Information Network of Kansas, Inc.

Grant Policy and Procedures

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# Overview

The 1991 Kansas Legislature created the nation’s first electronic government portal with the passage of K.S.A. 74-9301 et seq. Years ahead of its time, this visionary statutory act established the Information Network of Kansas (“INK”) to increase and enhance electronic access to Kansas government information and services. Since 1991, INK has provided the oversight and direction to create over 400 applications and services and hosted more than one hundred websites for the state-sponsored entities of Kansas.

INK’s Mission is to enable digital access to Kansas state and local government information and services for public use and benefit. Furthering that mission, INK awards grants to agencies of the State of Kansas or its political subdivisions that enhance the public’s digital access to government information.

INK awards grants on a competitive basis which grade how well the proposed projects fulfill INK’s mission and the statutory and strategic objectives set out in the rating criteria/methodology found in this policy.

# Grant Submission Procedures

## *Grant Applications*

Grant applications must be completed in accordance with the approved publicly published application. Please note that non-compliance with any grant application policy or procedure may result in the rejection of an application. Grant applications are available online at https://ink.kansas.gov/grants/ or from the INK office by e-mail upon request.

Grant applications and all attachments become the property of INK. Information contained in the grant application package cannot be guaranteed to be confidential given the open nature of the evaluation process. INK recommends all applicants retain a copy of their grant application in their files.

Grant applications are accepted from May 1 to May 31.The grant application and all attachments should be submitted in a standard PDF file electronically via the INK website or e-mail to INK Executive Director Murray McGee at [murray.mcgee@ks.gov](mailto:murray.mcgee@ks.gov).

INK shall not, in any event, be liable for any costs incurred in the preparation of grant applications submitted to it.

Applicants are solely responsible for complying with all laws and regulations applicable to their grant applications and grant awards.

Grants are permitted for agencies of the government of the State of Kansas or any of its political subdivisions, subject to the grant application process and approval by the INK Board of Directors (“Board”).

Applications for salary support or development or maintenance costs required by projects developed or maintained by INK are discouraged so any such requests require detailed justification.

Approved grant projects must be completed within 24 months of the date of the executed grant agreement.

## *Grant Application Content*

All grant applications shall include all of the following:

1. Cover sheet.
2. Cover letter of no more than two pages describing your entity and how a grant award would enable your entity to increase the public’s digital access to government information. The letter should be on letterhead and signed by an executive officer.
3. Completed INK Grant application.
4. A list of all officers, board members or trustees, as applicable, including names, addresses, phone numbers and officer positions in your entity.
5. If your entity is subject to state Chief Information Technology Officer (CITO) project approval, a proposed project template document must accompany the grant request. Please refer to the Kansas Information Technology Office for requirements.
6. If the entity’s project involves a partner or is designed to serve clients of another entity, you must submit a Letter of Endorsement in support of the grant request from an official of the affected partner or entity.
7. Proposals, timeline, project budget, bids or estimates of the project to be funded.
8. Photographs of the facility or project, if applicable.
9. Any additional supporting information that enhances the application.

## *Special Grants*

Some state or federal grants require matching funds and are announced on short notice. These types of grants may have submission deadlines outside the INK grant submission period. To support entities that are pursuing these types of grants, INK will accept these special grant requests at any time. The following guidelines apply:

1. Special grants will only be considered if the funding desired is time-sensitive in nature.
2. Priority will be given to special grants that leverage external funding to support a project.
3. A one-page letter explaining the request and a completed grant application will be required, including the completed application to the external grant making entity. Contact the INK Office at (785) 296-2408 or Murray McGee at [murray.mcgee@ks.gov](mailto:murray.mcgee@ks.gov) as soon as possible to discuss the project and determine what additional documentation the Board needs to make a decision.
4. Although there is not a limit to the amount of a Special Grant request, grant amount awards will be subject to the Board’s discretion and the grant funds available at the time of the request.

# Grant Assessment Methodology

Statutory and strategic objectives are used to rate each grant proposal. Each objective is assigned a percentage weight to emphasize the Board’s direction and focus. The following table shows the weights and rating criteria.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Statutory Objectives** | **Objectives Weight** | **Objective Description** |
| Increase Citizen/Business Access | 35% | Provide access to existing or develop new or enhanced public access to electronic government services. |
| Align to Technology Initiatives | 15% | Strive to ensure application and service development supports forward-thinking technology planning. |
| Improve Access Technologies | 10% | Where appropriate, use new or enhanced technology to improve the manner in which users access data or the manner in which data is provided. |
| Sustainability | 10% | Develop a long term plan to sustain the new or enhanced public access to electronic government services or information. |
| **Strategic Objectives** | | |
| Market Adoption  (2-year potential) | 10% | Emphasis will be placed with applications and services  which affect the largest number of users. |
| Integrated Services | 10% | Strive to increase the level of data integration with data providers or users to maximize information efficiency. |
| Extensible (reusable) design | 10% | Develop applications and services which may be reusable by other entities or other applications and services. |

# Application Consideration Process

The Grant Committee, which consists of three Board members including the Chair and the Executive Director, scores and/or ranks all grant applications. INK staff will preview grant applications, answer questions and may make suggestions to improve or complete an application. INK employees are non-voting members of the Grant Committee and participate in the grant making process to provide applicant clarification and administrative assistance to the Grant Committee and Board.

The final assessment of the Grant Committee for all grant submissions shall be presented to the Board as a recommendation for approval or rejection. Grant Committee recommendations will not be provided prior to submission to the Board.

All INK Board members are required to declare any conflict of interest pertaining to any personal, professional or agency interest in any grant application. Applicants are strongly discouraged from lobbying the Board & Grant Committee members. Violation may result in the disqualification of the application.

The Board determines the amount available for granting purposes during their annual budgeting cycle and reserves the right to alter the grant amount availability.

The decision on the disposition of all grant applications is final. The INK staff and Board are not authorized to release any information on the status of a grant application prior to final board decision.

INK reserves the right to accept or reject all grant applications if it determines it is in its best interests to do so.

INK reserves the right to not review incomplete grant applications.

Successful applicants will be informed in a Letter of Intent from INK of the grant amount that INK may award it, provided that the applicant: (a) submits any required documents or information that must be added or revised to the original application in order for an award to be granted and (b) executes a grant agreement which includes but is not limited to incorporation of the applicant’s complete grant application and attachments and sets out the grant compliance requirements for reporting and disbursements and penalties for failure to adhere to those requirements.

The Letter of Intent may be rescinded and the application denied if an applicant does not submit the requested documents or information within the time allowed in the Letter of Intent or to the satisfaction of INK or if the applicant fails or refuses to execute the grant agreement.

Receipt of a Letter of Intent does not bestow any rights or benefits to an applicant. INK reserves the right to reduce the amount outlined in the Letter of Intent at any time before a grant agreement is executed.

# Distribution of Grant Funds

Reimbursement requests must include supporting documentation for each reimbursable item requested. Grant recipients must respond to requests for additional information on reimbursement within ten (10) business days.

Disbursements will be made only to the applicant entity unless justification is presented as part of the application that payment must be made to another entity.

A reimbursement request is not complete and will not be paid until all corresponding quarterly reports have been received and approved.

Funds are typically provided within thirty working days after a paid receipt, purchase order, invoice or an accepted bid is delivered to the INK office. In rare cases, funds may be released to a grant recipient upon receipt of documentation supporting an unusual need.

Award recipients are expected to spend the full amount of their grant award within the identified grant award period, with extensions to this period approved only in exceptional circumstances.

INK reserves the right to suspend, deny or limit reimbursements that are not incompliance with its reimbursement requirements.

A grant award extension for more than the 24 month grant period may be requested only under extraordinary circumstances and if the extension request is made more than ninety

(90) days prior to the end of the original grant period.

Disbursement of grant funds is contingent upon certification by the grant recipient of compliance with procurement laws, regulations, policies and procedures required by their government jurisdiction.

# Reporting Requirements

Each grant recipient must submit a quarterly report on the status and progress of the project in the format attached to the grant agreement. The quarterly report should include, at a minimum, current status with respect to the timeline, budget and project milestones identified in the grant application. Reports are due on the tenth business day of the months of January, April, July, and October.

The Executive Director will review the quarterly reports to ensure all requested information is included and identify any questions or concerns. The grant recipient will be required to respond as directed by the Executive Director. If the report submitted by the grant recipient identifies any significant grant implementation challenges, the Executive Director will initiate discussions to develop a plan for resolving the concerns, which shall be finalized no later than forty-five (45) days after receiving the concerning report.

Failure to submit approved quarterly reports may result in a suspension of funds, termination of the grant agreement and/or ineligibility to be awarded additional grants.

Grant recipients whose awards are prematurely terminated are subject to the same requirements regarding recordkeeping, reimbursement and report submissions as a project that is not terminated prior to the project end date.

Upon conclusion of the grant project, a final report is required that details the results and benefits of the grant award with a full accounting of expenditures for the entire grant period. The Executive Director will review the final report to ensure all requested information is included and identify any questions or concerns. The grant recipient will be required to respond as directed by the Executive Director. The grant recipient also may be required to make a presentation to the Board to demonstrate and/or discuss the results of the grant.

Grant recipients are required to maintain a grant award file for two years following the conclusion of the project that includes all of the following documents:

1. the final project application, budget, signed certification, award letter, award agreement and any award agreement amendments
2. requests for reimbursement and supporting documentation
3. equipment and electronic purchase and sole source justification forms when applicable
4. performance or outcome measurement reports when applicable
5. grant notices from INK pertaining to requests for additional information, quarterly reports or other notices and
6. all other significant grant correspondence and documents.

# Grant Implementation Requirements

Grant recipients that experience significant grant implementation challenges that adversely affect the timeliness, budget, quality and/or objectives of the grant award must notify the Executive Director as soon as they become aware of the challenges. The award recipient should identify the action that they are taking to remedy the issues.

Upon notice of the award recipient’s challenges and proposed remedy, the Executive Director shall meet with the grant recipient’s designee to discuss INK’s concerns and develop a Corrective Action Plan with concrete deliverables and timeline. Grant recipients that show continued noncompliance will receive notification through formal letter that their grant award has been terminated and, if applicable, of ineligibility to seek additional grants.

Grant recipients must obtain prior written approval to modify the grant award including the timeline, budget or scope of work and should seek such approval with explanation as soon as any change is known to the recipient but no later than 30 days following such notice. Failure to obtain prior written approval to modify the grant award may lead to suspension of funds, termination of the grant agreement and/or ineligibility to seek additional grants.

# Application Enclosure Checklist

For your use in ensuring a complete Grant Application.

* Cover Sheet
* Cover letter of no more than two pages briefly on letterhead and signed by an executive officer describing your entity and how a grant award would enable your entity to increase the public’s digital access to government information.
* Completed INK Grant application in PDF format.
* A list of officers, board of directors or trustees, as applicable, including names, addresses, phone numbers and officer positions in your entity.
* Proposed project template document if required by the state of Kansas’ Chief Information Technology Officer.
* If your project involves a partner or is designed to serve clients of another entity, a Letter of Endorsement from an official of the affected partner or entity.
* Proposals, timeline, project budget, bids or estimates of the project to be funded.
* Photographs of the facility or project, if applicable.
* Any additional supporting information that enhances the application.

# Information Network of Kansas Grant Application

### Date Application Submitted:

### Applicant Name:

### Grant Amount Requested: $

### Applicant Contact Information

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Primary  Contact | Position Title | Mailing  Address | Phone | Fax | Email Address |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

### Other Participants, (if applicable)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Primary Contact | Position Title | Mailing Address | Phone | Fax | Email Address |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

### Description of Applicant’s Primary Services.

*Response:*

### Describe the vision of the project.

*Response:*

### Describe how the need is supported/required by Federal law, Kansas Statute or County/City ordinance.

*Response:*

### Describe the benefit to Applicant, State, and the public.

*Response:*

### If the grant is to create a web application, is the application envisioned to have a fee associated with the use of the application or is the application free for use by citizens, businesses or governments? Please place an “X” in the appropriate box.

Fee Free

### Select the area of service to which the grant benefit will best apply Commerce Health & Human Services

### Legislative (e-Democracy) Transportation

### Infrastructure Public Safety

### Natural Resources Education

### Other (please explain)*:*

### Date grant is desired?

### Provide the amount of funds or number of resources your entity will be contributing to the project and the source of those funds/resources?

*Response:*

### Provide the following; Project Start Date:

### Project End Date:

### Milestones and Dates:

### Payment Schedule with Dates:

### INK utilizes eight objectives to evaluate and prioritize grant applications. Those objectives with higher weight percentages will be considered more heavily in the evaluation.

### Provide a brief description of how your request satisfies the following INK objectives.

### Increases Citizen/Business Access: (35%)

Provide your description and estimate of the number of citizens and/or businesses you anticipate would utilize the service as a result of your grant application.

*Response:*

### Aligns to Technology Initiatives: (15%)

Describe how your application aligns with forward thinking technology planning.

*Response:*

### Improve Access Technologies: (10%)

Describe how the application aligns with the Kansas Information Technology Architecture and will expand the use of technology or how it incorporates new technology.

*Response:*

### Sustainability: (10%)

Describe your plan for long term sustainability, including funding source (if appropriate), for the new or enhanced public access to electronic government services or information.

*Response:*

### Market Adoption: (10%)

Describe your expected percent of total market adoption rates for the first two years.

*Response:*

### Integration: (10%)

Describe how your request is designed to integrate within your agency or entity and/or with other agencies or entities.

*Response:*

### Extensibility: (10%)

Describe how your request may potentially be extended or reused by other agencies or entities.

*Response:*

### Explain why you are not using existing resources or requesting resources through the Legislative or other budgeting process.

*Response:*

### Explain the procurement process in your jurisdiction applicable to the purchase of any goods or services for which grant funds will be used and certify that you plan to follow these processes and provide documentation of compliance upon request.

*Response:*

By signing below, the Grant Applicant attests to the following:

* + 1. The undersigned is authorized to bind their organization and has included their name, title, mailing address, email address and phone number in the grant application or cover letter.
    2. The Grant Applicant possesses the ability to maintain adequate files and records and meet all reporting requirements.
    3. The Grant Applicant possesses the ability to comply with the proposed delivery or performance schedule set out in their application.
    4. The Grant Applicant possesses the necessary organization, experience, accounting and operational controls and technical skills to implement the proposed grant or the ability to obtain them.
    5. The Grant Applicant meets all of the qualifications and eligibility criteria necessary to receive a grant award under all applicable laws and regulations.

### Applicant Name

### Title

### Date

#### *Signature*

**Please submit your request to** Murray McGee [murray.mcgee@ks.gov](mailto:murray.mcgee@ks.gov) (785)296-2408

Information Network of Kansas 109 SW 9th Street

Mills Building**-**3rd Floor Topeka, Kansas 66612

### Office Use only, do not fill in below this line

Grant Request Number: Date Request Received:

Grant Amount: Request Review Date:

Grant Request Score: Committee Recommendation:

Grant Disposition: Date of Meeting Minutes