Overview**

The Meet in Iowa Meeting and Event Incentive Program was created to attract, retain, and expand in-person overnight events, as well as incentivize groups to experience local tourism attractions.

Eligible events include business meetings, conventions, exhibitions, trade shows, sporting events, festivals, concert series and more. Events must generate overnight stays, meet population-based budget minimums and take place in Iowa between May 1, 2022 and December 31, 2022. New and currently booked events may qualify for pre-approved incentive reimbursement amounts up to \$25,000.

**Application Instructions**

An online application for the Meeting and Event Incentive ***must be received and approved before*** an event or meeting takes place.

The application must be submitted no later than ***30 days before*** the meeting has occurred with the following exception: Applications for events and meetings occurring between May 1, 2022 – June 1, 2022 may have the 30-day requirement waived at the discretion of the Program Administrator. However, those waived from the 30-day requirement ***must still provide all required documentation prior to the event*** for pre-approval review.

Applications will be processed for pre-approval on a first-come, first-serve basis. There is a finite amount of money to be distributed. When these funds are depleted, applications will no longer be accepted or approved.

**STEP ONE: DETERMINE ELIBILITY**

Incentive applications will be reviewed and awarded based on eligibility and availability of funding.

- The event must take place in Iowa between **May 1, 2022 and December 31, 2022**.
- The event or meeting must either be a **NEW Iowa meeting or event** contracted on or after May 1, 2022 **OR**,
- Be an already booked meeting or event taking place in Iowa during the specified time frame that **adds a pre- or post-event tourism opportunity**.
  - In order to qualify for the incentive program on an existing event, the added tourism opportunity must have a projected 33% addition in overnight stays. These nights are in addition to the already met minimum overnight stay requirement. To determine the additional number of room nights, use the following formula:  

$$\text{(Total room nights associated with event} \div \text{Total days of event)} \times .33 =$$
 Example: (25 total room nights associated with the event  $\div$  2 total days of event)  $\times$  .33 = 4 additional room nights (round to the nearest whole number)

- The applicant must be the **primary organizer** (event host or event/meeting planner) responsible for organizing the event and incurring the eligible expenses. Individuals may apply on behalf of multiple events, however incentives are issued only to the primary organizer.
- Events taking place in **rural** communities (less than 10,000 population based on the 2020 US Census) must have a total budget of at least \$2,500 **AND** generate at least 10 overnight room nights which collect state hotel/motel tax in a lodging establishment with at least 10 guest rooms.
- Events taking place in **urban** communities (greater than 10,000 population based on the 2020 US Census) must have a total budget of at least \$10,000 **AND** generate at least 25 overnight room nights which collect state hotel/motel tax in a lodging establishment with at least 25 guest rooms.
- Overnight stays connected to eligible events must take place in a property that has achieved certification with **Iowa's Human Trafficking Prevention training**.
- An event is eligible for a cash incentive only **once** per year.
- Application must be submitted at least **30 days before the event** to guarantee review.
- Recipients of the Tourism Marketing Grant, Regional Sports Authority District, or Sports Tourism Grant are **not eligible** for this program.

## STEP TWO: CREATE AN ACCOUNT

Log in to the [Application Portal](#) or create a new account. Steps to create a new account:

- Open the Application Portal
- Complete new account registration form (accounts are registered to individuals. Not companies.)
- Login using the new account you just created
- Individuals may apply on behalf of multiple events, however only one application may be submitted per meeting or event.
- Individuals may save and come back to an open application.

## STEP THREE: GATHER ALL APPLICATION MATERIALS

All supporting materials must be uploaded into the Application Portal. No hard copies of the application or supporting materials will be accepted. You will be required to download and complete the [Hard Cost Incentive Calculator](#) and then submit the forms, as well as an RFP, supporting documentation and a permit, if applicable, as a part of your application materials. Label files in the following format: **Applicant Organization Name\_Name of Attachment**.

1. A **detailed budget** for the entire event to demonstrate the economic impact.
2. [Hard Cost Incentive Calculator](#). All applications must include a budget outlining the eligible hard costs for the event.

- **NOTE:** Budget may include line items that do and do not qualify for incentive to ensure you meet qualification minimums. Line items that do not qualify for incentive include but are not limited to hotel room rentals and alcohol.
- 3. **Request For Proposal (RFP):** An RFP for the event or meeting requesting the incentive. If you do not have an RFP, please upload event details, schedule, needs, and/or budget.
- 4. **Supporting Documentation:** All applications must include documentation to support the eligible hard costs for the meeting as well as the paid overnight room nights. Include proposal or contracts for **all** line items listed in the Eligible Hard Cost Incentive Calculator, including
  - Event venue proposal or a final contract
  - Host hotel(s) proposal or final contract (if different than above)
  - Host hotel(s) room block agreement (with Total Number of Room Nights reserved. Total number must meet the minimum required for the Incentive Program or the event will not qualify for incentive)
  - Proposals or finalized contracts for other line items listed in the Eligible Hard Cost Incentive Calculator is required
- 5. **Permit:** If an event is on public property, please include a permit or letter of support from the host community.

#### **STEP FOUR: COMPLETE ONLINE APPLICATION**

Start a new application at [www.meetinia.com](http://www.meetinia.com). The application can be found under the Application Portal tab. It is extremely important that your application is complete and includes the required supplemental materials before submission. Once an application is submitted, reviewed and a potential incentive amount determined, you may not further revise or resubmit another application for the same event. Note: Hard copies of application and materials will not be accepted.

Prepare your application materials by reviewing the [Meeting and Event Application Questions](#) which includes all application information.

#### **STEP FIVE: PRE-APPROVAL NOTIFICATION**

Applicants will receive an email notification within 14 days of submission stating approval status and, if approved, a pre-determined maximum potential incentive amount. Qualified incentives must be at least \$500, but cannot exceed \$25,000. The pre-approved maximum potential amount is not a guarantee of the final incentive. The final incentive will not exceed the pre-approved maximum potential amount. Award amounts are final action and are not adjusted.

#### **STEP SIX: HOST YOUR EVENT**

Host your Iowa event within the allowed timeframe. Ensure it meets the overnight stay and other requirements. Fulfill payment obligations, as receipts are required to receive incentive funds.

#### **STEP SEVEN: SUBMIT EVENT FINAL REPORT**

Login to your Application Portal account within 30 days of the final day of your meeting or event to submit a final expense report, receipts and a verification of hotel room nights. Note: Those who do not

complete the final report steps within 30 days of the final day of your event risk receiving none, or only partial payment of the pre-approved incentive funds.

Pre-approved meetings and events must submit all of the following materials to receive an incentive:

- **Customized Pre-Approval Incentive Calculation** with the final, actual expenses of Eligible Hard Costs listed. Final incentive amount will be based on actual costs incurred and will not exceed the pre-approval calculation. Award amounts are final action and are not adjusted.
- **Room Night Verification** – Finalized hotel room night pick-up report(s) or [written verification](#) from the meeting property/properties listing the total room pick-up associated with the specified meeting or event. ***If your event does not meet the minimum overnight stay requirements, the incentive will be forfeited.***
- **Invoices** for all eligible hard cost expenses listed
- **Proof of payment** for all eligible hard costs listed. Acceptable examples of proof of payment include:
  - Receipts or,
  - Invoice or bill showing the amount has been paid or that no remaining balance exists
 Plus either:
  - Copy of bank or credit card statement
  - Copy of canceled check (front and back) that corresponds with the check number used for payment

### **STEP EIGHT: RECEIVE INCENTIVE**

Checks are issued to qualified applicants as a reimbursement post-event, after proof of payment has been submitted. All Meet In Iowa funding decisions are final.

- You will receive an e-mail confirming your final incentive award.
- A check will be issued to the applicant by the Iowa Economic Development Authority and Iowa Tourism Office.

### **Questions**

If you have any questions, please contact the program administrator at the Iowa Restaurant Association/Iowa Hotel & Lodging Association at 515-276-1454 or [info@meetinia.com](mailto:info@meetinia.com).