

Principle One: Collaborate

Collaboration is the basis of all successful cultural heritage tourism programs, providing a unique opportunity to unite partners who may not have worked together in the past. By its very nature, cultural heritage tourism requires effective partnerships. Partnering the “history and culture world” with the “business of tourism” offers a combination that can benefit everyone.



There are lots of reasons to collaborate, including:

- ❖ **Financial Incentives** – Funding is at the top of everyone’s list these days, and there never seems to be enough! Partnerships stretch limited budgets further.
- ❖ **Program Development** – For example, an organization which owns a historic home may not have the resources to develop extensive programming, but by working with other attractions, thematic tours could be developed to tell a broader story.
- ❖ **Increasing Product Offerings** – New programs give visitors more to do, increasing the chances that they will stay in your area longer and spend more money.
- ❖ **Define New Markets and New Tactics to Reach Those Markets** – Marketing is expensive, so sharing the costs of advertising, direct mail and promotions can help reach new markets in a cost effective way.
- ❖ **Put a New Spin on an Old Product** – Partnerships create opportunities for making an established attraction “new” through packaging and programming.
- ❖ **Benefit from Your Partner’s Expertise and Reputation** – Partnerships allow you to share in the good name and quality reputation of another attraction or heritage area, or share the expertise between partners.
- ❖ **Strengthen Relationships Between Industries** – Working together on a successful heritage tourism partnership paves the way and provides examples for others to do the same.
- ❖ **Set the Stage for Future Partnerships** – Success breeds success! Once you’ve been involved in a successful partnership, you’ll welcome the opportunity for more.

So who are your potential partners? Consider the needs of your project or promotion, and then consider what partners are needed to make it a success. Potential partners might include:

- ❖ **Businesses** – Loaned executives and development of materials such as newsletters and brochures, financial assistance and many other resources can be cultivated through business collaborations.
- ❖ **Tourism Organizations** – Pooling funds for advertising, regional promotions, inclusion in local and regional marketing collateral pieces and sharing expenses of programs such

as hospitality training are just a few benefits of working with your local and state tourism organizations.

- ❖ **Heritage sites and areas** – Knowledge of the area’s history for publications and press materials, shared consulting fees, and creating critical mass (enough sites promoted jointly to make the destination worth the drive) result from working with heritage sites and areas.
- ❖ **Cultural Organizations-** Local visual and performing arts organizations can help to enhance the visitor experience.
- ❖ **Other nonprofits** – Nonprofits such as historical groups, schools and churches have many of the same needs. Sharing resources such as materials, event equipment and volunteers will benefit everyone.

