

## **Bucks County Conference and Visitors Bureau**

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### **BCCVB Tourism Grant Program Guidelines**

#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Bucks County Conference and Visitors Bureau (BCCVB) shall be the development and enhancement of the not for profit tourism product in Bucks County through the operation of the tourism grant program. The BCCVB shall make grant funding available to applicants consistent with the grant guidelines of the BCCVB. The aim of the tourism grant program is to aid non-profit historic preservation, the expansion and improvement of future and existing tourism attractions, supporting the rich cultural heritage and special events in Bucks County aimed at attracting visitors, and funding marketing expenditures associated with the above.

The creation and implementation of educational events important to the Bureau, designed to assist Bureau partners on current trends and best practices in the tourism industry and to maximize their well-being.

A Resolution of the Bucks County Conference and Visitors Bureau was resolved and enacted by the Board of Directors on March 13, 2008 and approved by the Bucks County Commissioners on April 16, 2008 to become effective on May 1, 2008.

The Tourism Grant Review Committee will be one member appointed by the BCCVB, one member appointed by the County Commissioners and a third member chosen by the before mentioned members.

#### **The Purpose of the BCCVB Tourism Grant Program**

The Bucks County Conference and Visitors Bureau will designate a portion of the proceeds of the county's tax on lodging, agreed upon by the County Commissioners and the Bureau, towards funding a tourism grant program. The program will look to fund eligible participants in Capital Projects related to tourism promotion, marketing, historic preservation and enhancement of attractions and the staging of special events designed to attract visitors to the county.

#### **Eligible Recipients**

Eligible recipients are limited to non-profit (501-c3 or 501-c6) organizations or other entities that are located in Bucks County and are members of the Bucks County Conference and Visitors Bureau..

#### **Eligible Activities**

There are three categories in which grants are awarded, Special Events, Capital Projects and Marketing efforts:

Special Festivals, shows, performances, exhibits, programs and other events that will attract visitors, especially from outside of Bucks County will be considered. Annual events will not be considered. Event organizers must provide documentation of fund raising and marketing efforts.

The development and implementation of a marketing and fund raising plan should be designed to increase visitation to an attraction or event. This can include development of materials (printed, audio, visual or web based), which aid visitors to better understand, appreciate, or interpret their visit or experience.

## **Typical Grant Amounts**

Will vary for each application.

## **Timetable for Applications**

The Bureau will review grant applications twice a year, in April and October. Applications are due on the first day of these two months. Whatever the deadline date, full applications must be in the Bureau's offices by 5:00 PM of that day. Our Grant Committee Panel will review applications by the end of the application month, and formal notification is generally given by May 15 and November 15.

## **Other Application Requirements**

Applicants are requested to submit an application on forms provided by the Bureau which are available on our website, and to outline the details of the project or program, how it is expected to attract new visitors to Bucks County, especially from outside of the county, the extent of funds raised independent of the grant funding requested, as well as the amount of the funding requested and the date the funds will be required. The application must include information on anticipated visitation, audience profile, marketing plans, and benefit to the community.

The Grant Committee Panel reserves the right to consider special grant requests.

## **Allowable Frequency of Applications**

Applicants may receive up to two grants per calendar year. However, the applications may not be for the same project.

Multi year grants will be considered, not to exceed three years.

## **Other Stipulations and Requirements**

Grant applications for activities or events that are, in the opinion of the Grant Committee Panel, primarily related to fundraising for the sponsor are strongly discouraged. The only deviation from this policy will be if the Grant Committee views the event as a bona fide tourism generator bringing in significant visitation from outside the county.

The grant funds are not to be used for general operating expenses.

Successful applicants will be asked to sign our "Agreement to Terms and Conditions" form in order to receive their initial check.

Each application must clearly state who is the director for their application's activity and this must be the person who signs all paperwork.

All awarded funds must be spent, and all corresponding paperwork completing the grant submitted by the last day of the month one year after the grant application month. In other words, if you apply in October, you must close out the grant by the following October. If these terms and the deadline are not met the Bureau will seek reimbursement of its funding from the recipient unless an extension is approved by the grant panel.

Copies of cancelled checks will be required to document your total expenditures.

Staff time, volunteer time, salaries and wages are not eligible for reimbursement.

Applications for activities or projects that take place before the grant application deadline will be denied. In special occasions a waiver from this policy may be requested from the Grant Committee Panel. Contact the Bureau's Executive Director for more details. Should a waiver be approved it does not imply the application will be ultimately approved.

Applicants will be required to submit a Closeout Report to the Bucks County CVB.

Grant recipients are required to credit the Bucks County Conference and Visitors Bureau for funding the project in whole or in part.

Grant recipients are reminded to review the various marketing opportunities that the BCCVB offers to determine if they would benefit by the large buying power of the BCCVB.