



Tompkins County
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Spring 2017 Tourism Grant Funding Opportunities

Tompkins County organizations planning Community Celebrations or projects with potential to draw visitors from outside Tompkins County are invited to apply for financial support from the Tompkins County Tourism Program. Grant guidelines and applications are available at www.tompkinscountyny.gov/tourism. Applications for **Tourism Project Grants**, **New Tourism Initiative Grants**, **Tourism Marketing & Advertising Grants**, and **Community Celebrations Grants** are due online by **11 am, Tuesday, February 21, 2017**, with awards to be made in mid-April.

The Tompkins County Tourism Program annually invests over \$2 million in local hotel room occupancy tax dollars in community-based tourism that equally promotes economic development and enhances quality of life. The Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) provides oversight and strategic direction, and these grants are awarded by the Tompkins County Legislature. Tourism grants have supported the activities of dozens of local organizations contributing to area tourism and community vitality. As an industry, in 2015 tourism in Tompkins County supported over 3,500 local jobs and generated \$195 million in local economic activity and more than \$14.5 million in local tax revenues. Funds are currently available in the following grant categories:

Tourism Project Grants support tourism-generating projects that have been in active operation for more than three years at the date of application. Proposed projects must demonstrate likelihood of generating significant visitor participation and overnight stays in County hotels, motels and B&Bs. Maximum award: \$25,000

New Tourism Initiative Grants are for projects that have occurred less than three years in a row and that support implementation of the County's Strategic Tourism Plan. Maximum award: \$25,000

Tourism Marketing & Advertising Grants provide a dollar for dollar match for marketing and advertising expenses for campaigns that target potential tourists whose visits are likely to result in overnight stays at County-based lodging. Maximum award: \$5,000

Community Celebrations Grants provide assistance to events and programs endorsed by a municipality that are free and open to all and planned by community members as a benefit to the community. Maximum award: \$2,000.

Tompkins County also offers two other tourism grant programs with separate funding cycles and application requirements: **Tourism Capital Grants** are due online **by 11am, Wednesday, March 15, 2017**; and new applications for **Arts & Culture Organizational Development Grants** will be considered in late 2017.

A workshop for potential grant applicants will be held on Tuesday, January 31, from 3:00 to 4:30 pm, at the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce at 904 East Shore Drive, Ithaca. The workshop is free and open to all. RSVPs appreciated to tourism@tompkins-co.org.