

Northampton County



2021 Hotel Tax Grant Guidelines

Application Process Opens: 8:30 A.M. Monday, JUNE 15, 2020
Deadline: 4:00 P.M., Friday, JULY 17, 2020

Funding Requests are currently being accepted for projects that will take place in Calendar Year 2021. All projects funded under this announcement must be completed within the 2021 Calendar Year. Grant awards are expected to be announced December of 2020.

Please review these guidelines carefully for eligibility requirements and application submission procedures. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Northampton County Hotel Tax Grant Guidelines 2021 Grant Process

OVERVIEW

The County of Northampton will competitively award grants to be funded from revenues collected from the Northampton County Hotel Tax. The Hotel Tax funds are provided for under Northampton County Resolution No. 440 of 2005, as authorized by P.L. 307 of 2000 and amended by Act 12 of 2005, by imposing a Hotel Room Rental Tax of 4% on hotel guests, to be used for tourism and community development initiatives.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Projects will promote community development related to tourism and/or enhance tourism within Northampton County, such as activities/events/venues which measurably increase the number of visitors to the County and/or promote Northampton County's unique cultural and/or historic value. Applicants must fall within one of the categories identified below:

- Federally registered non-profit entity (501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4))
- Municipal entity located within Northampton County

In addition, events and activities must occur in Northampton County. These funds are intended to support events or project expenses such as promotional costs and capital improvements. Applicants relying on these funds as a general source of annual operating funds, such as requests to support core staffing costs and other administrative operational expenses typically covered by the organization, will be considered less competitive in the application review and selection process.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

All grants will be awarded based on a review process. Projects that can most effectively address some or all of the following will receive preference:

- The project promotes visitation to sites within the County that promote our unique cultural and/or historic value. Organizations must attempt to measure the number of participants (out-of-town tourists vs. local resident participation).
- The project will measurably increase the number of visitors to Northampton County;
- The project measurably improves public health and/or wellness;
- The project is a collaborative partnership with other Northampton County entities.
- The project demonstrates, at a minimum, 25% in matching funds of which no more than 50% can be in-kind services.

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

All applicants are required to register with the Northampton County Department of Community and Economic Development's (NCDCED) County Relationship Manager (CRM) and submit electronic applications through the web. CRM can be accessed at the following web link: <https://web.northamptoncounty.org/DCEDForms/views/Login.html>. Following NCDCED confirmation of registry (within 1-2 business days) you may upload and submit your electronic application forms and supplemental documentation through the CRM application program.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Interested organizations must submit a 2021 Hotel Tax Funding Request using the application form available by visiting the Northampton County Community and Economic Development Grant and Loan Programs webpage at <https://www.northamptoncounty.org/CMTYECDV/Pages/Apply-for-Funding.aspx>. Applications must be submitted electronically through the NCDCED CRM program. The Applicant's Contact Person will be provided confirmation of receipt within three (3) days of submission. **IT IS THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE APPLICANT TO ASSURE THAT THE APPLICATION IS RECEIVED BY THE DEADLINE.** Staff reserve the right to request additional information from the applicant after the deadline to clarify a submission.

1. A 2021 Hotel Tax Funding Request Form.
2. IRS letter indicating 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) status.
3. A project narrative is required. The project narrative must be typed on a separate page (limit three pages) and should include at the minimum:
 - A concise description of the need for the project and what activities will be undertaken through this funding to address this need.
 - An explanation of how the project/activity will increase tourism and/or quality of life in/within the County of Northampton;
 - Highlight any partnerships and/or innovative elements of the project;
 - Construction/Renovation projects require a current status list of permits and zoning variances, as well as, a copy of contract(s) for any vendor service already bid and/or executed (general contracts, architects, engineers, etc.). The Hotel Tax award may not be used for expenses/activities encumbered prior to the award date.
4. A projected schedule and detailed timeline for the project.
5. Methodology to be used to track participants.
6. Using the budget sheet provided within the application form, provide a detailed budget, including all sources and uses of funds, for the project from start to finish, including multiple project phases, if applicable. Application also requires cost estimates, as a source of determining amount of funds requested. Budgets submitted without documentation will not be eligible for consideration. Please enter dollars to the nearest 100th.

A minimum 25% of match in funds is required. No more than 50% of matching funds may be in-kind services. If matching funds are from another award source other than the organization, proof of award must be included with application submission. Letters or emails of award notices are acceptable. Applications with a match source exceeding the minimum requirement will be considered more competitive.

7. Any agency applying for funds must submit:
 - W-9
 - Most recent audited financial statements or most recent year-end financial statement
8. **The deadline for submitting 2021 Hotel Tax Funding Request applications is Friday, July 17th, 2020, 4:00 p.m.**

Upload application and supplemental documentation to CRM program.

PROCEDURES FOR ACCESSING FUNDS

A grant agreement between the grantee and the County of Northampton will be required prior to release of award dollars. Awards will be released only if the applicant is in compliance with all previously awarded County grants. Award recipients will be required to provide a Certificate of Insurance for the project, listing the County of Northampton as additional insured. All grant agreements include provisions and conditions appropriate to the project to be funded, including provisions addressing the following conditions:

Nondiscrimination - No assistance will be awarded unless grantee certifies to the grantor that it shall not discriminate against any employee or against any person seeking employment because of race, religion, color, handicap, national origin, age, or sex. All contracts for work to be paid with Hotel Tax funds must contain the Commonwealth's official nondiscrimination clause.

Project Records - The grantee must maintain full and accurate records with respect to the project. The County of Northampton and its designees shall have access to such records, as well as the ability to inspect all project work, invoices, materials, and other relevant records at reasonable times and places.

Reporting/Audit - The grantee must submit semi-annual and final close-out reports on the use of the funds consistent with the grant agreement. Grant may be subject to one or more audits after the year in which the grant was awarded, and grantees will be required to cooperate fully with those audits and provide all requested documentation in connection with those audits.

Contracting Requirements – Compliance with competitive bidding procedures will be required if the entity and the project to be funded are subject to statutory bidding procedures. If not, competitive bidding procedures may be required in awarding certain contracts for construction, reconstruction, demolition, alteration and/or repair, acquisition of machinery and equipment, and professional consultants. A copy of the “Contracting Requirements” are attached to this application. Notification of pre-construction meeting(s) shall be provided to the County.

Disbursement of Award Funds – Disbursement of award funds is based on a quarterly distribution schedule.

PROGRAM CONDITIONS

Grants are awarded based on anticipated hotel tax revenues to be collected in 2021. Given the state of the economy and its impact on the hospitality industry, **there are no guarantees that grantees will receive the entire amount of their grant award.** Therefore, all applicants are urged to have contingency plans should they not receive their entire grant. The organization’s application will become a part of the grant agreement between the organization and the County of Northampton.

PROGRAM REPORTING CONDITIONS

Disbursement of funds and future grant awards are contingent upon the timely submission of Semi-Annual Performance and Final Evaluation Reports to the County. Documentation depicting the expenditure of funds, to include matching, is required. Such documentation includes, at a minimum, proof of purchase and proof of payment, i.e. invoices, receipts, contracts, cancelled check(s), etc.

PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE SCORING CRITERIA

2021 Hotel Tax Scoring Criteria			Scoring Weight
1	Project Narrative		1/3
2	Budget/Matching Funds Leveraged		1/3
3	Additional Submission Requirements		1/3
	Effectively Address Priority Preferences	30%	
	Project Timeline and Capacity	30%	
	Partnerships	40%	

PROGRAM INQUIRIES

Program inquiries should be directed to:

Northampton County Department of Community & Economic Development
Karen Collis, Community & Economic Development Specialist
610-829-6314, kcollis@northamptoncounty.org.