

**Revised Guidelines For  
The Arts/Cultural Organization Development Program  
(Formerly “Arts & Cultural Organization Stabilization Program”)  
Of The Tompkins County Tourism Program**

**Intent of Grant Program**

Tompkins County’s vibrant arts and cultural community makes it stand out as special place in Upstate New York. Its reputation as a tourist destination in the Finger Lakes region is partially contingent on the continued success and growth of that community.

Since its inception in 2003, this program has sought to secure the financial and operational stability of the county’s major arts and cultural organizations. Through the funding of strategic planning and subsequent implementation of said strategies, the program intends to ensure the vitality and viability of our arts and cultural assets as important players in the county’s successful tourism industry, as well as our local economy. This recognizes the growing importance of tourism as a generator of jobs, taxes and income, while enriching the quality of life for Tompkins County residents.

As these institutions approach organizational stability—a term defined for the purposes of this program through an organization’s performance in on-site financial and fiscal progress reviews conducted by an outside accounting consultant—the program will continue to provide funding to encourage capacity building, be it in terms of audience development, enhanced programmatic quality, or any other method of increasing either earned or unearned income. As the County’s tourism industry and room capacity grows, so too must the capabilities and level of quality of our arts and cultural organizations.

Recipients of funding through this program will follow a path that includes:

1. Organizational Assessment and Strategic Planning
2. Strategy Implementation
3. Evaluation of Organizational Stability
4. Capacity Building

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**Program Description and Distribution Timeline**

This program, administered by the Community Arts Partnership since 2003, requires new guidelines to allow both for growing levels of stability in current recipients and for the inclusion of new recipients. The Strategic Tourism Planning board has appointed CAP to continue to manage the program.

Prior to review, all applicants must meet eligibility requirements listed below. The program administrator will continually seek out and evaluate potential applicants.

**I. Application Review**

Applications for the program will be reviewed annually in November by a panel consisting of the CAP Executive Director, two (2) members of the Strategic Tourism Planning Board, two (2)

community members, and at least two (2) professionals from outside of Tompkins County representing the fields of the applying organizations (e.g. performing arts and museums). This panel will make grant recommendations to the Strategic Tourism Planning Board for approval.

Recommended annual support for any applicant will not exceed \$35,000. It is not expected that each recipient will receive this amount.

## **II. New Candidates**

For new candidates, CAP will continue to work with eligible arts/cultural organizations to examine and articulate challenges. Successful applicants will work with consultants contracted by CAP to address these respective challenges. First year funding will be directed towards one or all of the following:

- Organizational assessment
- Program analysis and planning
- Creating a strategic plan
- Strategy implementation

## **III. Organizational Stabilization - Multi-year Grants**

After the successful completion of the first-year funding cycle, organizations will be able to apply for multi-year funding to support the implementation of long-term strategic plans for organizational stability. A 3-year cycle for these grants will encourage long-term budgetary planning on the part of recipients and ease the annual budget process for the Strategic Tourism Planning Board.

During these 3-year cycles, year-to-year funding will be contingent on submission of annual reports and an annual review of organization's adherence to eligibility requirements listed below.

*Recipients can receive funding for no more than two (2) consecutive 3-year Organizational Stabilization Grant cycles. Annual awards are contingent on availability of funds within the Tompkins County Tourism Program.*

## **IV. Evaluation/Determination of Organizational Stability**

In addition to semi-annual program assessment meetings with the Executive Director of CAP, within each 3-year grant cycle, recipient organizations will be required to undergo at least one on-site financial and fiscal progress review to be conducted by an outside accounting consultant retained by CAP. These interviews will not only determine financial stability, but also investigate the institution's fiscal practices to help determine the potential for long-term operational stability.

The results of these reviews will allow the grant panel to determine whether an organization

- a) will require an additional review during the current grant cycle;
- b) may apply for another 3-year stabilization grant cycle;
- c) will shift to the capacity building cycle of the grant program; or
- d) be required to re-apply for acceptance into the program.

## **V. Capacity Building (Multi-year Grants)**

Once through the Organizational Stabilization phase of the program, arts/cultural organizations will be able to apply for multi-year funding to support organizational improvements that will result in capacity building that might include, but is not limited to audience development, enhanced programmatic quality, or any other method of increasing either earned or unearned income. These grants will NOT directly fund marketing deliverables of any kind. Applicants will be directed to the Marketing Grants of the Tompkins County Tourism program for those expenses.

A 3-year cycle for these grants will encourage long-term budgetary planning on the part of recipients and ease the annual budget process for the Strategic Tourism Planning Board.

Annual awards are contingent on availability of funds within the Tompkins County Tourism Program.

The evaluation and progress review requirements of Organizational Stabilization Grants will also apply to Capacity Building Grant recipients.

Established arts/cultural institutions may apply to enter directly into this phase of the program. These applicants will be required to undergo an on-site financial and fiscal progress review prior to acceptance of applications.

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## Eligibility

Since current and future recipients of the program have diverse organizational needs and indicators of success, the following matrix can be used to categorize institutions and allow for more specific guidelines and eligibility requirements.

As the program continues to evolve, eligibility criteria will be examined and changed as appropriate to the program goals.

### **I. Organizational Stabilization Eligibility Requirements**

*The following requirements apply to ALL applicants, both **Performing Arts** and **Non-Performance** organizations.*

1. 501(c) 3 arts organizations the primary mission of which is to present arts and cultural programs to the general public.
2. Maintain professional standards of operation and management including paid, full- or part-time professional executive/managing staff.
  - a. Demonstrate sound governance, administrative and financial practices
  - b. Show long-range program planning or intent.
  - c. Show a commitment to collaborative cultural tourism efforts and initiatives.
3. Operate, own or rent a designated facility (to include an office) accessible and used by the general public.

#### **The following requirement applies to Performing Arts Organizations ONLY**

4. Because of the beneficial economies of scale provided by the use of a shared box office service, all performing arts organizations must sell their tickets exclusively through the Ticket Center at Clinton House.

### **II. Capacity Building Eligibility Requirements**

Once in the Capacity Building Phase, both **Performing Arts** and **Non-Performance** applicants need only adhere to requirements 1, 2, and 3 listed above.

### **III. Appealing Eligibility Requirements**

Written appeals for exclusion from any of the eligibility requirements listed above may be submitted at the time of application for consideration by the panel. Recommendations will be made to the Strategic Tourism Planning Board for approval.

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## **EVALUATION**

The on-going evaluation of the program and the progress of its recipients will include:

- Semi-annual program assessment meetings between CAP Executive Director and staff and board representatives of recipients
- Annual written reports submitted to grant panel by recipients in either of the multi-year grant cycles
- At least one on-site financial and fiscal progress review to be conducted by an outside accounting consultant during each multi-year grant cycle
- Annual progress report to Strategic Tourism Planning Board by CAP Executive Director detailing the impact of these funds on arts and cultural organizations and the ongoing development of cultural tourism.