



# FESTIVALS & CULTURAL EVENTS GRANT PROGRAM

Explore **ASHEVILLE**



# VIC ISLEY

President & CEO  
Explore Asheville



# ANNE MULLINS

Vice President of Destination Development & Community Engagement  
Explore Asheville

# BACKGROUND

The Festivals & Cultural Events Support Fund Grant Program was launched in 2016 and is designed to provide financial support for events that both serve the residents of Buncombe County and the visitors who travel to the Asheville area for the sense of authenticity and welcoming spirit that the destination exudes.

**The primary purposes of the fund are to:**

- Support and preserve cultural identity within Buncombe County;
- Stimulate the creation of new, or expansion of existing, festivals and cultural events; and
- Contribute to the financial viability and long-term sustainability of the area's festivals and cultural events.

# SOURCE OF FUNDING

Revenue earned through advertising sales and lodging reservations booked on ExploreAsheville.com is dedicated to the Festivals and Cultural Events Support Fund.

*These funds are not restricted by state legislation like occupancy tax dollars, which are governed by North Carolina law.*

# STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

Through a framework established in 2021, the Buncombe County TDA is charting a new course for tourism that is aligned with broader community goals.

These efforts are organized around four strategic pillars:

- Delivering Balanced Recovery & Sustainable Growth;
- Encouraging Safe & Responsible Travel;
- Engaging & Inviting More Diverse Audiences; and
- Promoting & Supporting Asheville's Creative Spirit.

These new strategic pillars are guiding the direction of Explore Asheville's program of work and community investments including grants through the Festivals and Cultural Events Support Fund.

# EXPLORE ASHEVILLE'S STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

## Delivering Balanced Recovery & Sustainable Growth



Balancing resident and visitor needs, recognizing the necessary role that sustainable, long-term growth of travel has in achieving a healthy, collective economy.

Focus on the quality of each visit to our community – balancing growth across the seasons, business and leisure travel, and throughout Asheville and Buncombe County.

# EXPLORE ASHEVILLE'S STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

## Encouraging Safe & Responsible Travel



Engage residents and visitors with shared values to care for and respect natural, cultural and human resources vital in delivering quality guest experiences.

Collaborate with community organizations, local businesses and environmentally focused partners to support the sustainability and growth of our outdoor economy.

# EXPLORE ASHEVILLE'S STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

## Engaging & Inviting More Diverse Audiences



Extend a genuine invitation to Black travelers and other diverse audiences including LGBTQ visitors – connecting them with local neighborhoods, businesses and entrepreneurs – creating more opportunities for all to win.

Support product development, place making and community connections, enabling new experiences and business opportunities throughout our community.

# EXPLORE ASHEVILLE'S STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

## Promoting & Supporting Asheville's Creative Spirit



Share stories of creators and makers who help differentiate our destination through food and drink, visual and performing arts, experiences and more.

Support product development, place making and community connections, enabling new experiences and business opportunities throughout our community.

# AVAILABLE GRANTS

- Grants range from \$1,000 to a maximum of \$5,000. The funding level will not exceed a 50% match of the total event budget.
- The number of grants awarded is limited by available funds. Available funds will vary from year-to-year and do not have to be fully appropriated.
- The 2022 grant application process is valid for festivals and cultural events occurring in the calendar year 2023.
- Funds will be disbursed in 2023 following the successful completion of the festival or cultural event and reporting.

# ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- To be considered for funding, the festival or cultural event must occur in Buncombe County.
- Applications will be accepted only from registered 501(c)3 or 501(c)6 nonprofit organizations chartered and working in Buncombe County.
- The festival or cultural event for which the application is being made must be sponsored by a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to conduct programs that benefit the residents and visitors to Buncombe County and have the potential to enhance the culture and vitality of Buncombe County.
- If the applying organization is not a designated nonprofit, you must have a qualified nonprofit serve as your fiscal agent.

# EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications will be reviewed by a Festivals & Cultural Events Grant Committee who will provide funding recommendations to the Buncombe County TDA. The TDA approves all grant awards.

In addition to meeting eligibility requirements, applications will be assessed using criteria developed to determine the extent to which the festival or cultural event is in alignment with the BCTDA's strategic pillars.

# EVALUATION CRITERIA

## Pillar: Delivering Balanced Recovery & Sustainable Growth

- **Balancing resident and visitor needs, recognizing the necessary role that sustainable, long-term growth of travel has in achieving a healthy, collective economy.**
- **Focus on the quality of each visit to our community – balancing growth across the seasons, business and leisure travel, and throughout Asheville and Buncombe County.**

## *Possible Examples*

*Ability of event to attract out-of-town attendees for day trips and overnight visits*

*Hosting event in needs period (off peak seasonally and midweek)*

*Ability to disburse visitors outside the core of downtown Asheville*

*Providing employment opportunities for Buncombe County residents, Sourcing from local Buncombe County-based vendors*

# EVALUATION CRITERIA

## **Pillar: Encouraging Safe & Responsible Travel**

- **Engage residents and visitors with shared values to care for and respect natural, cultural and human resources vital in delivering quality guest experiences.**
- **Collaborate with community organizations, local businesses, and environmentally focused partners to support the sustainability and growth of our outdoor economy.**

## ***Possible Examples***

*Incorporation of sustainability principles in production of event*

*Incentives provided to vendors and/or attendees to embrace environmental measures*

*Strategic partnerships with local nonprofits whose mission is to serve the natural, cultural, or human resources in the region*

# EVALUATION CRITERIA

## **Pillar: Engaging & Inviting More Diverse Audiences**

- **Extend a genuine invitation to Black travelers and other diverse audiences including LGBTQ visitors – connecting them with local neighborhoods, businesses and entrepreneurs – creating more opportunities for all to win.**
- **Support product development, place making and community connections, enabling new experiences and business opportunities throughout our community.**

## ***Possible Examples***

*Ability of event to appeal to diverse audiences*

*Percentage of opportunities afforded to minority-owned businesses*

*Strategic partnerships with local nonprofits whose mission is to support underserved and underrepresented segments of the community*

# EVALUATION CRITERIA

## **Pillar: Promoting & Supporting Asheville's Creative Spirit**

- **Share stories of creators and makers who help differentiate our destination through food and drink, visual and performing arts, experiences and more.**
- **Support product development, place making and community connections, enabling new experiences and business opportunities throughout our community.**

## ***Possible Examples***

*Demonstration of what makes the event stand out from other events in Buncombe County or in the region*

*Ways in which the event will contribute to the cultural identity and vibrancy of Buncombe County*

*The extent to which the festival or cultural event is anticipated to enhance the local community and/or economy*

*Percentage of opportunities afforded to local creative individuals or businesses*

# SUBMISSION PROCESS

**Application Deadline:** Wednesday, September 27, 2022, 5 p.m. EST  
**Grant Awards Announced:** Wednesday, October 26, 2022



- The application is viewable on the AshevilleCVB.com website for planning purposes only.
- **NEW THIS YEAR:** All applications and associated materials must be submitted electronically via the online portal which opens August 29 at 5pm. Paper applications, emailed PDFs, or correspondence via any other type or form will not be accepted.
- You will receive an email confirming receipt of your submission. It is your responsibility to ensure receipt of application.

# PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION

## **Supporting Documentation**

Submit any additional documentation supporting your application in PDF format including but not limited to the following:

- Sponsorship Deck (document outlining the sponsorship levels your event offers)
- Board of Directors
- Event Committee (if applicable)
- Event Budget (include all known and/or anticipated expenses and revenues)
- Liability Insurance

## **Optional Supporting Materials**

- Marketing Materials
- Media Coverage
- Photographs and/or links to videos

# SPONSOR RECOGNITION



- All festivals and cultural events receiving grant support must display the designated Asheville destination logo provided by Explore Asheville on materials and signage as appropriate and wherever sponsors are recognized.
- The use of the logo must be approved by Explore Asheville prior to public dissemination.



QUESTIONS?