



**Tompkins County**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Spring 2016 Tourism Grant Funding Opportunities**

Tompkins County organizations planning Community Celebrations or projects with potential to draw visitors from outside Tompkins County are invited to apply for financial support from the Tompkins County Tourism Program. Grant guidelines and applications are available at [www.tompkinscountyny.gov/tourism](http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/tourism). Applications are due online by 11am, Monday February 22, 2016.

The Tompkins County Tourism Program annually invests over \$2 million in local hotel room occupancy tax dollars in community-based tourism that equally promotes economic development and enhances quality of life. The Strategic Tourism Planning Board provides oversight and strategic direction, and these grants are awarded by the Tompkins County Legislature. Tourism grants have supported the activities of dozens of local organizations contributing to local tourism and community vitality. As an industry, in 2014 tourism in Tompkins County supported 3,500 local jobs and generated \$190 million in local economic activity and more than \$14 million in local tax revenues. Funds are currently available in the following grant categories:

**Tourism Project Grants** support tourism generating projects that have been in active operation for more than three years at the date of application. Proposed projects must demonstrate likelihood of generating significant visitor participation and overnight stays in County hotels, motels and B&Bs. Maximum award: \$25,000

**New Tourism Initiative Grants** are for projects that have occurred less than three years in a row and that support implementation of the County's Strategic Tourism Plan. Maximum award: \$25,000

**Tourism Marketing and Advertising Grants** provide a dollar for dollar match for marketing and advertising expenses for campaigns that target potential tourists whose visit is likely to result in an overnight stay. Maximum award: \$5,000.

**Community Celebrations Grants** provide assistance to events and programs endorsed by a municipality that are free and open to all and planned by community members as a benefit to the community. Maximum award: \$2,000.

Nearly \$250,000 in County hotel room occupancy tax funds will be made available through these four programs in 2016. Tompkins County also offers two other tourism grant programs with separate funding cycles and application requirements: Tourism Capital Grants, and Arts & Culture Organizational Development Grants.

A workshop for potential grant applicants will be held on Tuesday, January 26<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 to 4:30 pm at the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce at 904 East Shore Drive, Ithaca. The workshop is free and open to all. RSVPs appreciated to [tknipe@tompkins-co.org](mailto:tknipe@tompkins-co.org).