



## 2026 GUIDELINES

*Supporting Vibrant Main Streets and Communities  
in Delaware County, Pennsylvania*

**[www.visitdelco.com/grants](http://www.visitdelco.com/grants)**

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### Overview

As part of our continued commitment to fostering vibrant, welcoming communities and enhancing the visitor awareness across our region, Visit Delco is proud to introduce the Tourism Grant Program. This initiative aims to support main street areas and municipalities located within Delaware County, Pennsylvania by providing financial assistance for eligible initiatives related to:

- Public events that attract visitors and drive economic activity
- Beautification efforts that enhance curb appeal and placemaking
- Community-based programming that supports arts, culture, and tourism
- Strategies that encourage overnight stays in local hotels and lodging facilities

To maximize impact and community investment, and in accordance with PA Act No.18 of 2016, applicants are required to provide a 25% match of awarded funds, which may be in the form of direct monetary contributions or in-kind services.

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### Program Goals

- Foster long-term economic vitality
  - Stimulate tourism and drive foot traffic in main street and downtown areas
  - Enhance the visual appeal and visitor experience of the area
  - Support inclusive, engaging programming that reflects community identity
  - Increase overnight stays in hotels and other lodging establishments within Delaware County
  - Encourage partnerships and collaboration
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### Grant Awards

\$250,000 will be distributed across all awarded applicants. Grant awards will generally range between \$5,000 and \$25,000, based on project scope, impact, and matching contributions.

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## **Applicant Eligibility**

Eligible applicants must be:

- A municipality, formal business association, or registered nonprofit with a mission of economic development and/or community enhancement
- Located within Delaware County, Pennsylvania
- In good financial standing with no outstanding obligations to Visit Delco
- In operation for at least one year

*Visit Delco reserves the right to determine final eligibility of applicants and proposed projects. Submission of an application does not guarantee funding.*

## **Eligible Project Expenses**

Projects must support tourism, economic vitality, or visitor engagement with a focus on lasting impact on the community and fall under one or more of the following categories:

### **1. Beautification**

- Streetscape improvements (e.g. planters, banners, benches)
- Public art installations
- Clean-up initiatives or seasonal décor

### **2. Programming & Placemaking**

- Public programming that supports arts, music, wellness, or history
- Pop-up shops or vendor activations
- Storytelling or tourism wayfinding projects
- Experiences that enhance destination appeal for regional and out-of-town guests

### **3. Marketing**

- Marketing expenditures that are designed to increase visitation to an attraction or event
- Promotional activations
- Development of promotional materials and collateral (printed, audio, visual, digital or web based)

### **4. Event Support**

- New community events that have the potential to attract overnight visitors
- Existing events offering a new dynamic may be considered
- Marketing and promotion for public-facing events
- Event production and technical expenses
- Guest artist/speaker/performer fees
- Services provided directly for event execution

## **Ineligible Project Expenses**

- Costs not directly associated with the approved grant program
- Expenses incurred outside the Grant Activity Period specified in the grant application
- Retroactive expenses (those incurred prior to grant approval) such as research-related costs, including studies or surveys.
- General operating or administrative expenses, such as:
  - Building repairs or maintenance intended to sustain ongoing operations
  - Office rent, repairs, renovations, or remodeling
  - Office supplies, promotional items, or giveaways not directly supporting or related to the grant project
  - Administrative technology, including computers, hardware, and software
- Professional development for staff, including workshops or training.
- Subscriptions or membership fees not directly tied to the grant project.
- Payroll expenses (allowed as a match – see below for match requirements)

## **Match Requirement**

In accordance with PA Act No. 18 of 2016, organizations must provide at least a 25% match. Matching funds may include:

- Cash contributions
- In-kind services (physical items and/or services, volunteer, or staff hours)

All matches must be documented and verifiable.

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## **Application Process**

### **Key Dates**

- Applications Open: Wednesday, April 15, 2026
- Application Deadline: Wednesday, May 20, 2026
- Award Notifications: Thursday, July 2, 2026
- Grant Activity Period: July 2, 2026-June 30, 2027

### **Submission Requirements**

Each organization may submit only one application for a single project per cycle.

Applicants must submit a completed online application form, which will require:

- Project narrative and proposed outcomes
- Budget and matching funds documentation
- Timeline and implementation plan
- Description of how the project may drive visitor-related activity
- Organizational leadership information, including a list of officers.
- Subsistence Certificate
- W-9 Form
- Additional information may be requested, including letters of support or municipal resolution if a project takes place on private/public property

## **Application Review**

Visit Delco developed the Tourism Grant Program to support municipalities, formal business associations and registered nonprofit partners in advancing tourism initiatives throughout Delaware County. To ensure a transparent and efficient grant process, Visit Delco has selected The Foundation for Delaware County as the program administrator. The Foundation will manage the online application system and coordinate the selection committee review process.

### **Review Criteria**

Applications will be evaluated by the Visit Delco Tourism Grant Review Committee based on:

- Alignment with program goals
- Potential to encourage overnight visitation and tourism spending
- Project readiness and feasibility
- Community benefit and collaboration
- Match strength and demonstrated collaboration
- Clarity and quality of application

*Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted.*

### **Visit Delco Tourism Grant Review Committee**

The Visit Delco Tourism Grant Review Committee will include members of the Visit Delco Board of Directors, along with representatives from the Delaware County Chamber of Commerce, the Delaware County Workforce Development Board, the Delaware County Higher Education Sector, The Foundation for Delaware County, and Visit Delco staff.

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## **Awards**

- Grant awards will be disbursed after the execution of the Grant Agreement/Terms & Conditions by the recipient.
  - Grant requests may be funded in full or in part based on the number of applications received, overall funding availability, and alignment with program priorities. In some cases, the Tourism Grant Review Committee may recommend partial funding for a project. If awarded a partial grant, applicants may be required to adjust the scope of work, timeline, or budget to align with the awarded amount.
  - Funds may be released as a single payment or in installments, depending on the grant program and schedule outlined in the award notification.
  - Recipients are required to use funds solely for the approved project and purposes identified in the grant application.
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## **Grant Recipient Requirements**

- Successful applicants will be required to sign an Agreement to Terms & Conditions before receiving any award funds. Grant funds must be used solely for the initiatives outlined in the grant award notification letter, approved application, and approved budget. By signing the Agreement, recipients acknowledge that they may be required to provide supporting documentation, including budget reports and receipts.
- Failure to comply with these requirements may result in the recipient being held responsible for repaying the full grant award to Visit Delco.
- Grant-supported projects must take place within the dates defined in the Grant Activity Period. If grant funds have not been spent or project is open, the organization will not be eligible for applying in the next year's grant application cycle.

### **Branding & Acknowledgement**

Grant recipients are required to include the Visit Delco brand, logo(s), and website in all print and digital materials related to the funded project, in accordance with Visit Delco's Brand Guidelines.

### **Communication and Support**

Grant recipients are encouraged to maintain regular communication throughout the grant activity period. Opportunities for optional virtual check-in sessions with grant administrators will be available.

### **Reporting**

Grant recipients must provide a final report within 30 days of project completion that includes:

- Summary of accomplishments
  - Photographic documentation
  - Financial report detailing use of grant funds and matching contributions
  - Event attendance and business engagement
  - Estimated hotel/lodging occupancy generated (if applicable)
  - Survey feedback of the Visit Delco Tourism Grant Program
  - Visitor feedback or survey results (optional)
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## Contact

### **For Application & Technical Questions:**

For questions related to eligibility requirements, application materials, deadlines, or technical assistance with the online portal, please contact:

Mischico Warren, *Vice President of Nonprofit Services*

The Foundation for Delaware County

Email: [mwarren@delcofoundation.org](mailto:mwarren@delcofoundation.org)

Telephone: 610-744-1016

### **For Program Overview & Strategic Alignment Questions:**

For questions about the purpose of the Tourism Grant Program or alignment with Visit Delco's strategic priorities, please contact:

Kelly Sacchetti, *Director of Stakeholder Relations*

Visit Delco

Email: [ksacchetti@visitdelcopa.com](mailto:ksacchetti@visitdelcopa.com)

Telephone: 610-565-3679 ext. 107