



## Tourism Promotion

### Grant Application 2024-2025

#### Application Rules:

- All applications are submitted via JotForm. **Handwritten applications will not be accepted.**
- Do not skip any questions. Provide complete information for each question.
- Include a detailed budget for event/project.
- Include any supporting materials with application (pictures, letters of support, background info).
- Applications will be evaluated on the criteria outlined in the guidelines. If you have any questions, please contact HCTDA staff at 828-944-0761.

|   |                                       |   |          |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|----------|
| 1. Organization Name:                                     | Canton Merchant Partnership           |   |          |
| 2. For-Profit or Not-For-Profit Organization (check one): | <input type="checkbox"/> For Profit   | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Not For Profit |          |
| 3. Name of Event/Project:                                 | Passport to Canton                    |   |          |
| 4. ZIP Code for Event/Project:                            | 28716                                 |   |          |
| 5. Date(s) of Event/Project:                              | October 2023 to February 2023         |   |          |
| 6. Website (if applicable):                               |                                       |   |          |
| 7. Event/Project Location:                                | Canton NC                             |   |          |
| 8. Mailing Address:                                       | 902 Sandhill Road, Asheville NC 28806 |   |          |
| 9. Contact Person:  | Jeanne L Forrest                      |   |          |
| 10. Telephone Numbers:                                    | Office: 828-276-2840                  | Cell: 828-571-0515                              |          |
| 11. Email Address:  | cantonmerchantpartnership@gmail.com   |   |          |
| 12. Total Project Cost:                                   | 22110.00                              | Total Grant Request:                            | 11055.00 |

13. I am applying for funds for: ☒ Advertising ☐ Market Research ☐ Other Promotions

14. Provide a detailed overview of the event/project. This is your opportunity to sell us on your idea.

The Passport to Canton 2024 will be an expansion of last year's very successful program, which was not promoted outside of Canton and participation was primarily local. This year we want to invite folks from across the South to visit Canton to participate in the Passport to Canton contest! We will reach our target by advertising in Our State magazine and using location specific social media buys. Advertising will focus on the Passport activity and invite readers to "Come stay and play Passport to Canton and you might just be the winner of a very special getaway!" We will print and distribute Passport booklets to our participating merchants throughout the duration of the program. Visitors will get their Passports stamped at participating businesses, collect a souvenir "I Discovered Canton" t-shirt, and be entered into a contest for a "Very Special Canton Weekend Getaway". The contest will run through the end of February 2025 with the grand prize being drawn on March 1st. Prize accommodations, dining, and activities will be donated by member businesses.

15. Describe how the event/project will attract new and increased overnight visitation and potential for economic impact, including its ability to generate revenue, create jobs, and boost local businesses.

We are specifically targeting travelers from outside WNC with our paid advertising. The Passport requires guests to visit multiple businesses in Canton in order to receive the stamps necessary to win the t-shirt and be entered into the Getaway contest. This will have a huge impact on participating businesses though increased foot traffic during a time when it is most needed. Last year we printed 300 booklets and 75 t-shirts. This year we are anticipating a need for 1000 booklets and 300 t-shirts.

16. How does this event/project showcase creativity and uniqueness, and contribute to diversifying Haywood County's tourism offerings?

The program itself is creative and not something you find in every town, and it is a low cost way to make a huge economic benefit to all Canton businesses. It is unique in that no else in the County, or WNC region, is doing it. It provides a reason for folks to visit Canton, have a fun afternoon of shopping and dining, and get a prize for doing it! And, it's a great winter-time activity that isn't weather dependent.

17. Do you have strong collaboration between multiple entities (e.g., local businesses, non-profits, government agencies) and have significant community support or involvement for this event/project? Please explain.

Absolutely! Last year's program was brought to the merchants by the Town of Canton. This year, the Canton Merchant Partnership is taking the lead and expanding the program over last year's, which was primarily local. Last year we had 24 merchants participate by having a space in the Passport booklet. We anticipate even greater participation this year. Merchant members who have committed to participating include Southern Porch, Grateful Table, Cold Mountain Art Collective, Bearwater's Brewing, Pigeon River Mercantile, Evenstar Yoga, Papertown Coffee, Mountain Fly Anglers, Papertown Coffee, Jros, Maddie's on Main, and Geek Mountain. We expect all that participated last year will participate again this year. We also intend to invite lodging partners to participate (this is new!) and have recently established a lodging committee to bring this very important piece into our partnership.

18. How does this event/project aim to extend the tourism season by attracting visitors during off-peak times?

The project will run late Fall to into Winter, extending to March 1st. This is the time of year when local businesses are traditionally slower. The Passport to Canton program will serve to generate much needed foot traffic among member businesses. Even visitors staying in other areas within Haywood County will have a reason to visit Canton and spend the day while gathering the stamps needed to get their free t-shirt!

19. Describe your marketing plan. Who is your target audience for this project? How do you plan to reach potential day trip visitors at least 50 miles and potential overnight visitors at least 150 miles outside of Haywood County.

Our marketing plan includes placing ads in Our State magazine, as well as doing targeted social media buys in several larger markets in our region. Our target audience is mature adults, mostly female, discretionary income, cultural and history interests. See notes on budget sideline for more specific information on the marketing plan.

20. If your event/project will require a road closure permit, have you received pre-approval from local government? Yes ☐ No ☒

21. All applicants must provide a detailed budget that includes all revenues and expenses, regardless of whether they are covered by grant funding or not. Please download the budget form listed on our website or create your own and submit as an attachment. In-kind (i.e. non-cash) donations do not apply.

I confirm that I will submit a detailed budget as an attachment with my application. ☐

**Please sign below the following statements, acknowledging that you understand and agree to them and all contained within the application:**

**Indemnity:**

Grantee agrees, to the fullest extent permitted by law, to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless HCTDA, its officers, directors, affiliates, employees, volunteers, and agents, from and against any and all claims, liabilities, losses and expenses (including reasonable attorney's fees) directly, indirectly, wholly or partially arising from or in connection with any act or omission of Grantee, its employees or agents, in applying for or accepting the grant, in expending or applying Grant funds or in carrying out the festival/event as set forth in the proposal.

**Sole Discretion:**

All elements of the HCTDA Tourism Grant Program are managed at the sole discretion of the HCTDA Board of Directors, including the application review process and all subsequent funding decisions.

**Terms of Agreement:**

I hereby acknowledge that I have reviewed and understand the terms of the agreement.

**Completed Application:**

I hereby acknowledge that I have completed this application in good faith, confidence, and counsel, and have done so in full compliance with the law. I have made no attempt to falsify or misconstrue facts or data anywhere in this application.

Applicant Signature:



Signed at:  
2024-05-27 22:54:49

Date:

05/27/2024

Applicant Printed Name:

Jeanne Forrest

HCTDA | 91 N Lakeshore Dr. Lake Junaluska NC 28745 | 828-944-0761