

Visit CANTON



ArtsinStark

## Cultural Tourism Grants

### Mission

Grants will be awarded for the purpose of generating increased visitation and economic impact for the region through the support of arts and cultural events, programming, and marketing initiatives.

“Cultural Tourism” is defined as marketing initiatives and events that encompass visual arts, museums, performing arts, theatres, attractions, authentic historic and cultural places, and events to encounter traditions, history, music, and art.

**Update 3/15/24 – The Cultural Tourism Grant Program will open for projects taking place between July 1-December 31, 2024. The Grant Program will invest up to an additional \$125,000 in support of approved projects.**

**2024 Cultural Tourism Grant program will invest up to \$210,000 in support of approved projects.**

### Goals

The goals of the ArtsinStark/Visit Canton Grant Program include:

- **Create enhanced visitor appeal to special events, programming, or cultural institutions through the addition of arts and cultural elements.**
- **Increase attendance by gaining a new demographic of visitors with additional cultural entertainment and marketing campaigns of arts & culture programming.**
- **Foster strategic vision as well as industry and community collaboration.**
- **Maximize the economic return on public and private investments for travel and tourism destinations in Stark County through arts and culture initiatives.**

### Eligibility

#### **Applicant Eligibility**

Eligible organizations include, but are not limited to, arts and cultural organizations, local planning committees, Chambers of Commerce, local governments, non-profit organizations, and for-profit enterprises.

***\*\*If a for-profit enterprise is a lead or a partner applicant, the project must reflect an economic benefit for the community or county at large.***

### **Project Eligibility**

Projects should target the development of enhanced cultural tourism experiences, programs, entertainment, and creativity in visual arts, performing arts, or historical events. They should align with the Cultural Tourism Grant program's mission and increase the likelihood of visitation. **Priority will be given to projects that showcase experiences that cannot be found within 90 miles and/or 90 days of the project.** A cost match for marketing support is required to be eligible for grant dollars (see Awards and Timeline section for more information).

Project proposals are not limited to, but may focus on one of the following categories:

- **Visual Arts, Performing Arts or Museum Exhibitions**
- **Entertainment including Live Music, Dancing, Concerts, Theatrical Productions**
- **Heritage and historical experiences**

Project examples within the categories include:

- **Live music, dance, or entertainment elements added to special events**
- **NEW Marketing initiatives to reach a new demographic of guests to engage with the performance, exhibit, special event, or production**
  - **Marketing and promotional expenses including email marketing campaigns, magazines, newspapers, radio, TV, internet, direct mail, PR/media kits, and billboards, etc.**
- **Marketing initiatives that showcase the newly added arts and cultural elements at special events**
- **Additional arts or cultural-based experiences at special events or program**
- **Addition of arts-based experience that elevates the visitor/guest experience within the business or attraction.**

The following expenses are **ineligible** for grant funding:

- Marketing materials including event signage, photography, or videography
- Operational costs of hiring a contract employee or marketing firm
- Staff salaries, mileage, or other fees that are already budgeted to carry out daily work
- Food, alcohol, or other hospitality items
- Ad buys targeted only to cities/locations/audiences within Stark County (*Marketing and advertising expenses submitted for grant consideration must target at least 40% out-of-county audience.*)
- Grant Project must not solely be dependent on the Cultural Tourism Grant funding. Re-

occurring funding for projects is not available from year to year.

- Projects or marketing initiatives that do not have a regional impact, either directly or indirectly
- If the Grant Project is a pre-existing special event that has applied for Cultural Tourism Grant Funding in the past, eligible entertainment and marketing dollars requested must target a new geographic market, new demographic audience, or advertising placed in a new medium, or new entertainment with the potential to increase event attendance. **If a project has been funded in the past, line items that received funding will not be eligible to receive future funding.**

### Awards and Timeline

- Grant requests **up to \$20,000** per project will be considered through this competitive application process.
- Applicants can submit multiple projects per fiscal year.
- Cultural Tourism Grant applications must be submitted at least 60 days before scheduled programming or special event
- Cultural Tourism grant dollars may not represent more than 50% of the total marketing cost. If asking for Marketing Support – partners must show 50% match of marketing expenses (\*local marketing initiatives can be included as part of the match)
- Projects must be started and completed within the 2024 calendar year (January 1-December 31, 2024).
- The Committee will not award contingent grant awards; but rather recommend those organizations that need to provide additional information to be awarded, to re-apply when dollars are still available.

### Application Proposal Timeline

- **March 15, 2024** | Announcement of additional funding available in 2024 Cultural Tourism Grant Program
- **March 15, 2024** | Online Applications for 2024 Cultural Tourism Grants Open
  - **Online Applications are available at <https://visitcanton.grantplatform.com/>**
- **May 1, 2024 at 5:00PM** | Online Applications for Cultural Tourism Grants must be submitted by 5:00PM
- **June 2024** | Announcement of Awarded Funds

***If funds are still available in the Cultural Tourism Grant Fund, Visit Canton will accept rolling applications on the following timeline throughout 2024 until there are no longer dollars available. Cultural Tourism Grant Applications must be submitted at least 60 days before the scheduled program or event to be considered.***

- **By the 1<sup>st</sup> of Every Month (For example, February 1, 2024) |** Online Applications for Cultural Tourism Grants must be submitted by 5:00PM
- **By the 15<sup>th</sup> of Every Month (For example, February 15, 2024) |** All applications that were submitted by the 1<sup>st</sup> will be reviewed and judged by the Committee and an announcement of awarded funds will be made by the 15<sup>th</sup> of that month.

## Grant Application Requirements

**For consideration, grant applications must provide the following within their online grant application proposal:**

1. Name and dates of project or event for which the Cultural Tourism Grant will be used (the “Grant Project”)
2. Applicant organization’s name and FEIN #
3. Applicant organization’s phone number, mailing address, email, and website
4. Name of person filling out the application on behalf of the organization and their contact information
5. Amount of Cultural Tourism Grant funding requested
6. Project Description and Goals
7. A detailed line-item Operational Budget AND Marketing Budget showing the overall project scope and uses for all funding associated with the project, and identifying the source and status of funding (e.g., secured, contingent, applied for, etc.)
8. Marketing/PR Promotional Plan including audience demographics
9. A project timeline
10. Ad artwork (Previous years or upcoming events)
11. Requested Performer/Vendor/Marketing quotes
  - Invoices, contracts, or email communication confirmations are all acceptable forms of quotes to submit.
12. Estimated attendance from both spectators and participants at or with the Grant Project
13. Tracking Methods to plan and calculate ROI from attendees visiting the attraction or the event
14. If Event/Program has happened in the past, past data must be submitted:
  - Previous attendance at Event
  - Previous venue/location of Event
  - Previous dates of Event
15. If a project is a special event or exhibit, must be submitted to the VisitCanton.com and ArtsinStark Calendar of Events/Partner Profile before grant submission.

**Applications that do not submit all the requirements will not be scored and reviewed by Committee.**

## Scoring Considerations

Applications that have addressed all requirements above will be scored. **Applications that reflect collaboration with multiple partners on the project are highly desired.**

<b>Cultural Tourism  </b> To what extent does the application meet the requirement to encompass visual arts, museums, performing arts, theaters, attractions, authentic historic and cultural places, and events to encounter traditions, history, music, and art.
<b>Economic Impact  </b> Is this funding for a new event, new marketing initiative, or new elements that have the opportunity to significantly grow the economic impact of existing events or initiatives?
<b>Destination Appeal  </b> Does/Will this project enhance Stark County’s public perception as a travel and tourism destination with a unique experience authentic to Stark County?
<b>Collaboration  </b> Will this project significantly impact or connect multiple businesses and/or a community within Stark County?
<b>Marketing &amp; Operations Plan  </b> Does this project’s application present a complete & well-planned marketing and operational plan to accomplish the presented goals?

## Recognition and Acknowledgement Requirements

Visit Canton will notify grant award recipients following approval by the Cultural Tourism Grant Committee.

Initiatives completed using Cultural Tourism Grant Funds must acknowledge such financial support by including Visit Canton and ArtsinStark logo on marketing materials, website landing pages, signage at events, event programs, etc.

Applicants receiving grant funds will be issued a Memorandum of Understanding that must be signed and returned to receive funding. Cultural Tourism Grant funds will be paid to the awarded projects as follows; 70% disbursed upon approval of grant and receipt of signed MOU, and the remaining 30% will be disbursed following review of the final evaluation report submitted by the recipient organization

## Final Evaluation Reporting

If a grant project is awarded funding, the lead organization must complete the following reporting:

- A detailed summary of all expenditures and how all Cultural Tourism Grant funds were invested, including, but not limited to work orders, invoices, and receipts will be required with the final evaluation report.
- A detailed return on investment report that tracks visitation numbers, location of visitors, economic impact to the recipient organization, and estimated impact to the Stark County community will be required with the final evaluation report.

The final evaluation form will be submitted to the grantee upon completion of their event or marketing campaign. **The grantee has 30 days to remit a completed report. Should the Committee need any additional information, the grantee will have 10 business days to submit the additional data requested. Should the grantee not remit a completed report or the additional requested data in the aforementioned perimeters, the remaining 30% grant allocation will be forfeited and it will be notated on the grantee's profile.** This forfeiture will also be considered in judging future Cultural Tourism Grant applications from the grantees.