

FY 2026 Charles County Government Grants for Tourism Enhancement Guidelines

To: FY 2026 Tourism Grant Applicants

From: Department of Recreation, Parks & Tourism, Tourism Division

RE: Grant Application Guidelines and Application

Eligibility to apply for a Charles County Government Tourism Grant

- 1) Applicant must be based in Charles County and be accessible to all customers, including residents and visitors.
- 2) Awarded programs and projects must be delivered in Charles County and completed by **June 30, 2026**.
- 3) Applicant must be an active 501(c)(3) organization, in good standing with the Maryland Secretary of State, accessible (not membership based), and open to the public.
- 4) The applicant must have no active zoning/permitting violations.
- 5) Additional points will be awarded to applicants for projects that enhance county tourism objectives and or show evidence of fostering or strengthening partnerships with other county organizations, attractions or initiatives that enhance the quality of life for Charles County citizens and tourism visitors.
- 6) Funds requested may not be used for operating expenses (including, but not limited to utilities, office rent, maintenance and repairs, office supplies, insurance, internet access), building repairs, staff salaries or social events. They may be used for producing mission-based activities such as programs, exhibits, workshops and special events, strategic planning or marketing activities.
- 7) Funds may be requested to support or match Maryland State and Federal By-ways and Heritage Trail interpretive signage initiatives.
- 8) To receive funding in multiple grant cycles for the execution of a previously funded program, exhibit, workshop, special event, strategic planning or marketing activity, applicant must show significant expansion over previous years activity.
- 9) Applicants who receive funding from Charles County Charitable Trust are **not eligible** to receive grant funding within the same fiscal year.
- 10) Grant recipients that fail to exhaust previously awarded grant funds, or who fail to meet the grant reporting requirements, are ineligible to reapply for additional funding until all requirements for previously disbursed funding are met.

FY 2026 grant application is comprised of four parts.

- 1) Part I: Organization contact information
- 2) Part II: Organization background and grant management history
- 3) Part III: FY 2026 project description and budget
- 4) Part IV: Attachments, copy of 501(c)(3) letter; copy of your organizations most recent 990; copy of your current approved operating budget and year-to-date budget report.

FY 2026 Grant Application Guidelines

- 1) FY 2025 tourism grant funding recipients must close any previous tourism grant projects and submit the required report prior to **July 31, 2025**.
- 2) Applications are due by **Friday, July 11, 2025** no later than 4:30 p.m.

- 3) Applicants must submit one complete application with the required attachments. This may be submitted electronically or via mail.
- 4) The application cover letter (Part I) should be one page, front only with the amount being requested, a brief project description and how the project will positively support the County Commissioners of Charles County, Maryland goals for tourism.
- 5) Please ensure that the grant point of contact can be easily reached and can respond to messages via e-mail within 24 hours.
- 6) Award announcements will be accompanied by a contract to be signed by your authorized signatory. The contract hard copy must be returned with an original signature.
- 7) The Tourism Division must be included in the final proof process of any product and the project must include the tourism logo, county logo and if space allows the words “funding for this project was provided (in part) by the County Commissioners of Charles County, Maryland.”
- 8) Charles County Government needs to be recognized with the logos or appropriate wording on each project using county funding.
- 9) To maintain impartiality, the Tourism Division may not subscribe to memberships or make donations to non-profit organizations in Charles County. However, we encourage organizations to add or keep the Tourism Division on their mailing lists for notification of events, newsletters, and other activities.
- 10) A final report should be submitted no later than **July 31, 2026**.
- 11) The final report instructions will be attached to the notice of a grant award.

FY 2026 County Commissioners of Charles County, Maryland, Goals and Objectives for the Tourism Division that should be supported by grant awards include:

- 1) 2A.5 Heritage tourism product development in the form of (site) tours, interpretation, including signage and special events.
- 2) 2A.6 Attract out-of-town, overnight visitation through creative partnerships and weekend event development.

Part I

Charles County Government Application for Tourism Grants

**Department of Recreation, Parks & Tourism
Tourism Division**

Please submit one (1) original application with cover letter and all related attachments by
July 11, 2025, no later than 4:30 p.m. to:

Brittney Gray, Tourism Outreach Specialist
Department of Recreation, Parks & Tourism
Tourism Division

107 Centennial Street,
Suite A
La Plata, MD 20646

OR

grayb@CharlesCountyMD.gov
240-349-3040

**APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER 4:30 P.M. ON FRIDAY, JULY 11, 2025 OR NOT COMPLETE CANNOT BE
CONSIDERED FOR FUNDING.**

* Please contact the Tourism Division at grayb@CharlesCountyMD.gov if you would like the Microsoft Word version of this application sent to you. Paper or electronic applications may be submitted.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Organization Name: _____

Federal Identification Number: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Location(s): _____

Phone Number(s): _____ Fax numbers(s): _____

E-mail address: _____ Website Address: _____

Total Funding Requested from Charles County Government: _____

(Total Request Not to exceed \$5,000)

Please provide the information for at least one of the contacts listed below that can answer questions if called Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Name, Title, and Phone Number of Primary Contact for Charles County Grant Application

Name, Title, and Phone Number of Chief Executive Officer

PART II ORGANIZATION HISTORY AND GRANT MANAGEMENT BACKGROUND:

1. What year was your organization established? _____
2. What year did you begin providing visitor services in Charles County? _____
3. What is your organization's mission statement? _____

4. Tell us about your organization's activities. Include what your group has to offer, tours, outreach programs in Charles County, special events, education programs or workshops, outreach programs that market Charles County, artistic performances, shows or presentations, exhibits and any heritage activities. You may attach a separate sheet of paper, brochures, copies of advertisements for activities web-site address and other supporting material. _____

5. Tell us about your audience. What is your estimated or actual count attendance for the past three calendar years?
_____ 2024, _____ 2023, and _____ 2022

To the best of your ability please tell us where your audience comes from:

What percentage of attendance is from Charles County? _____

What percentage of attendance were from outside of Charles County? _____

What percentage of attendance was from outside of Maryland? _____

What is/are the predominate age group(s)? _____

How did you collect this data? _____

6. Will this specific project or activity encourage out-of-town, tourist type visitors to stay in Charles County overnight? YES _____ NO _____ Please explain why or why not? _____

7. Does your organization have paid staff? If so, please share how many full-time and how many part-time staff. Full-time _____ Part-time _____

8. How many volunteers worked with your organization last year? _____ How many hours did they work in total? _____

9. Did you utilize any other human resources (*students, interns, community service, organized service groups*)? If so, please briefly describe who they were and how they participated with your organization.

10. Describe any partnerships you formed or collaborated with last year. Include who they were and in what capacity you worked together. Examples might include special event coordination, marketing and advertising cooperative opportunities, shared staffing or volunteers. _____

11. Does your organization have a strategic, interpretive, business or other operating plan to guide your activities? YES _____ NO _____

Does your organization conduct itself with an ethics statement? YES _____ NO _____ and/or Equal Opportunity Statement? YES _____ NO _____

GRANT MANAGEMENT BACKGROUND

12. Please list all successfully completed grant projects you have had in the past three years (Or three of the most recent grant projects you have completed). Please include the grantors name, the date the grant was awarded and the date the final report was accepted, how much the grant was for and what activity or project was supported by the funding. YOUR APPLICATION WILL NOT BE PENALIZED IF YOU HAVE NOT COMPLETED A GRANT FUNDED PROJECT.

Granting Agency	Date of Award	Amount of Award	Project Name	Date Completed

PART III

FY 2026 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Project Name: _____
2. Project/Event Date: _____
3. Project/Event Location (Address): _____
4. Will this project/event take place in Charles County? YES _____ NO _____
5. Project Coordinator's name/title, daytime phone and e-mail address. Please ensure they can be reached and respond to questions during day-time hours approximately 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (if the same as in Part I you may skip this question). _____
6. How would you classify your project?

_____ Special Event	_____ Historical Exhibit / Art Show
_____ Workshop	_____ Performing Arts Production
_____ Sports Event	_____ Outdoor Recreation Opportunity
_____ Historical Interpretation	_____ Other: _____

7. Project Budget:

- Amount requesting from Charles County Government: \$ _____
- Amount contributed by your organization: \$ _____
- Amount from other sources (please list both the name of the funder and the amount)
Name: _____ \$ _____
Name: _____ \$ _____
Name: _____ \$ _____
Name: _____ \$ _____

TOTAL PROJECT INCOME: \$ _____

7a. If the Tourism Division is not able to fully fund your requested amount, do you have a contingency plan to move forward with a smaller grant award? YES _____ NO _____

7b. Budget Expense Detail:

Please be as detailed as possible, an explanation of expenses will be helpful to the reviewers. The posting of expenditure(s) to the category of OTHER will require its own detail with breakouts and explanation.

EXPENSE	AMOUNT
Materials and Supplies: _____	\$ _____
Contracted Services: _____	\$ _____
Marketing and Publicity: _____	\$ _____
Rental Services: _____	\$ _____
Printing / Fabrication: _____	\$ _____
Other (Detailed): _____	
	TOTAL EXPENSES \$ _____

8. Describe the project with a planning, implementation, and expenditure timeline. Be sure to include any partnerships or plans to coincide with other community events that may encourage overnight tourism. Include any supporting material, programs, schedules, lesson plans, drawings, planning meeting dates, photos or other visuals.

9. Have you received Charles County Government Tourism Grant funding for the same project in any previous year? YES _____ NO _____

If YES, please describe plans for significant expansion in FY 2026:

10. What do you hope to achieve with this activity or project? What are your measurable outcomes? _____

PART IV

FY 2026 REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

1. 501(c)(3) IRS Letter of determination
2. Organizations most current 990 filed with the IRS
3. A copy of organizations current year approved budget

APPLICATION PACKET CHECKLIST

1. **Parts I, II, & III**
2. **Part IV- Attachments**
 - a. Copy of your organization's Letter of Determination designating the group as a 501(c) (3)
 - b. Organizations most current 990 filed with the IRS
 - c. A copy of organizations current year approved budget

Please contact the Tourism Division, Brittney Gray, 240-349-3040 or Ashley Chenault, 301-396-5839 if you do not receive confirmation of receipt of your application within two working days (Monday – Friday)

THIS APPLICATION AND THE ATTACHMENTS MAY BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY BY 4:30 PM ON
FRIDAY, JULY 11, 2025

EMAIL: GrayB@CharlesCountyMD.gov

OR

MAIL: CHARLES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION, PARKS & TOURISM, TOURISM DIVISION,
ATTN: BRITTNEY GRAY, TOURISM OUTREACH SPECIALIST,
107 CENTENNIAL STREET, SUITE A
LA PLATA, MD 20646

OR

DROP BOX: CHARLES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION, PARKS & TOURISM, TOURISM DIVISION,
ATTN: BRITTNEY GRAY, TOURISM OUTREACH SPECIALIST,
107 CENTENNIAL STREET, SUITE A
LA PLATA, MD 20646