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Grants Will Stand Up Fan Zones and Support Small Businesses Statewide

CAMDEN COUNTY – Today, Governor Mikie Sherrill, along with representatives from the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJE), the FIFA World Cup 2026™ New York New Jersey Host Committee (“NYNJ Host Committee”), and Choose New Jersey, announced the receipt of \$5 million in grants awarded through the NJ World Cup Community Initiative to support 34 New Jersey-based organizations hosting public fan experiences and community events ahead of the FIFA World Cup 2026™.

Regional, Multi-Day, Multi-Location Event grants will be distributed to three organizers who will host large-scale events throughout the tournament. Statewide Community Experience grants will also be distributed to organizations across North, Central, and South Jersey hosting smaller events.

“The FIFA World Cup 2026™ is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to showcase New Jersey on the global stage, and we want to make sure all New Jerseyans can join in on the festivities,” said **Governor Mikie Sherrill**. “These grants will help ensure that the benefits of hosting the World Cup extend beyond the walls of the stadium. Through this initiative, we are supporting small businesses and empowering communities across New Jersey to create exciting experiences that bring residents and visitors together throughout our state ahead of the tournament, and during the World Cup.”

The \$5 million [NJ World Cup Community Initiative](#), launched by Governor Mikie Sherrill and developed and funded by the NJEDA, will support community-driven activations that bring the excitement and economic impact of the World Cup to neighborhoods across New Jersey. The NYNJ Host Committee selected Choose New Jersey to administer the grant application and distribution process on behalf of the State, with final award determinations approved by the NJEDA.

“This initiative, launched by Governor Sherrill, will help turn the world’s largest sporting event into an economic driver for local communities and small businesses across New Jersey,” said **NJEDA Chief Executive Officer Evan Weiss**. “I appreciate the collaboration between Governor Sherrill, Choose New Jersey, and the NYNJ Host Committee to ensure the FIFA World Cup brings communities together and has a meaningful impact in every corner of the state.”

The grants will help activate fan zones, street fairs, watch parties, and festivals that showcase New Jersey’s communities and amplify the impact of small businesses throughout the state. A full list of grant awardees can be found [here](#).

“Choose New Jersey is proud to support this initiative by helping bring these community-driven ideas to life,” said **Amy Herbold, President and CEO of Choose New Jersey**. “By administering the grant process and working directly with local partners, we are helping ensure these events are impactful, inclusive, and reflective of New Jersey’s diverse communities, while also supporting small and local businesses that are vital to their success.”

“Our goal is to make the World Cup experience accessible and felt in every corner of our region,” said **Alex Lasry, CEO of the NYNJ Host Committee**. “We’re grateful to Governor Mikie Sherrill for her leadership in helping bring this vision to life. These community events extend the tournament far beyond the stadium—creating authentic fan experiences that reflect the diversity, pride, and energy that define New Jersey, while ensuring residents and visitors alike can be part of this once-in-a-generation moment.”

In addition, all grant-funded events will be integrated into the [NYNJ Host Committee’s Welcome World Rewards Program](#), a free, region-wide initiative that connects fans with local businesses and experiences. Visitors attending these events will be able to check in through the program’s digital platform to earn points, which can be redeemed for official merchandise, exclusive experiences, and FIFA World Cup 2026™ match tickets. The program encourages fans to explore multiple destinations throughout the region, extending their experience beyond the stadium and into local communities. These activations will bring the tournament atmosphere beyond New York New Jersey Stadium and into neighborhoods, downtowns, and cultural hubs across the state.

Grant Recipients:



Regional, Multi-Day, Multi-Location Events:

Flag Cities (June 8–July 16), led by the Meadowlands Regional Chamber & CVB, will take place across Bergen, Essex, Hudson, and Passaic counties, including in Bayonne, East Rutherford, Hackensack, Jersey City, Newark, Paterson, and Secaucus.

North to Shore Festival (June 13–July 16), presented by the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJ PAC), will take place in Essex, Monmouth, and Atlantic Counties.

Visit South Jersey World Cup Activations – Camden County (May 2–July 19), produced by Visit South Jersey, will take place in Camden County.

Statewide Community Experiences:

AACCNJ World Cup Business Access & Economic Activation Initiative (July 17), African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey, Trenton

The Battle of Basking Ridge Soccer Village & Viewing Party (June 13), County of Somerset, Bernards Township

Watch Party Combined with Atlantic City Beach Fest (Latin Fest) (July 18–19), Visit Atlantic City, Atlantic City

World Cup 2026 Watch Parties (June 19; June 24; June 28; July 15; July 19), Borough of Fort Lee, Fort Lee

Downtown Viewing Event (July 19), Greater Asbury Park Chamber of Commerce, Asbury Park

Freedom to Play: Inclusive World Cup Soccer Experience at The NAACP Juneteenth Freedom Experience (June 6), McCovic Foundation, Edison

Game On! (June 12; July 12), Urban League of Union County, Elizabeth and Union

Hackettstown Street Fair with World Cup Celebration (July 19), Hackettstown Business Improvement District, Hackettstown

The Halfway Point: Flemington's World Cup Celebration (June 19), Flemington Improvement District, Flemington

Hoboken Arts and Music Festival (May 17; September 27), City of Hoboken, Hoboken

Hub City Fan Celebration 2026 (July 2), City of New Brunswick—The Department of Human and Community Services, New Brunswick

International Food & Dance Festival (July 12), Lackawanna Montclair Market LLC, Montclair

Ivy Hill Soccer Fest 2026 (May 23; June 19–20; July 9–12), Ivy Hill Neighborhood Association, Newark

Linden Welcomes the World: World Cup Activation Series (June 13–19), Uptown Linden Special Improvement District, Linden

Maplewoodstock (July 11–12), Music & Arts Education Project, Inc., Maplewood

Mount Holly World Cup Downtown Activation Series (June 19-20), Mount Holly UEZ, Mount Holly

New Jersey Youth Mini World Cup 2026 – Trenton Host City Activation (June 20), The United States Latino Affairs Initiatives, Trenton

Ocean County World Cup Watch Parties (June 14, 19; July 19), Ocean County Public Affairs Division of Business Development and Tourism, Little Egg Harbor Township, Jackson Township, and Lakewood

Passport to Paterson: A World Cup Experience (June 13; June 19; June 25; June 27; July 19), Andre Sayegh Civic Association, Paterson

Red Bank World Cup Activation Series (June–July), Borough of Red Bank, Red Bank

Saturday Heights LIVE Watch Party (June 13), HIP INC., Haddon Heights

Summer of Soccer & Science (June 6–July 19; June 17; June 24; July 9), Liberty Science Center, Jersey City

Tri-County Fair 2026 (June 18–21), CARE Center of New Jersey, Rockaway

Carteret World Cup Festival (June 11–July 19), Carteret Business Partnership, Carteret

Newark International Food Festival (July 18), Newark Alliance, Newark

Union City Soccer Festival & Fan Celebration (June 13), City of Union City in collaboration with the Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Union City

Welcome World! Princeton's Global Food Festival & World Cup Watch Parties 2026 (June 20; June 28; July 14), Experience Princeton, Princeton

The World on Central (July 10–11), City of Jersey City, Jersey City

WorldCupGardenState.com Esports Tournament (June–July), Esports Innovation Center, Atlantic City, Glassboro, Newark

World Cup on the Waterfront at Food Truck Tuesdays (June 9; June 23; July 14), Main Street Burlington, Burlington

World Cup Watch Party & Cultural Festival (June 27), Somerset County Business Partnership, Hillsborough

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