

Local Shuttered Tourism Grant Guidelines

Introduction

The Town of Canton has approved a \$70,000 Local Shuttered Tourism Grant program to support nonprofit organizations that have faced economic hardship resulting from or exacerbated by the public health emergency. The funding comes from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Such grants could include funds to cover a loss of earnings, decline in revenues, or impacts of cancelled fundraising events during periods of closure or limited operations due to public health orders; unexpected expenses related to an increased demand for services or mitigation efforts to contain the spread of COVID. The Local Shuttered Tourism Grant program is designed to support organizations, programs, and activities that benefit Canton residents and help to support local tourism. Organizations eligible to apply include nonprofits that are corporations, associations and agencies with a 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) nonprofit status under the Internal Revenue Service Code or be affiliated with an organization that has a 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) nonprofit status. For-profit entities and individuals are not eligible.

Requirement/Eligibility

For purposes of this program, an eligible nonprofit must have fewer than 10 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees and must have operations in Canton or significantly serve the Canton community. Eligible nonprofit organizations must meet the requirements outlined below.

Additional criteria required when applying to the Local Shuttered Tourism grant program:

- Nonprofit organizations must have 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) nonprofit status under the Internal Revenue Service Code or be affiliated with an organization that has a 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) nonprofit status.
- Nonprofit organizations must have a Canton address or indicate that they significantly serve the Canton public or operate within Canton.
- The nonprofit organization must be in existence since January 1, 2019.
- The nonprofit organizations must be in good standing and current on its federal, state and local tax obligations and have no outstanding liens or judgements.
- If applicable, dates of closure due to the pandemic need to be provided.
- Nonprofit organizations must provide a written statement that will clearly identify the negative financial impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency to the organization must identify how the grant request addresses the identified need or negative impact.
- The Town will need to track the impact of this initiative. Recipients must agree to assist the Town through follow-up surveys and/or interviews with a goal of measuring success of the program.

Amount of Funding

Eligible nonprofit organizations may apply for grants of up to \$20,000. Funding is limited and it is anticipated that requests for assistance will be greater than funding on hand. Not all nonprofits approved for participation may receive the maximum amount. If awarded, the amount will be based upon the documented need of the nonprofit. Nonprofit organizations must demonstrate economic hardship and demonstrate the need for funding.

Eligible Costs

- Loss of earnings, decline in revenues, or impacts of cancelled fundraising events during periods of closure or limited operations due to COVID-19 public health orders.
- Costs associated with implementation of prevention or mitigation measures to contain the spread of the virus, such as physical changes to enable social distancing, enhanced cleaning efforts, barriers or partitions, or COVID-19 vaccination, testing or contact tracing programs.
- Reimbursement of expenses related to the organization's response to the COVID-19 public health emergency such as payroll and benefit costs; costs to retain employees; mortgage, rent or utilities costs; and other related operating costs.

Nonprofit organizations must be able to demonstrate either a decrease in revenue AND/OR an increase in COVID-19 related expenses up to the amount of your request not to exceed \$20,000. In the application narrative, applicants should be as specific as possible in demonstrating the financial impacted by including cost estimates or information from actual receipts.

Use of Funds

Nonprofit organizations must have a clear and specific use for grant funds and demonstrate that such funds will be used exclusively for future expenditures directly related to the COVID pandemic.

Listed below are some of the uses that these funds can be used for. This is not an exhaustive list and other uses will be considered.

- Payroll costs
- Mortgage
- Rent
- Utilities
- Operational expenses
- Worker protection expenditures
- Costs associated with the compliance of public health measures
- Specific investment to enhance the viability of the organization.
- Innovative community marketing program
- Facility improvements

Approval Process/Criteria

Nonprofit organization must be able to demonstrate they have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and that grant funds will enable the nonprofit organization to continue to operate and become stronger. The nonprofit organization must present a reasonable likelihood for long-term viability. Nonprofit organization must have a clear and specific authorized use for grant funds. It is vital to demonstrate economic hardship and demonstrate that acquiring the grant funds will significantly benefit the organization.

Applications will be evaluated and ranked based on the following criteria:

- Application completeness
- Application submitted within the allotted time frame
- Eligibility qualifications
- Economic hardship-negative impact of COVID-19
- Use of funds
- Documentation to support the amount being requested (the budget/costs)
- Impact the grant will have on the nonprofit organization
- Viability of the nonprofit organization
- Financial need

All nonprofit organization seeking funding must submit a completed Local Shuttered Tourism Grant Application which includes signing the applicant certification. By signing the certification, the applicant specifies that funds will be used for eligible expenses only. Any nonprofit organization found in violation of the grant award agreement will be required to repay the funds.

Selected nonprofit organization will need to complete and submit the following documents prior to grants dispersal:

- Document indicating nonprofit status
- Form W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification Number & Certification
- A signed Local Shuttered Tourism Grant application, which includes the certification statement.

The application for the Local Shuttered Tourism Grant can be found on the Town website at www.townofcantonct.org. Applications will be accepted from April 1, 2022 to May 13, 2022. Applications can be sent to the Chief Administrative Officer at 4 Market Street, P.O. Box 168, Collinsville, CT 06022-0168 or emailed at rskinner@townofcantonct.org.