

Meaningful Miles Frequently Asked Questions

- 1) What defines a Host, Meaningful Mile or Traveler?
 - a. **Host** – Illinois travel industry participants, such as hotels, attractions and restaurants whose product or travel offering contributes time, goods or money for a charitable purpose
Meaningful Miles – the travel offerings from Hosts
Traveler – the consumer or patron of the Illinois travel establishments
- 2) How do I qualify to be a Host?
 - a. You must provide an offering that benefits the greater good through the donation of time, money or goods to a registered 501-C3 organization; the benefit must be both visible to the traveler and measurable for the industry.
- 3) Is there a deadline to submit my Meaningful Mile?
 - a. No, there is no deadline for submitting Meaningful Miles. However, the consumer site must have a minimum of 15 submissions prior to launching so it is suggested to submit your Meaningful Miles as soon as possible.
- 4) Am I required to offer an additional incentive to travelers participating in my Meaningful Mile?
 - a. Hosts may, but are not required to, offer the traveler an additional incentive for participating.
- 5) Do I have to partner with a 501-C3?
 - a. Yes, partnering with a 501-C3 helps legitimize and standardize our Meaningful Mile offerings.
- 6) How will I know if my Meaningful Mile is approved? Who manages the approval process?
 - a. A member of the Illinois Office of Tourism marketing team will contact you within a few days of your survey submission letting you know whether or not your Meaningful Mile has been approved.
- 7) How do I ensure that I am creating a quality Meaningful Mile?
 - a. Examples of quality Meaningful Miles as well as a list of criteria are available for reference in the online Tool Kit.
- 8) What is the best way to find a 501-C3 partnership?
 - a. The Illinois Office of Tourism encourages all Hosts to meet with their staff to determine the best non-profit organization that fits within the culture of your destination.
- 9) How do we track donations?

- a. Each tourism attraction is responsible for tracking the donations they make as part of this program. Some 501-C3 can help with tracking since they have stringent reporting mechanisms in place.
- 10) Do my donations to a 501-C3 organization impact the number of Meaningful Mile downloads counted towards the end goal?
- a. No, all Host donations are considered to be separate and are tracked by each establishment on an individual basis.
- 11) Does the offering have to be within a certain timeframe?
- a. Each offering should run for a minimum of one month. However, since the Meaningful Miles program is an ongoing effort throughout Illinois, hosts are encouraged to create offerings that run anywhere from three months to one year.
- 12) If I have an eco-friendly establishment, does that qualify for a Meaningful Mile?
- a. Eco-friendly establishments currently do not qualify for a Meaningful Mile unless they are aligned with a 501-C3 organization.
- 13) If our organization is already donating goods, time or money to a 501-C3 organization, does it qualify as a Meaningful Mile?
- a. No, to qualify, your donation must involve the traveler in some way. For example, "For every visitor to the museum, the museum staff will donate one hour of volunteer time to X."
- 14) What happens when my Meaningful Mile is downloaded?
- a. Each time a Traveler downloads a Meaningful Mile from the micro-site, a mile will be added to the odometer and will go towards achieving a pre-determined mileage goal.
- 15) What is the end goal for the number of Meaningful Miles downloaded?
- a. The goal will be announced in conjunction with the launch of the micro-site.
- 16) How will the micro-site downloads be organized for Travelers?
- a. Travelers will be able to search and sort downloads by Illinois region, interest area (Dining, entertainment, outdoors etc.) and timeframe they are looking to travel.
- 17) Can Travelers download multiple Meaningful Miles?
- a. Yes, travelers can download as many Meaningful Miles as they like.
- 18) How is the money collected for the corporate gift that is given to the Illinois travel site once the mileage goal is met?

- a. The money will be provided by a corporate sponsor.
- 19) What happens after the Meaningful Mile goal is achieved? Does the program end?
- a. The program will re-start once the new season begins as well as the pool of possible recipients for the corporate gift that is awarded.
- 20) How will Meaningful Miles be promoted? How can I promote my own mile?
- a. The Meaningful Miles program will be promoted through an array of ongoing public relations activities throughout the program. Materials will be made available to you through the online Tool Kit to assist you in promoting your own Meaningful Mile.
- 21) Am I eligible to receive the corporate gift?
- a. Not directly. The grant will be given to an Illinois Historic Preservation Agency foundation, chosen by Travelers. However, your attraction may benefit from how that money is applied, and the whole industry will benefit from the visibility this program will bring.
- 22) What do we get if we raise or donate more than other attractions?
- a. As part of the ongoing public relations efforts, individual Hosts will be promoted by the IOT public relations staff based on their success throughout the program.