

ENDLESS MOUNTAINS VISITORS BUREAU ROOM TAX GRANT APPLICATION

I. Introduction

As the agency responsible for ensuring that Room Tax money collected in participating counties is used for the purposes of tourism, promotion and development, the Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau has developed the Room Tax Grant Program.

II. Statement of Purpose

The set-aside portion of the county hotel room tax specific to the support of tourism-related cultural, historical and recreational assets is to be used to help underwrite the expense of three types of projects:

1. Special Events, exhibits and publicity initiatives, and historical preservation projects that will increase tourism to an area/attraction.
2. Marketing and promotional projects.
3. Wayfinding aides by the county or the county's cultural, historical, and recreational organizations for the purpose of increasing tourism and overnight stays.

Grants may be considered and awarded each grant cycle by the Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau upon the recommendation of the County Room Tax Tourism Committees and are administered by the Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau.

III. General Conditions

- A. Grants will **not** be provided for sectarian religious expenses.
- B. Grants will **not** be awarded for food or refreshments, travel, entertainment or operational expenses.
- C. Grant funds may be used to match federal and state funds, but are not considered private donations. Room tax grants can only be used to match grants that are being used for projects that will directly impact tourism within the region.
- D. Grants will be awarded to qualified applicants as defined in Section V.
- E. Each county may choose to set minimum/maximum grant awards

IV. Grant Categories

Category 1: Special Events/Exhibits and Historical Preservation

Special Event: A special event/exhibit is defined as an event/display open to the public that promotes tourism in the county. A bona fide not-for-profit or a program of an officially recognized not-for-profit organization must sponsor the event/exhibit. The event/exhibit must be either an attraction in and of itself or one that will be used as a complement to an existing public event, display or attraction. The event/exhibit must also be advertised outside a fifty-mile radius.

- Consideration will be given to all proposed events/exhibits, including those without history. Preference may be given to proposals from organizations that have produced similar events/exhibits with at least one year of event history and have completed financial summaries (reported using generally accepted accounting principles) and that have advertised or otherwise promoted these events/exhibits at least 50 miles outside of the County.
- All proposals must include a written marketing plan to promote the event.

Historical Preservation Projects: Room Tax Grant funds may also be used to improve, restore, or preserve existing historical sites/buildings (or portions of those sites/buildings,) that are considered to be of value to an area's culture, history, and sense of identity, as well as being an existing or potential tourist draw and which will add to the existing tourism attractions within the area.

Capital improvement projects are not eligible for room tax funds (i.e., sidewalks, sewers, etc). Funds cannot be used to improve, restore or preserve private residences or businesses.

Category 2: Marketing and Promotional projects: The applicant must demonstrate that this project directly correlates to increasing tourism within the region. The project should target promotion beyond a 50-mile radius with emphasis on overnight stays.

The applicant must be a county or bona fide, officially recognized not-for-profit organization.

Category 3: Wayfinding Aides: Consideration will be given to groups proposing to develop maps, signage or other tools which would be of assistance to visitors to the area.

V. Qualified Applicants

Grants may be awarded to all qualifying **cultural, historical and recreational entities** for qualifying **special events or exhibits, historical preservation projects, and wayfinding projects**, that submit a written application for such funds. **Local and county government** may also qualify and submit a written application for review.

To be a qualifying **CULTURAL, HISTORICAL, OR RECREATIONAL ENTITY**, an organization must:

- be a bona fide, officially recognized not-for-profit organization
- have at least one year of audited financial reports,
- have a proven positive record of advertising to bring patrons and audience members from beyond a 50 mile radius.

VI. General Conditions for Award

1. Through a press release issued by the EMVB, participating counties will announce the availability of grant funds in local newspapers. Eligible applicants will submit 5 copies of the EMVB Room Tax Grant application directly to the **Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau at 4 Werks Plaza, Tunkhannock, PA 18657.**
2. The Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau Room Tax Committee will be charged with making certain each application meets and/or exceeds the established criteria.
3. A County Room Tax Committee appointed by the County Commissioners will be charged with reviewing all applications and determining which grants will be awarded, keeping in line with the available grant funds. The committee may also recommend projects to be initiated by the County. The County Room Tax Committee shall present each of their final recommendations for awards to their county commissioners for formal approval. (In the event that a member of the County Room Tax Committee serves on the Board of a grant applicant, it is mandatory that said member removes himself or herself from the decision-making process related to any application submitted by that organization or event committee.) The County Commissioners and the County Room Tax Chairperson then sign off on those projects and a list of formally approved projects is submitted to the EMVB office.
4. Once approved, the EMVB office will notify all applicants of whether their project was approved and for what amount.
5. Grant funds will be dispersed through the EMVB. Nothing shall prevent the EMVB from withholding part or all of the total monies available for awards.

6. It shall in no way be understood or implied that there shall be an equal division of the total funds among categories or projects.
7. Awardees of EMVB Room Tax Grants must sign a contract outlining grant disbursement procedures.
8. Awardees (non-profit and municipalities) will disperse the received grant funds for eligible expenses. In a final report to the EMVB, awardees must provide adequate proof that the funds received were used for their intended purpose through the submission of ad tear sheets, media billings, or any other similar documentation, along with properly executed vouchers, invoices, cancelled checks and/or other records detailing the nature and propriety of the charges that were signed and approved by the organization's officer(s).
9. All publicity and promotional campaigns undertaken with grant funds must include the following:

“Funded in part by the (county name) County Room Tax Fund and the Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau.”

Questions regarding the application process should be directed to the **Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau, 4 Werks Plaza, Tunkhannock, PA 18657. Phone: 570-836-5431 or 1-800-769-8999. Email jean@endlessmountains.org**

GRANT APPLICATION: County Tourism Development Fund

Instructions: All applicants must complete all parts of Sections A, B and D and sign the Affirmation Statement. Special Events/Exhibits and Historical Preservation projects must also complete Section C.

If additional space is required for any questions, please attach separate page and reference Section number. Submit **five (5) copies** of the completed grant application and attachments by the application deadline.

Applications will only be accepted at the Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau office, 4 Werks Plaza, Tunkhannock, PA 18657.

Any questions concerning this application should be directed to the EMVB, 570-836-5431 or 1-800-769-8999.

Grant decisions and notification will be made according to the guidelines detailed in the Grant Program Overview, included with this application.

SECTION A	
<u>PROJECT NAME:</u>	
A-1) DATE:	A-2) County:
A-3) Organization Name:	
A-4) Tax ID Number:	
A-5) Name of Contact Person:	
A-6) Title in the Organization:	
A-7) Physical Location of Organization:	
A-8) Mailing Address:	

A-9) Telephone Number:
A-10) Email Address (if applicable):
A-11) Web Site Address (if applicable):

Section B	
Circle appropriate category:	
Marketing & Promotional Projects	Historic Preservation
Special Event/Exhibit	Wayfinding Project
Name of Project:	
Date(s) of Project:	
Location of Project:	
B-1) Amount Requested:	B-2) Total Projected Budget:
B-3) Description of other Funding Sources:	
B-4) Provide a brief overview of the organization's history and mission:	

B-5) What is the purpose of the event, current need, problem or opportunity?

B-6) How will grant funds support the initiative described in item B-5?

B-7)(If applicable) Describe relevant timelines related to additional grant support for this project:

B-8) Approximate portion of your last completed fiscal year budget dedicated to marketing beyond a 50 mile radius of your county:

B-9) List any supporting or sponsoring organizations involved in this particular project/event/exhibit:

B-10) If an event/exhibit, has the organization promoted a similar program/event in the past?

B-11) If yes, describe (include dates and locations):

(B-12) Detail your current marketing campaign for capturing patrons beyond a fifty-mile radius of the county:

B-13) How does that plan deviate from past marketing campaigns? What changes have been made and why?

B-14) How will your organization judge the effectiveness of your campaign to capture patronage from beyond a 50 mile radius of the county and how will this affect your future years marketing efforts?

If applying for a Special Events/Exhibits or Historic Preservation plan/project, please proceed to Section C to answer additional questions. Otherwise, please go to the Budget Section of this application.

Section C – For Special Events/Exhibits or Historical Preservation Projects Only

C-1) Provide numbers of visitors to your event/exhibit or historical site in the past year (based on guest book, ticket sales, etc):

C-2) Provide days/ hours your event/exhibit/site is open to the public:

C-3) How many members are in your organization?

C-4) List event/exhibit/site schedule (include start/end date):

Proceed to Budget Section

Section D- Current Project Budget

Affirmation Statement to be completed by all Applicants

By Signature Below, I affirm that all information in this application and all attachments are true and correct to the best of my ability, and that the receipt of any grant funds relative to this request will be used for the purposes detailed within this application.

Name:

Title:

Signature

Date: