

Lake County Visitors Bureau Arts and Culture Fund

2017 Project Support Grant Guidelines



Introduction

The Lake County Visitors Bureau (LCVB) is an independent, nonprofit, destination-marketing agency, governed by a board of trustees and funded by two percent of a three percent hotel/motel occupancy tax and membership dues. A portion of the hotel/motel occupancy tax has been dedicated to funding arts and culture projects within Lake County. The LCVB board of trustees oversees the dispensation of these funds with the guidance of a group of volunteer judges comprised of accomplished Lake County-area civic leaders as well as business and nonprofit professionals.

Mission of the LCVB

The mission of the LCVB is 1) to promote Lake County, Ohio, through the travel and tourism industry by marketing to meeting groups, tour operators, and individuals through advertisements, social media, trade shows, and other educational means; 2) to increase public awareness of cultural and recreational opportunities in Lake County; and 3) to increase the number of overnight visits in Lake County and the number of visitors to area attractions, restaurants, festivals, museums, special events, and retail shops for pleasure, business, and enrichment.

Program Purpose

The purpose of the LCVB Arts and Culture Fund grants program is to provide grants for the presentation of high-quality arts and cultural events that further regional impact of, and public awareness of, arts and culture in Lake County. For the purposes of the Arts and Culture Fund grants program, events must be arts-related and/or cultural in scope. **The program is intended for events and programs that attract attendees, rather than research/study or capital improvements.**

Examples of eligible disciplines include: *arts education, history, literary arts, media arts, nature/science* (museum-based), *performing arts*, and *visual arts*. Preference is given to projects that add to the breadth and depth of Lake County's arts and cultural programming and that build the capacity of organizations to grow arts and culture audiences in and outside of Lake County. **Out-of-county publicity is an important factor in selection of projects for grant funding.** Projects with specific marketing and publicity plans to promote their event/project will be given preference (see funding criteria for more information).

In order to cultivate a more inclusive mix of potential, deserving applicants, the Bureau allows appropriate latitude of the premise of "culture" and cultural events, including events with the premise of a unique heritage or distinctive musical, theatrical, or historical genre, as well as high-quality events that emphasize the richness of Lake County's diverse cultural expressions.

Eligibility and Restrictions

The LCVB Arts and Culture Fund grants program is open to a wide range of organizations that meet the eligibility requirements below. Specific documentation needed to verify eligibility is outlined in the grant application and must be submitted with the application.

- Applicant must be a *nonprofit organization, association, or institution*. This includes arts or cultural organizations, social service organizations, public and private educational institutions, and other publicly funded entities.
- If applicant does not have official IRS designation as defined above, the applicant must partner with another organization that meets the criteria that will serve as a fiscal agent.
- Applicant organization must have a minimum one-year history of providing public programs or activities directly concerned with the arts or cultural heritage.
- Applicant must have been incorporated in Lake County for at least one year prior to submitting an application.
- Applicant must properly and fully complete the Arts and Culture Fund project grant application and submit required documents.
- Applicant must be in compliance with previous LCVB Arts and Culture Fund grants. Applicants not in compliance will be considered ineligible for a period of one year.

Arts and culture fund grants will be offered annually, and funds must be used during the 12-month period of the grant (**May 1, 2017 – April 27, 2018**). Applicants may be asked to return funds that are not spent (or *encumbered*) during the grant period.

To provide funding to as many organizations throughout Lake County as possible, LCVB Arts and Culture Fund grant applicants may submit only one application requesting a maximum of \$7,000 in each grant cycle.

Important note: Applicants for funding are encouraged to present an additional new project or concept. **Previously funded projects will be considered but should try to introduce new elements or a project expansion for appropriate funding.**

The following is a breakdown of maximum funding requests:

Year #1 – Maximum \$7,000 request

Year #2 – Maximum \$5,000 request

Year #3 – Maximum \$3,000 request

At the end of three years, an applicant seeking funding for a previously funded event/project may repeat the three-year funding request cycle, and apply again for full funding.

Projects proposed by applicant organizations whose operations are primarily funded with state and/or local taxes or appropriations must demonstrate that LCVB Arts and Culture fund grant funding will not replace existing sources of governmental/public support.

LCVB Arts and Culture Fund project grant funds CANNOT be used to fund the following types of activities:

- *Fundraisers*
- *Capital improvements*, expenditures, acquisitions, and restorations (e.g., facilities and equipment, website upgrades/improvements)
- Organizational *operating support* or operating expenses not directly related to the proposed project
- Annual or endowment campaigns or membership drives
- Religious activities advancing or inhibiting a particular religious ideology
- Re-granting
- Scholarships, awards, cash prizes, or events whose primary purpose is to fund scholarships, awards, or cash prizes
- Deficit reduction or elimination, trust endowments, cash reserves, penalty or litigation fees, loans, or interest on loans
- Programs or activities that are not designed to involve the general public
- Cost of receptions, food and beverage
- Agent's fees for programs contracted through commercial agencies
- Travel outside of the United States
- Advocacy of specific political causes or candidates

Grant Application Panel Review

The LCVB Arts and Culture Fund grant program is a **competitive** process. Each proposal is evaluated on three criteria:

- Quality of Arts and Cultural project or event
- Value to Lake County's tourism industry, including out-of-county media coverage
- Quality of management

A group of panelists, selected by the LCVB, will evaluate each application in relationship to the criteria and recommend funding for submitted programs. Funding recommendations are not considered final until reviewed and approved by the LCVB Board of Trustees.

Funding Criteria

Quality of Arts and Cultural Project or Event (Maximum 30 points)

Indicators

- Provides clear artistic, cultural, and educational merit to the community and audience being served;
- Furthers regional impact and increases public awareness of historical, cultural, or entertainment opportunities in Lake County;
- Offers an innovative, unique arts or cultural event, program, or experience that adds to the breadth and/or depth of Lake County's arts and cultural program offerings and supports the mission of the Lake County Visitors Bureau;
- Demonstrates the project is relevant to the organization's mission and goals;
- If funds have been requested from LCVB for a past project, applicant should consider establishing a new facet that advances the project's arts & cultural quality; and
- If funds have been requested from LCVB for a past project, applicant should demonstrate expansion of audience in numbers & demographic characteristics.

Value to Lake County's Tourism Industry (Maximum 40 points)

Indicators

- **Furthers out-of-county publicity efforts**, especially marketing across the major metropolitan areas and smaller markets near—but not necessarily within—Lake County. Points will be awarded based on specific objectives detailed in the applicant's marketing plan that target out-of-county coverage. The marketing plan should include details regarding use of social media, local and regional print publications, public and commercial radio and television platforms, listing opportunities, website listings, and/or media outlets featuring entertainment options. Daily, weekly, and weekend publications, as well as electronic and digital media, should be considered. Free and fee-based objectives should both be included in the plan and are of equal importance;
- Addresses community goals and priorities (economic, educational, social, cultural); and
- Has clearly defined potential for showcasing Lake County as an arts and culture destination, specifically by increasing the number of day-trip and/or overnight visits to Lake County. Has potential to increase the number of visitors to area attractions, restaurants, festivals, museums, and retail shops for pleasure, business, and enrichment.

Quality of Management (Maximum 30 points)

Indicators

- Clearly defines objectives, timeline, and management roles and responsibilities;
- Provides for appropriate *fiscal* oversight and includes a project budget appropriate to the scope of the proposed project;
- Has established a set of *evaluation indicators* (pre-defined metrics) that will be used to evaluate the project's success;
- Presents a grant application with well-developed ideas and thoughtful planning and preparation, and;
- Includes a *marketing plan* (template provided) with an effective design and scope to impact patron participation from inside and outside Lake County. The marketing plan must include specific efforts to attract an audience from beyond the borders of Lake County. Applicants who do not include a marketing plan risk point deductions.

Grant Award Amounts

LCVB Arts and Culture Fund grant applicants may submit a single application requesting a maximum of \$7,000 in any funding period. There is a yearly decrease in funding availability for previously funded projects (see Eligibility and Restrictions section). The decrease applies to all previously funded projects submitted within the past three years. The requested amount must not be more than 50% of the proposed project's total cost, as the applicant must *match* the requested amount with other sources of earned and contributed income on a one-to-one basis. That is, at least 50% of the project budget must be paid by the applicant organization. Matching funds may include in-kind time or materials or the actual cash equivalent.

Panelists score funding criteria on a point scale. The total number of points awarded could be as high as 100 or as low as 0. The *Olympian Method* of dropping the single highest panelist score and single lowest panelist score and averaging the remaining scores is used to arrive at each applicant's aggregate score. Applicants receiving an aggregate score below 50 are not eligible to receive funding through the LCVB Arts and Culture Fund grant program. Organizations receiving an aggregate score of 50 or higher are eligible, but not guaranteed, to receive funding through the LCVB Arts and Culture Fund grant program. The higher an applicant's aggregate score, the higher the likelihood the applicant will receive a greater proportion of their funding request.

Grant amounts are determined through a pre-set system adopted by the LCVB. The funding system is as follows:

- Aggregate scores of 90 or higher are eligible to receive up to 100% of their funding request;

- Aggregate scores between 80 and 89 are eligible to receive up to 90% of their funding request;
- Aggregate scores between 70 and 79 are eligible to receive up to 80% of their funding request;
- Aggregate scores between 60 and 69 are eligible to receive up to 70% of their funding request; and
- Aggregate scores between 50 and 59 are eligible to receive up to 60% of their funding request.

If needed, an across-the-board percentage adjustment will be implemented after scoring to bring all grant amounts within the Bureau’s arts and culture grant budget.

Adjudication is tentatively scheduled for April 2017. Grant awards are not confirmed until the LCVB Board of Trustees meets and approves the panel’s recommendations at their May 2017 board meeting.

Acknowledgement and Reporting Requirements

If you receive funding through the LCVB Arts and Culture Fund, you are required to acknowledge its support in all published materials and promotional features relating to the project for which you receive funding. There is a specific “arts and culture” logo requirement for printed materials. This logo is different than the standard LCVB logo, and includes the text “Arts & Culture Funding Program.” Grantees should email the LCVB office if there are any questions regarding logo use. Grantees are also required to submit a final report on the project, including a final narrative, fiscal report, evaluation, and evidence of LCVB acknowledgment within 60 days of completion of the project. Final reporting forms and evaluation tools are included in these documents.



*Logo for
acknowledgement of
Arts and Culture Fund*

Two copies of a grant agreement will be issued to grant winners, to be co-signed by The Lake County Visitors Bureau Board President and the CEO or other authorizing representative of the applicant organization. The applicant organization will sign both copies of the grant agreement and the LCVB Board President will sign both copies, returning one to the applicant organization and retaining one copy for LCVB files. Applicants are not authorized to spend grant funds until the grant contract is fully executed.

Acknowledgment of the LCVB Arts and Culture Fund includes using the arts and culture fund’s logo on promotional materials in a format that is **readable**. Grant recipients must request the most up-to-date arts and culture logo from the bureau. Awardees not using the appropriate logo risk deductions to their grant funds. Details regarding logo requirements are provided in the grant agreement.

Application Submission

Your complete application and materials must be received at the LCVB offices **no later than 4:30 P.M. on February 17, 2017**. Applications may not be e-mailed or faxed. To guarantee the arrival of your application, we suggest you deliver your application in person. Call ahead to the LCVB at (440) 975-1234 before delivering your application so we can expect you.

Audio-Visual Materials

Due to the nature of our judging process, audio-visual materials are NOT recommended as part of your application. Please do not send videos, DVDs, or photo collections as part of your application.

Contact and/or Questions

For additional information, please contact the Lake County Visitors Bureau (One Victoria Place, Suite 265-A, Painesville, OH 44077) at (440) 975-1234 or ask@lakevisit.com.

Glossary of Terms

Arts education: programs that allow youth and/or adults to learn about the arts, or provide training in an arts discipline, or use the arts to teach another subject.

Barriers: practical, perceptual, or experiential mindsets that could hinder access to a program e.g.:

- practical: “I couldn’t afford a ticket,” “couldn’t find a sitter,” “didn’t want be out too late,” etc.
- perceptual: “I won’t fit in,” “I wouldn’t know what to wear,” “I wouldn’t get it,” etc.
- experiential: “I didn’t enjoy my last visit,” “the ushers weren’t helpful,” “the lines were too long” etc.

Capital improvement: a project focused on improving an organization’s assets or infrastructure, such as facility construction, renovation, equipment, and/or website upgrades or improvements

Collaborative (Collaborations): a combination of two or more groups working together to achieve shared goals.

Creative: engages in the natural thought process that generates new ideas, forms, and concepts.

Documentation: audio and visual recordings or collections that illustrate artistic/cultural quality, convey innovation, and show collaboration and focused programming.

Encumbered: an exchange of funds that has not physically transpired before the reporting period, but is contracted and scheduled for shortly thereafter.

Evaluation indicators: metrics or measurable variables used to assess the program, such as strengths and weaknesses, number of attendees, demographics, etc.

Experimentation: taking some calculated risks in changing or adding to a program or event to discover other possible methods of achieving the program’s goals and the organization’s mission.

Fiscal: dealing with finances, accounting and taxing.

Fundraisers: programs established to solicit monetary gifts that are not a fixed dollar amount and are not an exchange for a product or service.

History: events, paraphernalia, movements, factual evidence, etc. that existed in the past and have been recorded or expressed over time.

Indicator(s): a measurable characteristic that can be used to determine the degree of adherence to a standard or level of quality.

Innovation: the process of solving a problem by improving on or changing the existing environment.

Literary arts: professional creative writing e.g. poetry, fiction, non-fiction.

Marketing plan: detailed outline of goals and methods for achieving desired attendance and revenue at an event; this should include a description of goals, target audiences, message to be delivered, channels through which message will be delivered, marketing partnerships in which one is engaged, and metrics for evaluating the success of the marketing plan.

Match: the part of the project budget provided by the applicant through their own or other sources (such as fees, grants or donations) of income.

Media arts: an art genre that utilizes technology in the production of the art e.g. digital imaging, animation, graphic design, etc.

Nature/science: a cultural subject, which examines life forms and physical matter.

Nonprofit corporation, organization, association or institution: a business form that is legally filed as a tax exempt venture, where no individual or group of individuals is gaining a variable profit from the organization's revenue, and is established to improve the overall well-being of the general public.

Olympian method: a system for numerical scoring that drops the single highest number and single lowest number and averages the remaining numbers to receive an overall score or aggregate score e.g. 1,3,6,6,9 → (3+6+6) → (15)/3 = a score of 5.

Operating support: support to finance the daily operations of an organization (e.g., wages, utilities, maintenance)

Performing arts: an art form that displays human interaction with other people and the space around them, and is presented for an audience in a physical location at one time (e.g., dance, theatre, music)

Target audience: desired individuals who will benefit from and purchase the product/service offered e.g. demographics, psychographics, and behaviors.

Visual arts: an art form primarily meant as visual stimulus but can be functional e.g. drawing, design, sculpture, etc.