



# YORK COUNTY TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM

## General Information and Guidelines

### Background and General Information

Explore York and the York County Commissioners established a matching grant program aimed at boosting tourism (visitation from beyond a 50-mile radius) in York County. The program, which is funded through a room tax enacted by the York County Commissioners, provides financial support to initiatives deemed capable of generating broad and substantial benefit to York County tourism. The York County Tourism Grant Committee will be accepting applications for projects aimed at expanding and/or improving tourism promotion and development in York County. Non-profit, for-profit and government agencies are eligible to apply.

The committee seeks proposals that collectively represent a broad range of approaches to grow tourism and enhance the visitor experience in York County. It will be looking for proposals that reflect creativity and innovation, an understanding of the tourism industry and current trends, and that present a clear and convincing case for how the proposed initiative will expand tourism or broadly enhance the visitor experience. It is especially interested in proposals that describe a compelling case for maximizing the economic impact of tourism in York County by increasing overnight stays.

Some areas of interest to the committee include:

- Strengthening the competitiveness of existing attractions or events
- Building upon existing attractions or events to attract new visitors or drive increased tourist spending
- Developing new attractions or events with potential for substantial impact through increased overnight stays
- Broadly enhancing the visitor experience

The committee is particularly interested in proposals that will leverage grant dollars by:

- Attracting additional funding sources
- Bringing together collaborators or partners to align strategies, leverage consistent messaging and amplify impact
- Increasing organizational capacity to drive greater impact
- Advancing a high potential project or event to the next level or phase

Successful applicants will be able to articulate/provide most of the following:

- A clear vision of the impact their project will have on tourism in York County
- A realistic sense of what it will take to execute their project successfully
- Reliable data or evidence to support the proposed approach
- Relevant consumer/visitor input or feedback
- A strategic plan that describes the organization's direction and key goals
- Internally generated reports that reflect a financially stable organization without significant operating deficits or an unsustainable level of debt
- Evidence of experience and success with project design, management and execution

Grant applications and grants may be for multi-year projects and pay-outs.

## Requirements and Restrictions

1. The grant program is intended to market or help position York County as a sports, leisure, business, convention or meeting travel destination.
2. There is no set number of grant awards to be made in any fiscal year.
3. This grant program is not intended to be a sustaining operating funding source for the applicant or the proposed project.
4. Tourism or travel marketing or promotion program, expenditure or project must not unduly compete with private-sector tourism or travel efforts. \*
5. All grant recipients will be required to make a cash or in-kind match of at least 25% of requested grant amount. \*
6. An individual applicant must submit an application under a fiscal sponsor or form an LLC. All applicants must have an EIN and be organized and registered to do business in Pennsylvania.
7. All grant recipients will be required to provide liability insurance in the amount of \$1 million naming Explore York as additional insured. Grant funded events serving/selling alcohol will also need to provide liquor liability insurance in the amount of 1 million, naming Explore York as additional insured.
8. Project expenses incurred prior to grant notification are not eligible as a grant expense.
9. Signage that promotes a specific private entity on the situs of that entity is not a permitted use of grant funds, except where the signage also carries the logo of Explore York. \*
10. To promote collaboration and the overall destination:
  - All marketing material including but not limited to printed ads, postcards, promotional, video, TV, banners or digital, funded by the grant program, must contain the Explore York logo and website.
  - Depending on the project some recipients may be asked to incorporate additional elements of the county brand such as; use of the split circle, color palette, fonts and including “have it made here.”
  - Digital materials must link to [www.yorkpa.org](http://www.yorkpa.org). Grant recipients must also provide a link on their website to [www.yorkpa.org](http://www.yorkpa.org)
  - All logos are located on the website. <https://www.yorkpa.org/about-us/tourism-grant-program/explore-york-logos/>
  - Grant recipients will receive a box of the Official York County Travel Guide to distribute at place of business or at the grant funded event.
  - Press Releases to announce funded events must include acknowledgement of funding through the York County Tourism Grant Program.
11. Grant applications are not confidential. If information within the application needs to be kept private, please indicate on the application what documents need to remain private.
12. Successful applicants will be asked to sign a grant contract in order to receive their initial check.
13. Grant recipients are required to submit a post grant report with receipts for program expenditures of \$500 or more totaling the grant amount and the 25 percent match. The post grant report and receipts are due 90 days after completion of project.
14. Grant recipients who have not submitted the required interim reports and post report (including receipts) will be ineligible for a future grant.

\* Act 18 legal requirement

## Grant Match

ACT 18 requires recipients to provide at least a 25 percent match, cash or in-kind, of the requested grant amount.

### **A cash match can be derived from:**

- Applicant dollars
- Sponsorships
- Donated dollars
- Leveraging another grant

### **An In-Kind match could include:**

- Donated physical items - examples: rental venue, printed collateral
- Donated professional services - classified as someone who routinely, as a career, provides that service. Examples: accounting services, legal services, painting, IT development
- Volunteer hours will NOT be accepted as an in-kind match.
- Staff time will NOT be accepted as an in-kind match.

All in-kind matches need to be valued and documented by the donating organization(s). In-kind service documentation must include work performed, date/dates of the services and hourly rate and hours donated.

## Scoring Criteria

### **Program Impact - 50 %**

- Will have a significant positive impact on the community and population served
- Is consistent with funding priorities
- Maximizes economic impact via visitation from beyond a 50 mile radius of York County
- Longevity of impact

### **Program Plan - 16.6%**

- Program design and action plan are feasible and understandable
- Clear, understandable statement of need that aligns with program's outcomes & indicators
- Does not replicate existing services or compete with private sector
- Provides broad economic impact to multiple stakeholders
- Budget is logical - proposed expenses & revenues are clear and feasible; (appropriate to total project cost; not subsidizing existing/operational expenses)
- Collaborative effort

### **Agency/Project Capacity to be Successful- 16.6%**

- Agency is capable of carrying out project and is prepared to take on proposed program
- Project is consistent with agency mission
- Implementation timeline is reasonable

### **Outcomes - 16.6%**

- Project has measurable outcomes, indicators and evaluation criteria in place
- Project will have significant impact that is positive and measurable (i.e. "move the needle")

## Explore York Logo Guidelines

Grant recipients shall follow the logo guidelines when designing advertising (print or digital) or communication pieces and must include the Explore York logo on all print and digital media as it relates to the awarded grant project. Drafts of any materials and publicity about the grant project need to be emailed in advance of printing or distribution to [louise@yorkpa.org](mailto:louise@yorkpa.org).

### Logo Guidelines:

- A white box surrounding the logo should not appear when using the Explore York logo
- The logo should have a “buffer” or clear space around it to maintain legibility and visual impact.

### Digital Media

- o The Explore York logo must be included on electronic media with a link to [www.yorkpa.org](http://www.yorkpa.org).
- o Online/web communications should utilize the .png formatted logo

### Print Media

- o Smaller sized printed material should utilize the .png formatted logo
- o Large print material and vector-based artwork should utilize .eps format. Vector-based artwork is scalable and must be used when producing large format pieces, such as building signs, trade show banners, window displays, vehicle wraps, and billboards. While the size of the logo can be scaled larger, it must retain its proportions. The logo should always be proportionate to the rest of the project.

### Video Media

- o Video media should utilize the .png or .eps formatted logo
- o The logo should appear as the last frame in a size large enough to make it and the “yorkpa.org” easily readable by a viewer.
- o Preferably the logo should “hang” on the screen for a minimum of three seconds.