

**Lancaster County Visitors Improvement Fund Grant Guidelines  
For 2025 Improvement Fund Grants (Effective March 2025)**

1. Visitor attractions in Lancaster County owned by the public, and visitor attractions in Lancaster County owned by non-profit organizations whose primary purpose is to operate a visitor attraction, are eligible to apply for Visitor Improvement Grant Funds during this cycle.
2. For those of you who are familiar with Visitor Improvement Fund Grants, please note the following criteria for the 2025 grant cycle:
  - a. A total of \$750,000 in grant funding is available during this grant cycle.
  - b. Grant awards shall not exceed \$100,000 per attraction.
  - c. Attractions receiving an award of \$10,000 or more during this grant cycle shall be eligible for future grant cycles only after 2025 grant funds for the awarded project are completely paid out.
3. Only one application per visitor attraction will be considered.
4. Applicants must complete and submit the Lancaster County Visitor Improvement Fund Grant Request form outlining the use and benefits of the requested funds. Failure to complete the entire application may result in the rejection of your fund request.
5. The Visitors Promotion Committee will review completed grant requests and applicant presentations. The Visitors Promotions Committee then will provide a recommendation to the Lancaster County Board of County Commissioners, which reserves the right to accept, deny, or modify any recommendation in its sole and absolute discretion.
6. All grant applications are reviewed for the economic impact the fund allocation will have on Lincoln and Lancaster County lodging tax collections. Grant applicants assume the responsibility for providing inclusive and comprehensive information in this application so that the review committee has all pertinent and relevant details in order to arrive at a decision.
7. Recommendation for allocation of Visitor Improvement Fund money will be prioritized as follows:
  - a. Expanding and improving any existing visitor attraction.
  - b. Expanding, improving, or acquiring exhibits for existing visitor attractions.
  - c. Planning or developing such expansion, improvements or acquisitions.
  - d. New construction.
8. Grant funds may not be used for the following:
  - a. General operating expenses.
  - b. Additional or current personnel salaries.
  - c. Supplies and equipment.
  - d. Items not included in the approved grant application.
  - e. Event-related operational costs and expenses.
  - f. General maintenance or replacement of an existing structural component of an existing facility. Per the IRS, a structural component is defined as: the term "structural components" includes "such parts of a building as walls, partitions, floors, and ceilings, as well as any permanent coverings therefor such as paneling or tiling; windows and doors; all components (whether in, on, or adjacent to the building) of a central air conditioning or heating system, including motors, compressors, pipes and ducts; plumbing and plumbing fixtures, such as sinks and bathtubs; electric wiring and lighting fixtures; chimneys; stairs, escalators, and elevators, including all components thereof; sprinkler systems; fire escapes; and other components relating to the operation or maintenance of a building.

9. Grant funds may also not be used in any manner that would violate the Nebraska Visitors Development Act, Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-3701, et seq. (as amended from time to time). All grants are discretionary, based upon available fund balance, other anticipated uses, and anticipated effectiveness of proposed use.
10. Funding requests must be accurately submitted in the appropriate funding categories as defined in the grant application. Requests that do not conform to the proper funding categories may result in the rejection of your fund request.
11. 2025 Improvement Fund Grant Schedule:

Due Date: April 30, 2025

Visitors Promotion Committee Review Date: May 15, 2025

Grants from eligible organizations that are timely and completely submitted to Visit Lincoln will be presented to the Visitors Promotion Committee. A recommendation for acceptance or denial then will be submitted to the Lancaster County Board of County Commissioners at a future date to be determined.

Applicants will be offered the opportunity to present their application to the Visitors Promotion Committee. The Lancaster County Board of County Commissioners may request that any or all applicants, in the sole and absolute discretion of the Lancaster County Board of County Commissioners, present their applications at a meeting of the Lancaster County Board of County Commissioners.

12. Approved applicants will be notified by the Lancaster County Board of County Commissioners. Approved applicants will be required to enter a grant contract with Lancaster County, on terms acceptable to Lancaster County, in order to receive Grant funding.
13. All applicants are required to submit, among other documentation, facility and project budgets with this application. Please refer to the application for documentation requirements and be sure that supporting documentation accompanies your application. Incomplete applications will not be presented to the Visitors Promotion Committee.
14. **Visitor Improvement Funds will be paid only upon completion of the project, unless otherwise agreed to in the grant contract with Lancaster County.** To request reimbursement, your organization must supply a detailed listing of all expenditures and a professional external audit of your organization that covers the period of those expenditures; or a detailed listing of those expenditures and copies of all receipts, cancelled checks, contracts and/or other documents that substantiate those expenditures. Payment will not occur until this audit or documentation is supplied.
15. At the conclusion of approved projects, support given through the grant must be acknowledged through appropriate visual notification that will be placed on websites, materials, and within the facility at the cost of the grantee. Lancaster County will furnish the appropriate specifications for acknowledgement.

2025 LANCASTER COUNTY VISITORS IMPROVEMENT FUND  
GRANT REQUEST

Name of Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Address/City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Status: Non-Profit \_\_\_\_ Association \_\_\_\_ Civic Group \_\_\_\_ Governmental/Public \_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

(If other, please attach explanation)

Applicant Government/organization Federal ID number \_\_\_\_\_.

If tax exempt organization, designate IRS classification: \_\_\_\_\_ 501(c)(3) \_\_\_\_\_ 501(c)(6).  
Attach supporting tax-exempt documentation.

Is this grant request in addition to other project-related grant requests?

\_\_\_\_\_

If yes, then list other grant requests \_\_\_\_\_

**Grant amount requested from Visitors Improvement Fund:**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**PROJECT**

Provide a detailed description of your attraction as it exists today:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please describe how the project will expand and/or improve your attraction and the overall goals of the project:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Check all that apply to this project:

- ☐ Expanding and improving an existing visitor attraction.  
☐ Expanding, improving, or acquiring exhibits for an existing visitor attraction.  
☐ Planning or developing expansion, improvements or acquisitions for an existing visitor attraction.  
☐ New construction.

Project Start Date \_\_\_\_\_ Project Completion Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe how the project will enhance Lancaster County's tourism ecosystem:

---

---

---

---

Community support for your project is critical to its success. Please attach copies of support letters for the project from community partners and a copy of a resolution of approval for the application from your organization's governing board.

Please attach copies of project plans; requests for proposals or bid solicitations; contractor bids, quotes, or responses; and contractor contracts.

Is this project part of a larger expansion, improvement, or acquisition project? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please describe the entire project, including individual phase start and completion dates and overall project start and completion dates:

---

---

---

---

## **BUDGET**

Please attached a detailed budget for your attraction.

Please attach a detailed project budget.

Total Project Revenue \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Project Expense \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please identify project funding sources, including secured and pending applications for funding, other than the Visitors Improvement Fund:

---

---

---

---

Please describe your plan to sustain the completed project prospectively:

---

---

---

---

If you anticipate submitting future applications to the Visitors Improvement Fund to fund any aspects of this project, please describe those anticipated requests below:

---

---

---

---

## IMPACT

Number of visitors to your attraction during the prior calendar year:

From outside of Lancaster County \_\_\_\_\_

From inside Lancaster County \_\_\_\_\_

Total visitors \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated number of visitors to your attraction expected during the current calendar year:

From outside of Lancaster County \_\_\_\_\_

From inside Lancaster County \_\_\_\_\_

Total visitors \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe the completed project's financial impact on Lancaster County's tourism economy, including attaching relevant facility data, visitor data, and economic impact studies.

---

---

---

Estimated additional annual visitors because of the project:

From outside of Lancaster County \_\_\_\_\_

From inside Lancaster County \_\_\_\_\_

Total visitors \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Local Economic Activity Analysis:

I. National visitors to your project with associated hotel overnights:

(A) Number of hotel room nights booked because of the project \_\_\_\_\_

(B) Applicable Multiplier Amount \$ 375

(C) Estimated annual local economic activity = (A) multiplied by (B) =  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

II. Regional and In-State visitors to your project with associated hotel overnights:

(A) Number of hotel room nights booked because of the project \_\_\_\_\_

(B) Applicable Multiplier Amount \$ 350

(C) Estimated annual local economic activity = (A) multiplied by (B) =  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

III. Local visitors to your project without associated hotel overnights:

(A) Total visitors because of the project \_\_\_\_\_

(B) Applicable Multiplier Amount for Local events \$120

(C) Estimated annual local economic activity = (A) multiplied by (B) =  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

IV. Total estimated annual local economic activity = I + II + III = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: Multipliers determined by 2025 local and national industry standards**

(Multipliers encompass the total economic impact of a visit and are not intended to equate solely to the cost of attending the event.)

Signature of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Return your completed Application to:**

Visit Lincoln  
Attn: Jeff Maul, Executive Director  
1128 Lincoln Mall, Suite 100  
Lincoln, NE 68508

For more information:  
(402) 434-5343 [jmaul@lincoln.org](mailto:jmaul@lincoln.org)

---