



WellsFest Beneficiary Application

About WellsFest

WellsFest is an annual multi-day, multi-site festival through which Wells Memorial United Methodist Church helps a social service non-profit meet funding needs. WellsFest was created in 1984 as a "love offering" to the Jackson metro area. Known as "Jackson's Original Music Festival," WellsFest is family-friendly, free of alcohol and drugs and charges no admission fees. The Southeastern Tourism Society has listed WellsFest as a "Top 20 Event" and WellsFest has received the Governor's GIVE Award for Outstanding Achievement in Community Building and the Mississippi Arts Commission Governor's Award for Arts in the Community.

WellsFest includes an outdoor festival on the last Saturday in September located in Jamie Fowler Boyll Park on Lakeland Drive in Jackson. WellsFest includes live music acts, a children's play area, arts and crafts vendors, food, a silent auction of goods and services donated from area merchants and more. WellsFest also features an art auction and golf tournament held during the week prior to the music festival at locations other than the festival in the park. In 2021, due to the COVID pandemic, online activities were conducted and added.

All proceeds from each WellsFest go to the beneficiary which the church has chosen for that year. In addition to providing funds for a beneficiary's project, the festival provides the beneficiary publicity and promotion. (Learn more about Wells UMC and WellsFest at wellschurch.org.)

Becoming a WellsFest Beneficiary

The WellsFest Beneficiary Selection Committee seeks applications from qualified 501(c)(3) social service nonprofit organizations. The application form states criteria for an organization to qualify for consideration. A chosen beneficiary recipient cannot apply again within seven years after being awarded WellsFest funds.

The application deadline is December 15, 2021. After the selection of the beneficiary has been announced, the beneficiary begins to partner with the leaders of the Wells Church WellsFest Committee, which plans and conducts the festival events.

"Partnership" aptly describes the connection the church desires to develop with the beneficiary. The success of WellsFest depends heavily on the quality of the partnership between the church and the beneficiary. The two entities must share the work WellsFest requires. The strength of an applicant's commitment and capacity to carry out the work is of major importance to the Beneficiary Selection

Committee. Selection as beneficiary does not at all obligate the beneficiary to make financial outlays for WellsFest. However, the beneficiary *may choose to pay* for WellsFest-related expenses.

In assessing the merits of each qualified proposal, the Committee considers the following criteria:

- The application must describe a project or program that WellsFest funding will enable. The project or program must address specific needs of the applicant's clientele/target population.
- The application must clearly articulate measurable objectives for the proposed project or program.
- The application must specify the benefits that the project/program will produce for clients and the community at large.
- The application must show that the organization has the management, staff, supporters and related resources adequate to ensure the success and sustainability of the program or project.
- The objectives and activities of the proposed project/program must be consistent with the values of Wells Church. See wellschurch.org to learn about the history and mission of the church.
- The application must describe ways the organization can help with planning, publicizing and executing WellsFest. Examples include: (a) Is the applicant able to provide volunteers to help with the physical labor and activities of the festival at Jamie Fowler Boyll Park? (b) Does the applicant have a strong social media presence that will help draw attendees and participate in WellsFest events and fund-raising activities? (c) Can the applicant take the lead for managing a specific portion of a festival event.
- The application must address if the organization will endeavor to help with future WellsFests.

Priority will be given to proposals that reflect frugal and efficient use of monies and those that identify resources available to help conduct WellsFest in the coming year. ***Funds may not be used for ongoing salary, administrative expenses or overhead or to build a cash reserve.*** For example, past beneficiaries have used WellsFest proceeds to expand, enhance, or maintain their facilities; to expand existing programs and/or services; or to develop and launch new client-based initiatives.

Submitting of a WellsFest application means the applicant agrees that, if selected as the beneficiary:

- Funds received from WellsFest will be spent only for the purpose stated in the proposal;
- The organization will partner with Wells Church to promote, conduct and otherwise support WellsFest.

Please make sure all supporting documents are included. Incomplete applications will not be considered and providing false information in an application is cause for denial.

WellsFest Beneficiary Application

Please follow the directions in each step of the application. *Incomplete applications will not be considered.* Typed applications are required. Do not attach additional pages other than required documents or those that are indicated below as optional. If you have questions, please contact us via email at wellsfest@wellschurch.org.

Step 1:

- Has the IRS granted your organization the status of 501(c)(3) nonprofit?
- Has your organization been in operation for more than one 5 years?
- Is your organization based in the Jackson metropolitan area?
- Will your organization assist in organizing and conducting WellsFest events?
- If selected as this year's WellsFest beneficiary, will your organization use the awarded funding only for the purpose(s) that your application proposes?

If you answered "NO" to any of the above questions, your organization is not eligible to be a WellsFest beneficiary. Otherwise, proceed to Step 2.

Step 2:

Please provide the following information.

Organization's Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Physical Address (if different) _____

Contact Person _____ Title _____

Email Address _____ Website _____

Best phone to call _____ Best time to call _____

What geographic area does your organization serve? _____

How often does your Board of Directors meet? _____

Estimated number of people your proposed project/program will serve _____

STEP 3:

Please provide the requested information in the space provided.

Brief title of the project/program you propose _____

Concisely describe your organization's history, purpose, mission and objectives. Include a description of the client population you serve. You may attach a flyer or brochure of no more than two pages.

Describe the project or program for which you will use WellsFest funds (including the issues/needs it will address), the specific client base the initiative will serve, goals and objectives and how progress or success will be measured and evaluated.

Identify key ways participating clients and the community will benefit from your project/program.

If you are proposing to use WellsFest funding to expand an existing project or program or to launch a new one, describe how your organization will sustain the project or program.

How will your organization assist in planning, publicizing and conducting WellsFest events in the upcoming year? Provide as much detail as you can. For example, estimate how many associates would help in the set-up and take-down of the festival, volunteer in activities or serve in other capacities.

Would your organization be willing to volunteer to assist in future WellsFests?

Step 4:

Attach the first five items below. The 6th and 7th items are optional. **Do not attach additional information.**

1. A budget *itemizing* how your organization intends to use WellsFest funds, including any amount over \$30,000.
2. A copy of the IRS letter that confirms your organization is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.
3. A copy of your most recent IRS Form 990 or Form 990-EZ (Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax). If your organization is not required to file Form 990, you may substitute a copy of your annual report. This report must include your income and expenses for your most recent fiscal year and must also summarize your primary activities.
4. A listing of your current Board of Directors (including Secretary and Treasurer).
5. A one-page cover letter on your official letterhead. If your letterhead lists your Board of Directors, it is not necessary to submit the separate listing requested above. Your cover letter should note the title of your proposed project/program.
6. **Optional:** Up to three (3) letters of support. If you submit three letters, one must be from a client, one from a benefactor (individual or group), and one from a board member or a partner organization.
7. **Optional:** As noted in Question #1 in Step 3, you may attach a flyer or brochure about your organization, but it can be no more than two pages long.

Step 5:

Submit your application as **one PDF (including attachments)** to wellsfest.org. Reminder: Make sure your application fully addresses all requirements (including the attachment of all required documents). Make sure your application is specific and concise.

Applications must reach wellsfest.org before 11:59:59 p.m. on Dec. 15. You will receive a confirmation of receipt of the application by phone or email.

The Selection Committee may ask your organization to submit additional information or host a site visit.

Thank you for your work to enhance the quality of life in central Mississippi. We at Wells Church send you our best wishes for great success in all of your initiatives.

Additional copies of this application may be downloaded from wellschurch.org. **If you have questions, email wellsfest@wellschurch.org.**