

City of Hudson Common Council Tourism Committee
Tourism Funding Request Application



Hudson Business Coalition (HBCi)

Project: New Unnamed Summer Event Series in Hudson

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- 1) *Description of Project (attach extra sheet(s) if necessary): This description must include all relevant details (i.e., requested funding for print advertising must include name of newspaper or magazine, size of ad(s), number of ads, times run, sample copy, current advertising rates and projected rates. Just stating “funding for ads in The Register Star” will not be sufficient. Similar detail must be provided for other types of projects.*

Hudson Business Coalition (HBCi) is proposing a brand new event series (title TBD), to be initially held two Sundays in May, 2022, and two Sundays in June, 2022— and continuing through the summer and fall seasons, should the events prove to be successful and financially sustainable.

These events are essentially themed “tours,” starting and ending in Hudson, and stopping at several noteworthy, unique, and beloved destinations in the areas of agriculture; food and drink; and art and culture— all within Columbia County.

Event participants will register in advance via the VisitHudsonNY.com website. On the day, all participants will be picked up via a single shuttle or van at one of four predetermined lodging providers in Hudson. Then, over the course of several hours, attendees will be shuttled between four or five destinations in Columbia County. For example, participants might sign up for one of the following tours, which may include any number of these destinations or businesses:

- **Arts and culture tour**— Olana, Clermont, Jack Shainman Gallery, Art Omi, Lindenwald, Van Alen House, Shaker Museum
- **Distillery and winery tour**— Cooper's Daughter, Harvest Spirits, Hillrock, Tousey Winery, Hudson-Chatham Winery
- **Brewing tour**— Hudson Brewing Co., Old Klaverack, Upper Depot, Chatham Brewing, Roe Jan, Suarez, S&S
- **Farm/agribusiness tour**— Kinderhook Farm, Samascott, Golden Harvest, Liberty Farms, Letterbox Farms, etc.

At the conclusion of the tour, participants will be returned to their starting location in Hudson, to enjoy the rest of their visit to our City.

The lodging providers will likely include the following: **Wm. Farmer & Sons; Hudson Whaler; The Wick; and Amelia Hudson.** Both **The Wick** and **Amelia** have already expressed interest in participating, and HBCi has existing relationships with both **Wm. Farmer & Sons** and **Hudson**

Whaler. We have already been in contact with many of the destination businesses or organizations above, who have expressed an interest in participating in this initiative, and who are able to cater to group tours in this manner.

Our goal is to accommodate twelve to twenty participants for each tour, and the vehicles we pick and the destinations we select will support that number of attendees. Participants must pay a fee (amount TBD) when they register to participate in the tour. The fee will be less than the sum total of the expenses that each attendee would otherwise normally incur for transport and visiting each destination— that is to say, part of the expenses we bear as the events’ organizer will be to subsidize the costs of the tours for each participant.

We will work hard to design tours that can be enjoyed by persons with disabilities— from our vehicle selection to the array of destinations we choose for the tours. We will strive to help make appropriate accommodations for each individual, as necessary. We also recognize that not every destination naturally lends itself to such accommodations, and we will communicate in our promotional materials and on our website the extent to which each tour is accessible to participants.

HBCi has extensive experience producing and promoting paid, ticketed events like this, having done so in multiple years past with our popular Design Hudson festival and the recurring Hudson for the Holidays House Tours, which were not only well-attended, but profitable. We can leverage our existing marketing channels— through the VisitHudsonNY.com website, which receives about 5,000 visitors each month; through email blasts to our subscriber lists, which total about 2,500; and to our social media followers, which total a combined 6,500. As a registered 501(c)6, we can also take advantage of non-profit discounted advertising, in print and digital— and as an organization we have extensive experience purchasing media in this market.

In addition, we can take advantage of our partner’s marketing channels at no further cost— web, social, and email— including those of the participating lodging providers, tour destinations, and other supporting organizations and businesses.

2) *Purpose of Project (attach extra sheet(s) if necessary):*

While it may seem counterintuitive that we are proposing an initiative that is purposefully designed to take visitors *to* Hudson *away from* Hudson, we believe that this ultimately provides an even more enjoyable experience for Hudson’s tourists by fulfilling a very real market need.

In speaking with the aforementioned lodging providers, we have come to understand that most overnight guests don’t lack for activities to enjoy while visiting Hudson on Fridays and Saturdays. According to these lodging providers, guests do, however, often find themselves lacking options for activities to do on Sundays. We heard similar sentiments from many of the destinations listed above— that they are often “booked solid” with visitors on Saturdays, but typically have excess capacity on Sundays. This initiative is designed specifically to help fill that void.

In creating this event series, we ultimately believe that we are offering a new kind of promotion that will entice visitors to come and stay in Hudson, or for those who are already planning visits, to extend their trips by an extra day.

In addition to that, the tours will also be promoted heavily *within* Hudson, encouraging residents who may not have a vehicle, or who may not readily avail themselves of all Columbia County has to offer, to also partake. This will help to promote intra-county tourism and provide residents of Hudson with a fun and accessible way to spend a Sunday.

As HBCi evolves its branding efforts and the awareness campaigns we run on behalf of Hudson's business community, we're beginning to conceptualize and position Hudson not as *the destination*, but instead, as *the center of the universe*— the locus of the surrounding communities and environments. This initiative is also in furtherance of that effort.

3) *Why Project should be funded from City of Hudson Tourism Budget?*

As a 501(c)6 membership organization, HBCi receives most of its funding from membership dues. The majority of Hudson's brick-and-mortar businesses, including retailers, hotels and inns, restaurants and bars, and cultural institutions with a physical location, each pay just \$200 in yearly membership dues to our association. These dues go towards our ongoing campaigns that promote Hudson as a best-in-class destination for visitorship.

For new or special campaigns, events, or initiatives, we benefit greatly from securing funding from grants. Grants help to "incubate" these types of new initiatives, which often need capital beyond what we alone could normally budget for them.

HBCi has received funding from the City of Hudson by way of the previous iteration of the Tourism Board for several initiatives, including the redesign and development of the hugely popular VisitHudsonNY.com destination marketing website, and to support our Hudson Bonds program (<https://hudsonbond.org/>), in which a \$5,000 contribution from the City of Hudson helped us raise over \$31,000 in support of Hudson's business community during the height of the the Covid-19 pandemic.

Recognizing that these are tax-payer funds being offered to us, HBCi takes the stewardship of this money very seriously, and is extremely conscientious about what programs and events we support and produce with said funds.

4) *How Project will benefit City of Hudson and Tourism?*

The City of Hudson will benefit from this event series by having an additional attraction, supported by a robust marketing campaign, to draw visitors planning overnight stays to Hudson. The average nightly room rate for the above lodging providers on a weekend night in May and June ranges from

about \$450/night to \$650/night. In addition, we know from experience that each overnight visitor to Hudson spends significantly on food and drink, retail, and other entertainment experiences while here, thus contributing significantly to the revenue the City generates from lodging and sales taxes. What's more, as part of this initiative, Hudson is able to continue to position itself as the go-to destination for those looking to experience the very best in arts, culture, shopping, and dining in the Hudson Valley.

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5) Specific breakdown of how and when funding will be used

The funding we seek from the Tourism Committee is to produce and promote a total of four tours in May and June. We are seeking 50% of our funding from the Tourism Committee. The remaining 50% will be sought from other grants and sponsorships, as well as covered by Hudson Business Coalition itself.

Transportation			
<i>Average cost for vehicle and driver to accommodate twelve to twenty participants</i>	5/15/22	\$1400	Approx. 10 hrs for each tour, incl. fuel and gratuity
	5/29/22	\$1400	
	6/12/22	\$1400	
	6/26/22	\$1400	
Administrative			
<i>To cover the expense of HBCi paid staffer to help organize the event in its lead-up, and act as coordinator on the day</i>	5/15/22	\$200	Approx. 10 hrs for each event
	5/29/22	\$200	
	6/12/22	\$200	
	6/26/22	\$200	
Destination Activities			
<i>To cover the average total costs for an average of fifteen participants to participate in all activities offered on a given tour i.e. — total cost of a group tour at a historical site, a flight of beer at a brewery, etc.</i>	5/15/22	\$750	Approx \$50 per-participant per-tour
	5/29/22	\$750	
	6/12/22	\$750	
	6/26/22	\$750	
Marketing			
<i>To cover the expenses of successfully promoting this event series</i>	Release May 2022	\$4000	New York By Rail AMTRAK magazine (100,000 circulation)— 1/2 page ad
	April 7, 2022	\$500	New York By Rail Sponsored Email Blast (10,000 subscribers)
	May 1 issue	\$1850	Chronogram magazine— 1/2 page ad
	April-June	\$825	Chronogram Media— 75,000 impressions across website network
	April 14 & May 5	\$800	Chronogram Media— Eat, Stay, Play sponsored email blasts
	Apri-June	\$1800	Targeted Facebook/Instagram ad campaigns— within key geographic areas— 50 mile radius around Hudson; metro-Boston; metro-New York
PROGRAM TOTAL		\$19175	
<i>Amount from Tourism Committee</i>		<i>\$9587.50</i>	
<i>Amount from HBCi and others</i>		<i>\$9587.50</i>	

6) *Other funding being sought or anticipated by this Project (include source, amount, and use)*

HBCi has not yet sought additional funding for this program. However, we have existing relationships with organizations and businesses who we will call upon to raise additional funds necessary to make this event series a reality. They include, but are not limited to:

- Columbia County Tourism (\$1000)
- Columbia Economic Development (\$1000)
- Columbia County Chamber of Commerce (\$1000)
- Hudson Business Coalition (\$1000)
- Hudson River Bank & Trust Foundation (\$1500)
- Four additional non-profit or corporate sponsors (\$1000 ea)

Note: the dollar values above are based on previous funds raised from the above associations or organizations in support of previous HBCi initiatives, and do not represent commitments we have secured for funding of this project.