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Explore York

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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York County Tourism Grant Committee Approves \$125,000 in Funding

Explore York Grant Program – Round Two 2025

YORK, PA – The York County Tourism Grant Committee and the Explore York Board of Directors approved funding for six applications for projects or events that came through the 2025 round two grant cycle. The Explore York Board of Directors ratified these applications in September, and they were then approved by the York County Commissioners on October 15.

"We invest in projects that drive measurable economic impact," said President Commissioner Julie Wheeler about the York County Tourism Grant Program. "It's about more than tourism—by investing in experiences that attract visitors and showcase what makes York County unique, we foster collaboration, provide job creation opportunities, support local businesses, and highlight York County as a premier destination in Pennsylvania."

The York County Tourism Grant Program has awarded more than \$7 million in funding since its 2017 inception and continues to support Explore York's mission to strengthen tourism in York County. This program was established to support initiatives that enhance York County's billion-dollar tourism industry. Grant funded initiatives aim to draw visitors from outside of a 50-mile radius into York County, thus generating overnight hotel stays and additional economic impact through restaurant visits and other travel & tourism related expenses.

The following six grants were awarded:

1. **White Rose Figure Skating Club (\$20,000)** – A multi-year grant to expand the Keystone State Games (KSG) Figure Skating competition, capitalizing on skaters looking to qualify for Games of America. The KSG event is open to skaters age 4 – 66 and has been hosted in York since 2016.
2. **Northern Central Railway (\$10,000)** – To celebrate America's 250th in York County, PA, with a weekend-long celebration, leveraging grant funding received from America250PA.
3. **Handsome Cab (\$12,000)** – Supporting the creation of Champagne Fest, this multi-day, collaborative expansion includes the highly popular Champagne Stroll which has consistently sold out during its three-year history.



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4. **Maximum Cheer (\$20,000)** – Supporting the expansion of Pennsylvania Madness, a two-day cheer event this December that's expecting 600 participants and spectators from outside of the area and will be hosted at the York Expo Center.
5. **Taste2Tour (\$10,000)** – A year-long marketing and advertising campaign designed to increase out-of-area awareness and visitation to York City and its dining scene, partnering with 10+ participating restaurants & bars.
6. **Western PA Bruins (\$53,000)** – To establish the May Madness Grassroots Girls Basketball Tournament at the York Expo Center, a new girls' basketball tournament with intentions to operate annually and anticipating 3,000 participants and spectators from outside of the area.

The York County Tourism Grant Committee includes nine appointed seats. Six of those seats are appointed by various independent organizations within the county. The committee for this round was comprised of Bryan Tate, York County Register of Wills & Clerk of Orphans' Court; Christina McCullough, Stewart & Tate; Katie Mahoney, YCEA & Downtown Inc; Carmen Witmer, PA House of Representatives, Office of Senator Dawn Keefer; Sarah Messer, Hanover Area Chamber of Commerce; Tyler Chronister, County of York Pennsylvania; Ophelia Chambliss, Ophelia's Making Agency; Elaine Bonneau, Bonneau & Associates; and Scott Deisley, Crispus Attucks Association of York.

Laura Wagner, President of Explore York, said, "This committee diligently reviews numerous detailed applications during our bi-annual grant cycles, with the goal of identifying projects that have the potential for far reaching economic impact that will draw tourists into all corners of York County."

The next window for grant applications opens January 1, 2026. All grant applications require 25% cash or in-kind match. All approved grant recipients must provide post-grant reports no later than 90 days following project completion. Interested applicants are strongly encouraged to schedule a consultation with the Grant Program Manager, Elizabeth Fisher. Additional program requirements and restrictions are listed [here](#). Questions about the application process may be directed to Elizabeth@YorkPA.org or 717-852-9675, ext. 113.

More information about Explore York:

The Explore York Tourism Grant Program provides all applicants with equal opportunity for funding consideration and does not discriminate based on race, gender, religion, caste, or creed.

Explore York's mission is to maximize tourism expenditures and their economic impact in York County, PA, through comprehensive tourism sales and marketing programs. Explore York's vision is for a York County where tourism is recognized for the value of its economic impact and its role in raising the profile of York County as a sought-after destination. For more information on Explore York, visit YorkPA.org.

