REGIONAL EVENT FUND 2025-26

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
JANUARY 2025

GENERAL QUESTIONS

What is the Regional Event Fund (REF)?

The Regional Event Fund (REF) provides financial and in-kind support to events that drive tourism visitation and promotion of their relevant tourism region within South Australia.

Can our event apply to both the Established and Development category of funding?

No, an event can only be awarded funding under one of the two categories.

What qualifies as a Development event?

Development events are defined as new, innovative and dynamic events that can demonstrate potential for growth and development to become an annual addition to the event calendar. They demonstrate how they will use the funding to innovate and develop their event, to drive tourism visitation and are expected to target intrastate visitors.

What qualifies as an Established event?

Established events can demonstrate a strong track record of growth and demonstrate a strategy for event innovation. This category of events shows how they will use the funding to grow tourism visitation and are expected to target and attract interstate visitation.

Which category of funding should I apply for?

The portal is set up to automatically allocate a category based on your level of attendance and the number of years the event has been running.

Please refer to the REF Guidelines for the full eligibility requirements for both funding categories.

How much funding can we apply for?

The maximum funding for each category is:

- **Established Event:**
  Between $20,000–$50,000 per year

- **Development Event:**
  Between $5,000–$20,000 per year

How often does the Regional Event Fund open?

Once a year, annually. Applications are accepted only when the Fund is open.

Our event is held in metropolitan Adelaide, are we still eligible to apply for funding?

Yes, Adelaide is a tourism region of South Australia.

How do we apply?

Applications will open from **12pm Thursday 23 January 2025** and will be accepted until **5pm, Tuesday 18 March 2025**. Eligible applicants will be required to complete and submit an online application via the dedicated grants portal.

The event I am applying for is planned to take place before 1 September 2025. Am I able to apply for this round of funding?

No, the event would not qualify under this round of funding, which supports events staged between 1 September 2025–31 August 2026.

The event I am applying for is planned to take place after 31 August 2026. Am I able to apply for this round of funding?

No, the event may be eligible to apply as part of the next round of funding (2026-27), which supports events held between 1 September 2026-31 August 2027.

Is my event eligible for funding?

Applicants should consider if the event outcomes align with the objectives and purpose of the REF fund, as outlined in the REF Guidelines.

The REF aims to support events that drive tourism visitation (visitors from outside the region, from intrastate and interstate).

To be considered, applicants wishing to apply for event funding must meet the Regional Event Fund eligibility and address the application criteria, as outlined in the REF Guidelines.

Where can I find the Regional Event Fund (REF) Guidelines?

The REF Guidelines are available on our website: tourism.sa.gov.au/events/event-funding.

These guidelines are updated each year. Please ensure you are referring to the latest version, listed as January 2025 on the cover page.

If we are successful, are there restrictions on how we can spend the funds?

Yes, please refer to the REF Guidelines for the appropriate uses of funding. Funds are intended to contribute to event innovation, development, and growth, that drives tourism visitation and positive media exposure of the region. Funds cannot be used for prize money or sanctioning fees, legal costs or insurance.

Our event is a once-off event, are we still eligible to apply?

Yes, once-off events can apply, however, they must demonstrate how they will attract tourism visitation and align with SATC strategic initiatives such as the Regional Visitor Strategy.

I would like to apply for multiple events. What is the best way to submit my application?

In most cases, each event will require a separate application so it can be assessed on its own on merit. Before applying, please contact the Acquisition and Development team at ref@sa.gov.au to clarify, and our team can advise the best way to proceed with your application/s.

Can a not-for-profit organisation apply for funding?

Yes, applications are accepted from not-for-profit organisations.

Do I need an ABN or ACN to apply?

Yes, you will need a valid ABN or Incorporation Registration Number to apply for funding. If successful, the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) will enter into a sponsorship agreement with the organisation.

What is ATDW?

The Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW) is Australia's national platform for digital tourism information. This platform assists tourism businesses and event organisers to promote their events and businesses online by providing access to their listed event to a distribution network of tourism operators, advertisers and other online platforms. We strongly encourage all events to create and maintain an ATDW listing for their event. This is a free service available to all event organisers, no matter their sponsorship status. More information about ATDW can be found here.

What supporting documents will we need to provide as part of our application for funding through the Regional Event Fund (REF)?

Applicants will be asked to include documentation to support their online application. Supporting documents required include:

- A business plan
- An events marketing plan
- An event evaluation OR an economic tourism impact study OR a ticket report and summary of attendee feedback from your most recent event
- An event budget and profit/loss statement
- Letters of support from the relevant Regional Tourism Manager and/or from local council
- A copy of the events Certificate of Currency for Public Liability Insurance

Elements of the application and specific requirements are outlined in the REF Guidelines and within the portal.

What if I don't have all the documents to supply?

As the funding is highly competitive, we recommend supplying as much information as possible to demonstrate a strong application.

The event does not have Public Liability Insurance for the proposed event date. Can I still apply?

Yes, you can still apply. If the event is successful in securing funding, you will be required to obtain the relevant insurance/s. The SATC will require a copy of your Certificate of Currency upon signing of the agreement.

Will all eligible events receive funding?

Due to the competitive nature of the Fund, and the number of applications we receive, not all events that are eligible will receive funding.

The Fund is a comparative application process, and funds will be allocated to eligible events with the strongest applications until the available REF is fully exhausted.

Can I request an extension for my application?

Due to the competitive nature of the Fund and for fairness across all applications, we are unable to grant extensions or accept applications or additional information after the closure of the Fund.

Please submit your application via the REF portal no later than 5pm, Tuesday 18 March 2025.

How will the application be assessed?

All applications are assessed comparatively in line with the REF Guidelines and against the listed criteria. Applications are shortlisted by an assessment team and reviewed by a panel to determine successful events.

How long will the assessment process take?

All applications submitted are assessed as soon as the round of funding has closed. The multi-stage assessment process usually takes two months to complete.

How will I receive the outcome of my application?

All applicants will receive an email advising them of the outcome of their application. The SATC aims to contact all applicants by the end of May 2025.

Details of the event have changed since I submitted my application. Do I need to contact the SATC?

Yes, please contact the Acquisition and Development team at ref@sa.gov.au to advise of any changes (i.e. revised event dates, main contact details, etc). Our team will update the information attached to your application.

Where can I find the contact details for my Regional Tourism Manager?

Each region has a Regional Tourism Office, with a dedicated Regional Tourism Manager (RTM). Their contact details are listed as part of each region's profile here.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

What if the event does not qualify for REF funding or align with the purpose of the Fund, to drive tourism visitation?

We'd suggest considering alternative funding programs that may be a better fit for the event and its objectives. The REF supports events across various areas – including music, food & wine, arts & culture, and sport – but are primarily leisure events, and drive tourism.

Additional sources of funding may be available to support events that are primarily positioned as business, live music, arts & culture or community events.
These may include:

- **Local Council Grants** – Search for your local council that may have funding options for community and events.

- **Celebrate Together** – Grants to help multicultural organisations host festivals and events that celebrate cultural diversity.

- **GRANTassist** – Search for available grants and assistance for business, industry, social,community, art & music, sport, clubs or individuals.

- **Live Music Events Fund** – Support for live music events and festivals.

- **Business Events Adelaide** – For assistance with bidding for and hosting business events, conferences, and conventions in South Australia.

- **GrantsSA** – Grants supporting charitable, social welfare, multicultural or volunteer endeavours.

Are there other ways the SATC provides support to regional events?

The SATC provides a wealth of tourism, marketing, and event guides, tools and templates here to support tourism and event operators. The following may be of value:

- Get started with your ATDW listing here

- Access marketing, PR and social media guides, tools, and templates here

- Event operations checklists and guides here.

Are there other ways the SATC provides support to tourism organisations?

- Find tourism industry tools and resources here

- Explore data and insights about your region including the contact for your Regional Tourism Manager here.

SPONSORSHIP

I've been notified that I am successful. What are the next steps?

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a sponsorship agreement with the SATC detailing the terms and conditions, funding obligations, key performance measures, deliverables, benefits, and conditions of the sponsorship. Details of this agreement, including the payment schedule of the funding will be tailored to each event.

What are the terms and conditions of sponsorship?

A sample of the indicative terms and conditions forming part of the sponsorship agreement is available online at tourism.sa.gov.au/events/event-funding.

The actual terms and conditions may differ and be tailored to suit the specific circumstances. A complete version of the sponsorship agreement will be provided to successful applicants. The sponsorship will not take effect until the sponsorship agreement is signed by both parties.

Will I need to submit reports or invoices to acquit the sponsorship?

The Regional Event Fund is administered by Events South Australia which will appoint a dedicated account manager to the sponsorship. The sponsorship funding Recipient/Event organiser will be required to:

- Meet regularly with their account manager

- Provide progress reports detailing event planning, risk management, marketing/communications plans and attendance information

- Provide a post-event report

- Evaluate the event via an independent economic impact assessment OR by using the SATC's Event Evaluation Tool, including attendee survey questions

If successful, your issued sponsorship agreement will detail the specific reporting and acquittal requirements that apply.

Does the SATC provide sponsorship reporting templates?

Reporting templates, including access to the Event Evaluation Tool (with the attendee survey questions) will be provided to successful applicants.

If you would like to access these templates during the application process or to find out more, please email ref@sa.gov.au.

If the event is successful, when and how will the sponsorship be paid?

In most cases, payments will be made in three instalments in line with the Recipient/Event organiser meeting the relevant sponsorship milestone requirements, as set out in the sponsorship agreement.

As an example, the timeline of milestone payments could look like the below:

- **Payment 1:**
  Within 1-2 weeks after signing the sponsorship agreement and when all sponsorship milestone requirements have been met

- **Payment 2:**
  Within 2-6 months pre-event and when all sponsorship milestone requirements have been met

- **Payment 3:**
  Up to 3 months post-event, and when all sponsorship milestone requirements have been met

Payments will only be made once the relevant milestones attached to each of the sponsorship payment milestones have been met, and a valid tax invoice has been provided by the Recipient/Event organiser.

Please refer to your specific sponsorship agreement for the milestone requirements that apply to your event.

Can the SATC help promote the event?

As part of your sponsorship, the SATC may offer in-kind marketing opportunities to help promote the event via our existing platforms (as available or deemed as appropriate).

To facilitate marketing support, the event will need to have a live ATDW listing and supply 3-5 high-quality promotional full colour images (300dpi or greater) in TIFF or JPEG format. Images should not contain graphics or logos and must include a completed Visual Asset Deed (supplied by the SATC).

To maximise event marketing support and tourism opportunities, we encourage you to work closely with your dedicated SATC account manager, to proactively share information and work collaboratively.

PREPARING AN APPLICATION

How should I go about writing an application?

Throughout the preparation of an application and when preparing an Event Business Plan, please ensure you refer to the 2025-26 Regional Event Fund (REF) Guidelines to understand what is required. Applications should address eligibility and align with the Fund's objectives and each of the criteria.

Event applicants should complete the event application form and provide the requested information and documents.

How do I find out more about the SATC's tourism priorities and objectives, regional tourism in South Australia and State's target audience?

The **South Australian Tourism Plan 2030** and **Regional Visitor Strategy 2025** can be found here. Tourism and visitor insights and data for each of the 12 tourism regions in South Australia can be found here. Information about key growth sectors, such as Wellness, Aboriginal and Golf tourism, can also be found at tourism.sa.gov.au. The SATC's key domestic audience segments, which have been identified for their strong attitudinal alignment to what South Australia is looking to deliver, include **Authentic Connectors**, **Cultural Contributors** and **Achievement Seekers**. Further information can be found here.

What should my Marketing Plan include?

Guidance on how to prepare a Marketing Plan can be found in the SATC Event Planning Toolkit on our Event and Festival Support page.

An Event Marketing Plan should include:

- An overview of the event marketing strategy and identify the event audience

- Details of the marketing and communication activities planned in the lead-up to and during the event (for example, printed posters, social media ads, event website, media releases, eDMs, magazine articles etc.)

- The target audience for each marketing activity (i.e. are you marketing to interstate and/or intrastate audiences, or locally)

- Key messages you will use to attract attendees (i.e. what will draw them in to attend, what's your value proposition)

- Timelines of each marketing activity (i.e. will marketing take place 6 months out, 3 months out, 1 week out, and so forth)

- The marketing budget (i.e. how much is allocated to each activity, and each target market).

What should a Business Plan include?

Guidance on how to prepare a Business Plan can be found in the SATC Event Planning Toolkit on our Event and Festival Support page.

The Event Business Plan should provide insight into the event objectives, event details, value proposition, programming, location, audience, history, management model, SWOT analysis, event outlook and goals. It should address how funding will be used, how the funding will support the enhancement of the event, and how this will grow intrastate and interstate tourism visitation.

What type of information are you looking for as part of the event evaluation and economic data from a previous event?

The assessment team will evaluate the impact and benefits of each event. Primary consideration is given to the tourism economic impact, in addition to the social, cultural and community benefits of each event.

Previous event reporting and data may help to support the event Business Case and the event's forecasted tourism economic impact.

Applicants should aim to provide the following information, as available: the event's total attendance, daily attendance, the proportion of attendance from interstate and intrastate (from outside the region), the attendee length of stay in the region (bed-nights) and attendee expenditure (travel spending behaviours). Events may have previously engaged an independent researcher to conduct a tourism economic impact study of the event – if you have this, please upload this report. Alternatively, events may have previously conducted attendee feedback surveys and used ticket platforms to collect data – if you have a record of your ticket sales, attendee postcodes, and other travel, spending, demographic or behavioural data, please summarise this information and provide a copy.

Please do not share personal information (i.e. names, emails, phone numbers) via the portal.

If you are applying under the Established event category, please note that there will be a greater emphasis placed on obtaining event economic data and reporting that is of a high quality and accuracy.

I am applying for a new event and don't have previous event data. What do I submit?

Please provide your best estimates for the forward event attendance and impact, based on similar types of events and events in your region. Be sure to highlight its potential tourism value, and why it will attract visitors from outside the region.

For queries relating to economic estimates and data, please contact ref@sa.gov.au.

APPLICATION PORTAL (OPTIBLE)

Can I save the application part way through to complete at a later stage?

Yes. The application form will automatically save your progress as you enter the information, or you can press the 'SAVE' button at the end of the application form. If you plan on leaving the form open for an extended period, it's best practice to manually save your progress.

Please be sure to access your draft application form, complete it and hit the 'SUBMIT' button by the closing time **5pm, Tuesday 18 March 2025** to be eligible for assessment.

I didn't receive the link to my profile. What do I do next?

Please check your junk and spam folders for an email from **support@optible.ai**.

To ensure you receive future communications, add **support@optible.ai** to your safe senders list. Once found, move the email from your junk folder to your inbox to allow you to open the link.

If you are unable to find this email, please contact **ref@sa.gov.au**.

How will I know you have received my application?

You will receive a confirmation email from **support@optible.ai** that we have successfully received your application.

Can I view a copy of my application after I have submitted?

Yes. You can view your submitted application by logging into your REF Portal account (Optible).

I am receiving emails from Optible. Is this related to my REF application?

Yes. Optible is the platform that hosts the REF application form. You will receive emails from **support@optible.ai** about your application.

Can I add additional information and documents after I have submitted?

Once an application has been submitted, you are unable to edit the application.

If you need to submit further information ahead of the closing date **5 pm Tuesday 18 March 2025** please contact **ref@sa.gov.au**.

Can I check the status of my application?

Yes. You can log into your REF Portal account (Optible) and view either the 'draft' or 'submitted' status of your application.

You will receive the outcome of your application via email from **ref@sa.gov.au**.

I forgot to include some information or have something else to add to my application. Can I provide this after the closure date?

To ensure fairness, we are not unable to accept applications or additional documents after the closure of the REF (**5pm Tuesday 18 March 2025**).

Can I submit a combined document instead of uploading each of the requested documents in the application form?

Where you can, please upload a separate document for the marketing plan, business plan and budget, where prompted in the portal. You can also upload multiple documents throughout, but we recommend only including information that is requested/relevant.

If you are unable to provide separate documents, you can upload the combined document multiple times, however, this is not recommended.

I am having trouble submitting my application. What do I do?

Please check that you have filled out all fields in the application, uploaded all the requested documents and read and agreed to the acknowledgements. Once complete, you should be able to submit.

I am receiving an error message and am having trouble submitting my application. Who can I contact?

Please contact the Acquisition & Development Team, Events South Australia at **ref@sa.gov.au** for assistance.

Please include a screenshot of the error message or issue, a copy of the web address/link to your application form and provide a description of the issue so we can assist you.

When contacting us for support, please allow ample time (3- 5 business days) to resolve any issues or queries ahead of the REF closing time, **5pm Tuesday 18 March 2025**, to ensure you can successfully submit your application in time.

CONTACT US

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN TOURISM COMMISSION

ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT TEAM

EVENTS SOUTH AUSTRALIA

ref@sa.gov.au

WEBSITES

tourism.sa.gov.au/events/event-funding

southaustralia.com