Frequently Asked Questions

Kansas Advocates for Equity, Education and Health

Request for Proposals

Please submit questions regarding the Kansas Advocates for Equity, Education and Health United RFP via email, with the subject, "Kansas Advocates for Equity, Education and Health RFP Question," to grants@khf.org

Programmatic Content

1. **Is it important for the funded grantees to collaborate with one another? And if yes, how would the foundations like to see that play out?**
   An important component of this initiative is the connections and policy agenda created among the funded organizations. Organizations may play a specific role in moving forward certain aspects of the agenda while working collaboratively in carrying out the agenda identified by the group. A key part of this work focuses on shifting imbalanced power dynamics toward more equitably-distributed models of power that roots agency in individuals and groups of changemakers, thus amplifying their collective voice. Grantees and their partner organizations will be part of a learning community and participate in activities, such as convenings, group calls and sharing lessons-learned while working individually and collectively to advance the policy agenda as defined by project leaders.

2. **What is meant by, "working toward *policy, system and environmental (PSE)* changes?"**
   Policy, systems and environmental change (PSE) approaches seek to go beyond programming and into the systems that create the structures in which we work, live and play. These approaches often work hand-in-hand where, for example, an environmental change may be furthered by a policy or system change. Similarly, a policy could be put in place that results in additional environmental changes. The process is often not quick or linear. At the end of the day, an effective PSE approach should seek to reach populations and uncover strategies for impact that are sustainable. Such approaches often include advocates, decision and policy makers. For example, a PSE change that could impact educational equity could be to change discipline policies in schools, along with how they are enforced, so that all students are receiving equal treatment.

3. **Do the funders have specific policies or strategies related to educational equity in mind that they expect grantees to advance through this effort?**
   No. Funders do not intend to be prescriptive regarding campaigns or issue areas.

4. **Is there an expectation that the policies applicants propose to address be at the local level, state level, or within an organization?**
   Grantees may focus on local and/or state level policy. Funders recognize that, sometimes, prior to state policy level changes being achieved, it is first necessary to make progress at the hyperlocal, local, municipal or county level.

5. **Is the two-generation approach to addressing educational equity for children and families being used in other states?**
   Yes, addressing the needs of both child and parent simultaneously is a best practice and has been implemented in a number of states by a variety of organizations. Learn more about two-generation approaches here: https://ascend.aspeninstitute.org/two-generation/what-is-2gen/

6. **Are there educational and/or health equity issues that are considered a higher priority as it relates to this initiative?**
   No.

7. **Is this grant initiative a one-time opportunity, or will it be provided again?**
   At this time, KHF and UMHMF are able to offer a three-year initiative ending in 2024. Any considerations related to future investments in this type of work would happen closer to the end date.

8. **Should proposals have a narrower or broader focus?**
   We recommend organizations use community input and a comprehensive perspective as a guide to the overall direction of the proposed work. During the first year there will be an opportunity to further craft a collective agenda both locally and with other selected grantees.

9. **How are educational outcomes defined?**
   The overarching, long-term indicator is the proportion of Kansas students graduating from high school on time. While this is a long-term metric, applicants are encouraged to think about ways to create more supportive environments that reduce barriers and increase school readiness and consider how they can aid early care and education providers in designing equitable educational opportunities. Applicants should also consider how the social determinants of health impact education and those connections to educational outcomes.

10. **Should we focus our efforts on a regional area in Kansas and expand to the state, or focus on the state as a whole?**
    Applicants are encouraged to think about the work locally and how they might work together with the cohort to impact state policy.

Contacts

11. **If I have questions about content for the proposal is there technical assistance available?**
    Yes, your first point of contact is KHF Program Officer, Chan Brown at cbrown@khf.org. She can answer questions for you and/or connect you with one of our technical assistance providers for further support, including Community Catalyst, who can respond to questions related to proposed policy implementation. Connecting with Chan first so that she may get you in touch with the appropriate additional support, should any be needed.

12. **To apply for the Equity, Education, and Health grant, should applicants work with the KHF team or with the UMHMF team?**
    All eligible organizations are encouraged to apply and do not need to work with KHF or UMHMF staff to submit a proposal. Your first point of contact if you have questions is KHF Program Officer, Chan Brown, at cbrown@khf.org. Chan can answer questions and/or connect you with a technical assistance provider for further support, including Community Catalyst, who is responding to questions related to proposed policy implementation.

13. **Who should I contact if I need access to the online portal and/or have issues with submitting the proposal application in the portal?**
    If you are experiencing issues with proposal submission or other grant portal problems, please contact KHF Grants Associate, Gina Hess at ghess@khf.org.

Who should apply

14. **May we apply for funding if we are a current KHF or UMHMF grantee with an active grant?**
Yes.

15. **May our organization apply for this initiative if we previously received a KHF Impact and Capacity Grant (ICG) and are planning to apply for another ICG in 2021?**
Yes.

16. **Are coalitions eligible to apply?**
Applicant organizations must be tax-exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Coalitions may apply directly only if they are incorporated, nonprofit organizations.

17. **Are all nonprofits eligible to apply?**
Applicant organizations must be tax-exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Eligible applicants are tax-exempt organizations qualified under Sections 509(a)(1) or (a)(2) of the Code and have the primary purpose or function of supporting, promoting or furthering the improvement of health. Fiscal sponsors may be utilized.

18. **Can 501(c)4 organizations apply?**
No.

19. **Can churches apply as the lead applicant and receive a grant award?**
Yes. Churches who are recognized as a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization by the IRS with a group ruling letter are eligible to apply as the lead applicant and receive a grant award.

20. **Should public school districts apply as a lead applicant/may public school districts receive a grant award under this particular Request for Proposals?**
Public school districts should not apply/would not receive an award as this particular RFP for the *Kansas Advocates for Equity, Education and Health Initiative* is focused on advocacy as a strategy to shape policy and systems to make progress toward greater educational equity. Recognizing that school districts are considered government entities, this RFP approach avoids placing school districts in the difficult position of advocating for a two-generation policy and systems change approach at the broader state level (while there may be pressing educational needs to address within the district). Applicants are encouraged to engage school districts as *partners* in the work as appropriate because of the important role school districts play in supporting educational equity.

21. **Can organizations outside of Kansas apply for this initiative?**
KHF and UMHMF fund only in Kansas; however, organizations located in the Missouri counties of Cass, Jackson, or Lafayette may apply if the sole focus of their policy efforts under this grant will be in Kansas.

22. **If an organization's work is focused on a single county, is that organization eligible to apply for this initiative?**
Yes.

23. **If the applicant organization has not had a statewide focus previously, is that organization ineligible to receive a grant?**
No. The geographic scope of work of applicants may be statewide, local, or hyperlocal (neighborhood). This grant opportunity is open to organizations with expertise in education, equity or health, or other issues related to the focus here.

24. May organizations without an audit or recent financial documents apply?
Yes, but the funders may have additional questions regarding their finances.

25. Can a 509(a)(1) organization apply?
Yes.

26. Would the foundations consider a joint proposal from multiple organizations?
No. Organizations may take a collaborative approach, but a single organization must be the lead applicant and will be considered the lead grantee.

27. If an organization is a member of a coalition that is interested in applying for this grant opportunity, can the organization also apply individually?
Yes. An organization may apply as the lead applicant in their chosen issue area and still be considered as a coalition member or supporting organization of another organization applying in a different issue area. Doing so will not negatively impact consideration.

28. Could an applicant submit two proposals – one for its own project and one as the fiscal agent for another entity?
No.

29. Will KHF accept more than one application/project proposal from one organization?
KHF seeks to make the application process equitable. One proposal submission per organization will be considered.

30. Are city/county/state government entities able to apply?
No, applicants must be non-governmental, incorporated nonprofit organizations.

31. Can nonprofits partner with governmental agencies?
Yes, as part of the collaborative effort.

32. If an organization receives funding from a government entity, is that a problem?
No.

33. Do partner organizations (not the lead applicant, but supporting the work) have to be nonprofits as well?
No.

34. In lieu of a joint proposal, could one organization be the "lead group" on a proposal and contract with another organization to run the campaign in a different city?
Yes, if organizations want to work together on this initiative, one should apply as the lead applicant, and the other organizations would be partner organizations. Sub-contracting is permitted through this grant initiative as long as roles are clearly articulated in the section describing the planned approach.

35. If an organization is working with many other organizations, should they check in with those organizations to see if others are planning to apply for this grant opportunity?
Yes, organizations should try to collaborate.

36. If our organization primarily serves low-income children and families and there are very few residents of color in our community, may we apply for this grant?
With this initiative, KHF seeks to reach Kansas organizations who are authentically serving Black, Indigenous and other families of color with prenatal to age eight children, as well as those experiencing poverty, to ensure these organizations have the opportunity to apply.

Budget

37. Should organizations account for all three grant years when writing their proposals?
Yes. Organizations should submit a budget and objectives for all three grant years.

38. How much should I budget annually in this proposal, and, how much of the annual budget should be designated for salary and fringe benefits?
No specific amount has been recommended for salaries. Grantees should document each position employed (indicating whether the position is existing or new) to support the proposed work - to include % FTE and accompanying salary and fringe benefits. (The maximum allowable for fringe benefits is 25% of salary.)

- This category does not include any consultants or contract workers as they are not employees of the organization.

- Annual salary increases are limited to 3%.

39. Should applicants budget for mileage and hotel stays for cohort retreats and annual in-person meetings?
Yes. Applicants should plan and budget for one in-person meeting per year to be held in Wichita. While meetings at the outset of the initiative will likely be virtual, we would like to convene the cohort in person as soon as it is safe to do so. If it becomes apparent in-person meetings will not be feasible, budgeted travel funds may be used for another line item in the cost category.

40. Should applicants budget for technical assistance?
Policy, advocacy and programmatic support/technical assistance will be available through the initiative (and funded, separately, by UMHMF and KHF). This may cover coalition management, campaign development, coaching on centering community voice, or other needs identified by the cohort of project grantees. If the organization has a specific capacity building need related to their ability to implement effective advocacy in this area, that should be included in the applicant's budget.
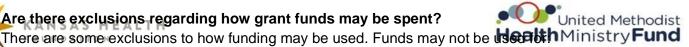
41. Should grantees plan for their own evaluation, or will the funders evaluate this initiative?
The funders will work collaboratively with an evaluation team and project grantees to plan, implement and share results of the assessment of this initiative. In addition, funders welcome and support any further evaluation activities individual grantees choose to pursue through their own efforts.

42. Is it possible for applicants to budget for technology needs?
Yes, as long as the budget line item includes justification of the need for this support.

43. Are there exclusions regarding how grant funds may be spent?
There are some exclusions to how funding may be used. Funds may not be used for:

- Construction projects of any kind;
- Medical research;
- Contributions to capital campaigns;
- Operating deficits or retirement of debt;
- Endowment programs not initiated by KHF or UMHMF;
- Vehicles, such as vans or buses;
- Medical equipment;
- Direct mental health services;
- Direct medical services;
- Partisan political activity;
- Candidate endorsements; and
- Lobbying as defined by the U.S. Internal Revenue Code (IRC), section 4945(d)(1).

Miscellaneous

44. Are letters of support required?
Letters of support are not required, but applicants are welcome to submit letters from organizations they plan to partner and/or work with.

45. How will proposals be reviewed?
Proposals will be reviewed by KHF and UMHMF staff as well as the team of technical assistance providers engaged on this initiative.

46. How are the projects selected for funding? Are there any criteria that will be used?
In reviewing proposals submitted, consideration will be given to the extent to which applicants describe:

- Their organization's readiness to effectively implement high-quality advocacy work
- A clear equity issue area important to improving educational outcomes
- An authentic working relationship with the BIPOC or other marginalized communities prioritized in this proposal and reasonable strategies to center their voice in this work
- A clear and thoughtful plan on how to engage in the proposed advocacy efforts
- A compelling vision for bold policy advocacy that will address barriers to educational equity and promote greater student success

47. Are financial reviews acceptable in place of a full audit?
Yes.

48. Is the informational meeting required?
No. We encourage attendance so we can answer your questions directly, but participating in the webinar is not required in order to apply.

49. If I am unable to attend the webinar will a recording be available?
Yes, the webinar will be recorded and posted with a link on the KHF RFP website that can be viewed at any time prior to the application deadline.