



## STRATEGIC INITIATIVE GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES - FY 2009

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism (CCT) created the Culture and Tourism Strategic Initiative Grant (SIG) program **to encourage unique, groundbreaking projects that advance culture and tourism in Connecticut.** Projects should be distinct from organization's normal activities. Proposed projects must further the goals of CCT's strategic plan. CCT encourages a broad range of requests and will consider planning grants for large-scale endeavors. The Strategic Initiative Grant program is an on-going, year round program with a rolling application deadline. Interested parties should note that the application and review process may take 2-3 months, so please plan accordingly.

Smaller, local endeavors should refer to CCT's Culture & Tourism Partnership Grants.

### WHO MAY APPLY

Eligible applications are strictly limited to Connecticut 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations whose primary place of business is Connecticut. These include:

- Arts organizations, local arts agencies
- Theater, dance, music, literary, design, visual arts, performance organizations
- History museums and sites, historical societies
- Historic preservation organizations, park conservancies
- Heritage organizations
- Film organizations
- Tourism organizations

**Creative partnerships are strongly encouraged.** Eligible applicants may partner with for-profit or non-profit organizations. Partnering entities (may not be lead applicants) include:

- Any entity that qualifies as a lead applicant, but represents a different discipline than that of the actual lead applicant
- Municipalities (arts/cultural commissions, historic districts commissions, tourism districts)
- Chambers of commerce, business associations, travel associations
- Production companies, media studios, public access television, local cable stations
- Attractions, lodgings, restaurants, tourism-related entities
- Arts, cultural, history or humanities programs affiliated with colleges or universities

### INELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING

#### Ineligible Entities:

- Organizations acting as fiscal agent for individual artists or other groups
- Past CCT grantees with overdue final reports
- Religious institutions and organizations
- Individuals

#### Ineligible Activities or Expenses:

- Previously funded activities
- Hospitality expenses, such as food and beverages
- Interest expenses paid on loans or payments to eliminate or reduce existing deficits
- General operating support
- Brick and mortar activities, equipment expenditures, facility construction, or capital improvements

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**REQUEST TO APPLY**

Interested parties may send a **request to apply** to Rhonda F. Olisky, Program Associate, Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism, One Constitution Plaza, 2nd Floor, Hartford, CT 06103. The request to apply should be no more than two (2) single-spaced typed pages (one side only). Margins should be no less than 3/4 inch on all sides; font size no smaller than 11 point. The request to apply should include the following:

1. Brief history of your organization and its partners;
2. Description of the project;
3. Description how this project is distinct from your organization's normal activities and why this project is a priority;
4. Total anticipated project budget;
5. Amount of request (minimum request \$15,000);
6. The specific purpose for which the funds would be used;
7. Name, address and phone number of the contact person.

It is the intention of the Strategic Initiative Grant Program to provide one-time funding. Applicants having received a previous Strategic Initiative Grant must develop a project that surpasses what has been accomplished previously. This must be clearly articulated in both the request to apply and application.

An invitation to apply/rejection will be issued within thirty days of receipt of request. **Application is by invitation only.** An invitation to apply is not a guarantee of award. Upon invitation to apply, applicants will be sent a grant application and budget form.

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**CRITERIA**

Strategic Initiative Grant applications are reviewed based on the following criteria:

- Cross-discipline purpose of project
- Consistent with the goals of CCT's strategic plan (available on-line at <http://www.ct.gov/cct/lib/cct/cct/cctstrategicplan.pdf>)
- Complete, well-prepared and overall clarity of proposal that includes an accurate and responsible budget
- Degree of reach/impact beyond organization's local area (state-wide)
- Degree to which the project promotes travel and tourism to Connecticut among residents and out-of-state residents
- Project's impact on the state's economy
- Partners representing one or more discipline— history, arts, heritage, historic preservation, humanities, film or tourism

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**GRANT AWARDS**

The minimum grant amount is \$15,000. The amount of a Strategic Initiative Grant award may depend on the funds available. Matching funds may be required. Potential grantees will be notified of matching requirement upon notice of award.

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**REVIEW PROCESS**

Strategic Initiative Grant applications are reviewed according to the published criteria by the Special Projects Committee of the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism which will make recommendation to the full commission. Applicants may be required to make a presentation to the Special Projects Committee.

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**AFTER FUNDING  
DECISIONS ARE  
MADE**

CCT will notify all applicants in writing of the determination of award. If awarded funding, the following shall apply:

\* **Grant Contract and Payments:** CCT shall send the grantee a grant contract and requisite forms for signature. The contract shall outline the terms of the grant and the payment schedule. CCT will request the release of funds only upon receipt of the fully executed contract.

\* **Final Report:** Within sixty (60) days of the last day of the funding period, grantee shall provide a written program evaluation narrative and financial report to CCT in a format to be specified by CCT. Future CCT funding is contingent on submission of final reports. Thoughtful, complete and timely final reports help assess the effectiveness of grant programs, account for expenditure of taxpayers' dollars, and document the public benefit of investing in culture and tourism organizations and programs.

\* **Credit:** All grantees shall acknowledge support by CCT in any news release or printed material promoting this grant-funded activity according to the CCT's Credit & Publicity Kit.

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**GRANT  
CANCELLATIONS**

CCT has the right to withhold, reduce or cancel grants if an organization:

- Does not properly credit CCT support
- Experiences significant changes in programs or services, or cancels or suspends a funded project
- Owes final reports from previously received CCT grants which are overdue
- Fails to comply with the terms of the grant contract
- Is unable to raise or expend the required cash match
- Demonstrates inadequate financial management or oversight