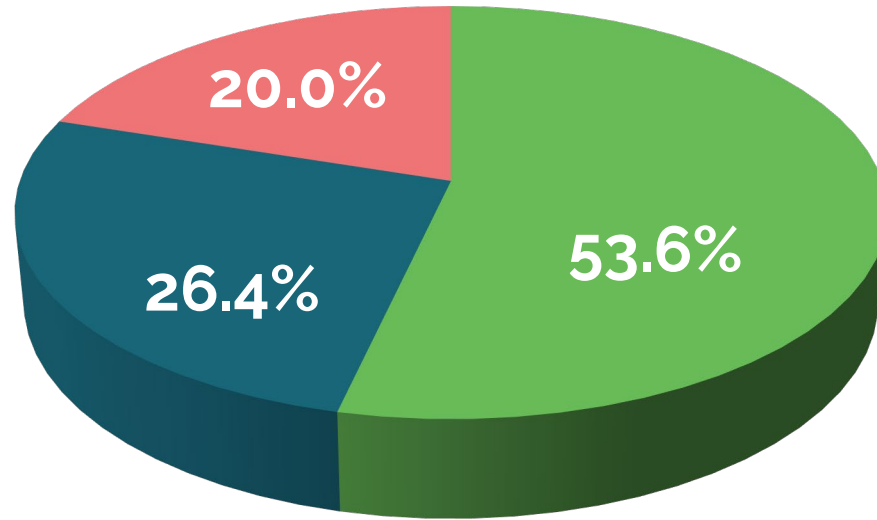


**Lee County Tourist Development Council
Events Marketing Program
Application Webinar
April 9, 2026**

TDC Marketing Programs

Attractions Marketing	Events Marketing
Year-round marketing plans	Consecutive multiple day events to generate room night revenue
Local spend permitted, encourage out-of-marketing and hotel partner collaboration	Out-of-area marketing placements only Must collaborate with hotel partners and track room nights
By reimbursement	By reimbursement
\$600,000 budget \$25,000 (less than 100,000 annual visitors) \$50,000 (more than 100,000 annual visitors)	\$200,000 budget \$25,000 cap per request
Match encouraged	75% marketing match required
FY26/27 application cycle opens May 12	FY26/27 application cycle opens today! April 9

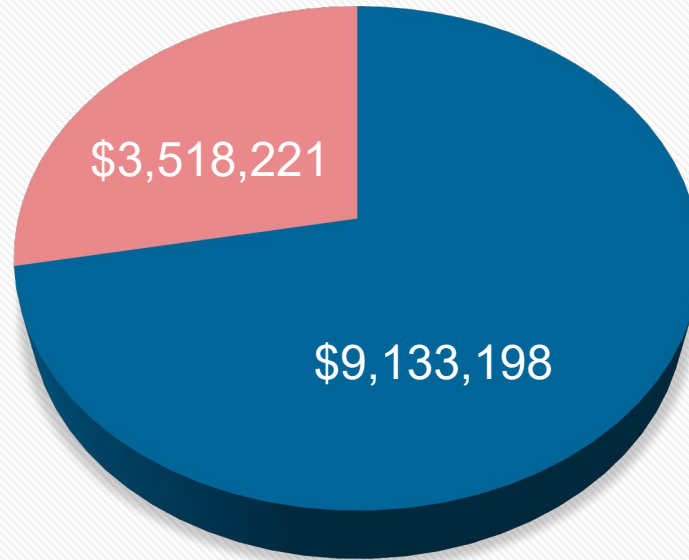
Tourist Development Tax (TDT) Distribution



■ Advertising & Promotions ■ Beach & Shoreline ■ Stadium Facilities

TDC Marketing Programs 2000-2026

Total: \$12,651,419



■ Attractions Marketing Funding

■ Events Marketing Funding

Events Marketing Program Timeline FY 26-27

- Application Cycle Opens - Wednesday, April 9, 2026 @ 3:00pm
- Application Closes – Friday, May 8, 2026 @ 5:00pm
- Review Workshop (Discussion & Recommendations) – Thursday, June 11 approx. 10:30am (following TDC meeting) Be sure to attend!
- Approval of Recommendations - Thursday, August 13 (during TDC meeting)
- Budget Approval- BoCC - September 2026
- Funding allocation confirmation sent by October 1, 2026

Events Marketing Program Purpose

- Stimulate local economy during off- peak season- (January 2-30 or mid April through December 23).
- Employ “Always On” Marketing.
- Promote Lee County’s Assets.
- Generate measurable hotel/motel/campground room nights.

Program Eligibility Checklist

- Lee County not-for-profit organization (501c3, 501c6).
- Event must be a visitor facing event scheduled for multiple, consecutive days between October 1, 2026, and September 30, 2027.
- Organizations must provide a 75% marketing match (50% in-kind).
- Marketing must be placed 140 miles or 2 hours drive time from Lee County.
- Must work with lodging partners to secure hotel rooms.

Program Guidelines

- Can be viewed:
<https://www.visitfortmyers.com/lee-vcb/funding-programs>
- Materials submitted will be a matter of public record.
- Final report and reimbursement request workbook due no later than 60 days after the last day of the event.

Application Evaluation Criteria

- Commitment to the expansion of tourism.
- Soundness of proposed event.
- Organization stability.
- Out of market promotion.
- Quality and uniqueness.

*See page 5 & 6 in guidelines for more information.

Eligible Marketing Tactics

- Creative design of advertisements.
- Video or photography projects that supports the marketing plan.
- Creative development of the event's dedicated website.
- Social Media buys.

*For the complete list see page 9 of the guidelines.

Ineligible Marketing Tactics

- Invoices dated prior to TDC approval in August.
- Invoices dated for services advertising a future event in the next fiscal year.
- Marketing tactics NOT listed in the approved marketing plan.
- Marketing tactics that do not credit Fort Myers Islands Beaches and Neighborhoods. Find our logo here.
<https://www.visitfortmyers.com/lee-vcb/education-and-resources/web-image-guidelines/guidelines-for-vcb-image-library>

*For the complete list see page 9 of the guidelines.

How to Apply & Events Marketing Program Resources

<https://www.visitfortmyers.com/lee-vcb/funding-programs/events-marketing>

Events Marketing Program Resources:

2026-2027 Events Marketing Timeline and Guidelines

Events Marketing Appendices

Reimbursement Instructions

Reimbursement Webinar


Status/Final Report - Fillable Form

Online Application

Online Application Portal website- bookmark this page!

<https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=leevcb>

grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=leevcb



Logon

Email Address*

Password*

[Log On](#) [Create New Account](#)

[Forgot your Password?](#)

Look for these embedded links to DOWNLOAD forms

For each of the questions that follow be sure to refer to the criteria for evaluation on pages 5 through 6 of the [Events Marketing guidelines packet](#). During review your score is contingent on meeting this criteria.

1. Goals and objectives*

Describe the goals and objectives of the event for which you are applying and how they meet the evaluation criteria for the Events Marketing program.

500 characters left of 500

2. Describe how the event increases awareness of Lee County as a vacation destination*

Describe how the event increases awareness of the County as a visitor and/or convention destination, increases the number of visitors, their length of stay, and promotes inter-county travel by visitors.

500 characters left of 500

3. Effectiveness*

Describe how the effectiveness of marketing dollars will be measured. List your key performance indicators and provide detail/expected outcome of each marketing placement. Unless this is a new event request, using [Appendix B](#) in the guideline packet, please provide detail showing measured success of past marketing initiatives and room night generation and upload in the next question.

Appendix B: ROI SUMMARY SHEET

This section must be completed by events that have received TDC funding in the past. All other events should start measuring moving forward.

Name of event: **ARTFEST FORT MYERS**

Measurements	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Event Attendance	<p>COVID required that we reduce crowd size.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Attendance = 6,433 Visitor = 12.4% Seasonal = 36.4% Year Round Lee County resident= 47.4% Year Round other FL resident = 2.1% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Attendance = 65,000 Visitor = 13.2% Seasonal = 35.4% Year Round Lee County resident= 48.2% Year Round other FL resident = 3.2% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Attendance = 95,000 Visitor = 15.2% Seasonal = 33.4% Year Round Lee County resident= 48.2% Year Round other FL resident = 3.2%
Number of paid room nights generated	244	143	124
Media Impressions (print, online, radio, tv)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website = 113,326 annual visitors WGCU TV = 89,500, 36 spots in 2021 Public Radio = 92,400 cumulative. 43 spots. Commercial Radio = 228 spots w .9 million impressions. WOLZ & WCKT only. Billboards = 4,979,769 Destination Magazine = 11,500 issues in 56 hotels & local distribution. Plus out-of-market print. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key West - 25,000 issues Daytona - 20,000 <p>SOCIAL MEDIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facebook Fans = 11,184 Page Views = 91,800 500,000 +/- organic 231,045 +/- paid Reach = 47,904 paid with 4.82 frequency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website = 116,211 annual visitors GABI = 2,615 interactions NBC/ABC7 TV = 33,700, 21 spots WGCU TV = 12,431. 5 spots in 2021 Public Radio = 23,637 cumulative. 11 spots. Commercial Radio = 167 spots 551,039 impressions. WOLZ & WCKT only. Billboards = 5,263,769 Destination Magazine = 14,170 issues in 106 hotels and local distribution. Plus out-of-market print <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key West - 22,000 issues. Tampa - 18,000 issues Daytona - 16,000 issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website = 154,070 annual visitors TV = 66,700, 46 spots Radio = 1,103,000 impressions. 375 spots. Billboards = 6,617,019 Destination Magazine = 14,000 issues in 105 hotels and local distribution. Plus out-of-market print <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key West - 22,000 issues. Tampa - 18,000 issues Daytona - 16,000 issues

Marketing Results

Appendix B

Return of Investment (ROI)

See sample participant survey. (Appendix E) in guidelines to assist with capturing event attendance.

Tracking event attendance can be done several ways.

- Ticket sales (capture info).
- Engaging attendees.

Appendix C1 and C2

Marketing Plan & Budget Information

Look for these embedded links to **DOWNLOAD** forms-save as a PDF then hit “upload a file.”

Total Event Budget

This allows the Tourist Development Council to determine what percentage of the total budget the organization is dedicating to promoting the event. As this is the **total budget**, please list all proposed expenditures, including items that do not fall under the Marketing category.

Use the [Budget Form found in Appendix C #1](#) of the guidelines.

Upload a file [3 MiB allowed]

Marketing Budget Breakdown

This allows the Tourist Development Council to determine how the requested Events Marketing funds will be utilized. Please refer to Appendix A, page 9 of the [guidelines](#), to see the allowable uses of funds and restrictions. Please remember the 75% marketing match requirement. Please provide a detailed list of anticipated expenditures.

Use the Budget Form found [in appendix C #2](#) of the guidelines or create your own using the same format.

*It is recommended you share this plan with the VCB marketing team prior to submitting.

Upload a file [3 MiB allowed]

Appendix C1

Appendix C: EVENT MARKETING BUDGET TEMPLATE - Please present in two parts (C #1 and #2).

1. Show total event budget. This allows the Tourist Development Council to determine what percentage of the total budget is dedicating to promoting the event.

Budget Line items	TDC Request	Agency Contribution	TOTAL
<i>Marketing Expenses</i>	\$20,000	\$15,500	\$35,500
<i>Operating Expenses</i>		\$28,000	\$28,000
TOTAL	\$20,000	\$43,500	\$63,500

Remember to list all expenses to show the total cost of the event.

Appendix C: EVENT MARKETING BUDGET TEMPLATE

2. **Show your marketing budget breakdown.** This allows the Tourist Development Council to determine how the Events Marketing funds will be utilized.

Marketing Activities	Brief description	Amount requested	Agency Contribution	Number of ads/impressions
Ad placement List publications & out of market areas- placement must be 140 miles out of area.	Palm Beach Today magazine, Destinations magazine Tampa, Miami Living magazine- print ads.	\$1,800 \$1,000 \$1,000	\$3,000	3 ads 75,000
Design of Advertising Materials List what design is for (digital, banners, print ads)	Design for digital banners, social media posts and print ads.	\$700	\$2,000	N/A
TV/ Radio List specifics for each and out of market areas.	NPR radio Tampa, Palm Beach and Miami. Pandora-streaming- Tampa, Palm Beach and Miami.	\$4,000	\$4,000	50 radio spots/ 475,000
Social media tactics List platforms (Facebook, Instagram etc.) and out of market areas.	Instagram and Facebook - Tampa, Palm Beach and Miami.	\$5,000	\$1,000	350,000
Website List features of the website that will be updated or developed.	Updating website with new dates, photos, videos, and event details.	\$1,500	\$1,500	175,000
Other Include other plans for content creation (promo video, photography etc.) List how this will be used to market the event.	Creation of short video for website and promo on social media platforms	\$1,500	\$1,500	N/A
Other SEO/ Geotargeting	SEO for event targeted key words.	\$3,500	\$1,500	70,000
TOTAL		\$20,000	\$15,500	Agency contribution must equal 75% of amount requested

*Refer to Appendix A for other eligible expenses

Marketing Budget Appendix C2

Make sure your marketing plan has a variety of diverse marketing tactics.

List out of market areas (140 miles or 2 hours drive time from Lee County).

Submit plan by April 27th for review prior to submitting.

Don't forget to list your marketing match!

Reporting Requirements

Final Report (Appendix D) MUST include

- Marketing Results (Appendix B)
- Revenue producing room night (Appendix F)

Reimbursement Workbook

- Required documentation and proof of marketing tactics placed out of market.
- Required documentation of marketing tactics for match.

Event Name: _____

Reporting Date: _____ Organization: _____

Funding Manager: _____ EMAIL: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

=====

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS FOR EACH ELEMENT IN YOUR SCOPE OF WORK. ATTACH ADDITIONAL NARRATIVE OF EVENT IF NECESSARY.

FINAL – Required for reimbursements - Answer each question as it relates to the Scope of Work for the event.

1. What is the overall assessment of the event? Did the event have the anticipated results?
 - a. Number of participants and attendees from out of the Lee County area. (appendix E)
 - b. Total Number of revenue-producing room nights generated by the event (appendix F.)
2. Did expenditures fall within the most recent event funding budget categories?
3. How and what were the results of the marketing efforts proposed in funding request? (Impressions, tracking, surveys, analytics) (appendix B & C2)
4. List efforts made to 'green' your event and the benefits derived.
5. What recommendations do you have for improved results in the future?
6. What VCB workshops and assistance did you participate in and find helpful?

Final Report Requirements Appendix D

Due no later than 60 days after the last day of the event.

Review prior to submitting your application to understand requirements.

Thank you for attending the _____
Please take a moment to fill out this brief survey so that we can continue to make this experience great for all our attendees.

1. How did you hear about the event? (select all that apply)
 - a. Attended last year!
 - b. TV/Radio: Which station: _____
 - c. Print publication: Which one _____
 - d. Website: Which one _____
 - e. Social Media- Which platform(s)? _____
 - f. Other _____

2. Where are you from? (city/state) _____

3. What was your mode of transportation to Lee County?
 - a. Fly into RWS
 - b. Drive
 - c. Local Resident

4. What is your age group?
 - a. Centennial (born 1996 and later)
 - b. Millennial (born 1977 to 1995)
 - c. Gen X (born 1965 to 1976)

 - d. Baby Boomer (born 1946 to 1964)
 - e. Traditionalist (born 1945 and before)

5. How many nights of local accommodations did you book to attend this event?
 - a. None
 - b. One night
 - c. Two nights
 - d. Three nights
 - e. Four or more nights

6. Would you like to receive more information about our next event and destination information?
 - a. If Yes. Provide your email address here _____.

Event Attendance Appendix E

Sample Participation Survey.

Appendix F: Sample ROOM NIGHT CERTIFICATION FORM-

The purpose of this form is to quantify the actual number of room nights booked in Lee County as a result of _____. Your cooperation in helping us to document these room nights will enable us to fulfill important Tourism Development Council requirements, and assist the Lee County VCB in its marketing efforts.

Hotel Name: _____

Hotel Location: _____

Event Name: _____

Tracked room nights

Date						
Paid room nights						
Complimentary room nights						

**Kindly add date columns if the event lasted longer than six days.*

Total number of PAID room nights for duration of event _____

Please provide any noteworthy comments: _____

Hotel Representative Signature:

Date: _____

Print Name and Title:

Tel: _____

Thank you for completing this form.

Room Night Certification Form Appendix F

Need help working with local lodging partners?

Contact: Candice Cocco

CCocco@leegov.com

Tips on how to be successful

- Produce events that attract out of town tourists.
- Collaborate with lodging partners to create unique event packages.
- Create and maintain listings on visitfortmyers.com.
- Maintain a responsive event website and implement mobile-first thinking into all marketing.
- Measure and report back on effectiveness of your marketing efforts.

Cross promote!

- Follow @VisitFortMyers on Facebook, Instagram & TikTok and share our posts.
- Tag us @VisitFortMyers on social media posts.
- Cross promote and attend other local events.

Take advantage of how the VCB can support you!

10 Ways the VCB Supports You

There are several ways industry partners can work with the VCB. Some of these include but are not limited to:

Business Listings

We encourage you to list your hotel, attraction, tour business, restaurant, or event for FREE on [VisitFortMyers.com](https://www.visitfortmyers.com).

Deals & Specials

We also invite you to regularly post special offers and consumer-focused deals or packages on [VisitFortMyers.com](https://www.visitfortmyers.com).

Co-op Advertising

Buy into our cooperative advertising program that gives you national ad presence and/or booth-sharing opportunities at trade shows at a fraction of the cost.

Grant Funding

Check eligibility and apply for one of our three [TDC funding programs](#): Beach & Shoreline, Events Marketing and Arts & Attractions Marketing.

Host Journalists and Influencers

Host press and social media influencers the VCB invites to write about our area, whether online or in print.

Data & Research

Complete our surveys and use our published statistics as a source for timely visitor research and industry information.

Events

Attend our events: Tourist Development Council Meetings, Tourism Outlook, Team Tourism Meetings, Travel Rally, E Awards, and Training Workshops.

Site Visits

Facilitate site visits for travel agents, travel wholesalers and meeting planners.

Train Staff

Enroll your staff in [Guests First](#), our Certified Guest Service Professionals (CGSP) program that improves customer service excellence.

Engage on Social

Follow @VisitFortMyers on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Pinterest](#), engage with us, and use #MyFortMyers on relevant posts.



@VisitFortMyers



- Statistics
- Value of Tourism
- Annual Visitor Profile Summary Reports
- 20-Year Recap
- Bed Tax Information
- Performance Dashboard
- 2018 Spring Training Impact Study
- Monthly Hotel Update

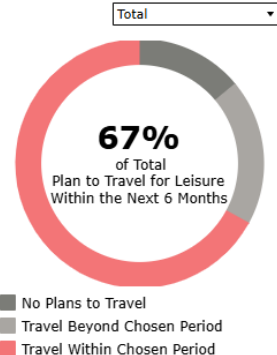
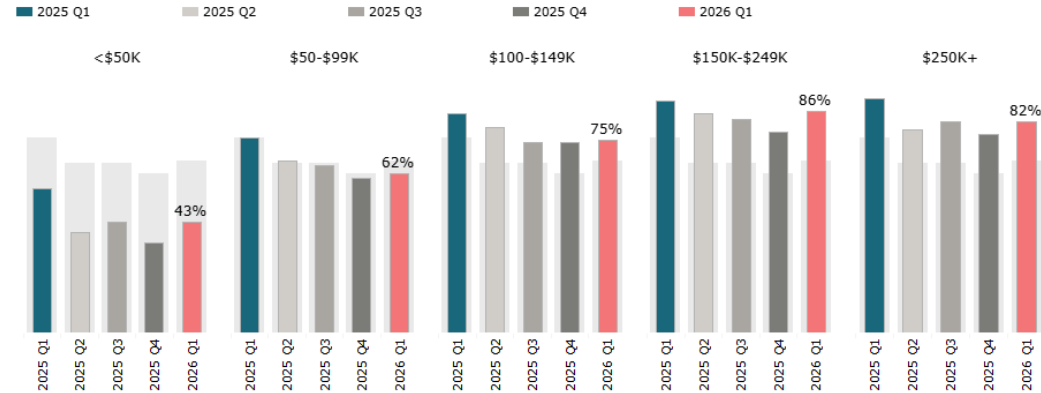
Travel Trends

As of Q1 2026



Planning Leisure Travel Within the Next 6 Months

% of American Consumers Planning Travel by Household Income (Calendar Year)



VCB Resources
Stay up to date on
travel trends



Statistics

20-Year Recap

2018 Spring Training
Impact Study

Value of Tourism

Bed Tax Information

**Monthly Hotel
Update**

Annual Visitor
Profile Summary 
Reports

Performance
Dashboard

February 2026

Monthly Hotel Update

HOTEL ROOM UPDATE

Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau

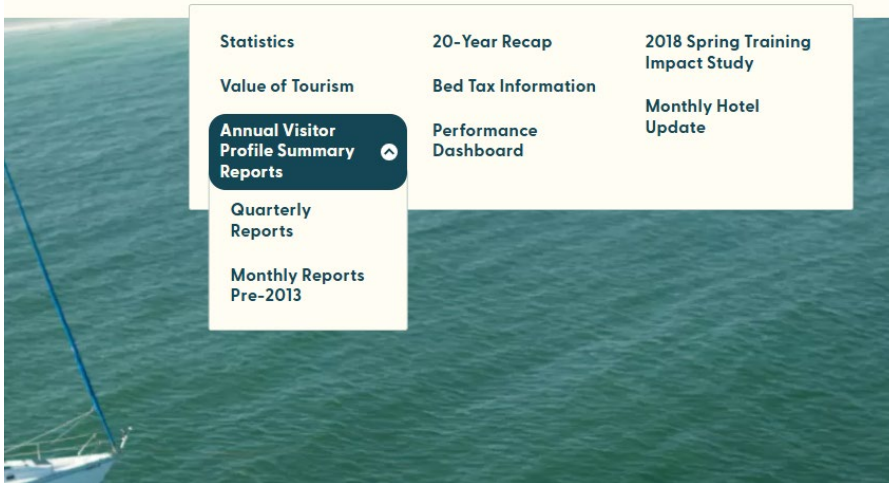
Community	Open	Closed	Total	Percentage Open
Boca Grande	181	12	193	93.8%
Bonita Springs	1,259	76	1,335	94.3%
Cape Coral	820	0	820	100.0%
Captiva	416	185	601	69.2%
Estero	566	0	566	100.0%
Fort Myers	6,960	124	7,084*	98.2%
Fort Myers Beach	1,395	985	2,380*	58.6%
Lehigh Acres	75	0	75	100.0%
North Fort Myers	412	139	551	74.8%
Pine Island	65	37	102	63.7%
Sanibel	1093	523	1,616	67.6%
Total	13,242	2,081	15,323*	86.4%

* Includes new properties opened Post-Jan. Total Pre-Jan was 14,266.

02-06-2026

Where to find this information on Leevcb.com

Destination Development Sales & Marketing **Statistics** News Events Resources



2025 Visitor Origin

Domestic 90.3%	International 9.7%
New York 6%	Canada 5%
Chicago 5.3%	Germany 1.8%
Minneapolis- Saint Paul 4.6%	UK 1.0%
Boston 4.1%	Other Europe .7%
Atlanta 3.3%	Other International 1.2%
Detroit 3.2%	
Philadelphia 3.2%	
Washington, DC- Hagerstown 2.2%	
Cleveland-Akron 2.1%	

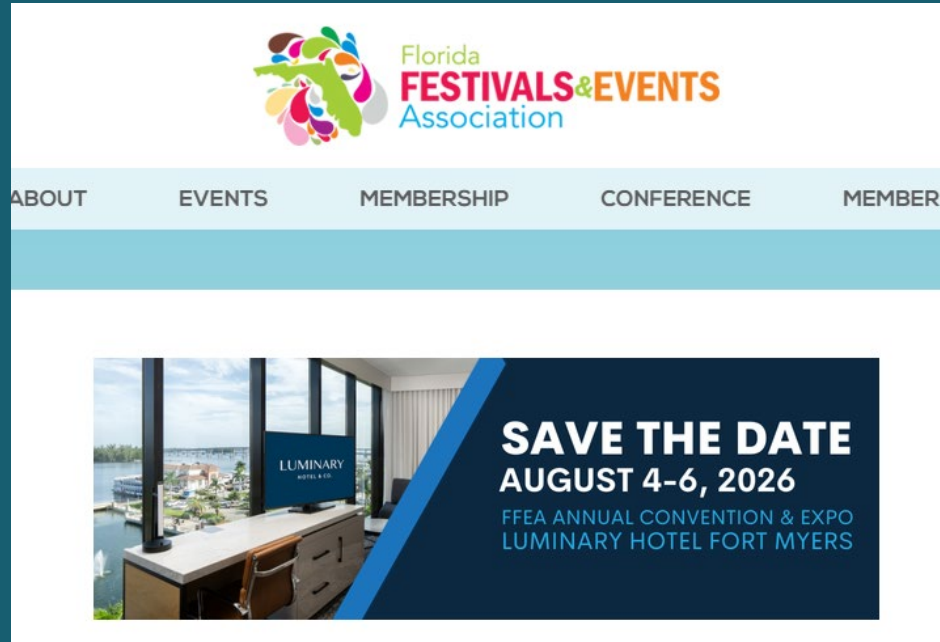
Source 2025 Visitor Tracking Report (DSG)

<https://www.visitfortmyers.com/lee-vcb/education-and-resources/statistics/annual-visitor-profile-summary-reports>

SAVE THE DATE!

Florida Festivals and Events Association Annual Conference at the Luminary Hotel August 2026!

<https://www.ffea.com/>



The screenshot shows the Florida Festivals & Events Association website. At the top is the logo, which consists of a colorful, abstract graphic of people holding hands, followed by the text "Florida FESTIVALS & EVENTS Association". Below the logo is a navigation menu with the following items: ABOUT, EVENTS, MEMBERSHIP, CONFERENCE, and MEMBER C. Below the navigation menu is a large banner image. The banner features a photograph of a modern hotel room with a desk and a large window overlooking a waterfront. Overlaid on the right side of the banner is a dark blue diagonal shape containing the text: "SAVE THE DATE", "AUGUST 4-6, 2026", "FFEA ANNUAL CONVENTION & EXPO", and "LUMINARY HOTEL FORT MYERS".

EVENTS MARKETING PROGRAM REMINDERS

- Thursday, April 9 @3pm- Application Cycle opens
- Monday, April 27- Deadline to submit draft plan for VCB review
- Friday, May 8 @ 5pm- Application Cycle closes
- June 11 @10:30am -Subcommittee Review Workshop

Attractions Marketing Program Info

- May 12 @ 3pm- Application opens with a webinar-Registration for the webinar is live!
- June 10 @ 5pm- Application Cycle closes

QUESTIONS?

Alison Giesen

agiesen@leegov.com

Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau

239-338-3500

Thank you!

A copy of this presentation will be
located on the LeeVCB website at

<https://www.visitfortmyers.com/lee-vcb/funding-programs/events-marketing>