



KY Dept of Tourism/  
Tourism Recovery  
and Investment

ARPA Grant Program:  
Meetings and  
Conventions

# Deadlines and Applicants

## What is the ARPA grant?

- The ARPA Grant offers funding for projects, which are in direct support of the promotion and marketing efforts of a tourism event, attraction or geographic area.
- The meeting and convention portion of the ARPA grant will be distributed to tourism commissions for attracting meetings and conventions.

## Program Deadlines:

- March 15, 2023, to April 17, 2023: Applications submitted
- April/May 2023: Applications reviewed, and contracts will be sent for signature.
- June/July 2023: Grant award checks are disbursed to eligible applicants.

## Who can apply?

- Tourism Commission, Convention & Visitors Bureau or DMO with 501c3 or 501c6 Status. Tourism Commissions will include organizations defined in KAR300.001, which includes an organization designated by a County Judge Executive, such as Chamber of Commerce or Fiscal Court when no tourism commission exists in the county.
- Entities operating and established before March 2020

# Funding Distribution

Funding will be distributed to eligible events based on the square feet of the event venue.

Venue Size	Amount
5,000-9,999 square feet	A maximum of \$100,000
10,000-14,999 square feet	A maximum of \$200,000
15,000-34,999 square feet	A maximum of \$500,000
35,000-74,999 square feet	A maximum of \$1.5 million
75,000-124,999 square feet	A maximum of \$3 million
125,000 or more square feet	A maximum of \$5 million

# Eligible Events

## Event Requirements

- Professionally organized meetings, conventions, conferences, exhibitions, expositions, trade shows, and certain sporting events
- Must be new to the destination and has not been held in the destination for at least three years
- Must be contracted on or after July 1, 2022.
- Must be a competitively bid meeting, convention, or event.
- Must bring attendees from outside the area (100 miles or more)
- Must be a multiday event

## Sporting Events

- Amateur and professional competitive sporting events or tournaments only
- Minimum size of the event must be 100+ athletes and coaches
- Must be new to the destination and has not been held in the destination for at least three years
- Must be contracted on or after July 1, 2022.
- Must be a competitively bid meeting, convention, or event.
- Must bring athletes from outside the area (100 miles or more)
- Must be a multiday event

# Ineligible Events

- Local festivals and events
- In-state association meetings that rotate on an annual basis
- Weddings
- Fraternal events (unless a national conference)
- Social events
- Motor Coach/ Group Tours (unless a national conference)

# Eligible Expenses

- Marketing and advertising such as video, print, digital, sponsorships, onsite events, and other expenses related to promoting the destination as a meeting/conference destination
- Underwriting incentives for offsetting event expenses such as venue or room rental, transportation costs during events, audio visual rental and services, discount on food and beverage, pipe, drape, tables, and chairs
- Per room night confirmed incentives for selection
- New research and consultants to build sales strategies
- Familiarization trips for meeting planners or board meetings with the intent to host a larger event
- Sales missions for recruiting meetings or conventions
- New third-party lead generation fees
- Refundable bid or RFP fees tied to hosting industry events and conferences
- Retention incentives due to increased costs (specifically 6% sales tax on meeting room rentals) for events already contracted but occurring after July 1, 2022
- Other expenses deemed eligible by the Kentucky Department of Tourism if consistent with the funding mandate of the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021

# Ineligible Expenses

- Funds used to replace an organization's tourism funding commitment for existing budgets, marketing, and/or staffing
- Non-refundable bid or RFP fees
- Renovations or building of permanent structures at a facility for an event
- Expenses for an event that was contracted prior to December 7, 2021
- General operating or administrative expenses such as travel reimbursement and salaries
- Purchase of permanent equipment
- Purchase of alcohol for meetings, events, sponsorships, or related functions
- Hiring of permanent or temporary staff
- Purchase or production of promotional items
- Other expenses deemed ineligible by the Kentucky Department of Tourism if consistent with the funding mandate of the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021

## What is needed to apply?

- A completed application
- Documentation to establish the entity qualifies as a “tourism commission” (i.e., proof of non-profit status, a letter from the fiscal court that the organization is part of the city or county government, an ordinance establishing commission)
- A W-9 (showing Federal ID number and entity name)
- Documentation demonstrating that the tourism commission was in business before the COVID-19 pandemic on March 6, 2020, and show the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to be eligible to receive recovery and investment funds
- Evidence that the applicant is a Kentucky based organization
- Complete Affidavit for Bidders, Offerors, and Contractors
- Documentation verifying the square feet of the venues available for use within the tourism commission jurisdiction



# Documentation

- A report will be provided to the Department of Tourism and the Legislative Research Commission
- The report should include details on expenditures and outcomes including return on investment
- The report should be provided by September 1 of each year

# Need more information?

Visit our website at [kentuckytourism.com/industry](https://kentuckytourism.com/industry) and click KY Dept of Tourism/Tourism Recovery and Investment ARPA Grant Application

OR

Send an email to [KDTARPAMEET@ky.gov](mailto:KDTARPAMEET@ky.gov).