



2019 MATPRA Media Marketplace

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is MATPRA?

MATPRA (the Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance) is a membership-based organization for tourism-based public relations officials to connect with travel-centric journalists. Membership is comprised of state, local and regional Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) within the Mid-Atlantic region including Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia.

2. What is MATPRA Marketplace?

Marketplace is MATPRA's official annual conference that blends the best of tradeshow, professional development, networking and familiarization (FAM) experiences into three days of work and play. Each year, the conference is held in a different host location within the Mid-Atlantic region. Throughout the conference, journalists learn about various destinations throughout the Mid-Atlantic region and gather information for future stories and plan future visits with DMO representatives. At the same time, DMOs can develop relationships with new and returning journalists in a relaxed, no-pressure environment.

3. Are there pre and post FAM opportunities for MATPRA Marketplace?

There are pre and post FAM tour opportunities for journalists interested in learning about a specific destination. Such opportunities vary from year-to-year and are made available after a journalist is accepted to MATPRA Marketplace.

4. Why is an application required to attend?

The number of attendees is determined by the number of rooms available and space requirements of the host location. MATPRA typically receives applications from more interested journalists than can be accommodated. An application process ensures there is a broad mix of quality journalists in attendance.

5. What qualifications do you consider when scoring the applications?

A media committee consisting of nearly a dozen DMO representatives volunteer their time each year to review all applicant submissions. The committee members read all responses and writing samples thoroughly to determine if the journalist is eligible to attend the MATPRA Marketplace.



Along with consideration of current media outlets, the committee looks for content that inspires travel, consistency of topics, social media and influencer presence. For returning journalists, professionalism and conduct at past Marketplaces is also taken into consideration. The participants of this committee change year to year ensuring that a fresh perspective is brought to each reviewing session.

6. Do you have any tips or recommendations when submitting my application?

The application process is your opportunity to showcase your best work to the media committee. Be as thorough as possible with the information you provide. Don't assume that all committee members know who you are or have read your work. Writing samples from a range of media outlets is highly preferred. Plus, make sure the content inspires travel and/or is destination centric whenever possible. If you have visited and written about a MATPRA destination, we encourage you to share a story you produced as a result of that visit.

A couple important notes for bloggers: Only providing a link to your blog does not constitute a writing sample. The media committee reads a lot of writing samples and appreciates that you point us in the direction of the content that you are most proud of. Make sure the posts you submit are the best representation of your brand and point-of-view as a writer. Our selection criteria for bloggers and influencers also take into consideration both the number of followers AND the overall engagement of your followers on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Video content will be considered for those using YouTube.

7. What types of writers are you looking for?

We look for a diverse assortment of people in the industry including:

- Freelance Journalists- a writer who sells their work or services to one or several outlets rather than working on a regular basis for one employer.
- Editors- oversees the news organizations or some part of it and is responsible for selecting stories to be featured for a specific publication or outlet.
- Staff Writers- a regular contributor employed by a specific outlet and carries a by-line with their work for that outlet.
- Bloggers- contributes material for a website or web-based publication. This may or may not include a website of your own.
- Influencers- uses social media as their primary story-telling platform. This may include Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Pinterest, SnapChat, etc.

8. My spouse or significant other is also a writer; do they need to apply separately?

Yes. We ask that each writer apply separately as each is scored based on their individual credentials. In cases where one is accepted, and another is not, the spouse is not permitted to



attend any MATPRA sponsored activities including tours, meals, professional development sessions, or the media marketplace.

9. Why are you asking personal questions such as dietary and physical restrictions on the application?

This information will be used only if you are accepted. It allows us to make sure that proper accommodations are made to ensure an outstanding experience for you.

10. What is the timeline for the process?

Applications open in mid-January and close mid-March. All media should be notified of their application status (approval or rejection) by mid-May. Should you have questions about your application status, feel free to email the main MATPRA account at midatlantictourism@gmail.com.

11. Will expenses be covered for accepted media?

MATPRA covers lodging, meals and any activities associated with FAM experiences for writers during the conference itself – which is funded by the DMO representatives in attendance. Transportation to and from MATPRA Marketplace and hotel incidentals are the responsibility of the journalist. Should a journalist choose to extend their stay beyond pre or post FAM tours organized by DMO organizations, any additional expenses incurred are also their responsibility.

12. Are there certain expectations for accepted media?

Journalists are expected to act in a professional manner throughout the event. This is your opportunity to network with DMO representatives and learn about their destinations. You are expected to attend all activities during the three-day event. Invasive solicitation or sales tactics of any kind are prohibited during MATPRA Marketplace and may result in rejection from future events.

13. Do I need to produce a story about the host should I be accepted?

We hope that writers will feature the host location if possible, but recognize that for some niche writers, the host location may not provide any relevant material. We hope that you will use the opportunity to network with other DMOs and gather information for stories that will be relevant for your publication and/or followers.

14. What happens if I accept and find out later that I cannot attend?



We hope that you will attend if accepted but understand that life happens and things come up. Please communicate any changes in your plans to the MATPRA host and/or board as soon as possible so that we can allow other journalists to attend in your place should you not be able to attend.

15. If I am not accepted this year, should I still apply in the future?

Absolutely. The number of applications vary from year to year, as do the number we can accept. Please keep in touch and keep a lookout for future Marketplace opportunities.

16. I have attended MATPRA Marketplace in the past. Is my application automatically accepted?

All journalist applications are reviewed and scored equally. While previous attendance to MATPRA Marketplace is taken into consideration, it does not mean your application is immediately accepted.

17. Can I bring a guest?

Media are not permitted to bring guests to any MATPRA sponsored activities including tours, meals, professional development sessions, or the media marketplace.

18. Who do I contact if I have any additional questions?

If you have additional questions, feel free to contact the MATPRA Board of Directors at midatlantictourism@gmail.com.