VISIT PITTSBURGH

Festivals & Cultural Events Marketing Fund

VisitPITTSBURGH is a tourism development organization dedicated to expanding the tourism economy across Allegheny County. For VisitPITTSBURGH, drivers of the tourism economy are broken into three categories: sports events, business events and leisure tourism. Within leisure tourism, events and festivals are key factors in attracting visitors to the region.

To support the growth and expansion of leisure events in Allegheny County, VisitPITTSBURGH has developed the **Festivals & Cultural Events Marketing Fund**. This program provides the opportunity for event organizers of Pittsburgh events to apply for, and secure, marketing support from VisitPITTSBURGH.

To be eligible for marketing support:
- The event must take place in Allegheny County
- The event must draw out-of-market visitation and have clear, outlined plans to increase the draw of out-of-market visitation
- The event must have a projected attendance of at least 3500 attendees
- Events must be ticketed
- The event must be a one-day event or take place on concurrent dates
  - Ex. A three-day festival occurring in one weekend may qualify, but an event series that is broken out over multiple dates throughout a season would not.

Marketing by VisitPITTSBURGH is meant to help existing events grow by increasing the draw of out-of-market visitation. A total of **(4) events** will be selected in 2026 to each receive **marketing support** for this purpose worth **$15,000**.

Events must take place in the year the support is awarded. Additionally, VisitPITTSBURGH logo recognition and on-site activation opportunities will be required for all events that are awarded funds. Recipients will be required to submit a post-event report to VisitPITTSBURGH no more than 30 days after the event, detailing how the marketing support impacted event attendance.

Events will be evaluated, and events will qualify, based on the review of a completed application and the outcome of VisitPITTSBURGH's event evaluation process.

The following key categories are evaluated for each event:

Economics
- Does the event currently draw out-of-market, overnight visitation to Allegheny County?
- Does the event have potential growth for future out-of-market, overnight visitation to Allegheny County?

Awareness
- What are the target markets for the event?
- Does the event incorporate public relations and/or media engagement opportunities?
- Does the event have an established online presence with a website and social media handles?
- Does the event have an established social voice?

Community Involvement
- Is the event run by a non-profit, charitable organization or a VisitPITTSBURGH business partner?
- Does the event involve VisitPITTSBURGH business partners?
- Is the event an annual occurrence or a unique, one-time experience?

Marketing
- Will the event take place between May 1st, 2026 and December 31st, 2026?
- Can the event or organizing body provide high quality marketing assets?
- Does the event have a clear opportunity to be amplified through VisitPITTSBURGH co-op channels?
- Any other points Marketing wants to add?

VisitPITTSBURGH will accept applications for the 2026 calendar year from **February 10th** through **March 16th**. Applicants may only apply once per year. Events must take place between May 1 and Dec. 31st, 2026 to qualify.

Applications should be submitted to elaine.zedack@visitpittsburgh.com. Once the application window closes, no further submissions will be accepted. The evaluation process for applications will take up to 30 days after the deadline closes for submissions. During this time, VisitPITTSBURGH may reach out for clarification and additional information.

Upon completion of the evaluation process, VisitPITTSBURGH will award support based on the above criteria.

Please Note: VisitPITTSBURGH's Festivals & Cultural Events Marketing Fund operates under a policy of nondiscrimination with a steadfast commitment to equity and diversity. VisitPITTSBURGH will not support programs centered on hate speech and/or the unjust or prejudicial treatment of any person or group.

For more information, please contact:
Elaine Zedack, Project Manager, Strategic Initiatives
elaine.zedack@visitpittsburgh.com

To apply for this marketing fund, please submit a PDF application with the following information.

Please be as specific as possible:

A: Organization Information
- I. Organization Name
- II. Organization Address
- III. 501(c)(3)?
- IV. Federal ID #
- V. Non-Profit - IRS Federal Type:
- VI. Organization Mission Statement
- VII. Description of Organization

B: Contact Information
- I. Name
- II. Email
- III. Phone

C: Event Information
- I. Event Name
- II. Date(s)
- III. Location
- IV. Event Type
- VI. Have you obtained all necessary event permits?

D: Attendance/Visitation
- I. Are you working with any local hotels on room blocks for staff?
  - a. If yes, please list hotel(s) and block size(s)
- II. Are you working with any local hotels on room blocks for visitors?
  - a. If yes, please list hotel(s) and block size(s)

III. What do you anticipate actual attendance to be for this event?
    a. What is the basis for this estimate?
IV. What is your projected out-of-market attendance (100 or more miles away)?
    a. What is the basis for this estimate?
V. How will you measure out-of-town visitation? Examples: zip-code tracking, survey, etc.

E: Questionnaire

I. How would you describe this event?
II. What is the projected budget for the event?
III. What is your need for marketing support and how will this support help? Is this a cooperative event involving more than one organizing entity?
    a.) If so, please list organization name(s), contact(s) and phone number(s)
IV. What are your target markets for this event?
    Examples: Allegheny County residents, Pittsburgh MSA (7 county region), out-of-market destinations, etc.
V. If out-of-market destinations, which destinations are you targeting?
    Note: VisitPITTSBURGH considers out-of-market to be 100+ miles from downtown Pittsburgh.
VI. How do you plan to reach your target markets?
VII. Which of VisitPITTSBURGH brand pillars does this event support, and how?
    VisitPITTSBURGH's 2026 brand pillars are:
    - Outdoor Recreation
    - Arts & Culture
    - Culinary
    - Family-Friendly

F: Marketing Assets

I. Please provide the following:
    a. Event Logo
    b. Event Brand Guidelines
    c. Website
    d. Social Handles
    b. 30-50 word blurb of marketing copy
    c. 3-5 images
    d. 3-5 videos (if available)

Please Note: Incomplete or partial applications will not be reviewed.