

DIGITAL OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT KANSANS

PUBLIC PROPOSALS- SECOND ROUND



Application Title: Eagle Nest Inc- Digital Skills Launching Pad

Organization Name: Eagle Nest Inc.

Project Executive Summary

Goals of the proposed project:

Eagle Nest Inc. is thrilled to enhance our capacity and innovate our digital literacy skills program, in Cowley County, KS. Eagle Nest purposed project " Digital Skills Launching Pad" looks to serve justice-involved women (women in jail or prison and women recently released from jail or prison), women recovering from domestic violence, and women in Cowley County susceptible to generational poverty. This program will offer accessible and free digital skills training through **(i)** a new computer lab, with technology infrastructure enhancements, **(ii)** a comprehensive curriculum, delivered through workshops and one-on-one sessions on digital skills, online safety, and accessing community resources remaining flexible to adapt to participants' changing needs and interests, and **(iii)** a Train-the-Trainer model for sustainable development ensuring that expertise is shared and scaled efficiently within the community and internally, fostering long-term impact and sustainability. Additionally we'll address barriers like transportation and childcare to reach more program participants.

Funding support will not only enhance access and mobility for participants but will also enable Eagle Nest to adapt and grow in an increasingly digital society. By modernizing infrastructure along with sustainable technical support and expanding program offerings, Eagle Nest will better serve the Cowley County community while ensuring organizational sustainability. We believe the " Digital Skills Launching Pad" will empower approximately 50 in women transition within the first 12 months and strengthen the local economy, fostering long-term personal and community growth.

Needs addressed by the proposed project:

In Kansas, women face significant challenges related to digital literacy, economic mobility, and social reintegration, particularly after involvement in the criminal justice system and those susceptible to generational poverty. Women represent nearly 10% of Kansas' incarcerated population, often for economic-related offenses. Poverty rates in Kansas show that over 16% of women live in poverty, while Cowley County has a lower rate, with 14% of its population below the federal poverty line—above the national average of 12.5%. Data shows that the largest group living in poverty in Cowley County are women aged 25-34, followed by those aged 35-44 and 18-24, women at the focus of our efforts. These challenges are intensified for women involved in the criminal justice system, those experiencing homelessness, or transitioning from domestic violence. The lack of digital skills and access to technology impedes employment opportunities, perpetuating cycles of generational poverty. Approximately 19% of Kansas households lack internet access or digital literacy, with this gap most pronounced in economically distressed rural areas like Cowley County.

The " Digital Skills Launching Pad" will address the digital divide in Cowley County by providing women with digital skills training and access to technology, reducing social isolation by offering comprehensive curriculum, facilitated by a digital navigator. A well-equipped computer lab will create lasting pathways for digital literacy, workforce skills, economic mobility, and reduced poverty and recidivism for our focus population. Running from November 30, 2024, - July 31, 2026, providing time to establish, implement, refine, and assess the program's impact.

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Service partners involved in the proposed project:

Eagle Nest proposed project " Digital Skills Launching Pad" harnesses the collective strengths of service partners to maximize its impact. Collaborating with Winfield Public Library, Cowley County District Court, partnering to ensure continued referrals of participants pre and post incarceration, Cowley County Economic Development (Cowley-Works), partnering to promote workshops and assist with employment leads for participants. The Kansas Workforce Center of South Central Kansas offers a trusted and accessible space at Cowley College's Arkansas City campus (67005), for potential facilitation of hybrid and off-site training sessions. Winfield Public Library (67156) is committed to providing technology training, curriculum support, and access to its Digital Navigator through the American Connection Corps. This collaboration will train Eagle Nest-funded Digital Navigator, offer resources, and identify partnership opportunities with the Eagle Nest strengthening outreach and project implementation. Our collective goal is to close digital literacy gaps, enhance mobility, and disrupt cycles of generational poverty. Each partner contributes specialized expertise, in tailored trainings, and/or programming experience.

Community and/or stakeholders involved in the proposed project:

Eagle Nest proposed project " Digital Skills Launching Pad" will collaborate with a wide array of local organizations and institutions to deliver the proposed program:

Primary Stakeholders

Eagle Nest Inc. Staff and Volunteers: Provide guidance and resources to support participants throughout the program.

Justice-Involved Women and Families: Women transitioning from incarceration face barriers like limited digital skills and employment challenges. This program will empower them with the tools to secure jobs and rebuild their lives.

Survivors of Domestic Violence: Provide a safe space for survivors to gain digital skills and independence through new economic opportunities.

Women in Generational Poverty: Equip women facing systemic barriers with digital skills to break cycles of poverty and join the modern workforce.

Community Involvement

Winfield and Arkansas City Public Libraries: Key access points for technology, providing outreach support, resources, and workshop spaces.

Cowley County Economic Development (Cowley Works): Connects participants to local employers and job opportunities while aligning training with workforce needs.

Kansas Workforce Center Of South Central Ks: Offers training expertise and accepts pass-through referrals to extend resume and job application support.

Community Corrections and Legal Partners: Refers justice-involved women as part of re-entry plans, ensuring they receive necessary support for reintegration.

Intended impact of the proposed project:

Eagle Nest proposed project " Digital Skills Launching Pad" intended impact is to achieve measurable improvements by increasing access to technology and reliable internet, increasing employability and job

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readiness among participants through practical digital literacy and skills curriculum and assessments. By strengthened personal and family stability, as participants confidently engage with online and community resources related to basic needs such as healthcare, housing, and educational opportunities. Participants will gain foundational digital skills and competencies needed for today's workforce, including proficiency in, and online job applications. These skills will directly increase their employability, broaden job opportunities, and open pathways for higher-paying, stable positions.

" Digital Skills Launching Pad" Key area if Impact further defined:

Increased Digital Proficiency: Participants will gain essential skills, such as online safety, resume building and job application, basic computer operations, internet navigation and email usage enabling them to access economic and educational opportunities.

Improved Economic Mobility: Participants will have a stronger ability to secure employment, leading to greater financial stability for themselves and their families.

Enhanced Community Connectivity: Participants will engage more fully with community resources, contributing to their overall well-being.

Breaking Cycles of Poverty: By addressing digital skill gaps, the program provides a pathway to decreasing determinants to poverty for individuals and their families.

" Digital Skills Launching Pad" expects to serve approximately 50 participants in the first 12 months, with expected outcomes of improved digital literacy, employment readiness, and self-confidence and a projected success rate of 70-80%, measured through skill assessments and participant feedback

Total amount requested in DOCK 2.0 funding:

\$169,186.45 USD