

Community Celebrations Grant

Fall 2021 Guidelines



Funding Purpose + Overview

Community Celebrations grants support local events that convey the unique culture and history of Tompkins County. Their mission is to enhance quality of life for residents, improve understanding of local culture, and expand contemporary culture in ways that are informative, educational, and just plain fun.

- Award Range: \$500 to \$1,000
- Deadline: September 10, 2021
- Contact: Kristin McCarthy - tourism@tompkins-co.org - 607-274-5560

A "celebration" is an event, program, or series of events endorsed by a municipality or community group. A celebration is also defined as an observance, commemoration, jubilation, inauguration, presentation, salute, or any other "red letter day" that has meaning for the community.

Examples of previously funded Community Celebrations include International Mud Day at the Ithaca Children's Garden, Watermusic/Dancing on the Trail, Streets Alive!, Groton Cabin Fever Festival, the Festival of Nations hosted by the Greater Ithaca Activities Center, and countless other favorite local events.

A total of \$10,000 is available for fall 2021 grants.

Please note: All applications must be submitted online through [Common Grant Application](#). Please see the section titled "Prepare and Submit Your Application" for details.

Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

- Non-profit organizations designated as 501(c)3
- Municipalities within Tompkins County

Eligible Activities

- Local artists, performers, or providers of cultural programming
- Promotion and marketing
- Professional services needed to produce a successful celebration
- Educational materials
- Reusable banners

Other Limitations

- All events must be **free and open to the public** without discrimination.
- Events that exclusively promote religious traditions are ineligible.
- Events must take place within Tompkins County, NY.
- The following expenses are **ineligible**:
 - Carnival-type rides, bounce houses, and fireworks
 - Building repairs or alterations
 - Gifts and prizes
 - T-shirts and apparel intended for event volunteers
 - Paid staff time
- Applicants must demonstrate a financial **match** of at least 50% of the total project cost. This match can be provided from the following sources:
 - Cash (including income from on-site sales)
 - In-kind donations of goods and professional services
 - Volunteer time only if this time would otherwise need to be replaced by paid staff time or paid professional services. Where the specific value of the service is not estimated by the provider, use an estimate of \$28.54 per hour.*

Creating a Strong Application

Evaluation Criteria

The review committee will score applications based on an assessment of how well they meet the following criteria and answer the related questions:

1) Cultural and Historic Value

- Is the event a real celebration that builds community?
- Are significant historical educational elements incorporated?
- Are components of local heritage or culture highlighted?

* This is an independent estimate of the value of volunteer time in the United States in 2021. Source: Independent Sector. <https://independentsector.org/value-of-volunteer-time-2021/>

2) Community Value

- Does the celebration demonstrate broad and deep community support through partnerships, financial and in-kind contributions, and volunteers?
- Does the celebration support local talent, performers, products, and services?
- Does the event feature artists and entertainers from Tompkins County?
- If new, does the celebration demonstrate a compelling vision and innovative addition to local event/festival offerings?

3) Ability to Deliver

- Does the project team have the right skills and experience to deliver?
- Is there evidence of an event plan with adequate personnel, budget, volunteers, and other resources?
- Does the applicant demonstrate evidence of healthy reflection, learning, and adjustment from past events?
- Has the applicant taken advantage of the technical assistance provided by the Tompkins Festivals Program and other support offered through the County Tourism Program?

4) Diversity

- Does the celebration promote social diversity and inclusion?
- Does the application demonstrate efforts to attract a diverse audience?
- Does the celebration support geographic diversity in the distribution of grant funds?

5) Sustainability

- Are sustainable event management practices used?
- Does the celebration promote sustainability?

6) Clarity of Application

- Is the application complete and coherent?
- Is a detailed and interesting description of the Celebration provided?
- Is there a clear and complete budget that identifies all event projected costs, revenues, in-kind support, and uses of grant funds?
- Is an effective means of measuring attendance identified?

Considerations

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 at <http://tompkinscountyny.gov/tourism/board>.

Applicants are encouraged to think of all the ways that life in Tompkins County is made richer by the area's history, folklife, architecture, and ethnic heritage.

Applicants are encouraged to source goods and services locally.

A previous award for the same event does not guarantee or prevent future funding.

Applicants should consider if their event will require specific permits, licenses, or other permissions. If so, these should be described in the application.

Applicants should consider what methods they can use to invite people to their event and track attendance or participation.

Required Attachments

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

- 1) Detailed project budget (Applicants are *strongly encouraged* to use the template budget spreadsheet available on the application webpage. All major categories of expenses should be listed along with all types of revenue and donations.)
- 2) Proof of non-profit status in the form of a 501(c)3 determination letter. (Municipal applicants are exempt from this requirement.)
- 3) Returning Community Celebration applicants must submit the final report from their most recent grant-funded project. (New applicants are exempt from this requirement.)

Optional Attachments

Applicants may submit letters of support from key partners, qualifications, drawings, or ancillary supporting information (including video and/or audio files). The review committee will focus primarily on evaluating the information in the online application and the project budget.

Award Decision Process

- Tompkins County Department of Planning and Sustainability 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 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 a contract.

Applicants can appeal the decision of a grant award. A denial of funding, or dissatisfaction with the amount of the award, is not justification for an appeal. An appeal may only be made due to improprieties in the grant selection process. You may appeal the decision

based on misrepresentation of information, non-presentation of information, or improper procedures. To appeal a funding decision, send a letter stating the reason for the appeal to the grant administrator or STPB chair within 14 days of receiving written notification of the grant decision.

Grant Recipient Responsibilities

Effective June 15, 2021, the Governor has lifted COVID-19 restrictions around mask wearing, distancing, cleaning, health screening, and gathering in most settings, except for the mask requirement for unvaccinated individuals. Businesses and events may require proof of vaccination status or may rely on the honor system. More information can be found here: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>

Grant awardees are required to enter into a contract with Tompkins County. Several of the responsibilities listed below are included in the contract.

Awards will be paid directly to registered not-for-profit organizations or municipal governments. (Successful applicants under the fiscal sponsorship of a municipality should contact their individual municipality for payment instructions.)

Grant funds are disbursed upon the receipt of an authorized payment voucher. This grant is paid in advance. All unspent funds must be returned to the County.

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, which can be downloaded from the Tourism Program webpage: <http://tompkinscountyny.gov/tourism/recognition>

Grant recipients are expected to submit a grant report no later than 30 days after their event. The grant report asks for information about attendance, actual expenses, and event promotion. A template report is attached to each contract.

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 this link to sign up for an account and start an application:

<https://www.commongrantapplication.com/register.php?refOrgId=70636&refProgId=686&refProgType=grantsNew>

All Tompkins County Tourism Program grant applications are available online:

<https://www.commongrantapplication.com/grantmakers/70636/Tompkins-County-Department-of-Planning-and-Sustainability.html#gmkProgGrants>

The deadline for applications is September 10, 2021.

For additional assistance, please contact Kristin McCarthy – tourism@tompkins-co.org – 607-273-5560.

Resources

The **Tompkins Festivals Program** is available to help event organizers with:

- Annual event management workshops
- Technical event assistance to support: budgeting, fundraising, site planning and permitting, volunteer management, site management, succession planning, etc.
- Event equipment loan service
- Tompkins County event vendor lists
- Tompkins County event planning manual

For more information, visit the Tompkins Festivals website at <http://www.tompkinsfestivals.com> and contact Scott Rougeau at the Downtown Ithaca Alliance. scott@downtownithaca.com.

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.

Additional funding opportunities are listed on the following websites:

- Tompkins County Administration: <http://tompkinscountyny.gov/ctyadmin/Grants/index>
- Human Services Coalition of Tompkins County: <https://hsctc.org/funders/>