



**Amelia Island Foundation
Organization and Funding Outline**

The Vision

The vision of the Amelia Island Foundation is to engage our community and visitors in an effort to enhance and protect Amelia Island.

The Mission

The mission is to enhance the community assets of natural resources, vital workforce, and the unique way of life by creating and supporting a sustainable tourism industry.

The Background

The Amelia Island Foundation (AIF) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization created by the Amelia Island Convention & Visitors Bureau (AICVB). Tourism is the economic engine for Nassau County, accounting for nearly \$900 million in economic impact¹. The industry is the number one employment sector in Nassau County, contributing almost 36% of the total jobs. In addition, visitors are responsible for 35.7% of tax revenues for Nassau County, yet only 13.3% of its costs, leading to a net positive impact of \$53.6 million on Nassau County government's budget². While there are a number of community enhancement projects that the tourist development tax (TDT) can support, there are just as many areas where TDT funding cannot be spent as restricted by state statute 125.0104. The creation of the Amelia Island Foundation seeks to fill that void.

For many years, there has been a desire to establish a funding source to connect private dollars with partnerships that enhance this community to benefit both locals and visitors alike. In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic had a devastating impact on the tourism industry and its workforce, creating rippling negative repercussions throughout the community. To provide meaningful assistance to local employees and businesses directly impacted by the dramatic drop in travel, the AICVB launched the "Amelia Island Tourism Gives" initiative, donating \$50,000 to the Barnabas Center of Nassau County to support displaced workers.

The Amelia Island Foundation was born out of the recognition that there will always be a need to supplement the work vital non-profits, community partners, and private organizations are doing to reinvest in our community. Through a grant application process, the goal of the Foundation is to bridge the gap between what public dollars can support and what private dollars can enhance, all with an eye toward driving our tourism industry and strengthening our local community assets. The Foundation will be funded solely from philanthropic outreach with no support from property taxes, sales taxes, occupancy tax, gas tax, or TDT revenues. Under no circumstances will funds from TDT be used for direct support.

¹ CY 2019 Visitor Profile Report

² 2019 Value of Visitors Report

The Purpose

The Amelia Island Foundation aims to reinvest in our community by creating a funding source to support local projects that benefit the island where TDT revenues may not be utilized. By connecting public and private contributions, the AIF will support shovel-ready projects and efforts throughout the Island to bolster our natural assets, vital workforce and the unique way of life, creating and supporting a sustainable tourism industry.

Foundation Board Guidelines and Leadership:

Oversight of the Amelia Island Foundation will be provided by the current Amelia Island Convention & Visitors Bureau until the Foundation Advisory Board is established.

Foundation Staff

- Maurie Dugger, Director

Amelia Island Foundation Board of Directors Guiding Principles

- Support and articulate the mission and vision of the Foundation and review its purpose to ensure the goals, means, and constituents are served.
- Follow conflict of interest and confidentiality policies.
- Attend all board and committee meetings and functions, including special events.
- Support the Foundation staff and ensure that resources are secured to further the Foundation goals.
- Actively participate in the overall planning process and assist in implementing and evaluating the goals.
- Ensure fundraising efforts have adequate resources and support from 100% board financial participation.
- Promote the Foundation to Island businesses, community partners, non-profits and private organizations.
- Score, evaluate and determine project and grant awards.

Composition:

The Amelia Island Foundation Board of Directors (AIFBOD) is made up of no less than seven (7) members. The board will be made up of Amelia Island and Nassau County community leaders with an interest toward supporting a strong effort to protect and enhance Amelia Island and its offerings. The members will use their expertise and relationships to ensure broad support from a cross section of community leaders, business owners, ambassadors and partners. The Executive Committee of the AIFBOD is made up of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Director.

The principal role of the AIF Chair is to provide leadership to the AIF and manage AIF meetings. The Chair is accountable to the AIF and acts as a direct liaison between the AIF and the Director. The Chair's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Preside over AIF meetings.
- Review and sign minutes of AIF meetings.
- Call special meetings as necessary.
- Represent the views of the AIF as designated spokesperson.
- Nurture positive relationships with board members, business, community and industry partners.
- Lead AIF fundraising efforts – both personal giving and corporate outreach efforts.
- Keep abreast of AIF activities.

- Assist with the scheduling of AIF meetings and general preparation of AIF meeting agendas.
- Provide advice and counsel to the Director and staff as needed.

The principal role of the Vice Chair is to provide leadership to the AIF in the absence of the Chair. The Vice Chair's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Attend all board meetings
- Serve on the executive committee and participate as a vital part of the board leadership.
- Carry out special assignments as requested by the board chair.
- Assume responsibilities of the Chair in the absence of the Board.

The principal role of the Secretary of the Board will be to ensure the safety and accuracy of all board records. The Secretary's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Attend all board meetings.
- Take board meeting minutes and make available upon request of the Chair.
- Assume responsibilities of the Chair in the absence of the Board Chair and Vice Chair.
- Serve on the executive committee of the Amelia Island Foundation.

The principal role of the Treasurer of the Board will be to understand and manage the financial accounting of the Amelia Island Foundation. The Treasurer's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Attend all board meetings.
- Review and take action related to the board's financial responsibilities.
- Work with Director to ensure that appropriate financial reports are made available to the board on a timely basis and present the annual budget to the board for approval.
- Review the annual audit and ensure accuracy for all filings.
- Serve on the executive committee of the Amelia Island Foundation.
- Assume responsibilities of the Chair in the absence of the Board Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary.

Appointment

The AIF shall make recommendations to sitting Amelia Island Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) members for approval. Board members shall be appointed to serve staggered two (2) year terms with an opportunity for reappointment. Terms shall begin on January 1 of the year of appointment and terminate on December 31st of the year the appointment expires.

Terms for the Chair and Vice-Chair are limited to one year. The AIF shall have the option of designating the Chair. The Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be appointed by the Chair. The Chair may be reappointed by a majority vote of the AIF members. Officer terms shall begin on the first day of January of the year of appointment and terminate on the 31st of December.

Meetings and Events

The Amelia Island Foundation Board of Directors will meet no less than once (1) a quarter each year. Any board member who is absent for more than two (2) meetings each calendar year (unless excused from attendance by Chair and Director) shall automatically forfeit their position on the Board and will be removed from membership.

Board members are expected to attend events and community partnerships to promote the Amelia Island Foundation. Appropriate action will be taken for members who are consistently absent from special events without excused absence.

Conflict of Interest / Code of Conduct

The members of the Amelia Island Foundation Board of Directors have a fiduciary relationship to the Amelia Island Foundation. This relationship requires that in the performance of their duties they shall act in good faith, with undivided loyalty to the Foundation and with a high degree of due diligence, care, financial support, and skill which prudent persons would exercise in the conduct of their own affairs. This relationship further requires that the AIF board of directors not take advantage of their positions, of the knowledge gained there for private gain or other personal advantage.

How is the Foundation funded?

Funding for the Amelia Island Foundation can come from a variety of places such as private donations, corporate contributions, grants, and the launch of voluntary contribution program (VCP). During the launch of the Foundation, establishing the VCP is our primary focus for funding the Foundation. No revenues from TDT will fund the AIF.

What is the *Voluntary Contribution Program*?

VCP is a consortium of local businesses joining together to fund Amelia Island Foundation initiatives. Over the last three decades, voluntary contribution programs have primarily been used throughout the United States to fund projects such as land conservation efforts (i.e. National Park Foundation, St. Simons Land Trust, Gunnison County/Crested Butte, Colorado) or charity donations through local business partnerships (i.e. Publix, The Donna Foundation, disaster recovery efforts, etc.). A voluntary contribution program is a micro-donation that is added to a customer's retail, hospitality, lodging or recreation activity bill to raise funds for a specific cause. The Amelia Island Foundation will use this model to establish a funding mechanism to supplement projects and activities that will enhance community assets. Residents and visitors have a vested interest in reinforcing our natural resources, workforce, and unique way of life. Customers may participate in VCP by adding a voluntary micro-donation of 1% of their purchase to their final bill. These voluntary micro-donations can have a huge impact on the local community.

How does it work?

Funds are raised solely by participating businesses on Amelia Island opting in to collect the voluntary 1% donation on top of products and services from their customers, including both residents and visitors. The businesses will have an agreement with the Amelia Island Foundation on the details of collecting and remitting the voluntary contribution program on behalf of the Amelia Island Foundation.

The business may include the 1% voluntary contribution on the customer bill with an option to opt-out OR the business may include the customer option to opt-in to the 1% voluntary contribution. If a business prefers, they may charge a small, optional flat fee instead of the 1%. The participating businesses will then remit collections to the Foundation on a payment schedule agreed to by both parties. Participation in the voluntary contribution program can be long-term, short-term, or a single day.

Who participates?

- First and foremost, contributions are completely **VOLUNTARY** for both participating businesses and customers.
- Contributions can be set up so that customers either opt-in or opt-out (opting out is preferred) of making a donation.
- Contribution programs involve a network of businesses.

Why should businesses participate?

- Business, employees and patrons love this community, Amelia Island, and its unique way of life.
- Business and employees recognize that the local tourism industry is a vital economic driver for businesses in this community and support the vision for the Foundation.
- Business and employees acknowledge the need for an organization, such as the Foundation, to connect our community and visitors and support initiatives which will help enhance the community assets of natural resources, vital workforce, and the unique way of life.
- Business participation establishes a positive perception of the business in the customers eyes for their support and contribution to the community. Participating owners become AIF ambassadors, offering input and guidance for AIF initiatives.
- Participation gives customers the opportunity to give back to the community and industry you represent, fostering a sense of goodwill. Organizations that have implemented this program in resort areas around the country report that customers are thrilled to participate and invest in a place that they've come to love. In fact, if the customer knows that the contribution is **ENTIRELY voluntary**, seldom does anyone reject.

How do businesses participate and what support will they receive from the Amelia Island Foundation?

- Participation is FREE for the businesses and does not impact your bottom line but allows contribution to community enrichment programs.
- Businesses will sign an agreement with the Amelia Island Foundation outlining program guidelines and the timeline to remit donations.
- The Amelia Island Foundation will coordinate bookkeeping and accounting setup to ensure smooth transfer.
- Participating businesses will:
 - Be included in promotions including but not limited to the website, social media, public relations efforts and promotional materials.
 - Receive a promotional toolkit of materials to communicate their involvement including but not limited to collateral materials (rack cards/check stuffers), signage, clings, etc.
 - *Example verbiage:* This business collects a voluntary donation in support of the Amelia Island Foundation to reinvest in our community. Please ask your cashier to remove the donation if you do not wish to contribute. Thank you for your contribution and for supporting our local community!
 - Receive staff education tools. Amelia Island Foundation staff will be available to attend employee training sessions as requested.

How does it work for the customer?

- Customer identifies that the business is participating in VCP through visual and verbal prompts.
 - Each business must have a minimum of TWO forms of notification of their participation in the program in their actual place of business so that the customer **feels informed** and understands the program ask.
- Customer voluntarily makes the donation at the point of sale. ○ If a customer doesn't wish to donate, they simply notify the business and the voluntary surcharge is removed from their final bill.
- Businesses collect and remit these funds on behalf of the customer through the VCP program to the Amelia Island Foundation.
- Contributions to the Amelia Island Foundation are tax exempt for the customer, however the Foundation will not provide tax receipts for small contributions. For large donations (personal or corporate) made directly to the Foundation, a tax receipt will be provided.
 - Customers could use proof of donations through their receipts as charitable deductions.
- **Customer Examples:** ○ For the customer, the requested donation is typically very small. ○ \$10 mini golf = \$.10 donation to AIF ○ \$40 jacket = \$.40 donation to AIF ○ \$100 dinner = \$1.00 donation to AIF
 - \$5,000 weekly house rental from local property management = \$50 donation to AIF

Grant Application Guidelines

In the first year of formation, the AIF will not distribute grants to allow for donations to accrue. The competitive grant application cycle will open in January 2022 and awards are announced in early May. Funding for the competitive cycle is made possible from contributions collected from the AIF VCP program which is supported by residents and visitors to Amelia Island.

Amelia Island Foundation will place all donations into a high interest-bearing account in anticipation of upcoming projects. For the initial 3 years of AIF, available grant money will be 1/3rd of contributions received by the Empowering Amelia program to allow donations to accrue.

Focus

1. Education and Scholarship
2. Quality of Life projects for community and tourism
3. Supplemental funding for shovel-ready projects
4. Support for tourism facing workforce in times of crisis
5. Activities that provide a marketplace opportunity
6. Projects that enhance, beautify, or upgrade our Island surroundings

Grant proposals may request funding appropriate to the project focus.

Prospective applicants are welcome to discuss their proposal with staff prior to submitting the application. Note: Amelia Island Foundation staff do not vote on proposals.

Upon the Foundation's receipt of a Grant Application, applicant will be notified by email indicating that submission has been received. Foundation staff may contact organization for additional information or to arrange a meeting with representatives of the organization for a site-visit. The notice of grant decision will be emailed to applicants in early May. Please note that an unsuccessful application does not reflect on the worthiness of a project. AIF will be unable to fund every project and we encourage organizations to submit proposals in upcoming years should additional support still be needed.

2022 Grant Cycle Timetable

January	Grant cycle opens
February (end)	Grant proposal deadline
April	Site visit scheduled
May	Notifications

Eligibility

The Foundation invites applications from non-profit, public charities and civic partnerships that benefit the residents and visitors to Amelia Island. Government agencies and civic organizations will also be considered if the grant is used to be strictly for charitable purposes as defined by the IRS.

Requirements:

- Current IRS determination letter
- Registered as a nonprofit with the Florida Division of Corporations
- Service to residents and visitors to Amelia Island, Florida or tourism facing workforce employed on Amelia Island
- Board of Directors with representation from the community / communities served
- Annual budget or project budget
- Audited financial statements for the last fiscal year if annual budget exceeds \$XXXXX, or a review by an independent, certified public accountant if annual budget is less
- Documentation of other matching financial support

Only one proposal may be submitted per organization.

Preference will be given to those projects and programs that:

- Show how the AIF grant would have a direct impact the success of project or program.
- Show ability to raise diversified financial support, in-kind support and volunteers to sustain the program.
- Demonstrate past performance in delivering a quality service to the residents or visitors to Amelia Island.

Funding will not be considered for the following activities:

- Retroactive funding
- Endowments
- Building funds (unless determined that structure benefits entire community)

- Debt or deficit reduction
- Medical or academic research
- Annual fundraising campaigns
- Grants for religious activities
- Grants to individuals (excluding education or scholarship applicants)
- Grants for re-granting

Reporting

Grants are awarded for a 12-month period, May through June. All successful grant recipients are required to provide the Foundation with a final report no later than 30 days after the 12-month grant period. Report guidelines and a copy of the report form will be furnished at the time the grant is made.

Publicity and Media Coverage

Amelia Island Foundation will issue a press release immediately after the grants are announced. Agencies are encouraged to undertake their own publicity after receiving a grant after the initial press release from Amelia Island Foundation. The Foundation appreciates photographs, publications and videos of funded projects to use in its promotion/publicity.