



## ABOUT THE GRANT

### What is the Cultural Tourism Advancement Grant?

The Chattanooga Tourism Co. Cultural Tourism Advancement Grant was established to support a wide range of tourism-related projects that will contribute to visitors' positive experience of Chattanooga. Grants are awarded on the basis of merit as determined and administered by Chattanooga Tourism Co. [Apply here.](#)

### Background

The Chattanooga Tourism Company (Tourism Co.) developed this grant and designates funds annually to support several objectives identified in our strategic plan: 1) increase brand awareness for Chattanooga and Hamilton County, 2) drive visitor demand, and 3) develop visitor experiences.

Grant funds consist of public dollars generated by visitors to Hamilton County who spend the night in our accommodations. These funds must be used to support the Tourism Co.'s mission of promoting and developing visitor experiences to enhance the economic and social prosperity of Hamilton County.

### Grant funds

Organizations may request up 10% of their total operating budget, not to exceed \$50,000.



# APPLICATION

## Who may apply?

Applications are accepted from non-profit, non-governmental organizations, and for-profit businesses who demonstrate the ability to complete the proposed event or activity. Businesses and organizations must also have been in operation for more than two years. The grant program is designed to encourage wide participation and innovative proposals. Potential grants can be cultural, informational, recreational, or artistic in nature.

## Application process

Potential grant recipients are required to complete a grant application form. Applicants must be a partner of Chattanooga Tourism Co. There is no cost associated with becoming a partner.

To apply, please visit [visitchattanooga.com/ctagrants](https://visitchattanooga.com/ctagrants)

# TIMELINE

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| <b>June 9</b>   | Application open  |
| <b>June 15</b>  | Grant info session ( <a href="#"><u>register here</u></a> ) |
| <b>July 9</b>   | Applications close  |
| <b>July 26</b>  | Awardees notified   |
| <b>August 2</b> | Signed contracts due  |

# CRITERIA

In awarding funds, greatest consideration will be given to projects that closely match the goals and mission of Chattanooga Tourism Co: to promote and develop visitor experiences for our community's economic and social prosperity.

Applications will be rated on the project/program's ability to:

- Attract diverse audiences
- Create economic impact
- Encourage visitors to travel to or extend their stay in Hamilton County
- Enhance the visitor experience
- Collaborate with other local organizations/artists
- Improve the quality of life for Hamilton County residents through tourism
- Address a community need that supports the Chattanooga Tourism Co. mission

## Requirements

- Potential grant recipients are required to complete a grant application and submit by application deadline.
- Projects/events must take place between August 1, 2021 and August 1, 2022
- A final report and accounting of expenses must be completed within 60 days after the completion of the event/activity to receive distribution of funds. Copies of original receipts are required with the final report.
- Events must comply with the most up-to-date Covid protocols specified by the jurisdiction in which the event takes place
- Failure to comply with the obligations will prohibit the organization from receiving a grant in the future.
- Grant recipients will provide the same benefits and sponsor recognition to Chattanooga Tourism Co. as given to other sponsors at the same level. If there is no established sponsor recognition, the Tourism Co. will partner with grant recipient on the appropriate use of the Tourism Co. logo, link and language for recognition.
- All marketing materials promoting the event or activity must include an approved message about Chattanooga as a destination. Tourism Co. will partner with the grant recipient to develop the destination message for appropriate channels.

# PAYMENT OF GRANTS

- Applicants should be able to demonstrate the ability to execute their project without depending on the continued financial assistance from these funds. It should be the intention of the organization to be self-sustaining
- In some circumstances, grants may be awarded over a period of years
- A legally binding funding agreement will be entered into between the Chattanooga Tourism Co. and successful applicants
- Successful recipients will receive 50% of the project funds on signing of the funding agreement and 50% on completion of the project and submission of completed documentation. A bank routing number may be provided for direct deposit payments.

## **Allowable expenses**

- Development of new visitor experiences that diversify tourism offerings in the region
- New or enhanced infrastructure upgrades to facilitate a new tourism visitor experience
- Implementation of new technology to create a new tourism visitor experience in the Chattanooga area
- Signage (wayfinding, on-site attraction, visitor information kiosk)
- Funding to support marketing a visitor experience to new audiences
- Participating in the Tourism Co. cooperative marketing program

## **Disallowable expenses**

- Rent of offices, repairs, renovation and/or remodeling of facilities
- General operating, personnel, or administrative expenses (excluding marketing consultants/agencies)
- Expenses incurred or obligated before grant approval (with the exception of events that occur within the calendar year but occur before the grant award date)
- Projects restricted to private or exclusive participation
- Scholarships or endowments
- Cash awards of any description
- Expenses not directly related to the approved project or program
- Project applicants cannot transfer funds from one specific tourism project to another without a written request and an addendum to the contract.
- Activities or materials which violate the law



# EXAMPLES - MARKETING

## Weak

An art museum plans a new glass art exhibit at the same time as an aquarium plans to open a new jellyfish exhibit. The two attractions work together to sell tickets. The aquarium and art museum apply for signage that cross promotes the exhibits.

A festival in Chattanooga wants to expand its audience at the festival. The festival applies for the grant, submitting a marketing plan to run billboards, digital ads, print ads and TV spots around Chattanooga.

A long-running film festival has a celebrity coming to Chattanooga for the upcoming event. They apply for funding to shoot a video with the celebrity. The application includes a bid from a contractor for the cost of the video production.

## Strong

An art museum and aquarium apply for marketing grant dollars to promote the same joint ticket outside of the Chattanooga area as a part of their strategy to drive visitors to Chattanooga. Their application includes a clear marketing plan and as well as a plan to track the joint ticket sales to measure the effectiveness of the campaign.

The same festival has identified a new market that shows promise based on the previous year's ticket sales. They would like to expand their marketing efforts and need additional funds to properly reach that market. The festival applies for the grant, submitting a marketing plan to run billboards, digital ads, print ads and TV spots in this new market. The application includes a system in place to track ticket sales by zip code and will provide reporting after the event is over to measure the effectiveness of the campaign.

The film festival applies for funding to shoot a video with the celebrity to distribute to targeted audiences, inviting them to the festival. The application includes a bid from a contractor for the cost of the video production and a distribution plan for the video. The film festival has tracking in place to know the amount of engagement with the video and ticket sales at the time of the video release to track conversions.

# EXAMPLES - PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

## Weak

A local museum requests funding for renovations to their exhibit and building that will enhance learning resources.

A local walking tour company requests funding for a fleet of bicycles that would enable them to expand their tour offerings.

A group of neighborhood businesses request funding for the creation of a regular, projection mapping experience on an iconic building downtown.

A group of historians request funding to design and install signage that call out important historical stories of a neighborhood.

## Strong

A local museum requests funding for renovations to their exhibit and building that will enhance learning resources. They demonstrate that 25% of their visitors are from out of area and include a study that concludes the renovations will increase visitation an additional 10%

A local walking tour company requests funding for a fleet of bicycles while demonstrating that a substantial number of previous visitors have requested bicycle tours. They include a plan to market the new tours outside of Chattanooga in order to attract more visitors.

A group of neighborhood businesses requests funding for the creation of a regular, projection mapping experience on an iconic building downtown that will draw both locals and visitors. They've already collaborated with the artists and technologists necessary to complete the project and they support their application with statistics on current visitation to the neighborhood and support their application with a plan to promote the new experience to markets outside Chattanooga.

A group of historians working with the city request funding to design and install signage that call out important historical stories of a neighborhood. To convey the value this would add to visitors' experience in our city, they've had conversations with multiple tourism partners that suggest visitors are looking for a historical context to their surroundings. They also include successful examples from other destinations.