

TGRC Grant Guidelines Fiscal Year 2021-2022

*part of the Centre County Room Tax Grant process

The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau (HVAB), in Partnership with the Centre County Commissioners office, is accepting grant requests for event or projects that will have a positive impact on the tourism industry in Centre County during Fiscal Year 2021-2022.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: The set-aside apportionment of the Centre County Room Tax specific to the support of for profit and/or not-for-profit cultural, educational, historical and recreational assets is to be used for underwriting the expense of initiatives by those assets for the purpose of enhancing the tourism experience, increasing tourism and overnight stays within Centre County. Awards are granted annually on the basis of merit as determined by the Tourism Grant Review Committee (TGRC) and administered by the Centre County Board of Commissioners and Happy Valley Adventure Bureau (HVAB) and follow Pennsylvania State Regulations (Act 18 of 2016).

The TGRC grants have been established to reach the following goals:

1. Recognize and support events that have a significant economic impact on Centre County
2. Support organizations and activities that strengthen the perception of Centre County
3. Support applications that are clear, complete and well thought-out

Overall consideration may be increased when an application demonstrates the following:

- A strong room night impact, with demand generation at a time of need
- New projects OR projects that have significant changes from prior year's event.

Applications should specifically show how the event or project brings visitors to Centre County, both for this event or project, and in the long-term as well. Grants are not intended to provide long-term or operational support, but are intended to support marketing and event efforts that help advance the goals above.

1.) General Information

Grants may be awarded to all qualifying cultural, educational, historical, recreational and special event entities or qualified event venue of meaningful impact on driving business to Centre County.

- The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau Board reserves the right to establish a “maximum funding limit” in any particular grant cycle based on the total number of applications, total funds requested and total funds available

- Applicants must have a Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) in order to apply
- For-profit applicants should provide specific information demonstrating how grant funds will increase economic activity for Centre County
- Generally, no grants will be provided for political or sectarian religious purposes
- Although priority will be given to marketing and advertising expenses, requests for infrastructure improvements that benefit tourism and enhance the visitors experience may also be considered as long as they do not compete with for profit facilities of similar meaning
- Grants will not be awarded for operational expenses
- Grant funds cannot be used to purchase membership, advertising, etc. from or with any Convention and Visitors Bureau, Chamber of Commerce or similar organization outside of Centre County
- Grants shall not be used for signage that promotes a specific private entity on the site of that entity, except where the signage also carries the logo of the HVAB
- Grants shall not be used by the Grantee to compete with any other private sector tourism or travel efforts in the county as determined by the HVAB
- In accordance with Pennsylvania law, Act 18, all grant recipients must 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). The documentation must:

- Show confirmation from the donor with a signature or official invoice.
- Determine how the contribution can be traced back to source documentation.

2.) Grants for Special Events

Grants may be awarded to qualifying Centre County special events separate from those conducted by the above entities that submit a request for such funds. Special events will be defined as those unique events that are designed to drive visitation to the county. Preference will be given to those events that are designed to encompass multiple days and strive to drive business to county hotels, restaurants and local businesses. Preference will be given to proposals from organizations that have produced similar events with three years of event history and complete financial summaries (reported using generally accepted accounting principles) and that advertised or otherwise promoted its event outside of Centre County; however, consideration will be given to all proposed events, including those without history, provided that the proposal otherwise meets funding criteria, including a written media plan to advertise or otherwise promote its event using media that's intended to reach overnight or multi-day visitors outside of Centre County.

3.) Grants for Resource Improvement - Visitor Facility Upgrades / Construction: projects that will enhance the non-resident visitor experience and increase expenditures.

Grants may be awarded to qualifying Centre County businesses and organizations that demonstrate the greatest need for the funds and the strongest commitment to use the funds to provide adequate resources to proposed tourism and recreation projects that will enhance the non-resident visitor experience and increase expenditures in the community.

Tourism Grant funds can be requested for actual project and activity related costs only.

Examples of ineligible project costs include but are not limited to: workshops and training; market research or feasibility studies; staff costs including wages, travel, per diem; administrative, overhead, or indirect costs; office supplies; promotional items; subscriptions or membership costs; domain registration and website hosting; routine operation and maintenance costs.

4.) Grant funds will be awarded in proportion with your event/project execution. A call for applications will be announced in January and must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. on April 30. Award amounts must be used within one (1) year of receipt.

- Grant funds will be distributed based on the requirements of the TGRC. If the funds are not expended by within the one (1) year period, applicants may apply for a 1-year extension. If the funds are not expended by the end of the extension period, applicants will forfeit the remaining grant funds; likewise, if the funds are not expended as agreed based on the application, applicants will forfeit the remaining grant amount.

5.) Awards will be given based on demonstration of the potential for attracting tourism beyond the Centre County area. Priority will be given to those groups and/or organizations which can provide documentation of success from past initiatives in achieving the goals of this granting authority.

6.) An initial payment of the approved grant amount will be disbursed upon receipt, acceptance, and execution of the Grant Agreement by the HVAB. Grant funds are disbursed in proportion with your event/project execution. Grant funds will be disbursed throughout the grant cycle year.

7.) Each grant recipient will follow these guidelines for both marketing and resource improvement projects:

Invoicing from media vendors are to be paid directly by Grant Recipient. Copies of invoices must be included in final report (copy of the ad and/or script used for radio and television or other electronic media).

Marketing and Advertising campaigns must include The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau Logo

Grant recipients shall follow the logo guidelines when designing advertising (print or digital) or communication pieces and must include The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau logo on all print and digital media as it relates to the awarded grant project.

Logo Guidelines:

LOGO USE CASES

Use cases are put in place to create consistency within the brand. These examples should be followed in order to create recognizable, professional-looking layouts for the HVAB.

Social Media

- The Badge should be used sparingly in social media posts. It should only be used if it is the main focus of the layout on a solid background, never over photography or as a watermark.
- If a watermark must be used, the Keystone should always be used in the bottom right corner.
- Sizing and clearance ratios should also be followed between social posts to create consistency in social feeds.

For example, the Keystone as a watermark in the bottom corner of a layout should align with the size of the H in a Badge-oriented layout. The color of the Keystone may change, but the sizing and placement will always remain the same.

Web and Banner Ads

- The simpler the better. The HVAB message should always be clear and concise, so outside of yearly campaigns it is recommended to keep layouts as clean as possible with a color Badge or Wordmark, solid background, short message, and url.

Print and Branded Items

- The Badge should only be used in cases where it can be at least two inches wide. This is to make sure every part of it is always readable and no thin lines are lost.
- If it must be smaller, revert to the Keystone or Wordmark.
- If creating a series of printed items or branded merchandise (ex. for an event) one logo color scheme should be selected and followed between all items.

Over Photography

- In this instance, which should be rare, all-white versions of the logo should be used.
- When used over photography, shading behind the logo may be necessary to achieve the desired look. To make letters stand out, we recommend using a large, soft brush at a low opacity rather than adding a drop shadow.

SIZING RATIOS

Logo sizing relationships will always be measured using the letter “H” in “HAPPY” as a unit of measurement. Between the Keystone, Wordmark, and Badge, when more than one is used in the same layout, the “H” should be the same size in each. The same goes for spacing outside of the individual logo. The Wordmark and Keystone need two “H” marks minimum clearance on all sides, while the Badge needs three minimum.

WORD MARK AND KEYSTONE

The Keystone may be used with the Badge or Wordmark in a layout, but the Badge and Wordmark should never be used together. We don't need to say the full name more than once.

Badge should never be less than two inches wide in any layout. If it must be smaller, the Wordmark should be used instead.

RADIO ADVERTISING must include the following paragraph:

Funding provided through a grant made possible by The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau. (HVAB)

TV ADVERTISING must include the HVAB logo.

- Preferably the logo should “hang” on the screen for a minimum of three seconds.

The appropriate format of the HVAB logo on any printed material or media buys including television, etc. HVAB logo will be provided by the HVAB upon request.

Awardees shall publicly acknowledge program support through all reasonable vehicles as a stipulation of accepting such awards by the following language:

“Funding provided through a grant made possible by The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau and the Centre County Board of Commissioners”.

Note: RFCC guidelines prohibit TV and Radio from mentioning 3 organizations within the same advertisement. For TV, only the logo is necessary. For radio, it can be shortened to Funding provided through a grant made possible by The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau. HVAB is also acceptable.

8.) Grant Recipients, as a provision of accepting this grant award, must provide adequate proof that the funds received were used for their intended purpose as detailed in the application through the submission of ad tear sheets, media billings, or any other similar documentation along with appropriate invoices.

9.) Upon receipt of a grant award, should any changes to the intended purpose of the original application be necessary; you must receive prior approval from the TGRC. Contact Lori Miller at 814-231-1401, ext. 307 or lorim@visitpennstate.org. Failure to comply may result in penalties up to and including the recipient remitting a full refund of their grant award.

10.) ●●A final project report is due to the HVAB 90 days after completion of project and no later than June 30, 2021 and **MUST BE** submitted via the [online final report template](#).

Final project reports must provide a narrative that will enhance our understanding of the success of your project and include the following:

Marketing/Media

Successful projects will leverage a communications strategy that will use multiple media and communication tools. It will also track media impressions to measure geographic influence. Trace the achievement of the project/event by providing photos from the event or of a construction project, screenshots of a website or media project, or statistical graphics of increased traffic/expenditures as a result of the completed project.

1. Includes evidence of print media, electronic media, radio, tv, and/or billboard ads (i.e. email blasts, photos, receipts)
2. Includes metrics from media impressions (i.e. radio, tv, etc)
3. Includes evidence of speaking engagements (i.e. programs, etc.)

Return on Investment Estimates

Successful projects will clearly show economic impact to tourism stakeholders. (i.e. hoteliers, restaurants, etc.) Ideal projects will show longevity of impact through repeat visitors.

1. # Number of Overnight Stays
2. Includes metrics from media impressions (i.e. radio, tv, etc)
3. # Number of Visitors beyond Centre County (50mile radius)
4. % Percent of Daily Visits
5. # Number of Additional Visits/Repeat Visits

Cost Effective Budget Management

All expenditures are logical and adhere to HVAB guidelines. Copies of all receipts have been provided and correlate with the success of the project and the stimulation of the local economy.

1. Includes evidence of additional financial sources
2. Auditable financial accounting for all expenditures from grant funds
3. Itemized list of expenses with copies of receipts
4. Narrative on the stimulation of local economy

*applicants are encouraged to make arrangements with our marketing team to review data from our AirSage, STAR data, Air DNA, Visa Vu, Social Media and website analytics.

11.) An organization may file a grant request in any one or more of the categories referenced on the Grant Application.

12.) Nothing shall prevent the granting entity, TGRC, from withholding part or all of the total monies available for annual awards should the granting entity feel that insufficient requests have been made to justify exhaustion of those funds. Should funds be remaining at the end of any single fiscal year, those funds may be rolled forward into the following year for granting consideration.

13.) It should not be presumed that any applicant will be awarded a grant on an annual basis, nor should the availability of these grant awards be considered an annual part of any applicant's budget.

14.) The Tourism Grant Review Committee (TGRC) shall be composed of five (5) members: Two Centre County Commissioners, President/CEO of The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau, one Board appointed Centre County Hotel General Manager, and the President of the Centre County Historical Society. These community members shall ideally be citizens outside of the board of directors of any of the applicant organizations or events. Any TGRC member with a conflict of interest, or the appearance of a conflict, may not participate in the review of, or decision on, any grant request for which such a conflict exists and are mandated to remove his or herself from the review and/or decision making process of the grant application they are associated with. If a TGRC member must be excused, the HVAB chairperson may appoint an alternate to replace him/her. The TGRC will make the final granting decision, which must be ratified by The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau Board of Directors who carry the fiduciary responsibility as mandated in Act 18 of 2016.

15.) The TGRC shall be charged with making certain each award meets and or exceeds the established criteria. The TGRC shall present each of their final recommendations for awards to the HVAB Board of Directors for ratification on an individual basis.

16.) Grant awards shall be presented jointly by the Centre County Board of Commissioners and the HVAB.