



FAYETTE COUNTY TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM

Reneé Seifert, President and CEO
Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau



Coming Soon

The Economic Impact of Tourism in the Laurel Highlands

Tripp Umbach

Market Research Study and Strategic Brand Plan

Red House Communication, Inc. And Campos, Inc.

Reports available Spring 2017

TOURISM MATTERS

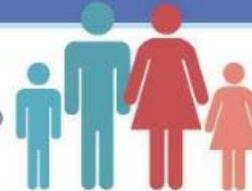
Laurel Highlands Visitor Profile
& Economic Impact Data



WESTMORELAND, FAYETTE & SOMERSET COUNTIES



72% INDICATED THEIR MARITAL STATUS AS MARRIED **



71% REPORT TRAVELING WITH THEIR SPOUSE OR HOUSEHOLD FAMILY **

TOP FACTORS CONSIDERED FOR TRAVEL TO THE LAUREL HIGHLANDS **



REPORT AN EDUCATION LEVEL OF ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE OR HIGHER *



50% REPORTED AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME AS \$75,000+ *

76% REPORT THEIR AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY PER LEISURE VISIT AS 1-5 NIGHTS *

70% REPORT SPENDING \$100-\$400 PER DAY ON AVERAGE *

TOP 5 MOST SOUGHT-AFTER EXPERIENCES **



ECONOMIC IMPACT †



\$1.5 BILLION
2014 VISITOR SPENDING UP BY 4.2% OVER 2013

\$510
SAVED PER HOUSEHOLD IN THE REGION IN TAX PAYMENTS BECAUSE OF TOURISM

\$116 Million
FEDERAL TAXES GENERATED BY TOURISM IN THE LAUREL HIGHLANDS IN 2013.

19,200 JOBS
TOURISM-RELATED JOBS IN 2013 REPRESENTING 7.5% OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT IN THE REGION - 1 IN 13 JOBS IN THE REGION IS SUPPORTED BY TOURISM.

\$120 Million
STATE AND LOCAL TAXES GENERATED BY TOURISM IN THE LAUREL HIGHLANDS IN 2013.

** Laurel Highlands Market Research Survey, September 2014 - 1,075 respondents
** Laurel Highlands Market Research Survey, August 2013 - 495 respondents
† The Economic Impact of Tourism in Laurel Highlands Report, Tourism Statistics - An Initial Economic Impact Study 2005



I want a grant.
Now how do I go about getting it?

It is important for you to review the
Fayette County Grant Criteria and Guidelines
before you begin completing your Grant Application



Additional Opportunities and Resources

- [GrantStation.com](https://www.grantstation.com)
- [TechSoup.org](https://www.techsoup.org)



Tourism Grant Programs

Somerset County
Westmoreland County
Fayette County



Tourism Grant Program Overview

Pennsylvania Statute



Adopted by County



Tax Collected/Enforced by County



LHVB TPA for the County



Memorandum of Understanding



New Legislation Overview

Pennsylvania Statute - *Act 18 (new)*

- Marketing the area as a leisure travel destination, business or convention/meeting destination
- Programs, expenditures, or grants directly related to tourism and do not compete with private sector tourism or travel efforts
- Grants require at least a 25% match



Role of the Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau

- LHVB is the administrator of the grant programs
- LHVB disburses the grants at the direction of the grant committee in each county
- LHVB oversees the documentation process and works with the grant recipients to ensure compliance with the criteria and guidelines
- LHVB provides guidance and responds to questions from grant recipients
- LHVB refers special requests or “change of use” requests to the grant committee



Main intent of the legislation...

- **Must advance/improve tourism in the county**
 - Primarily to attract visitors from outside the region
 - Encourage visitors to stay overnight
 - Market the region for leisure/business travel
 - Improve or expand the attractions in the county to accomplish all of the above



Grant Criteria and Guidelines

- **Statement of Purpose**
 - The purpose of this grant program is to enhance the tourism experience, increase tourism visitation, and overnight stays
- **Fayette County**
 - Non-profit tourism assets can apply for any of the four types of grants: Marketing, Capital, Operations and Education
 - For-profit tourism assets can apply for Marketing grants only, which require a \$ for \$ match



Grant Components

Application Page 1

- Available online at laurelhighlands.org/grant
- Fillable PDF form
- Download and save to your computer
- Complete and submit by November 18, 2016.

Grant Application
2017 Fayette County Tourism Marketing Grant - Not for Profit

Contact Information

Full Legal Organization Name

Street Address

City State

Zip Code

Organization Website

Organization President / Executive Director

Title

Phone Number E-Mail Address

Contact Person (if different)

Title

Phone Number E-Mail Address

Organization Information

501(c)(3)? Yes No Federal ID #

Fiscal sponsor name

Fiscal sponsor address



Grant Components

Application Page 2

Total Organization Budget	<input type="text"/>	Total # of Board Members	<input type="text"/>
Total # of Staff	<input type="text"/>	Total # of Volunteers	<input type="text"/>

Organizational Mission Statements
(700 characters or less)
Describe the current need, problem, or opportunity and how grant funds will address these issues

Brief Description of Organization
(500 characters or less)

How will the project enhance or increase tourism in Fayette County (1250 characters or less) *(your response to this question is vitally important to the committee's decision relative to your application)*

laurelhighlands.org/grants



Application Page 3

Grant Components

Proposal Request

Program / Project Name

Total Projected Budget for this Project Requested Amount

Cash Match In-Kind Match

Total Organization Marketing Budget

Other funding sources and amounts include:

Category (check only one category) General Marketing Promotion of an Event

Is this a Cooperative Project?
If a cooperative project involving more than one entity, please list names of additional participants (include organization name(s) and contact(s) and phones number(s))

Has your organization received a tourism grant in the past Yes No

List the last three grants received from the Fayette County Tourism Grant Program:

Amount (1)	<input type="text"/>	Year (1)	<input type="text"/>	Type
Amount (2)	<input type="text"/>	Year (2)	<input type="text"/>	Type
Amount (3)	<input type="text"/>	Year (3)	<input type="text"/>	Type

laurelhighlands.org/grants



Application Page 4

Grant Components

General Information

1. If your organization is a **tourist attraction/event**:

a. What were your annual visitation numbers for the past three (3) years?

2014: 2015: 2016:

b. How are the visitation numbers provided above determined?

If your business is a **lodging facility**:

How many rooms/beds are at your property?

What was your annual occupancy percentage for the past three (3) years?

2014: 2015: 2016:



Application Page 5

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Grant Components

MARKETING PLAN NARRATIVE: (2 pages to answer the following a - d, budget is separate document)

Please provide a total organization/business detailed marketing plan which includes:

- a) **Target audience** - location, gender, age, and number of individuals to be targeted
- b) **Proposed media** to be used or distributed of marketing materials plus documentation as required as identified in the grant application instructions
- c) **Time line** - include anticipated start of project and project completion date
- d) **How will your organization measure the outcome of this project?** How will the results/impact be measured?
- e) **The marketing project budget in detail on the Budget Worksheet** (separate document)



Grant Components

Marketing Plan Narrative, continued

**Application
Page 6**

laurelhighlands.org/grants



Application Page 7

Grant Components

Sign/date and check appropriate attachment boxes as the last page of your application

Applicants are reminded that this grant is not a permanent allocation and that there is no guarantee of a grant being made at any time in the future.

I/We affirm that all information in this application and all attachments are true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge, and that the receipt of any grant funds relative to this request will be used for the purpose detailed within this application. I/We agree to abide by all local, state, and federal laws and regulations. I/We understand that the Tourism Grant Review Committee will require a Grant Closeout form, Final Certification form, Grant Expenditure form, copies of all expenditure invoices, proof of payment for all expenditures, detailed final report, and copies of materials produced for advertising and printed material, before and after photographs if applicable to verify the expenditure of any grant funds received, and I/we agree to furnish said documentation according to reporting deadlines. I/We further understand that the expenditure of grant funds received might be subject to audit and/or further verification and I/we agree to cooperate with any such audit or verification process.

I/We agree to the grant terms and conditions as per the 2017 Criteria and Guidelines for the Fayette County Tourism Grant Program.

Name (print):

Title

Signature

Applicant is a non-profit organization and:

A copy of the applicant's non-profit organization IRS 501(c)(3) Determination Letter is attached

A list of applicant's Board of Directors with addresses, etc., is attached

Mail or personally deliver application to:
Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau (LHVB)
Fayette County Tourism Grant Program - Not for Profit
120 East Main Street
Ligonier, PA 15658

Fax transmittals or e-mails will not be accepted.

Date Received by LHVB:

By:

DEADLINE: If submitting via US Postal Service, the application must be postmarked no later than November 18, 2016. If delivering application by hand, the application must be turned into the Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau office no later than 4:30 pm on November 18 2016.



Application Page 8

laurelhighlands.org/grants

Grant Components

Deadline for receipt at LHVB Offices:

No later than 4:30 PM on FRIDAY, November 18, 2016

Applications may be mailed or personally delivered to the Laurel Highlands Office. Fax transmittals or e-mails will not be accepted. **Note: Handwritten applications will not be considered.** Any application received after the deadline will be disqualified. Granting decisions will be determined and notification will be announced January 2017

Grant Match and Eligible Expenses

All tourism grants are required to have a cash or in-kind match of at least 25%. Half of the match can be in-kind services and/or donated materials and documentation must be provided for any in-kind match. In-kind services documentation must include work performed, date/dates of the services and hourly rate and hours donated. In-kind volunteer work is only acceptable for events (such as festivals) and only for the time the volunteer works at the event. The volunteer's time is valued at \$10/hour and must be documented, including dates, services they provided, and hours of service.

Please refer to the Fayette County Tourism Grant Program Criteria and Guidelines for more detailed information.

One-time events that will not be continued annually do not qualify for grant funds.

Grant Guidelines

- An applicant may not file for more than one (1) grant request.
- Grants without the required documentation will not be eligible for consideration.
- Grants are available for for-profit and non-profit organizations, according to the County MOU.
- A federal identification number is required to submit an application.
- A credit line for the Fayette County Tourism Grant Program and its official logo must be included on any advertisement or literature paid for by the grant.
- Once notification is given to projects selected for a grant, a contract will be made between the Fayette County Grant Committee and the applicant outlining what can be funded with grant dollars.
- Recipients are required to incorporate the Fayette County Tourism Program Logo in all marketing projects.

Grant Application Instructions

Applications must include:

- Completed cover page.
- No more than two (2) typed pages of narrative to describe the project, answering the questions specific to the application grant category.
- A copy of the marketing plan for the organization or event.
- A budget worksheet specifically listing the projects' activities for which the grant will be used.
- o Must identify radio and TV stations by location and call letters (for example WTAE TV, Pittsburgh)
- o Must provide coverage area maps for all media buys (print or electronic media including television stations, radio stations, newspapers, magazines, etc.) identified in budget worksheet. Must also include information that shows their audience and reach, and indicate why this target market was chosen in relation to your project and overall marketing plan in your marketing plan.
- o Must include copy of quotes and bids for all project activities identified in the budget worksheet.
- o **NOTE:** *If you applied for and received a marketing grant last year, and intend to maintain and/or expand your marketing using the same media, coverage maps are not required, but you must identify all media by name & the related cost in the budget. In addition, copies of invoices paid in 2016 will be accepted as your bid/quote.*
- o New advertising, though, will require media kits and quotes.

Submit five (5) copies of the entire application, with each individual copy paper clipped. DO NOT staple set together and DO NOT place applications in folders or binders.

Key criteria grant committee members will take into account when reviewing and selecting tourism projects for funding:

- The project has the ability to draw or increase the number of tourists.
- The project provides a distinctive experience.
- The project has the potential to appeal to various age groups or to educate/develop appreciation by future generations.



Grant Components

Budget Worksheet

Description of Activity - Please provide detail as to what you are purchasing, price of item, quantity and the number of months being covered if applicable regarding line item costs associated with this marketing project.

For each activity in your budget, you must submit one of the following: quote, bid or media packet with pricing**. Be specific regarding types of advertising; for example, magazine, newspaper, radio, TV, visitor guides, rack cards, brochures, posters, web sites, travel show booth and registration fees, etc. Also, provide both call letters and city of origin (for example, KDKA-Pittsburgh, NPR-Washington DC) and magazine and newspaper advertising by individual publications and costs.

***Please note, if you propose to do similar advertising you did in 2016 and have invoices from 2016 showing what you paid, those invoices can be used in lieu of a bid or quote if you have difficulty getting a quote/bid from a representative of the media outlet you plan to use.*

Matching Requirement:

A 25% match is required, you must show how both the grant amount requested and the matches (both cash and in-kind) will be allocated among activities. The match **MUST** be at least 25% of the total cost of the activity. *(i.e total cost \$1,000.00, grant request \$750.00, \$250.00 match)*

You must show how both the grant amount requested and the matches (both cash and in-kind) will be allocated among activities

Qualifying In-kind Matches:

In-kind donated services by a professional company

In-kind donated materials from a professional company

For in-kind services and/or donated materials documentation must be provided and include a description of the work performed, date/dates of the services and the hours donated and the hourly rate. All tourism grants are required to have a cash or in-kind match of at least 25%.

In-kind volunteer work is only acceptable for events (such as festivals) and only for the time that they are volunteering at the event. The volunteer's time is valued at \$10/hour and must be documented, including dates, services they provided, and hours of service.

Grants submitted without required documentation will not be considered eligible for this year's grant.



Grant Components

A Budget Worksheet

- Provide a very detailed budget.
- For example, if you're requesting funds to advertise in five magazines, list the magazines in the budget and how much you plan to spend for each.
- Do not simply write "Magazine ad placements: \$10,000" in the budget worksheet.

The budget worksheet is a fillable PDF document separate from the application. If grant is funded, the worksheet will be returned with the contract indicating which expenditures are approved for funding.

2017 Tourism Marketing Grant Budget Worksheet

Application/Project _____ County _____

Name of Organization/Business supported by grant: _____

Contact Person _____ Federal ID # _____

Please number all activities with corresponding documentation.

	Vendor Name / Description of activity	Grant Amount Requested	Match (Cash)	Match (In- Kind)	Source of Match	Total Cost for Activity	Required supporti ng docs ✓
1.						0.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.						0.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.							<input type="checkbox"/>
4.							<input type="checkbox"/>
5.							<input type="checkbox"/>
6.							<input type="checkbox"/>
7.							<input type="checkbox"/>
8.							<input type="checkbox"/>
9.							<input type="checkbox"/>
10.							<input type="checkbox"/>
11.							<input type="checkbox"/>
12.							<input type="checkbox"/>
13.							<input type="checkbox"/>
14.							<input type="checkbox"/>
	Column Totals						

(Total of Grant Amount Requested + Match (Cash) + Match (In-Kind) Must Equal Total Cost for Activity Column)



Detailed Marketing Plan

A copy of the marketing plan for the project to include:

- ✓ Identification of radio and TV stations by location and call letters (for example WTAE-TV, Pittsburgh)
- ✓ Coverage area maps for all media buys (print or electronic media including television stations, radio stations, newspapers, magazines, etc.) identified in budget worksheet. Must also include information that shows their audience and reach, and indicate why this target market was chosen in relation to your project and overall marketing plan.
- ✓ Copies of quotes and bids for all project activities identified in the budget worksheet. (**Note:** *If you propose to do advertising similar to what you did in 2016 and have invoices from that advertising medium, invoices will be accepted in lieu of a quote or bid. The ask amount must be the same as the invoice.*)



Media Kit Example





Marketing Grants

- All three counties permit marketing grants
- Funding may be used for advertising, marketing, promotion – local advertising not favored
- Marketing grants can be made for creating or updating websites and promoting special events that will bring visitors into the county, putting “heads in beds”
- Funding may apply to marketing partnerships, such as with LHVB for brochures and brochure distribution, Destination Guide ads, website ads cooperative ad campaigns as well as collaborative efforts, or joint ventures with other properties or attractions



Print and Electronic Media

- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Billboards
- Specialty publications
- Brochures
- Television, broadcast or cable
- Radio
- Social media
- Internet
- As noted earlier, marketing in local media is not favored because it doesn't attract visitors from outside the region. Marketing needs to put "heads in beds!"



Participation in LHVB Marketing Programs

Available online October 7

- Basic marketing package (webpage and 1 guide category Listing)
- Destination Guide ads and expanded 2-page spread ads
- E-newsletter ads (database of 30,000+)
- WCNS radio show segment advertising
- LHVB newsletter inserts
- Co-op opportunity in “Happy Traveler” (PA Travel Guide)
- Seasonal calendar ad spotlights (circulation 13,000)
- Seasonal co-ops





Participation in LHVB Marketing Programs

- Fall festival co-op
- Holiday event co-op
- Co-op opportunities in meeting and group travel magazines
- Leisure travel market shows, including new Toronto show
- Advertising specialty co-op in bridal \market
- Brochure distribution
- laurelhighlands.org website ads
- 2017 Summer Fun Coupon Book (circulation 25,000)



Collaborative Efforts

- Festival cooperative advertising
- Outfitters Cooperative Marketing
- National Road Corridor
- Package deals for events and activities
- Development and Promotion of an Artisans' Trail, Wine Trail, Food Trail, Distillery/Micro Brew Trail, etc.

Capital Improvement Grants

- Two county grant programs permit grants to be made for capital improvement to tourism assets
 - Must benefit tourism and improve the visitors' experience
 - Signage (*grants may **not** be used for signage that promotes a specific private entity on the situs of that entity, except where the signage also carried the logo of a recognized TPA*)
 - Handicap accessible, i.e. electric doors, ramps
 - Restore/repair significant tourism attraction
 - Expand the facilities, i.e. new room, terrace, gardens, access, etc.
 - **NOTE:** For-profits in Fayette County are not eligible for Capital Improvement Grants.

Preferences

- **Marketing trumps capital in most situations...**
 - Banking and financial institutions, including The Progress Fund, can help with capital improvements.
 - Financial institutions will not make a marketing loan.
- **Doing the most good...**
 - The project **MUST** benefit tourism in the county and the Laurel Highlands and have potential of attracting more visitors to the region and putting “heads in beds.”



Operational Grants

Fayette County Only

- Operating expenses were included in Fayette County beginning with the 2009-2010 grant cycle
 - This category was added to assist non-profits who were strapped for operational funding, but the committee will note how long any organization has received funds and expects organizations to work toward self-sufficiency
 - **Might not be a permanent grant category!**



Tourism Education Grants

Fayette County Only

- These grants are made to train and educate the staff and employees of tourism-related entities regarding customer service
- Customer service training programs can be developed “de novo” or purchased from a vendor
 - Keep in mind that speculative projects, research, or “experimental” projects are not favored

Projects Not Funded

Items not considered tourism-related or worthy of a grant:

- An improvement in a sole proprietor's property, including new roof, new doors, paving a parking lot...even though those projects may enhance the visitors' experience
- Speculative
 - Untried ventures...committees want to see a successful track record
- Research
 - To determine if an idea might work, e.g., market or feasibility studies
- Local Marketing
 - Keep in mind the purpose of the program is to bring visitors in from outside the Laurel Highlands region



Ineligible Expenses

- Standard Operating expenses (except for Fayette and for visitor centers in Trail Towns)
 - Fayette permits grants for: Rent, utilities, land phones, office equipment and supplies
- Standard operating expenses, except visitor centers in Trail Towns
- No payroll, wages, benefits, except in visitor centers in Trail Towns in Westmoreland and Somerset counties
- No travel expenses, such as gas, mileage, air fare, lodging
- No purchase or rental of computers, software, projectors, and other equipment
- Telephone expenses
- Postage and handling expenses
- Brochure racks

Ineligible Expenses

- Envelopes, letterhead, business cards, and miscellaneous office supplies
- Membership dues
- Sponsorships and talent/dignitary honorariums
- Office space rent
- Physical construction of billboards
- Gift cards, t-shirts and items for resale.
- No sectarian religious purposes.



Grant Criteria and Guidelines

Most important

How will this project enhance or increase tourism in Fayette County?

**Your response to this question is vitally important!
Failure to thoroughly answer this question will likely result in your application not being approved.**



Grant Criteria and Guidelines

- A final grant report must be submitted for all grants
 - Must include:
 - Invoices/receipts and proof of payment, detailed on Expenditure of Funds Worksheet
 - Final report explaining how the funds were used and providing details regarding the project, visitation numbers, measurements documenting project effectiveness, etc.
 - A Final Certification Letter which attests to the proper application of the grant
 - Will be provided at grant ceremony
 - Pictures and/or other supporting documentation required



Grant Criteria and Guidelines

Tourism Grant Applications will be available

Friday, October 7, 2016

laurelhighlands.org/grants

Application Deadline

4:30 p.m., Friday, November 18, 2016



Grant Criteria and Guidelines

Adhere to strict deadlines

A 2017 grant must be fully utilized by

December 31, 2017



Grant Criteria and Guidelines

County deadlines for submission of Final Reports regarding the **2016 Grants**:

Fayette County – May 31, 2016

Please note: Although the deadline for your 2016 final report is May 31, 2017, we recommend you file your final report as soon as your project is complete.

If your organization received a 2016 grant and is awarded a 2017 grant, the 2017 check may be held until the final report has been submitted and the 2016 grant has been closed.



Grant Criteria and Guidelines

- **If your project has faced extenuating circumstances that might have prohibited the grant from being appropriately utilized, you may request a deadline extension by contacting the LHVB.**
- **The grant committee reserves the right to approve or reject an extension request. The decision of the committee or its designated representative(s) shall be final and binding upon all parties.**



Grant Criteria and Guidelines

Remember

- All grant applications must be typed.
- Handwritten applications will not be accepted.
- Five copies of each application must be submitted.
- An entity may apply for and possibly receive each grant type available in a county.
 - However, a separate application is required for each grant.



Tourism Grant Committee Fayette County

- Three individuals chosen by the County Commissioners
- Member of LHVB from lodging community representing highest hotel tax collected
- LHVB President and CEO



Tourism Grant Committee Fayette County*

2016 Grant Review Committee

Ashli Mazer-Workman, Nemaquin Woodlands Resort

Tammy Stenson, McMillen Engineering

Warren Hughes

Reneé Seifert, LHVB

*Subject to change at the direction of the Commissioners. The 2017 Grant Review Committee has not been selected as of today.



QUESTIONS?



Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau

laurelhighlands.org/grants

Key Contacts:

Georgia Robinsky, Grant Administrator
724-238-5661, grobinsky@laurelhighlands.org

Reneé Seifert, President/CEO
724-238-5661, rseifert@laurelhighlands.org