

Tourism Product Development Grant Guidelines

Sponsored by Cumberland Area Economic Development Corporation (CAEDC) d/b/a
Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau (CVVB)

Revised & Effective September 23, 2024

ELIGIBILITY

In order to be eligible to participate, an Applicant must be:

- submitting an application that directly impacts tourism to Cumberland County, PA;
- a for-profit, not-for-profit or governmental enterprise;
- a partner (as defined by CAEDC) in good standing;
- closed out of any open Tourism Product Development or Tourism Recovery Grants facilitated by CAEDC at the time of grant application submittal; and
- applying for funds for a non-retroactive project.

PROJECT CRITERIA

For a project to be considered, the project should meet the following basic criteria:

- increases visitation or enhances the visitor experience in a measurable way;
- the tourism sector supports the project and the project does not create an unfair competitive disadvantage to other local businesses;
- integrates well with the existing destination product;
- generates economic benefits and/or quality of life improvements for local community; and
- is sustainable, and financially and conceptually viable.

Additional criteria for grant requests of \$75,000 and over include:

- Is the Applicant complementary to or does it serve an anchor role in the local economy?
- What is the Applicant's current financial health or ability to capitalize the project?

Goals of Tourism Product Development

1. Increase the number of products, experiences and services that will draw overnight visitors to Cumberland Valley.
2. Grow the number of visits, length of stay and spending by visitors to Cumberland Valley.
3. Keep Cumberland Valley's tourism assets competitive with other destinations.

REQUEST AMOUNTS & MATCH REQUIREMENTS

Grant requests may be made for \$25,000 to \$250,000.

The Applicant must provide at least a \$0.50 match for each dollar awarded. For a \$60,000 total project, a \$40,000 award would be matched by \$20,000 from the Applicant. Applications that include a higher

amount than required of cash match may be given higher consideration than those with equal in-kind match.

Non-profit and governmental organizations may meet part of the match through in-kind services or product contribution, provided they have a minimum of 25% additional cash match. For a \$60,000 total project, a \$40,000 award could be matched by \$10,000 in-kind services or product contribution plus \$10,000 cash from the Applicant. For-profit organizations may not use in-kind services or product contributions as the local share match. For-profit match must be cash or other grants.

CAEDC reserves the right to require financial information to help assess the Applicant's strength and capacity to deliver on the project. Basic financial requirements are listed by request amount below, but CAEDC may request additional information based on the project.

Requests up to \$75,000

- Last Year's Business Tax Return (For-Profit)
- Year-to-Date Profit & Loss (For-Profit)
- Last Year's Financial Statement (Non-Profit)
- Certificate of Organization, Articles of Incorporation or Certificate of Limited Partnership
- Operating Agreement, Bylaws or Partnership Agreement
- Quotes for all activities included in your application

Requests over \$75,000

- Last Year's Business Tax Return (For-Profit)
- Year to Date Profit & Loss (For-Profit)
- Previous Two Year's Financial Statements (Non-Profit)
- Certificate of Organization, Articles of Incorporation or Certificate of Limited Partnership
- Operating Agreement, Bylaws or Partnership Agreement
- Quotes for all activities included in your application
- Business Plan, Concept Plan, Economic Impact Report and/or Feasibility Study, as appropriate to the project (For-Profit & Non-Profit)

Timeline

Applications for the Tourism Product Development Grant are accepted as funds are available. Initially, applications are reviewed by CAEDC's Tourism Committee and if deemed appropriate for further consideration; CAEDC's Finance Committee is charged with final decision making. This process takes 45-60 days.

If awarded, Applicants should anticipate a 30-day turnaround time on their grant agreement, as well as an additional 30-day turnaround time on their first fund distribution. Project timelines should start 75 days after the application submittal. Applicants have 18 months to complete their projects.

TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT FOCUS AREAS

Tourism Product Development comprises those experiences, activities and products that are specifically provided for the visitor and community. Examples are provided below. *Please note that this list is not all-inclusive.*

Soft Product Development

- New event development that will create overnight stays
- Expanded existing event development that will create overnight stays
- Thematic trails and factory, production, history, architectural, agritourism and other experience-based tours that create overnight stays and add to visitor spending impacts

Asset Product Development

- Facilities
 - Meeting/Conference Venue
 - Sports Complex/fields that supports the youth travel sports market
 - Indoor waterpark that supports leisure travel
 - County-wide attraction that will draw visitors from outside the region
 - Food & Beverage / Specialty/Unique Retail that will draw visitors from the 5-hour drive market
- Lodging
 - Waterfront
 - Unique to our marketplace - boutique, full-service
 - Additional meeting or banquet space amenities within a lodging facility
- Recreational Trails and Resources
 - Multimodal trails
 - Trails and gateways that connect trails (water or land)
 - Resources that improve and extend experience, such as boat launches or trailhead access
- Development and/or Redevelopment of an area with tourism potential
 - Trail towns that support and connects to the outdoor recreational assets and outdoor visitor
 - Waterfront Development that extends the visitor stay and experience
 - Amusement/entertainment that will draw visitors from the 5-hour drive market
 - Could include conservation and restoration projects

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Interested Applicants should schedule an in-person meeting with the Tourism Development Manager prior to submitting an application. This early step is designed to assist the Applicant with their application with the intent to provide competitive advantage and ensure that the project is well-defined.
2. The application is available through the website portal. It must be submitted electronically. **Please visit <https://cumberlandbusiness.com/tourism-grants/>.**

3. All required attachments must be digital files. No handwritten responses will be accepted.
4. Upon successful submission of an application and supporting materials; an electronic response is sent. Be sure to check your spam or junk folders. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to confirm receipt of the grant application.

AWARD GUIDELINES & REQUIREMENTS

A for-profit business that receives a grant is required to treat the grant as income and is responsible for paying any federal, state and local taxes.

This grant program is not an entitlement program. Awards will be merit-based.

This grant program cannot fund operating labor costs, signage or other routine expenditures that are a part of the Applicant's normal operating budget. This grant program also cannot fund acquisition of buildings or land. All funds must directly support the project as scoped and defined in the application submitted by the Applicant.

Although eligible to apply, Applicants should not assume that they will be awarded a grant on an annual basis, nor should they consider this grant program a permanent addition to their annual budget. Applicants that can communicate a compelling need that directly enhances CVVB's tourism mission with quantifiable results may be given higher consideration. Grants may be awarded for multiple years, if requirements are met. Past grant stewardship and compliance with grant requirements will be considered while reviewing new applications from applicants who have received tourism grants in the past, which may impact future grant awards.

Additional criteria may be required for your grant application. The award letter and agreement will clearly outline all criteria and timeframes for meeting stipulations.

Once approved, a Grant Agreement will be mailed to the successful Applicant ("Grantee") for execution. Upon execution of the Grant Agreement, programs must be executed and award amount must be used within 18 months of the award announcement date. If the funds are not expended within the 18-month period, the Grantee must inform the Tourism Development Manager in writing that the project has been canceled or to request an extension. CVVB reserves the right to reject a request for extension and cancel the grant.

As a provision of accepting these funds, Grantee must provide adequate proof (receipts, invoices, canceled checks, credit card statements, wire transfers, etc.) that the funds received were used for their intended purpose. CVVB reserves the right to audit the Grantees records and use of funds.

A Final Project Report is required within 60 calendar days of the completion of the project. A template will be provided to the Grantee.

Grant funds will be awarded on a reimbursement basis. At a minimum 20% of the grant funds will not be released until the final report is received and approved by CVVB. Depending on the project, the

amount of grant funds to be held may be higher than 20%. The amount will be defined in the Grant Agreement. A site visit is required before held grant funds can be released.

Grantees that do not meet the post-award requirements will be deemed ineligible to apply for future cycle grant rounds or other programs.

Pennsylvania Prevailing Wage Act – In the event the Pennsylvania Prevailing Wage Act applies to this project, the Grantee, its subgrantees, contractors and subcontractors shall comply with the provisions, duties, obligations, remedies, and penalties of the Pennsylvania Prevailing Wage Act, 43 P.S. § 165-1 et seq. The general prevailing minimum wage rates, as determined by the Secretary of Labor and Industry, shall be paid for each craft or classification of all workmen needed to perform work on the project during the term hereof for the locality in which the work is to be performed.

Grant Recognition

Grantee shall publicly acknowledge the support that the CAEDC and CVVB grant program provided through all reasonable vehicles as a stipulation of accepting such awards. Grantee is required to have a hyperlinked Cumberland Valley PA destination logo on their website following the award of the grant. Additional required recognition will be outlined in the award letter and agreement. CVVB reserves the right to promote this grant program and Grantees as deemed appropriate or beneficial to the CVVB. Any media obtained through this grant program must be shared with CVVB for promotional use.

The information provided herein is a guideline for eligibility to partake in the Tourism Product Development Grant Program and should not be relied upon by an applicant who believes they will receive a grant based upon the information herein. A grant award letter will be issued to all successful grant applicants and until such letter is issued, CAEDC reserves the right to deny any application based upon its determination that the applicant did not meet the requirements of the program.