



FY2026 Unmistakable Events Grant Program

WORLD CUP 2026!

Web page: <http://lawrenceks.org/lprd/tgt-grants>



City of Lawrence Unmistakable Identity Statement:

Lawrence is a welcoming community, synonymous with arts, diverse culture, fun, and a quintessential downtown. City parks and community events contribute to the vibrancy experienced by all people in Lawrence.

GOALS

The Unmistakable Events (UE) Grant Program will provide funding for specific events that meet the following goals aligned with our [Strategic Plan](#) and [Key Progress Indicators](#):

- **Economic Impact:** Demonstrate a measurable economic benefit by enhancing the cultural economy or travel/tourism economy, including the generation of additional transient guest tax and sales tax revenue.
- **Strengthening Lawrence's Unmistakable Identity:** Enhance Lawrence's unmistakable identity as a welcoming community known for arts, culture, and vibrant events. Events should showcase Lawrence's reputation as a hub for regional visitors and contribute to the community's diverse and inclusive atmosphere.
- **Community Engagement, Inclusion and Cultural Impact:** Foster community engagement, with a focus on inclusivity, by hosting events that resonate with diverse audiences, including black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) residents. Events should strive to increase the percentage of residents who feel their culture is celebrated in the community.
- **Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship:** Promote events and programs that celebrate and enhance and increase awareness about environmental sustainability, contributing to Lawrence's long-term environmental goals.

The UE Grant program will have one funding cycle per calendar year, with applications being accepted in the fall of the year preceding the funding year. An ad hoc committee will review the applications and make recommendations for funding to the City Commission for final approval.

GUIDELINES

A scoring matrix aligned with the program's goals and the Unmistakable Identity outcomes of the Strategic Plan will be used to evaluate applications.

- **Eligibility:** State registered for-profit and non-profit businesses may submit one grant request for events held throughout the year in Lawrence, Kansas. Grants start at \$600 and are limited to \$15,000 per event.
- **Local Focus:** Only events that are held within the city limits are eligible for grant funds. Events should strive to become self-sustaining over time, although the city retains the discretion to fund events that align with the grant program goals.
- **Focus on Marketing and Promotion:** Funding can be used for overall event support, with a particular emphasis on marketing and promotional efforts. This could include advertising (print, social media, digital, radio, television), printing (flyers, posters, banners), video production, email marketing, web design, and graphic design services.
- **Impact on Tourism:** Events expected to generate overnight stays, especially during non-peak times (December through March and weekdays, Monday through Thursday night), are particularly desirable. Benefit scoring will reflect the potential for generating transient guest tax during off-peak periods.

- **In-Kind and Cash Support:** Applications should note the value of in-kind services or cash support from other organizations, with required letters of commitment included as confirmation.
- **Post-Event Reporting:** Recipients of grant funds must sign an agreement with the city, including a requirement to submit post-event reports within one month of the event. Reports must include a summary, participant data, and details on the use of city funding. Failure to submit a report may disqualify the organization from future funding opportunities.
- **Recognition:** Events receiving funding must include the City of Lawrence and the Unmistakably Lawrence logos on sponsorship materials and acknowledge the city's support. City logos can be obtained from www.lawrenceks.org/identity, and the Unmistakably Lawrence logos can be obtained by contacting Allison Calvin of eXplore Lawrence at allison@explorelawrence.com.

PLEASE NOTE - Increased Equity for the City's Two Grant Programs

The City administers two annual grant programs which are both funded by Transient Guest Tax funds (TGT). These are the Unmistakable Events Grant Program, which supports public events, and the Cultural Arts Commission's Community Arts Grant Program, which is dedicated to arts and culture projects, programs and initiatives.

- To increase grant equitability, each applying agency can only receive one grant. This can be either from the **Unmistakable Events Grant Program** or the **Community Arts Grant Program**, but not both.
- However, if two separate non-profits are collaborating on the same event, each organization may apply for its own grant. For example, if the XYZ event receives an Unmistakable Events Grant, the ABC Arts Program (a separate nonprofit partnering on the same event) could still receive support through the Community Arts Grant Program. This approach encourages collaboration among local event organizers and arts agencies, creating more opportunities for everyone.
- Plus, the application timelines for these grant programs are organized so that applicants will know if they will receive an Unmistakable Events Grant before the deadline for the Community Arts Grant Program. This makes it easier to plan and helps provide a fair chance to receive funding.

After all applications are received, the review committee will begin the review process. Applications will be posted on the city's website, and review committee meetings are open to the public.

PROCESS

The online grant application and program information can be found online [here](#).

TIMELINE for FY2026 Grant Program

- October 3 – November 10, 2025 – Application period for FY2026 event grants
 - Application deadline: November 10, 2025, by 11 p.m.
- Thursday, October 16 (2 to 3 p.m.) and Friday, October 24 (2 to 3 p.m.) – Informational meetings for grant applicants – Virtual and recorded on YouTube
- Friday, November 14 (1-3 p.m.) – Ad hoc committee meets to review scores and make recommendations – Parks and Recreation Administration office in South Park, 1141 Massachusetts St. – Hybrid public meeting
- Tuesday, December 2, 2025 – City Commission reviews Unmistakable Events Grant Program funding recommendations for approval at City Commission meeting

For more information: Please contact Porter Arneill, Assistant Parks, Recreation and Culture Director - (785) 832-3449, parneill@lawrenceks.org

The deadline for FY2026 TGT Grant applications is November 14, 2025, by 11:00 p.m.

Applications will be accepted online at www.lawrenceks.org/lprd/tgt-grants.