

Tompkins Outdoors Grant

2022 Guidelines



Funding Purpose + Overview

The Tompkins Outdoors Grant is intended to increase the capacity of organizations that enhance Tompkins County's profile as a leading outdoor recreation destination.

- Maximum Award: \$15,000 OR 10% of organizational budget (whichever is less)
- Minimum Award: \$1,500
- Deadlines:
 - Eligibility Questionnaire: January 31, 2022
 - Full Application: March 14, 2022
- Contact: Nick Helmholdt – nhelmholdt@tompkins-co.org – 607-274-5560

This grant is funded by Hotel Room Occupancy Tax collected in Tompkins County, NY. A total of \$50,000 is available for 2022 grants.

Examples of entities that may be eligible for funding include groups that maintain parks and trails and outdoor tour operators. A grant workshop will be held at on Jan. 6, 2022.

All applications must be submitted online through [Common Grant Application](#).

Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

- Non-profit organizations designated as 501(c)3
- All applicants must either be responsible for stewardship of an outdoor recreation asset in Tompkins County OR offer outdoor recreation programming in Tompkins County.

Eligible applicants are required to satisfy the following criteria:

- Established for at least one year
- Overseen by an elected board of directors
- Have documented history of long-range planning
- Adopted organizational policy on diversity, equity, and inclusion

Organizations applying with a fiscal sponsor should contact the Tourism Program Director to determine eligibility for this grant prior to submitting an application.

Eligible Activities

This award provides general operating support. The award can support specific activities, projects, and staff within an organization. Awards are intended to build organizational capacity in alignment with goals established in the *Strategic Tourism Plan: 2021-2027* and *Outdoor Recreation Tourism Implementation Plan*. Applicants will also be asked to provide a detailed description of how they intend to use funding awards toward stated funding purpose.

Creating a Strong Application

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated in four categories: Tourism Impact, Outdoor Recreation Impact, Operating Capability, and Administrative Capability. Indicators within each category will be scored from 1 to 5 by grant review committee members as applicable. The total score for each application will weight each category as shown below. Specific indicators are listed below:

Tourism Impact (weighted at 35% of overall score)

- Demonstrated ability to attract visitors from outside Tompkins County (proxy measures may be used such as website analytics, visitor logs, etc.)
- Seasonal hours and capacity as applicable
- Site accessible to people of all abilities
- Programming reflects a significant effort to reach a broad array of people
- Web traffic and social media reach
- Written annual marketing plan and budget
- Demonstration of a working relationship with the Ithaca/Tompkins County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB)
- Effectiveness of past marketing campaigns

Outdoor Recreation Impact (weighted at 35% of overall score)

- Unique landscape, environment, or scenic view offered
- Variety of active and passive recreational activities offered
- Visitor amenities provided (restrooms, interpretive signage, etc.)
- Days of programming offered, if applicable
- Evidence of past successes and growth
- Evidence of the uniqueness of program offerings
- Memberships in national or regional organizations
- Environmentally sustainable practice
- Evidence of programming that gives voice to diverse and non-dominant cultures

Operating Capability (weighted at 15% of overall score)

- Clear and coherent operating budget
- Percentage of funding from local donors / individuals and corporate
- Number of donors / members / subscribers / students
- Number of full-time and part-time year-round staff
- Percent of operation within Tompkins County

Administrative Capability (weighted at 15% of overall score).

- Evidence of the following:
 - Mission statement
 - Board roster that includes length of service
 - Bylaws
 - Employee manual
 - Strategic plan
 - Active financial management
 - Revenue from an array of funding sources
 - Last completed audit or financial review
 - Grant reporting history
 - Succession planning
 - Diverse staff and board of directors
 - Collaborations with other organizations
 - Documentation of livable wage

Additional Considerations

Organizations that have been awarded the Arts and Culture Organization Development Grant in the same year are ineligible for this award since both grants fund general operating support.

Applicants should be aware of the Diversity Statement approved by the Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB). The STPB encourages applicants to consider how their events can appeal to diverse audiences and reflect the diversity of our community. You can [review the Diversity Statement online](#).

The grant review committee is allowed discretion to recommend funding amounts that do not correspond strictly with evaluation criteria.

Organization budget is defined as the previous fiscal year's total operating expenses.

The program will be comprehensively reviewed following the first round of grant awards. The grant guidelines are subject to change in future years.

Required Attachments

Failure to provide the following required attachments will cause your application to be ineligible for funding.

- Proof of non-profit status in the form of a 501(c)3 determination letter
- Current organizational budget and other financial documents
- Current board roster
- Proof of adequate insurance coverage

Optional Attachments

Applicants may submit letters of support from key partners, graphics, or ancillary documentation (including video and audio files). However, the grant review committee will focus primarily on evaluating the information in the online application and the project budget.

Award Decision Process

- Tompkins County staff review applications for completeness and eligibility. Complete and eligible applications are shared with the appropriate grant review committee.
- The review committee makes funding recommendations for each application to the STPB.
- The grant review committee's evaluation scores and feedback will be shared with applicants after STPB review.
- The STPB makes a funding recommendation to the Tompkins County Legislature.
- The Legislature votes on the grant awards.
- Staff send emails to all applicants with funding decision and if applicable a contract.

Grant contracts are typically awarded 2-3 months following the application deadline.

Grant Recipient Responsibilities

Please check for COVID updates available on the Tompkins County Health Department website: <https://tompkinscountyny.gov/health>

Grant awardees are required to enter into a contract with Tompkins County. Several of the responsibilities listed below are included in the contract. Contract terms will run from the award date to December 31, 2022.

Awards will be paid directly to eligible awardees.

All unspent funds must be returned to the County.

Grant recipients are required to participate in an annual marketing workshop hosted by the CVB.

Grant recipients are required to submit final reports.

Grant recipients are required to acknowledge the support of the Tompkins County Tourism Program in all public relations materials, posters, and programs. The standard acknowledgment statement is: "This program was made possible in part by a grant from the Tompkins County Tourism Program." Grant recipients may use the Tompkins County Tourism Program logo in accordance with the [recognition guidelines](#).

Prepare and Submit Your Application

Pre-Application Checklist

- ✓ My organization is an **eligible recipient**.
- ✓ My celebration is an **eligible activity**.
- ✓ I have documented **matching funds** equal to at least 50% of the total project cost.
- ✓ I have a detailed **project budget** to attach to my application.
- ✓ I have the other **required attachments**.
- ✓ I have reviewed the **evaluation criteria** and **considerations**.
- ✓ I understand the **grant recipient responsibilities**.

Application Instructions

All applications must be submitted through [Common Grant Application](#). Use one of the links below to start an application:

- Already have an account: [Login to start an application](#)
- First time applying: [Register for a new account and start an application](#)
- Review [other grants](#) offered by Tompkins County Department of Planning and Sustainability

Resources

The **Ithaca/Tompkins County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB)** is available to provide technical assistance related to promoting your event. Grant recipients are encouraged to work with the CVB if they would like to attract visitors from outside of Tompkins County. For more information contact Peggy Coleman, VP Tourism & Community Relations, peggy@visitithaca.com.