



# MIDLOTHIAN & BORDERS TOURISM ACTION GROUP

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**Background** – Events & Sales Specialist, International events,  
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# WHATS GOING ON WITHIN MBTAG

Midlothian & Borders  
Tourism Action Group



- MBTAG Tourism Ideas Fund
- Essential Scotland – Online Training – Leading accreditation destination wide
- New Tourism App – Launch Spring 2019
- Tourism Showcase November 2018 – 15<sup>th</sup> November 18
- 2019 and beyond
- Make sure you are also linked in with your local tourism partnerships and on our mailing list for all news, events and opportunities

# TOURISM IDEAS FUND LAUNCH

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## Tourism Ideas Fund



### THE THEMES AND THE IDEAS!

We aim to help businesses create new, innovative and memorable visitor experiences, making the most of any of the four themes in the Midlothian and Scottish Borders region. It will focus on projects which strengthen the areas appeal as a visitor destination, which improve the quality of the visitor experience, and which drive business at key times. We are looking for projects which broaden the areas visitor offer and which will increase our competitive advantage.

#### THEME 1: FOOD AND DRINK

Scotland's Tourism Strategy 2020 identified food and drink as key elements in the improvement of the visitor journey. Visitor research does tell us that food can significantly enhance our visitors' experience – and therefore enjoyment – of a particular destination.

In the Midlothian and Scottish Borders we have many excellent pubs, cafes, restaurants, hotels and food producers with a strong commitment to showcasing world class food which comes from this stunning part of Scotland. You will find producers of organic and sustainably produced meat, vegetables, game along with the finest fresh fish. Not forgetting the craft brewers, artisan gin distillers and of course a dram or two of whisky! We are looking to support new tourism experiences that build on and celebrate our unique regional food & drink.

#### THEME 2: HISTORY AND HERITAGE

Heritage Tourism in Scotland forms a significant part of Scotland's appeal as a World Class tourist destination.

Midlothian and the Scottish Borders is exceptionally rich in cultural heritage. From its mysterious hillforts, to its ruined abbeys to the picturesque stately homes and designed landscapes. A quick walk in the area can bring you into direct contact with Neolithic and

Bronze Age burials, Iron Age farms and forts, medieval churches and castles, Reiver towers, fateful battlefields, Industrial Mills that supplied an empire and towns and farms that to this day retain their own identities.

In broadening this appeal to new and existing markets, we can increase the value of this sector by ensuring that Scotland's heritage remains one of the key motivators for visits to Scotland. We are looking to support new tourism experiences that build on our unique heritage and cultural offering. This could be the history of a place, person, building, town, village, product or cultural celebrations.

#### THEME 3: ADVENTURE AND ACTIVE TOURISM

Adventure and activity based holidays are showing significant growth within the tourism industry. The global product sees both established holiday destinations and new locations all looking towards "extreme sports" as an attractor to bring in holiday makers.

In Midlothian and the Scottish Borders we have world class facilities that have paved the way ahead of other areas of Scotland. From Glentress mountain biking resort in Tweeddale to the Pentland Hills Ski Centre, there are many activities that the adventurous visitor can take advantage of just one hour from Edinburgh city centre. We are looking to support new tourism experiences that build on and develop the vast array of outdoor and adventure opportunities in the region.

#### THEME 4: BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

A suite of exclusive experiences, which might be, for example, new business collaborations which include the exclusive use of attractions or exclusive guided tours or even specialised dining experiences. This is thought to be of specific interest to the groups market or travel trade of which MBTAG have done considerable work in supporting businesses to be more travel trade ready. We are keen to support collaborations and partnerships between businesses with new ideas for exclusive experiences.

### PRIORITIES FOR FUNDING APPLICANTS

The MBTAG Ideas fund is there to support new product development and can help contribute towards research and development costs (it does not support consumer facing marketing activities). These can be anything from small events or tourism trails, to large scale initiatives; the only proviso is that they enhance the regions tourism offering.

Funding will be prioritised for projects which:

1. Encourage tourism businesses, operators, and organisations to collaborate.
2. Aim to enhance the experience for those who are already here.
3. Address a gap in the existing offering.
4. Complement the existing offering.
5. Provide new long term tourism assets.
6. Allow the visitor to access our region in a new and innovative way.
7. Aim to attract more non-local visitors to the area.
8. Encourage visitors to stay longer and spend more.





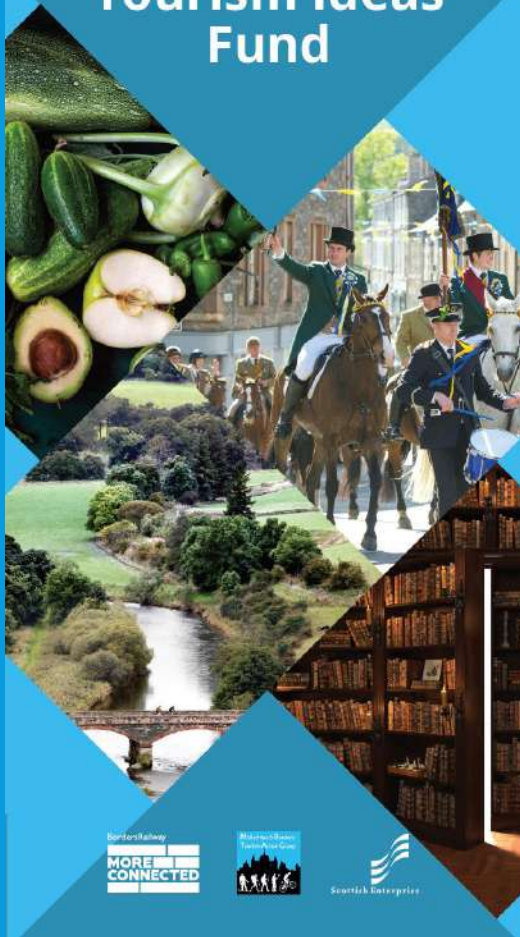
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## Tourism Ideas Fund



### WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE?

The MBTAG ideas fund offers a discretionary grant of up to a maximum of £5000 to support businesses that have creative Ideas for online bookable products to grow their businesses linked to one of four specific areas.

- Food and Drink
- History and Heritage
- Adventurous and active tourism
- Behind closed doors

Projects will be funded up to 80%. Applicants are required to provide a minimum of 20% cash contribution.

### MORE THAN MONEY...

In addition to financial support applicants will be able to consult with our MBTAG project team who will put you in direct contact with a Business Gateway advisor who will help inform and shape your ideas. Depending on the nature and scale of the projects, applicants may also be able to tap into specialist innovation support from Scottish Enterprise, VisitScotland and other funders.

This support includes:

- Developing your ideas
- Refining your ideas
- Collaboration and working with others to enhance the offering

### HOW TO APPLY

You will find the application form on the Midlothian and Borders Tourism Action Group website. Remember to tell us about the applicant(s), the project, who it's aimed at, what it will cost, how it will be managed and how results will be assessed.

**Submission deadline for application:  
5pm on the 16th November 2018**

For further information about the fund and to download the application form email [jemma@mbtag.uk](mailto:jemma@mbtag.uk) or visit [www.mbtag.uk](http://www.mbtag.uk)

Your application will be acknowledged by return of email and the judging panel will meet in late November 2018 and review your proposal against the criteria stated below. We aim to make a decision within four weeks of the submission deadline.

### WHAT QUALIFIES FOR FUNDING?

All projects must satisfy four key criteria:

1. They must be new projects based in either Midlothian or the Scottish Borders.
2. They must have tourist appeal.
3. The funding should be used to support new ideas, trialling new experiences or events or the development of new offerings.
4. They should aim to be financially sustainable – projects must demonstrate long-term financial viability.

### WHO CAN APPLY?

Funding is available to both public and private sector tourism businesses. Funding is also available to any tourism businesses or organisations (including charities) providing that the project they wish to fund is tourism related.

### OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the fund are to:

- Encourage tourism businesses, operators and organisations to collaborate and develop new products or experiences which showcase the regions in a new exciting or innovative way.
- Encourage new experiences or products which are available to book on-line
- Generate sustainable business development opportunities and activities.

### Further information

✉ [Jemma@mbtag.uk](mailto:Jemma@mbtag.uk) 🌐 [www.mbtag.uk](http://www.mbtag.uk)



# EVENTS, FESTIVALS AND BUSINESS TOURISM

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## EVENTS

- Weddings
- Private events such as family celebrations
- Themed events such as cycling, heritage and arts
- Launch events
- Celebrations
- Burns night? St Andrews Day? Valentines? Capitalising on occasions throughout the calendar year
- Build an event around something else that is happening locally and promote and deliver together for the destination – Big Picture...

# EVENTS, FESTIVALS AND BUSINESS TOURISM



## FESTIVALS and EVENTS

- Are you already running a festival?
- Would you like to organise a festival?
- What to think about when you are organising a festival?
  1. Licences
  2. Road closures
  3. Police / Fire rescue / Ambulance / Fire points
  4. Health & Safety / First Aid / Certificates/ Hygiene / Food Safety / Risk assessments
  5. Stewarding / Security
  6. Supplier lists
  7. Marketing & PR
  8. Insurance
  9. Collaborations – links to accommodation, how to get there (transport links), other things going on at the same time, encouraging extended stays, more spend = growing the visitor economy and spend

# EVENTS, FESTIVALS AND BUSINESS TOURISM

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## BUSINESS TOURISM – MICE ( Meetings, Incentives, Conferences & Events)

- Conferences
- Meetings
- Corporate dinners
- Team Building / Incentive Trips
- Tapping into international conferences to Edinburgh
- Accompanying persons programmes – PCO
- Corporate direct
- Event management companies – targeting their clients - corporates

- The Business Events Industry focuses on Scotland as a destination for meetings, incentive programmes, conferences, conventions and exhibitions – also known as the MICE Market
- Delegates travelling for business **events represent around 20%** of all tourism expenditure in Scotland.
- Business Events visitor **spend is almost twice** that of leisure visitors, making it a highly lucrative sector, and it is also less seasonal than leisure tourism, with some events booked in to the country several years in advance.
- Major conferences reinforce Scotland's credentials in key industries and can make us a more attractive destination for inward investors, meaning that the benefits of business events extend well beyond delegate spend
- Business Events can be the catalyst for economic and social change. Conferences, corporate meetings, and incentive trips bring an industry or a professional knowledge group into Scotland to engage with our industry, our expertise, here in our own country – there can be few more powerful adverts for Scotland than this.



International associations, corporate and incentive groups choose the location of their events based on many factors including transport and accessibility, selection of good conference and event venues and bed stock, and even the personal preferences of the decision makers. However, what can be crucial is that the host country, city or region has a strong link to the subject or industry of the conference. In Scotland there is huge potential to work with our partners in academia and industry to attract events here.

When international events come into Scotland, delegates have an opportunity to learn about our strengths, about the science and research taking place in our universities and innovation centres, about our key sectors and industries. These delegates take this view and this knowledge of Scotland home with them, which in the long run can lead to decisions to invest in Scotland, relocate and move to Scotland, study in Scotland or collaborate with newly met Scottish partners.

Business Events can be transformative. In the short and immediate term, they bring business to our hotels, venues and service providers. In the medium and long term, they show Scotland to the world, they connect us to global communities and they help generate the new ideas we need to keep inventing and innovating.

**Check out VisitScotland for more information, details, facts, figures and toolkits on this market – Business Tourism**

# EVENTS, FESTIVALS AND BUSINESS TOURISM

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What are the current challenges you face?

What tools do you need to grow this sector for your tourism business

**OPEN CONVERSATION – CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

# SECTION 2

# WHAT DO EVENT ORGANISERS LOOK FOR?



- New, innovative, exciting products and experiences – something different
- To work with suppliers that listen to the brief
- Quick response times (no more than 24 hours)
- Regular updates and excellent communication
- Commission / negotiated rates
- Good, strong relationships with suppliers
- Reliable suppliers
- Recommendations, referrals, reputation and experience

Please note that this accounts for event organisers within any type of organising company including corporate, PCO's, DMC's, Travel Trade



# WHAT SUPPLIERS NEED TO THINK ABOUT...



Whether you are a hotel, caterer, production company, theming provider  
– what do you need to think about in order to secure business..

- Response time – Event organisers wont wait – they will go elsewhere..
- Providing a detailed response / proposal
- Follow up, building relationships – chase, chase, chase and secure
- Wish, Want and Walk Rates
- Going the extra mile
- It is a competitive landscape
- Sell your USP
- Upsell on packages – adding value
- Making it as easy as possible for the end user / the visitor / the client – put yourself in their shoes...

# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT – SECURING EVENTS

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Driving capacity ,business development and account management is very important.

- Know what event markets you want to target
- Build relationships with the right people that book these events
- Organise inbound FAM's for your target market so they can experience your product = makes much easier to convert business
- Trade Shows
- Collaboration – Work together... not against
- If you cant do, refer or create a solution with another business
- Identifying gaps in the market
- Digital landscape but face to face still important with regular contact – the next supplier will just come in..

# SECTION 3

# COLLABORATION IS KEY

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# TOOLKITS AVAILABLE AND CONTACTS

- VisitScotland
- EventScotland
- MBTAG
- Scottish Borders Council
- Midlothian Council
- Midlothian Tourism Forum – join as a member
- Scottish Borders Tourism Partnership
- Scottish Borders Food & Drink Network & Scotland Food & Drink
- Scottish Tourism Alliance

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# DIGITAL & BEING ONLINE

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- Ensure you are listed on VisitScotland page as a tourism business
- Link in with your account manager at VS
- List your events on the VS website
- List your events on your local tourism partnerships website and ask them to communicate out
- MBTAG in phase 2 will be able to share and communicate external events
- Push and promote your events digitally
- Push and promote your event facilities digitally

# DIGITAL & BEING ONLINE

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## Digital Tourism Scotland & Digital Boost

- Check out the courses in more detail here and BOOK TODAY <https://www.mbttag.uk/events/>
- 1. From House Swapping to Dinner Hosting – What does the sharing economy mean for Scottish Tourism – 29<sup>th</sup> October – Musselburgh
- 2. Understanding online reviews and feedback for your tourism business – 29<sup>th</sup> October – Musselburgh
- 3. Booking online and inbound Tourism – 19<sup>th</sup> November East Lothian Council
- 4. Digital Tourism Briefing – 26<sup>th</sup> November – The Interchange Galashiels
- 5. Improved User Experience for tourism websites 6<sup>th</sup> December – Musselburgh
- 6. Inspiring written content for tourism Be Seen , Be Shared, Be Found – 6<sup>th</sup> December – The Interchange Galashiels
- 7. How to increase your online bookings and conversions – 10<sup>th</sup> December – The Interchange Galashiels

# MARKETING & PROMOTING

- Social Media
- Ensuring you have an excellent online presence
- Share with local businesses and on larger website portals
- Border Events
- The List
- Being on partners websites
- Viator
- What's On Guides
- Local newspapers
- Databases, business development and new contacts

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# NEW PACKAGE REGULATIONS 2018

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## IN SUMMARY

- Make sure your Terms and Conditions are in order and that they are provided at the booking stage, take care to not misstate or misrepresent services offered
- Make sure your current insurance policy fully details your business activities within the business description, activities not declared will not be covered
- Check subcontractors have the right insurances in place (if you need help on this we have a template questionnaire I can let you use)
- If you fall within the Package Travel criteria or Linked Travel arrangement and you are classified as a Tour Operator then you will need a Tour Operators Liability (TOL) Insurance Policy
- If your subcontractors don't have the right cover you need an overarching Liability Policy
- All businesses have a duty of care to their staff and members of the public, make sure you have the right cover for your legal liabilities.

CHECK OUT MBTAG WEBSITE PRESENTATIONS FOR FULL DETAIL



OPEN DISCUSSION..... SHARE EXPERIENCES



# CONTACT DETAILS

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