

## Application for Swansboro Tourism Promotion Fund Assistance

The Swansboro Tourism Development Authority (STDA) is interested in assisting new events that bring revenue and overnight stays to strengthen and build Swansboro as a destination. While the STDA will carefully review every grant application each year, we strongly recommend that each applicant's goal should be to becoming self-sustaining.

### Section 1. Applicant Information & Summary

Full Legal Name of Applicant Organization:

Seaside Arts Council

Name of Event, Activity or Project to be Funded\*

SwanFest

Is Applicant a 501c3? \*

☒ Yes

☐ No

Is Applicant Tax Exempt?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Application Contact Person\*

Cassandra Nicholas

Title\*

Seaside Arts Council Secretary

PO Box 431, Swansboro NC 28584

Mailing Address

City

Swansboro

State \*

NC

Zip Code

28584

Primary Phone

(252)369-2442 (Cassandra, Secretary)

Alternate Phone

(732)864-7045 (Sierra, Vice President)

Email Address

cassandrajnicholas@gmail.com

Date or Dates of Activity or Project \*

05/25/2025 — 08/31/2025

Amount Requested \*

\$2,000.00

### Notes

Organization refers to the applicant or operating entity and the terms may be interchangeably used.

Activity is used to reflect a program, project, activity, festival, or event for which funding is being sought. The applicant may use any word that adequately describes their activity.

Dates: Because this application covers a time longer than one year, if your event occurs during July-August, please note whether it is schedule to occur twice and if so, please list the dates for both if available.

An attachment may be provided in lieu of using the space provided in the application. The attachment must reference the specific section being referenced, be in order behind the signature page and the section being answered in the attachment should be marked to indicate an attachment has been provided.

Only this application and approved attachments should be included in the submission.

### Section 2. Organization Information

What is the purpose of the Organization?

The Mission of the Seaside Arts Council shall be to promote, advance and provide performing arts arts opportunities, appreciation and education for residents of and visitors to the Swansboro and Western Carteret County Area.

Please limit to 3 lines of text

Number of years organization has been in business

13 yrs

Number of years organization has operated as IRS tax exempt

12 yrs

Does the Organization have a Board of Directors?

Describe the leadership of the Organization and how it relates to the activity. If a nonprofit such as a 501(c)3, describe the makeup of the Board of Directors and how the activity is administered. If another type of organization, describe the leadership of the activity and what if any, oversight others may have over that leadership.\*

The volunteer officers of Seaside Arts include the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. The President chairs the overarching SwanFest committee. The Vice President is the chair of the SwanFest Private Sponsorship sub-committee. The Treasurer chairs the SwanFest Logistics sub-committee. The Secretary chairs the SwanFest Public/Grant Funding sub-committee. Each committee or sub-committee includes additional volunteer members of Seaside Arts Council. Please limit to 4 lines

### Section 3. Disclosure of Potential Conflict of Interest

Are any of the Board Members, employees, or staff of the organization that will be carrying out this activity, or members of their immediate families or their business associates:

Employees of the Town of Swansboro or related to an employee of the Town of Swansboro \*

☐ Yes

☒ No

Members or related to members of Swansboro Tourism Development Authority?

☐ Yes

☒ No

Potential beneficiaries of the activity for which funds are requested?

☐ Yes

☒ No

Paid providers of goods or services to the activity or having other financial interest in the activity?

☐ Yes

☒ No

### Section 4. Organization Administrators

Chief Executive Officer

Cyndi Stephenson-Gibbs, President

Phone

(910)381-9026

Email

cstephensongibbs@gmail.com

Note if any

Chief Financial Officer

Martha Oyan, Treasurer

Phone

(540)460-4630

Email

marthaoyan@gmail.com

Note if any

Other Administrator

Sierra Meisenbacher

Title

Vice President

Phone

(732)864-7045

Email

Note if any

### Section 5. Activity Administrators, if different

Primary Responsible Person

Phone

Alternate Phone

Email

Note if any

Chief Financial Contact for matters related to this activity

Phone

Email

Note if any

Any Other Administrator responsible for this activity

Title

Phone

Email

Note if any

#### Section 6. Nature of the Activity

What is the purpose of the activity?

SwanFest is a well-known free summer concert series held annually in downtown Swansboro for visitors and community members alike to enjoy.

Is this a fundraiser for the organization?

☐ Yes

☒ No

This does not disqualify the activity for funding

Is admission or a fee charged?

☐ Yes

☒ No

What is the target audience for the event?

Residents of and visitors to the Swansboro area of all ages and demographics. Must enjoy good music.

#### Section 7. Organizational Capacity

Briefly describe the competency of the organization and staff to perform this activity and to provide responsible management. Has this organization or staff members been in direct leadership of this event or similar events before? If this activity has occurred in the last two years, please briefly summarize any organizational leadership changes as well as lessons learned/challenges from the event in those years and what the organization and/or staff intends to do differently to improve the activity in previous years.

SwanFest 2025 marks the 16th year that Seaside Arts Council has produced this cherished tradition in Onslow County, described in more detail in Section 8. Our officers have changed since last year's SwanFest. Our previous president and vice president are both still involved with Seaside Arts Council and SwanFest. The previous secretary was elected president, a member for more than two years was elected secretary, and a newer member with stellar tech skills and an even better attitude was elected vice president. There have been numerous shifts in Seaside Arts Council's leadership in SwanFest's 16 year history and SwanFest has improved every year. Prior leadership has provided a solid roadmap and excellent resources. Two improvements this year based on community feedback are to adjust the benefits available to sponsors to better suit the sponsors and to more heavily weight direct community input (on social media) regarding the lineup of bands for SwanFest 2025.

#### Section 8. Activity Information

Simply and clearly explain and describe the activity in sufficient detail so that the Authority knows what is to occur. Attach additional sheets, if necessary, but a concise narrative is highly desired. Report any contingency plans if the activity is weather dependent. Please attach and label as "Activity Information" and this section number.

SwanFest is a beloved, free summer concert series held annually in downtown Swansboro. Since its inception, it has become a cultural cornerstone, bringing live music to the community while fostering and showcasing local talent. SwanFest 2025 marks the 16th year of this cherished tradition, and its success remains dependent on the efforts of the all-volunteer Seaside Arts Council (SAC) and the support of funding and sponsorship initiatives. The 2025 and 2026 series aim to follow the established tradition of presenting live music every Sunday from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Last year's series featured 15 weekly concerts, with each performance attracting an average of 300 attendees. SwanFest 2025 aims to expand on this success, enhancing the audience experience with diverse musical programming and broader outreach efforts.

#### Section 9. Activity Timeline Detail

Provide a Detailed timeline for the activity. Provide information on any organizational meetings, planning meetings or key milestones. Give specific information about when sponsor solicitation would occur, when promotion would begin, when funding might be needed from the Authority if approved and any contingency plans if the activity is weather dependent. If this event has occurred last year and was funded by the STDA please attached the actual detailed timeline from that activity. The Authority is interested in evaluating when expenditures would need to be made, the time needed for lead-up expenditures to the event, and whether marketing is a blast type activity or something more institutional.

Date	Action/Event
2/6/25	SAC meeting.
3/6/25	SAC meeting. Propose SwanFest 2025 schedule and budget to full membership for approval.
3/11/25	SwanFest subcommittee meeting to choose bands.
3/31/25	Sponsor applications due.
3/6/25-4/3/25	Choose potential bands and reach out to them re: availability. Apply for Swansboro permit – due 45 days before event. Begin advertising, continue through August.
4/3/25	SAC meeting. Determine whether and what merchandise, if any, will be sold at SwanFest 2025.
4/3/25-5/1/25	Determine and plan for SwanFest 2025 logistics. Create and distribute marketing materials. Order merchandise. Purchase insurance. Get signed contracts and W9s from bands.
5/1/25	SAC meeting. Determine volunteer needs for SwanFest 2025.
5/1/25-5/25/25	Finalize all SwanFest 2025 details.
5/25/25-8/31/25	SwanFest 2025 concert dates on Sundays, weather permitting. Typically two of 15 concerts are canceled due to weather.

# Section 10. Promotional & Marketing Activity

If the Activity has occurred in the past, describe the promotional or marketing activity that has been used. If the Activity has not yet occurred, describe the promotional activity that the organization seeks to have for the Activity.

- Swansboro Tourism Development Authority Downtown Merchants & Restaurants Guide, spring edition.
- Rack cards at regional businesses and in the folders provided to guests by Emerald Isle Realty.
- A SwanFest series in the Tideland News with a monthly article introducing and interviewing one of that month's SwanFest bands in advance of their SwanFest performance.
- Social media posts and the Seaside Arts Council website.
- Advertising by our sponsors.
- The SwanFest concerts! The best advertising is a good, well-attended concert. Anyone visiting Swansboro on a Sunday is sure to notice it!

## Section 11. Summary of sources and amounts of funding for the activity for the past five years

If your activity does not have a past history, then only include the budget numbers for current FY.

What constitutes your fiscal year?

January 1 — December 31

State 5 years previous

\$0.00  
Actual

State 4 years previous

\$0.00  
Actual

State 3 years previous

\$0.00  
Actual

State 2 years previous

\$0.00  
Actual

State 1-year previous

\$0.00  
Estimated

State Current

\$0.00  
Budget

County 5 years previous

\$0.00  
Actual

County 4 years previous

\$0.00  
Actual

County 3 years previous

\$0.00  
Actual

County 2 years previous

\$0.00  
Actual

County 1-year previous

\$0.00  
Estimated

County Current

\$3,000.00  
Budget

Authority 5 years previous

\$0.00  
Actual

Authority 4 years previous

\$3,250.00  
Actual

Authority 3 years previous

\$0.00  
Actual

Authority 2 years previous

\$0.00  
Actual

Authority 1-year previous

\$0.00  
Estimated

Authority Current

\$2,000.00  
Budget

Other 5 years previous

\$6,500.00  
Actual

Other 4 years previous

\$3,250.00  
Actual

Other 3 years previous

\$6,500.00  
Actual

Other 2 years previous

\$6,500.00  
Actual

Other 1 year previous

\$6,500.00  
Estimated

Other Current

\$6,500.00  
Budget

\*\*Town of Swansboro funding

Activity 5 years previous

Actual

Activity 4 years previous

Actual

Activity 3 years previous

Actual

Activity 2 years previous

Actual

Activity 1-year previous

\$19,000  
Estimated

Activity Current

\$22,100  
Budget

\*\*All other funding from sponsors, donations, tshirt sales

Total 5 years previous

Actual

Total 4 years previous

Actual

Total 3 years previous

Actual

Total 2 years previous

Actual

Total 1-year previous

Total Current

\$25,500.00

\$33,600.00

Estimated

Budget

## Narrative

Describe any other funding being sought for current year from other entities including whether an application is being made to Onslow County Tourism:  
We are seeking \$6,500 from the Town of Swansboro and \$3,000.00 from Onslow County under the nonprofit category, not under the tourism category.

## Section 12. Summary of expenditures for the activity for the past five years.

If your activity does not have a past history, then only include the budget numbers for current FY. These are broad categories and rounded estimates of expenditures can be used for each of the categories.

What constitutes your fiscal year?

January 1 — December 31

5 years previous Salaries &amp; Benefits

4 years previous Salaries &amp; Benefits

3 years previous Salaries &amp; Benefits

2 years previous Salaries &amp; Benefits

\$0.00  
Actual

\$0.00  
Actual

\$0.00  
Actual

\$0.00  
Actual

1-year previous Salaries &amp; Benefits

Current Salaries &amp; Benefits

\$0.00  
Estimated

\$0.00  
Budget

5 years previous Promotion, Media, or Advertisements

4 years previous Promotion, Media, or Advertisements

3 years previous Promotion, Media, or Advertisements

2 years previous Promotion, Media, or Advertisements

Actual

Actual

Actual

Actual

1-year previous Promotion, Media, or Advertisements

Current Promotion, Media, or Advertisements

\$320.00  
Estimated

\$500.00  
Budget

5 years previous Awards, Music, Performers, Art

4 years previous Awards, Music, Performers, Art

3 years previous Awards, Music, Performers, Art

2 years previous Awards, Music, Performers, Art

Actual

Actual

Actual

Actual

1-year previous Awards, Music, Performers, Art

Current Awards, Music, Performers, Art

\$18,100.00  
Estimated

\$22,500.00  
Budget

5 years previous Payments for lodging

4 years previous Payments for lodging

3 years previous Payments for lodging

2 years previous Payments for lodging

\$0.00  
Actual

\$0.00  
Actual

\$0.00  
Actual

\$0.00  
Actual

1 year previous Payments for lodging

Current Payments for lodging

\$0.00  
Estimated

\$0.00  
Budget

5 years previous Any Other Expenses

4 years previous Any Other Expenses

3 years previous Any Other Expenses

2 years previous Any Other Expenses

Actual

Actual

Actual

Actual

1 year previous Any Other Expenses  
\$10,600.00  
Estimated

Current Any Other Expenses  
\$10,600.00  
Budget

5 years previous Total

Actual

4 years previous Total

Actual

3 years previous Total

Actual

2 years previous Total

Actual

1-year previous Total

\$29,020.00  
Estimated

Current Total

\$33,600.00  
Budget

Narrative: Describe any other funding provided and give information that would help the Authority have a more complete understanding of this information.

There was a deficit for 2024 which is one reason we are seeking additional funding sources for SwanFest 2025.

### Section 13. Activity Budget Detail

Provide a Detailed budget for the activity. Provide income, expenditures, and anticipated revenue (including how you would spend Authority Funds). For administrative grant provide total operating budget for the organization. An attachment such as a printout from a spreadsheet or the spreadsheet file is preferable.

AMOUNT	EXPENSE DESCRIPTION	Income	AMOUNT	INCOME DESCRIPTION
\$22,500.00	15 bands for SwanFest concerts 5/25/25-8/31/25, \$1,500 each.	\$18,000.00		Business sponsorships
\$7,500.00	Sound support for 15 SwanFest concerts 5/25/25-8/31/25, \$500 each.	\$6,500.00		Town of Swansboro nonprofit funding
\$500.00	Advertising including banners (schedule and sponsors) and rack cards.	\$3,000.00		Onslow County nonprofit funding
\$1,000.00	Event insurance.	\$2,000.00		Swansboro Tourism Development Authority nonprofit funding
\$2,100.00	Security and police presence.	\$4,100.00		Individual private donations
\$33,600.00	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$33,600.00		TOTAL INCOME

Please attach and label as "Detailed Budget" and this section number.

### Section 14. Tourism Related Impacts

Please answer as completely as possible, but if you do not know, or it is undetermined, please state so. Unless otherwise stated, questions refer to the FY16 Activity as proposed.

Is the Activity an annual event or do you hope that it will be?

☒ Annual (it has occurred twice)

☐ Hoped to be Annual

☐ One Time Activity

If checked, do you plan to become self-sustaining

☐ Yes ☐ No

If this event has occurred in the last two years, list the actual numbers next to estimated numbers for the activity under the previous two fiscal years\*.

\*If funded by the TDA, this number should match your after-action report, or the report should be amended.

2 years previous Estimated Total  
Participants

Actual

1-year previous Estimated Total  
Participants

4,500 (300 people X 15 events)  
Actual

Current Estimated Total Participants

6,000 (400 people X 15 events)  
Estimated

2 years previous Estimated Participants who  
travel more than 100 miles

Actual

1-year previous Estimated Participants who  
travel more than 100 miles

150 (10 people X 15 events)  
Actual

Current Estimated Participants who travel  
more than 100 miles

150 (10 people X 15 events)  
Estimated

2 years previous Estimated Overnight Stays for  
this Activity

Actual

1-year previous Estimated Overnight Stays for  
this Activity

75 (5 people X 15 events)  
Actual

Current Estimated Overnight Stays for this Activity

75 (5 people X 15 events)  
Estimated

2 years previous Organizational Paid Employees  
assigned to this Activity

Actual

1-year previous Organizational Paid Employees  
assigned to this Activity

0  
Actual

Current Organizational Paid Employees assigned to  
this Activity

0  
Estimated

2 years previous Paid persons as a result of this Activity (Not ordinarily on payroll, hired only for this Activity)

Actual

1-year previous Paid persons as a result of this Activity (Not ordinarily on payroll, hired only for this Activity)

Actual 50

Current Paid persons as a result of this Activity (Not ordinarily on payroll, hired only for this Activity)

Estimated 50

2 years previous Estimated volunteers to be involved in this Activity

Actual

1-year previous Estimated volunteers to be involved in this Activity

Actual 20

Current Estimated volunteers to be involved in this Activity

Estimated 20

2 years previous Estimated Value of Overnight Stays from Previous Activity\*

\$7500

\*If funded by the TDA, this number should match your after-action report, or the report should be amended.

#### Section 15. Tourism Development Plan

A. Describe how the Activity will encourage persons to stay overnight in Swansboro lodging facilities.

Although we would love to believe that folks are coming and staying in Swansboro JUST for SwanFest, we recognize that the much more likely scenario is that visitors are staying an EXTRA night for SwanFest. SwanFest is held on Sunday evenings, so many visitors may have already been in Swansboro for the weekend and see the SwanFest rack cards, the TDA Downtown Guide, or hear all of the excellent chatter about SwanFest that the visitors choose to stay Sunday night to enjoy the concert without having to drive back to wherever they're from late that evening.

B. Describe the other tourism related impacts of your activity to the Town of Swansboro.

SwanFest, as an outdoor event in the heart of downtown Swansboro, encourages the audience to spend time and money downtown before, during, and after SwanFest concerts every Sunday.

C. Have any partnerships been made or are planned with Swansboro lodging facilities?

Hampton Inn is a recurring sponsor of SwanFest. SwanFest rack cards will be visible and available to their guests.

D. If you used a formula for any tourism related actual totals or estimates, describe the methodology used to derive the estimate.

#### Section 16. Volunteers

Does this Activity intend to use volunteers?

☒ Yes

☐ No

#### Section 17. Other Award Criteria Items

A. Does the Activity follow any of the goals adopted by Swansboro? This is not required but does add to the adopted criteria for consideration by the Authority. The goals are available by email or on the web.

B. Will the Activity be operated or performed in a manner that is consistent with standards for such activities?

Yes

C. Is there professional management or a demonstration of competence among the operators?

This is the 16th year Seaside Arts Council is producing this concert series and there is continuity among the event planners.

D. How does the involvement of the Authority or staff benefit this Activity?

Because of the budget shortfall due to negative market conditions and therefore lower than expected business sponsorships last year, TDA's funding would be essential to allow this Swansboro summer staple to continue to thrive. The inclusion of Swanfest in the TDA Downtown Guide is also key in driving tourists to stay in Swansboro an extra night to enjoy the concert.

#### Section 18. Certifications and Notices

Does the Organization agree to follow the financial guidelines of the Town of Swansboro, including no expenditures related to the grant before authorization? No payments will be made to the organization \*

☒ Yes

☐ No

Does the Organization agree to adhere to other provisions and conditions described in the Instructions for this application?

☒ Yes

☐ No

I certify that I am authorized to sign for the organization and that the information provided, including attachments, is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I further certify that the organization I am signing for has reviewed and will accept the terms of the provided instructions if funding is approved.

Authorized Signer for Organization

/s/ Cassandra J. Nicholas

I accept the conditions \*

☒ Yes

\* Indicates a required field

#### NOTES TO APPLICANT

- Applications may be submitted to:  
Sonia Johnson, Finance Director  
Town of Swansboro  
601 W. Corbett Ave.  
Swansboro, NC 28584
- A representative of the applicant will be required to attend the Authority meeting at which the application is to be considered.
- For consideration, an applicant must submit an application at least 30 days prior to the next scheduled quarterly TDA meeting and grant awards will be awarded up to \$2,000 unless by special exception by the TDA. Applications received after 30 days prior to the next scheduled meeting will be considered the following quarter.
- Funding is normally provided on a reimbursement basis, based on submission of proper documentation of expenses incurred.
- The applicant hereby acknowledges receipt of the STDA Outside Organization Funding Policy and agrees to comply with all requirements of that policy, including those related to performance contracts, final reports, and accountability for funds use.