

Rural Apprenticeship Innovation for a Stronger Economy
(RAISE)

Rural Apprenticeship
Innovation for a Stronger
Economy (RAISE)

Application Guidelines

Opening Date: March 16, 2026

Announcement Dinner Bell Call: March 11, 2026

Deadline: April 17, 2026

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Overview

The Kansas Department of Commerce and the Kansas Office of Registered Apprenticeship are committed to meeting Kansas' high-wage, high-demand workforce needs by expanding Registered Apprenticeship programs in counties with populations under 50,000 residents. This grant provides direct operational support to new and existing programs—such as business support, marketing, and training equipment—to help them grow, expand services, and reach more Kansans.

Purpose

The purpose of this grant is to provide seed funding for long-term investments in the expansion of new or established Registered Apprenticeship programs in rural Kansas with populations under 50,000. Registered Apprenticeships are a sustainable and economical way to connect residents to meaningful training for long term careers, retain talent in rural areas, and keep Kansas competitive.

Goals

- Support expansion of Registered Apprenticeship programs in rural Kansas counties.
- Increase Registered Apprenticeship enrollment by at least 10% year over year in high-wage, high-demand occupations

Eligible Applicants

- Applicants must be registered with the Kansas Office of Registered Apprenticeship and possess a RAPIDS number beginning with “KS,” **or** commit to developing a new Registered Apprenticeship Program—either as a single-employer sponsor or through an intermediary—in the state of Kansas within three months of receiving the award.
- Have the business plan to engage existing or potential new employers or potential new apprentices that live in counties with a population of less than 50,000 residents.
- Applicants must be actively conducting business within the state of Kansas.
- Applicants must be in good standing with the State of Kansas.

Ineligible Applicants

- Businesses or entities not willing to register with the Kansas Office of Registered Apprenticeship.
- Businesses not in good standing with the Kansas Department of Revenue.
- Businesses that do not conduct business in Kansas.

Timeline

Grant Announcement: March 16, 2026

Application Period: 30 business days (March-April)

Submission Deadline: April 17th, 2026

Award Notification: As early as May 2026

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Informational/Grant Application Webinar:

Date: March 11, 2026

Time: 10:00 AM

Link: <https://ksapprenticeship.org/dinner-bell-calls/>

Application Procedures

- Online application link can be found here: [Raise Grant Application](#)
- Questions and submission of additional documentation should be directed to Shonda Anderson at apprenticeship@ks.gov
- Applications that are incomplete or missing documentation will not be reviewed for rating or considered for funding.

Estimated Time to Complete Application: 30 minutes

Funding Availability

- Total Funding Available: \$500,000.00
- Minimum Award Amount: \$60,000.00
- Maximum Award Amount: \$100,000.00
- Expected Number of Awards: 8
- Period of Performance: Twelve (12) months

The Kansas Department of Commerce expects to announce selected grantees as early as April 2026. If selected, you may only incur eligible expenditures when the grant contract agreement is fully executed, and the period of performance date has started.

Eligible Projects

- Initiatives that increase the number of Registered Apprentices in rural counties through the expansion or the development of multi-employer intermediaries or single employer program sponsors.
 - New programs must register a minimum of five Registered Apprentices within twelve months of being awarded.
 - Current programs must increase Registered Apprenticeship enrollment by at least 10% year over year in high-wage, high-demand occupations.
 - Registered Apprentices must work in Kansas counties with populations under 50,000 residents.

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Eligible Program Costs

- Total or partial cost of a business support specialists (FTE)
- Marketing costs
- Training equipment
- Related technical instruction (organized and systematic form of instruction as defined in 29 CFR 29.2),
- Other contracted services
- Administrative costs

Ineligible Program Costs

Grant funds cannot be used for apprentice's wages or indirect costs.

Match Requirement

A 1:1 cash match is required for this grant. The organization must contribute funds equal to the total grant award. Eligible cash match may include regular operational expenses directly related to the Registered Apprenticeship program, including but not limited to staff salaries and wages, apprentice wages, and other allowable business expenses necessary for program operations.

Authority

The Kansas Office of Registered Apprenticeship is recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Apprenticeship Training, Employer and Labor Services under 29 CFR 29.2 as well as governed by K.S.A. 44-661 and 44-662.

This project is supported in part by a 2025 grant from The Patterson Family Foundation.

Definitions

High-Wage, High-Demand Jobs: Jobs with starting wages of \$15 per hour or more with wage progression and strong current employment and expected job growth.

Registered Apprenticeships: Industry-driven, high-wage, high-demand training system where employers can develop and prepare their future workforce, and individuals can obtain paid work experience, classroom instruction, and industry-issued, nationally recognized credentials as defined in 29 CFR 29.

Multi-Employer Intermediary: Entities with the ability to convene apprenticeship programs in the region or industry sector and assume full responsibility for the administration and operation of the apprenticeship program. Multi-Employer Intermediaries offer a concierge service for businesses

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and they're responsible for collection and maintenance of required documentation from participating employers. Examples can include community colleges, technical colleges, universities, workforce boards, chambers, union/associations, non-profits, etc.

Single Employer Sponsor: An employer that will assume the full responsibility for administration and operation of the apprenticeship program including paperwork, related technical instruction (RTI), on-the-job training (OJT), mentor, wage and credentials. Examples can include a business, union/association, community colleges, technical colleges, state departments, universities, workforce boards, chambers, etc.

Release of Information: Information submitted to the Kansas Department of Commerce relating to the application may be subject to the Open Records Law (K.S.A. 45-215 et seq.).

Application and Submission Instructions

Application Content

Please follow the online application within the portal as written. The application includes the overall narrative, budget and other relevant information necessary to effectively award the applications. Please note that your answers are included in the memorandum of understanding for the grant should you be awarded.

Required Attachments

Attachments and support materials must be uploaded into the application through [application software]. Attachments and support materials will not be accepted by any other method. Required attachments are required for eligibility. The required attachments are:

1. A signed copy of the State Policy Regarding Sexual Harassment Acknowledgment Form. Blank form is available [here](#).
2. A signed copy of the Anti-Boycott of Israel form.
3. A signed copy of the Office of Procurement Contract Policy on Covered Technologies form
4. Tax clearance certificate from Kansas Department of Revenue
5. A Screenshot of Good Standing Status from the Kansas Secretary of State website.

Instructions

Applications are required to be submitted through the Kansas Department of Commerce Grant portal. A link to the application can be found here:

Late Applications

To maintain a fair application process, the Kansas Department of Commerce will not accept late grant applications.

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For emergency circumstances please contact Shonda Anderson, apprenticeship@ks.gov to discuss any extenuating circumstances that led to late submission.

Application Review Information

Kansas Commerce strives to review grants through an objective and unbiased process. Grants will be reviewed based on rubric criteria by a panel.

VALUE	DESCRIPTION	SCORE
EXEMPLARY	Clearly explains the project and its significant public value, justifying the allocation of financial support from the State of Kansas.	90-100
EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	Satisfactorily explains the project and its public value, justifying the allocation of financial support from the State of Kansas.	70-89
MEETS EXPECTATIONS	Sufficiently explains the project and its public value, and may justify the allocation of financial support from the State of Kansas.	50-69
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	Does not sufficiently explain the project or its public value; does not warrant the allocation of financial support from the State of Kansas.	30-49
INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE	Provides an incomplete and/or inadequate explanation of the project or its public value. The information is confusing, not very clear, and/or doesn't give enough details. Does not warrant funding from the State of Kansas.	0-29

Rubric

Grants will be reviewed and scored based on the rubric available in the application package.

Scoring

The maximum number of points an application can earn is 100. Reviewers will individually score each application or each section that is assigned to them. A scoring rubric will be published with the grant opportunity and on the grant webpage. Funding priority criteria may be allocated a higher percentage of the total score or weighted more.

Applications must earn enough points for their application to fall under “Meets Expectations”, “Exceeds Expectations”, or “Exemplary” to be recommended for funding. Meeting one of these values does not guarantee funding for a project.

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Selection Criteria

Kansas Commerce will announce the amount of funds available for the RAISE Grant, subject to funding availability. All grant applications approved by the Department of Commerce will be funded according to the process set forth in the following:

All applications received by the deadline will be reviewed for eligibility and threshold criteria, as outlined in the guidelines. Eligible applications will then be reviewed and rated according to the established rubric and scoring matrix.

Kansas Department of Commerce may determine which grant applicants will receive state grant funds based on a number of factors, including:

- **Grant reviewer scores**
- Geographic distribution of grant applicants
- Services to specified populations
- History of grant applicant as a state grantee
- Applicant's capacity to perform the work
- Pre-award capacity assessment of the applicant

All awards must be approved by the Secretary of Commerce.

Award Notification

Kansas Commerce strives to notify applicants of awards as early as April. Applicants will be emailed with their award letter.

Grant Provisions

Ineligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- Fundraising
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services and payroll taxes
- Lobbyists, political contributions
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, or contingency funds
- Parking or traffic violations
- Out-of-state transportation and travel expenses. Kansas will be considered the home state for determining whether travel is out of state.
Apprentice wages

Grant Performance Expectations

In addition to Applicant Eligibility, all grantees are expected to:

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1. Complete all proposal activities within the grant period
2. Include only allowable expenses in the proposal budget
3. Comply with all grant administration requirements:
 - Provide the required information for grant award agreement
 - Sign and return the grant award agreement to Commerce within 30 calendar days of receipt.
 - Request approval for any changes to the grant award agreement.
 - Complete a final report no later than twelve months after grant is awarded.
 - Maintain complete and accurate grant records, including all documentation, for a minimum of three years after the end of the grant period.
 - Comply with the requirements of the State of Kansas Policy Against Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation established by Executive Order 18-04.
 - Use the appropriate credit line or approved logo to acknowledge grant funding in all publications. See grant contract for credit requirements.

Accountability and Reporting

Awardees will be required to complete quarterly narrative reports that are due approximately three weeks after the end of the quarter through the agency's online grant management portal.

Due dates for quarterly narrative reporting:

(April 1 – June 30) report due July 17, 2026

(July 1 – September 30) report due October 16, 2026

(October 1 – December 31) report due January 15, 2027

(January 1 – March 31) report due April 16, 2027

(April 1 – June 30) report due July 16, 2027

Grant Payments

This grant will be paid on a monthly cost reimbursement basis. For processing, all completed expenditure forms must be emailed by the 20th of every month to apprenticeship@ks.gov. Further details and forms can be found on the Kansas Office of Registered Apprenticeship website [here](#).

Release of information

Information submitted to the Kansas Department of Commerce relating to the application may be subject to the Open Records Law (K.S.A. 45-215 et seq.). Confidentiality will not be guaranteed.

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Contact Information

For more information about this grant, please contact:

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