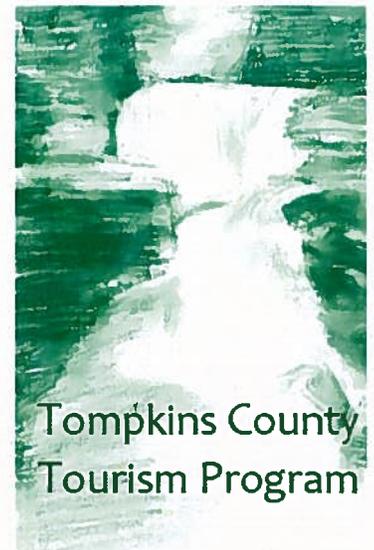


COVER PAGE

2015 Budget Request Form

Tompkins County Tourism Program



I. BASIC INFORMATION

Program: Tompkins County Festivals Program

Applicant Organization: Downtown Ithaca Alliance

Contact Person: Gary Ferguson

Phone: 277-8679 Email: gary@downtownithaca.com

2016 Request: \$25,594 Product Development or Marketing? Product

Year	Tourism Program Allocation**	\$ Change	% Change	% of Program Budget*
2012	25000			
2013	25000	0	0	82.2%
2014	25750	750	3%	82.2%
2015	24849	(891)	(3.5%)	82.2%
Request 2016	25594	745	3%	82.2%

* Enter the % of the total program budget that would come from the Tompkins County Tourism Program.

** Enter modified budget amounts where applicable.

II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Describe the program in two or three sentences.

The Festivals Program was created by the STPB to support, nurture, and guide applicant, grantee and non-grantee special events in Tompkins County. The Program strives to make festivals and special events important and meaningful elements of County tourism. The Program accomplishes this through technical assistance, education and networking, improving access to equipment, and by integrating events into tourism and economic development.

III. CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Very briefly state overarching challenges and opportunities related to your program (current or anticipated in 2015) and describe you how propose to address them.

- Completing criteria for providing assistance and delivering sustainable levels of assistance and support (We are working with TK and Committee on revised guidelines)
- Continued high demand for services, but with limited resources (Related to #1; work with the new Festival Committee to prioritize both demand and scope of services provided)
- Municipal fiscal constraints remain (We will continue to provide advice to both municipalities and event organizers on ways to value engineer projects)
- Maximizing the impact of events on the local economy (We will continue to provide education and assistance that will help projects better benefit the local economy.)
- Need to better integrate Festival Program with grant selection (Continue collaboration)

IV. BUDGET NARRATIVE

Describe how you propose to use the requested funds. You may also use this section to expand on your answers to questions II and III.

The 2016 budget request for the Festivals Program seeks to build upon the activity and success of the previous seasons utilizing new personnel on a team basis. Up to four different DIA staff people will deliver service (Tatiana Sy- Special Events Director; Allison Graffin- Marketing Director; Kris Lewis- Operations Director; Gary Ferguson- Executive Director).

The Downtown Ithaca Alliance (DIA) operates this program on behalf of the Tompkins County Tourism Program (TCTP) in conjunction with its own extensive agenda of downtown Ithaca special events. Funding from the TCTP enables the DIA to hire additional event staff, hence freeing up DIA staff time to work on Tompkins County event assistance. This assistance occurs throughout the year, although May-October represents the busiest time.

The equipment sharing program has become extremely popular and alone saves our county events well in excess of \$20,000 each year.

Work continues to be divided into two principal categories: technical assistance and equipment. These two categories have been reflected in the 2016 budget presentation.

Technical Assistance Goals

The majority of funds will be used to provide technical assistance to Tompkins County organizations and entities seeking to undertake special event and/or festival projects. This assistance falls into three main sub-categories:

- Workshops
- Direct Technical Assistance
- Ongoing Planning, Evaluation, and Education

Workshops:

In the 2014-2015 program year, the DIA took a new approach to workshops, choosing to organize two full days in consecutive weeks devoted exclusively to ten (10) different workshop topics pertaining to key special event planning issues. These included such topics as seeking grants and fund raising, greening your event, volunteer recruitment, budgeting, measuring tourism impact and marketing. DIA staff was joined by some 12 other presenters who provided in-depth information for event planning practitioners. This format reduced the number of days event planners had to devote to training. All sessions were video recorded and are being installed on the Festival website for ongoing availability and referral.

For 2015-16, the DIA will repeat this format for workshops. Some topics will be repeated and some new workshops will be created, based on prevailing issues. These workshops will be organized by DIA staff, led by Tatiana Sy and Allison Graffin.

Direct Technical Assistance:

The DIA provides direct technical assistance in the following ways:

- (a) Technical assistance to TCTP grant applicants: The DIA works with interested applicants on helping them prepare appropriate and workable special event grant proposals. We can review their plans, help brainstorm concepts and ideas, and help arrive at reasonable revenue and cost projections. Our service is designed to assist, but not "take over" a planning process.

- (b) Technical assistance to TCTP grantees: The DIA works with interested successful applicants in further refining their plans, event logistics, and helping them find/obtain needed equipment and supplies. Many grantees have availed themselves of this service. The volume of hours will depend on the number of grantees who chose to seek assistance, within the constraints of allocated STPB funds.
- (c) Technical assistance to other County-wide festivals and events: There are a number of projects and groups who do not seek grant assistance but are still interested in receiving technical assistance for their events. Some, but not all, of these entities decide to seek grant funding in future years. Our new guidelines will specifically help us determine how to allocate resources to this group.
- (d) Technical assistance to City of Ithaca events: Not all events that happen in the City are DIA events. The City has urged groups seeking municipal permission to seek technical assistance from the DIA. Some of these are also TCTP grantees; some are not. We routinely receive referrals from the City for assisting City based events.

In our 2014 annual report to the TCTP, we indicated that direct technical assistance provision in 2014 was _____ hours from all DIA staff. In 2016 we will serve a similar number of events, but work to reign in the number of hours devoted to each entity, commensurate with available funds and our new technical assistance guidelines.

In 2016, we project that we will provide direct technical assistance to at least 50 different projects and events. In 2015 we begin to shift our time with recipients to reflect actual planning assistance and not direct day of event logistical assistance. This will continue in 2016.

Ongoing Planning, Evaluation and Education:

This portion of technical assistance involves providing more programmatic assistance on behalf of the TCTP Festivals Program. It includes the following:

- (a) Review of grant applications (once or twice a year)
- (b) Festival Program website content and maintenance
- (c) Production of a periodic e-newsletter
- (d) Efforts to maintain, store, and repair equipment
- (e) Continued work on evaluation criteria for grantees and for better relating events to tourism

In summer/fall 2015, we expect to undertake a comprehensive programmatic evaluation. Our goals will be to review the needs of the event planning community, assess the effectiveness of the TC Festivals Program in providing services to this community, and arrive at possible revisions and alterations to the program that will make it more effective for practitioners as well as more valuable to the tourism program.

Equipment

The DIA has been progressive growing a program to acquire, stockpile, and lend equipment for use in special events in the County. This equipment ranges in scope from stanchions, to generators, to pop-up tents, to lighting. Each year the DIA adds to this collection, adding approximately \$5,000 of equipment to the pool of resources. More recently we have also had to undertake repairs to equipment that gets broken through usage.

In 2016, we have allocated \$6200 toward equipment purchases. The exact purchases will be determined by the DIA in consultation with grantees and with community special event providers. Among the likely

purchases will be additional pop-up tents, electrical equipment, stanchions, and other miscellaneous items important to festival logistics. We will undertake a major equipment repair and refurbishing effort.

Issues for 2016

- Completing the comprehensive program evaluation and then implementing recommendations.
- Assuring that technical assistance is planning related, rather than hands-on logistical assistance;
- Continuing to seek metrics, measures, and actions to help link grantee projects to overnight and day tourism spending;
- Working to better link grant programs with the festival program.
- The DIA will continue to conduct its own internal assessment of DIA expenditures of staff time and resources on the Festival Program to better understand the true cost of the program to the organization and the actual contribution of the DIA to this initiative.

V. PROGRAM GOALS

List and describe program goals for 2015, using the sample format. For each goal listed, describe how you will measure achievement of that goal (you may list more than one measure of achievement for each goal). This will require you to consider appropriate numerical measures and baselines.

Also, which goals and critical actions of the Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Plan does this program respond to, and how do your proposed program goals align with goals stated in the 2020 Strategic Tourism Plan?

The Festival Program addresses and aligns to the Festival/Special Events section of the Strategic Plan. In the Strategic Plan, there are objectives to increase the number of events, increase overnight stays related to events, and increase spending directly related to events. Critical actions from the Strategic Plan include providing technical assistance aimed at succession planning, financial sustainability, and enhancing tourism impact. The Festivals Program is designed to directly address these goals and actions.

Working with the TC Tourism Coordinator and our new Festivals Committee, the DIA will conduct a more in-depth analysis of the Festival Program in summer/fall 2015, not only providing data for the following goals but also reviewing the impact of some of the goals listed below in leveraging other resources and in overall savings that accrue to events.

Goal 1: Provide Direct Technical Assistance:

- Measure of Achievement 1A: Assistance to at least 35 different entities and groups
- Measure of Achievement 1B: Average technical assistance planning session will last at least one hour
- Measure of Achievement 1C: We will work with at least eight (8) major festivals/events;
- Measure of Achievement 1D: We will work with the City of Ithaca on their special events policies and procedure

Goal 2: Purchase and loan new/additional equipment needed for events

- Measure of Achievement 2A: Meet with event planners to assess needs

- Measure of Achievement 2B: Purchase \$4000 of event equipment in 2016
- Measure of Achievement 2C: Lend equipment to at least 12 different entities
- We will also determine the savings impact of meeting these goals on events and their respective organizations.

Goal 3: Conduct Ongoing Planning, Evaluation and Education

- Measure of Achievement 3A: Conduct a review of grant applications (once or twice a year)
- Measure of Achievement 3B: Maintain and update on a monthly basis the Festivals Program website
- Measure of Achievement 3C: Prepare a quarterly e-newsletter for event planners, grantees, and other interested parties
- Measure of Achievement 3D: Operate an ongoing program to maintain, store, transport, and repair equipment; report on program utilization and maintenance needs
- Measure of Achievement 4D: Prepare updated evaluation criteria for event grantees and prepare guidelines for better relating events to tourism

VI. ACHIEVEMENTS

Please describe your most significant program achievements during 2014 and the first quarter (January through March) of 2015. If possible, please use this as an opportunity to restate your program goals for the 2014 and 2015 budget years and describe progress towards these goals.

During 2014 and 1st quarter, the Festivals Program assisted dozens of groups and projects. (see year-end report for details) Perhaps our most notable interventions were: (a) once again, working with the Ithaca Festival to assist them in operating without their traditional access to the Commons; (b) working with the Ithaca Fringe Festival on logistics and fundraising, and (c) working with larger events like the Celtic Festival to navigate permitting and logistics issues.

Since the inception of the program, our goals have been to assist grantees, applicants, and potential future applicants in planning and producing better, more cost-effective, and more tourism centric festivals and events. A summary of the 2014 major goals and achievement metrics follows:

Number of event/festival applicants for grant programs: continued year-to-year increase

Number of entities assisted: over 50 different entities (61 projects)

Scope of assistance provided: 686 hours of technical assistance

Workshops provided: 10 workshops in 2014; 2 full day workshop dates on 2015

The 2015 workshop series was video-taped and is available for on-going viewing.

Website launched: Fully operational

Manual prepared: Completed, posted, and printed; used as an ongoing tool

Equipment purchased and loaned: Items purchased in 2012, 2013 and 2014; frequently loaned to community events (include bounce house, stanchions, tables, chairs, pop-up tents, generators)

VII. IMPACT OF FUNDING

What would be the specific impact of receiving less funding than you are requesting? For example, what are the things that you would like to be able to do that you would not be able to do? What would be removed or reduced from your plans if you had to make do with less than requested?

Reduction in funding would necessarily translate into a proportionate decrease in technical assistance provided (both in terms of hours provided and numbers of clients served). We would work with the new STPB Festivals Committee to determine where to make strategic reductions (i.e. fewer workshops, fewer clients served, less time per client).

VIII. COLLABORATION

What steps have you taken and/or what new steps do you propose to take to collaborate, coordinate, partner, and share information and resources between your program(s) and other room-tax funded programs?

- (a) We are working with the STPB to convene a newly constituted STPB Festivals Committee to help guide and oversee this program.
- (b) We continue to be interested in working with the STPB to examine the appropriateness for a revamped grant program that specifically targets events and festivals. Currently, events and festivals can be funded under several different grant programs. They are often rated against other non-event proposals rather than other events. We want to examine and explore the utility of such a re-alignment of programs.
- (c) We will work with the new Committee on methodologies for evaluating proposals and for better linking event activities to measurable tourism metrics (room nights, sales and retail/restaurant activity). We will continue to assist in the scoring and evaluation of grant proposals as appropriate.
- (d) We will continue to grow our collaborations with the event planning community, with both major and minor events. We will continue to facilitate meetings and networking to promote sharing of ideas and equipment.
- (e) As mentioned, program staff will collaborate with the TC Tourism Coordinator, the new Festivals Committee, and the STPB Board on an in-depth program evaluation that will now occur in the second half of 2015. Plans are already being formulated for this evaluation.

IX. STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES (optional)

What strategic opportunities related to your program outside of this 2016 budget request would you like the STPB to be aware of?

Key opportunities that pertain to the Festivals Program include:

- Working on a longer term plan to provide shared work space for event planners that could reduce overhead costs for many and provide a stronger level of professionalism for the local industry.
- Working to provide the needed storage space for equipment to be shared through the TCTP program. Currently, this space is provided by the DIA at its own cost. Given the increased demands of the Commons project, the DIA has now had to rent off-site storage space for much of its own needs, so that space can be reserved the TCTP equipment lending program. This situation is not sustainable for the DIA and a remedy is being sought.

2016 Selected Room Tax Budget Scenario: +4% in 2015; +6% in 2016

	<i>reduce 2015 growth to 4%</i>	<i>2016 growth at 6%, \$150k to STI</i>	<i>2015 to 2016 comparisons</i>	
	2015 Budget	2016 Budget	<i>Difference</i>	<i>% change</i>
REVENUES				
Projected Revenues	\$2,354,070	\$2,495,315	\$141,244	6.0%
EXPENSES				
For Marketing and Product Development	\$1,836,904	\$1,890,095	\$53,191	2.9%
Tourism Coordination	\$79,106	\$80,688	\$1,582	2.0%
County 10%	\$235,407	\$249,531	\$14,124	6.0%
Strategic Tourism Implementation	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$0	0.0%
TCAD	\$60,000	\$125,000	\$65,000	108.3%
Total Expenses	\$2,361,418	\$2,495,315	\$133,897	5.7%
Revenues Minus Expenses (to reserves)	(\$7,347)	\$0	\$7,347	-100.0%

Program Name

2016 Budget Request - Tompkins County Tourism Program

For previous years budgets, used modified budget amounts

REVENUE - Project 1 Name		2013 Budget	2014 Budget	2015 Budget	2016 Request	Notes
<i>List major categories of revenues</i>	TCTP*	20000	20600	19879	20475	Room Tax Prog. Request
<i>Add or delete lines/rows as needed</i>	DIA- staff	\$2,400	\$2,472	2546	2457	DIA Staff fringe @ 12%
<i>Separate by project if more than one project</i>	DIA- overhead @ 15%	\$3,000	\$3,090	3183	3071	DIA Overhead @ 15%
<i>Include value of in-kind support as "other".</i>	SUBTOTAL	\$25,400	\$26,162	\$25,608	\$26,004	
REVENUE - Project 2 Name						
	TCTP*	\$5,000	\$5,150	\$4,970	\$5,119	Equipment & workshop
	Other (name)					
	Other (name)					
	SUBTOTAL	\$5,000	\$5,150	\$4,970	\$5,119	
	TOTAL REVENUES	\$30,400	\$31,312	\$30,578	\$31,123	
	TOTAL TCTP*	\$25,000	\$25,750	\$24,849	\$25,594	
	TCTP Share	82.2%	82.2%	81.3%	82.2%	
EXPENSES - Project 1 Name						
<i>List major categories of expenses</i>	Personnel Wages	\$20,000	\$20,600	\$21,218	\$16,385	including equipment repairs
<i>Add or delete lines/rows as needed</i>	Personnel Fringe	\$2,400	\$2,472	\$2,546	\$1,966	
<i>Separate by project if more than one project</i>	Materials				\$6,200	Equipment
<i>List in-kind expenses if also reporting as revenue</i>	Services				\$1,040	Workshops
	Occupancy and Utilities					
	Travel					
	Administration	\$3,000	\$3,090	\$3,183		
	Grants			\$3,333		
	DIA additional staff & overhead				\$5,528	
	SUBTOTAL	\$25,400	\$26,162	\$30,280	\$31,120	
EXPENSES - Project 2 Name						
	Personnel Wages					
	Personnel Fringe					
	Materials	\$5,000	\$5,150	\$0		Equipment
	Services					
	Occupancy and Utilities					
	Travel					
	Administration					
	Other (name)					
	Other (name)					
	SUBTOTAL	\$5,000	\$5,150	\$0	\$0	
	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$30,400	\$31,312	\$30,280	\$31,120	
	TOTAL TCTP*	\$25,000	\$25,750	\$24,849	\$25,594	
	TCTP share	82.2%	82.2%	82.1%	82.2%	
	REVENUES LESS EXPENSES	\$0	\$0	\$298	\$3	

*TCTP-Tompkins County Tourism Program