

2016 Somerset County Tourism Grant Application Marketing

Sponsored by: Somerset County Board of Commissioners and
Administered by the Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau

You must submit **FIVE (5)** copies of this application with attachments to:

Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau (LHVB)
Somerset County Tourism Grant Program
120 East Main Street
Ligonier, PA 15658
Phone – 724.238.5661, Ext. 101

Deadline for receipt at LHVB Offices:
No later than 4:30 PM on FRIDAY, January 29, 2016

Applications may be mailed or personally delivered to the Laurel Highlands Office. **Fax transmittals or e-mails will not be accepted.** Any application received after the deadline will be disqualified. Granting decisions will be determined and notification will be announced mid to late March 2016.

NOTICE: HANDWRITTEN APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Funds distributed in the form of grants are a portion of the hotel room occupancy tax collections. Grant funding thus, should be primarily used for marketing and advertising expenses that target potential visitors who reside outside of the Laurel Highlands counties, and whose visit is likely to result in an overnight lodging or B&B room stay.

Grant Match and Eligible Expenses

There is a high probability the state law will require a 25% match. Please prepare the application with that expectation. Half of the match can be in-kind services and/or donated materials; however, documentation must be provided for any in-kind match. Volunteer work is valued at \$10/hour and must be documented, including dates and list of volunteers, the services they provided, and their hours of service. If you receive a grant, you can incur expenses eligible for assistance immediately after grant notification. (Expenses cannot be incurred before notification date.)

A variety of tourism-related marketing expenses are eligible for funding under this program including:

- Internet web site development or enhancement.
- Image marketing (creating photo or film libraries, logo development, new art work, etc.).
- Tourism awareness programs and customer service programs.
- Brochure design and printing, and
- Advertising (TV stations, radio stations, newspapers, magazines, billboards, etc. – local media may be included if the majority of their audience is out of the county).

One-time events that will not be continued annually do not qualify for grant funds.

Expenses not eligible for grant funding:

- Food, lodging, mileage and transportation costs.
- Purchase or rental computers, software, projectors and other equipment.
- Telephone expenses.
- Postage and handling expenses, brochure racks.
- Envelopes, letterhead, business cards, and miscellaneous office supplies.
- Membership dues, salaries and talent/dignitary honorariums.
- Rental of office space.
- Physical construction of billboards, and
- Gift cards, t-shirts and items for resale.

Grant Guidelines

- No more than two grant applications are accepted from any single applicant (1 of each type).
- Grants are available for for-profit and non-profit organizations, according the County MOU.
- A federal identification number is required to submit an application.
- A credit line for the Somerset County Tourism Grant Program and its official logo must be included on any advertisement or literature paid for by the grant.
- Once notification is given to projects selected for a grant, a contract will be made between the Somerset County Grant Committee and the applicant outlining what can be funded with grant dollars.
- Recipients are required to incorporate the Somerset County Tourism Program Logo in all marketing projects.

Please refer to the Somerset County Tourism Grant Program Criteria and Guidelines for more detailed information.

Grant Application Instructions

Applications must include:

- Completed cover page.
- No more than two (2) typed pages of narrative to describe the project, answering the questions specific to the application grant category.
- A copy of the marketing plan for the project.
- A budget worksheet specifically listing the projects' activities for which the grant will be used.
 - Must identify radio and TV stations by location and call letters (for example WTAE TV, Pittsburgh)
 - Must provide coverage area maps for all media buys (print or electronic media including television stations, radio stations, newspapers, magazines, etc.) identified in budget worksheet. Must also include information that shows their audience and reach, and indicate why this target market was chosen in relation to your project and overall marketing plan in your marketing plan.
 - Must include copy of quotes and bids for all project activities identified in the budget worksheet.

Submit five (5) copies of the entire application, with each individual copy paper clipped. **DO NOT** staple set together and **DO NOT** place applications in folders or binders.

Key criteria grant committee members will take into account when reviewing and selecting tourism projects for funding:

- **The project has the ability to draw or increase the number of tourists.**
- **The project provides a distinctive experience.**
- **The project has the potential to appeal to various age groups or to educate/develop appreciation by future generations.**

Take up to two (2) typed pages to answer the following questions

SECTION I: *General Information*

1. Provide a brief description of your organization/applicant/business:
2. If a cooperative project involving more than one entity, please list the names of the additional participants below [include organization name(s) and contact(s) and phone number(s)]:

Organization #1
Contact
Phone #

Organization #2
Contact
Phone #

(Additional organizations may be added here)

SECTION II: *Marketing Grant Request*

Marketing Grant Requested: \$ _____

Total Projected Budget for this Project: \$ _____

Other funding sources and amounts include:

SECTION III: *Marketing Project Information*

Please answer all of the following questions as completely as possible; you may attach additional pages if necessary.

- Mission of this project. In two or three sentences, describe the current need, problem, or opportunity and how grant funds will address these issues.
- *****How will this project enhance or increase tourism in Somerset County?*****
(Your response to this question is vitally important to the committees' decision relative to your application!)

SECTION IV: *Marketing Plan:*

1. Please provide a detailed marketing plan which includes:
 - a. Target audience – location, gender, age and number of individuals to be targeted.
 - b. Proposed media to be used or distribution of marketing materials plus documentation required as identified in the Grant application Instructions.
 - c. Budget details on Budget Worksheet.
 - d. Time line – include anticipated start of project and project completion date.
2. How will your organization judge the effectiveness of this project? How will results be measured?

SECTION V: General Information

1. If your organization is a **tourist attraction**:

a. What were your annual visitation numbers for the past two years?

2014: _____ 2015: _____

b. How are the visitation numbers provided above determined?

2. If your business is a **lodging facility**:

a. How many rooms/beds are at your facility?

b. What was your annual occupancy percentage for the past two years?

2014: _____ 2015: _____

Applicants are reminded that this grant is not a permanent allocation and that there is no guarantee of a grant being made at any time in the future.

I/We affirm that all information in this application and all attachments are true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge, and that the receipt of any grant funds relative to this request will be used for the purpose detailed within this application. I/We agree to abide by all local, state, and federal laws and regulations. I/We understand that the Tourism Grant Review Committee will require receipts and a certification to verify the expenditure of any grant funds received, and I/we agree to furnish said documentation. I/We further understand that the expenditure of grant funds received might be subject to audit and/or further verification and I/we agree to cooperate with any such audit or verification process.

Name (print): _____ Title: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Applicant is a non-profit organization and:

☐ A copy of applicant's non-profit organization IRS 501(c)(3) Determination Letter is attached

☐ A list of applicant's Board of Directors with addresses, etc., is attached

Date Received by LHVB: _____ By: _____

2016 Tourism Marketing Grant Budget Worksheet
(Include Advertising and Contractor Bids if Applicable)

Be specific regarding types of advertising (for example, magazine, newspaper, radio, TV, visitors guides, rack cards, brochures, posters, web sites, travel show booth and registration fees, etc.) All advertising by both call letter and city of origin (for example, KDKA-Pittsburgh, NPR-Washington DC) and magazine and newspaper advertising by individual publications and costs.

You must show how both the grant amount requested and the matches (both cash and in-kind) will be allocated among activities. Remember that the match must be at least 25% of the total cost and that at least half of the match (or 12.5% of the total cost) must be in cash. The other half of the match can be "in-kind," consisting of volunteer services and donated materials. Volunteer services should be valued at \$10 per hour.

Application/Project _____ County _____

Name of Grant

City/Town of Applicant _____ Federal ID# _____

Activity	Grant Amount Requested	Match (Cash)	Match (In-Kind)	Source of Match	Total Funds
Column Totals:					

(Total of Grant Amount Requested + Match (Cash) + Match (In-Kind) Must Equal Final Column Total.)