



## NEWS RELEASE | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

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Wednesday, June 25, 2025

### **City awarded Virginia Tourism Corporation grant for tourism marketing**

The Danville Office of Economic Development & Tourism (DOEDT) received a \$30,000 grant from the Virginia Tourism Corporation's (VTC) Marketing Leverage Program for its project, "See You in SoSi."

The marketing initiative, "See You in SoSi," will drive cross-border visitation from North Carolina, primarily Raleigh, Greensboro, and Durham. The project will work closely with six local partners, including the Danville Museum of Fine Arts and History, The Schoolfield Restaurant, The Bee Hotel, Caesars Virginia, VIRginia International Raceway, and the River District Association, to promote regional activities and cultural offerings. The marketing plan will consist of print and digital advertising, web content, itinerary development, and an updated creative.

During this grant round, VTC awarded more than \$2 million in matching grant funds to 197 local tourism programs across the Commonwealth. These awards are funded through VTC's Marketing Leverage Program, Destination Marketing Organization Grant Program, and VA250 Tourism Marketing Program.

These grant programs are designed to pair state funds with local tourism marketing campaigns to increase visitation and traveler spending through 2026. Local partners will commit more than \$2.74 million to match the grant funding, generating more than \$4.76 million in new marketing and event production focused on increasing overnight visitation across all nine GO Virginia regions. The tourism marketing will ultimately benefit 1,130 small businesses and nonprofits statewide.

Sonja Ingram, Danville Museum of Fine Arts and History Executive Director, said, "We are thrilled to partner with Visit SoSi on the "See You in SoSi" tourism marketing grant, which will

help the museum share our vibrant arts programming and rich history with a broader audience. The museum has seen an uptick in visitors, both residents and tourists, eager to learn more about Danville and participate in our growing art scene."

"Tourism is a unifying force that strengthens communities, fuels small businesses, and supports jobs across the Commonwealth," said Rita McClenny, President and CEO of Virginia Tourism Corporation. "These grant programs empower our local partners to share the stories, experiences, and destinations that make Virginia such a special place to visit. We are proud to support this important work and to extend the impact of the *Virginia is for Lovers* brand through these collaborative efforts."

Administered by the Virginia Tourism Corporation, these tourism marketing programs are designed to increase visitor spending by leveraging limited marketing dollars to stimulate new tourism marketing through partnerships, and to extend the *Virginia is for Lovers* brand to drive visitation. Using the hub-and-spoke tourism model, Virginia entities create local partnerships to apply for funding. Partners include Virginia cities, towns, counties, convention and visitors' bureaus, chambers of commerce, destination marketing organizations, museums, attractions, cultural events, and other tourism non-profits and businesses.

Each grant program plays a distinct role in advancing tourism growth:

- The Marketing Leverage Program is a reimbursable grant program to leverage existing marketing funds available to Virginia travel industry partners including small businesses, destination marketing organizations, private sector attractions, accommodations, and events.
- The Virginia DMO Grant Program is awarded to destination marketing organizations (DMOs) for marketing expenses that show positive and significant economic impact on tourism and must include marketing plans designed to drive visitation to Virginia.
- The VA250 Tourism Marketing Program is a reimbursable grant program that leverages existing marketing dollars to carry out a targeted, research-based marketing plan promoting America's 250th commemoration. Building on the *America: Made in Virginia* theme, the grant program is designed to drive visitation by highlighting Virginia's rich cultural and historical legacy.

VTC will have additional Marketing Program grant and sponsorship rounds opening throughout 2025 and 2026. Organizations and businesses that are interested in applying for these grant opportunities may visit [vatc.org/grants](https://vatc.org/grants) for more information.

A full list of grant recipients can be found [here](#).

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### **About the Danville Office of Economic Development & Tourism**

The Danville Office of Economic Development & Tourism is responsible for leading the city of Danville's tourism efforts by branding and promoting the city and Pittsylvania County to differentiate it from other regional competitors through advertising, promotions, trade events, and visitor experience initiatives to stimulate economic growth for the region. To learn more about the Visit SoSi brand and regional attractions, visit <https://www.visitsosi.com/>.