

# AIR KS

Air Innovation Range in Kansas

## Application Guidelines

**Opening Date: October 22, 2026**

**Deadline: November 22, 2026**

**Notification of Award Date: December 2026**

## Overview & Purpose

The Kansas Department of Commerce is seeking competitive proposals for a one-time strategic investment to enhance and support a Kansas-based Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) test range and expand its capability to support Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) operations.

This funding is intended to strengthen an existing Kansas-based UAS test range through investments in BVLOS navigation infrastructure, operations, and commercialization support. Applicants should propose a comprehensive approach for using the State's investment to expand or improve existing infrastructure and operational capabilities, increase utilization by commercial and public-sector users, support technology development and commercialization, and position the test range for continued operation and growth following the State's one-time investment.

The State is not prescribing a specific ownership, governance, operator, technology, or partnership model. Applicants should propose the structure they believe will best leverage the State's investment and provide long-term value to Kansas.

The investment is directed by 2026 HB2513 for fiscal year 2027, which states:

“Provided further, that expenditures in an amount of not less than \$2,000,000 shall be made by the above agency from such fund during fiscal year 2027 for BVLOS navigation infrastructure, operations and commercialization support for a Kansas-based UAS test range focused on attracting and developing agriculture, rural healthcare, defense, and other emerging technologies.”

## Timeline

Grant Announcement: October 22, 2026

Application Period: October 22, 2026, through November 22, 2026

Submission Deadline: November 22, 2026

Award Notification: December 2026

## Application Procedures

- Online application link can be found here:  
<https://kansascommerce.my.site.com/Grants/s/>
- Questions about the application or the submission of additional documentation should be directed to Rebecca Campbell at [KDC\\_Air.Ks@ks.gov](mailto:KDC_Air.Ks@ks.gov).
- Applications that are incomplete or missing documentation will not be reviewed for rating or considered for funding.

**Estimated Time to Complete Application:** 3- 5 days

## **Funding Availability**

The Kansas Department of Commerce is making \$2,000,000 available for this one-time funding opportunity. The Department reserves the right to award all, part, or none of the available funding; make one or more awards; negotiate project scope and budget; or decline to make an award if determined to be in the best interest of the State.

- Total Funding Available: \$2,000,000
- Minimum Award Amount: \$2,000,000
- Maximum Award Amount: \$2,000,000
- Expected Number of Awards: One or more, depending on the proposed submissions and measurable value to the State.
- Period of Performance: Dependent on contract execution date.

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

## **Eligible Entities**

- Airport Authorities
- Airport Sponsors
- Municipalities
- Counties
- Other Governmental Entities
- Private Companies
- Nonprofit Organizations
- Institutions of Higher Education
- Tribal Governments

For partnerships or consortiums, only one organization serves as the primary applicant and respondent and will be solely responsible for contract administration, project management, financial reporting, and overall contract performance.

## Applicants

At a minimum, applicants shall demonstrate:

- Organizational experience managing projects of comparable scope and complexity.
- Technical expertise related to UAS, aviation, communications, infrastructure, or comparable technology programs.
- Experience planning, deploying, operating, or supporting advanced aviation or BVLOS capabilities.
- The ability to obtain and maintain any FAA approvals, waivers, authorizations, or certifications required to perform the proposed work.
- Financial and managerial capacity to successfully complete the proposed project.
- Experience managing public or private contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements of comparable complexity.

## Eligible Projects

Commerce is not prescribing a specific technology, ownership structure, operator, governance model, or delivery model. Projects should be Kansas non-competitive in nature. Applicants should propose the approach that provides the greatest long-term value to Kansas and clearly identify:

- The Kansas-based UAS test range and the existing infrastructure, assets, and capabilities to be supported;
- The BVLOS navigation infrastructure, technology, equipment, operational capabilities, and commercialization activities proposed for State funding;
- The ownership, operation, maintenance, and long-term disposition of infrastructure and equipment acquired or improved with State funding;
- The roles and responsibilities of the applicant and participating project partners;
- What commercial companies, public agencies, researchers, universities, and other users will access and use the resulting capabilities;
- How the proposed project will support commercialization and generate measurable economic development outcomes, including company engagement or attraction, private investment, technology deployment, jobs, partnerships, or additional federal and private funding; and
- A credible operating and financial plan to sustain operations, maintenance, and future growth after the State's one-time funding is expended.

## Eligible Program Costs

Costs related to improvements to navigation infrastructure, technology systems, and operational capability.

- Equipment
- Infrastructure
- Software
- Professional services
- Project management

## Authority

This one-time targeted investment was directed by the Kansas Legislature in 2026 HB2513.

## 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

Please navigate to <https://kansascommerce.my.site.com/Grants/s/> to submit your application.

You will answer eligibility questions, submit a Technical Project Proposal, and upload specific documents to be considered for funding.

**Note:** *Please follow the Technical Project Proposal guide section below to ensure you address all required items.*

## Required Attachments

Upload attachments and support materials to the application through <https://kansascommerce.my.site.com/Grants/s/>. Attachments and support materials will not be accepted by any other method. Throughout the application process, some sections will require documentation or additional information.

## Technical Project Proposal

*The Technical Project Proposal should be in the following format and address all areas listed below.*

### Project Overview and Objectives

Please describe the proposed project objectives. Proposals should align with the specific capabilities, infrastructure, partnerships, operational improvements,

commercialization activities, and economic opportunities expected to result from the project. The proposal should explain how the project positions Kansas for continued growth in advanced aviation beyond completion of the initial investment and be Kansas non-competitive in nature.

### **Applicant Capabilities**

Please describe past projects, performance, and partnerships. The narrative should explain how the applicant's experience and technical expertise enable the capability to manage the proposed project to successful execution. Capabilities of partners or other resources that ensure project success should be detailed to illustrate the proposed project's feasibility. The proposal should demonstrate applicants' ability to produce measurable improvements in BVLOS operations to support commercialization.

### **Infrastructure**

Please list any existing infrastructure to be utilized and/or any proposed improvements or additions, operational coverage, technical capabilities, scalability for future growth, and operational capability, and describe how the proposed project enhances BVLOS operational capability within Kansas, if applicable. Identify existing or proposed for acquisition infrastructure. Any identified capital equipment or infrastructure must include anticipated ownership, operation, maintenance, and disposition of such assets following completion of the project.

### **Operational Capacity**

Describe the documentation, credentials, certificates, or pending applications and how they relate to the proposed project. The proposal should demonstrate applicants' ability to deliver measurable improvements in BVLOS operations to support commercialization, along with the credentials to conduct the work proposed. Provide details on flight operations, operational procedures, safety management, airspace coordination, and support for testing, demonstrations, or commercial operations.

### **Improved Capabilities**

Describe how the proposed project will make any planned capabilities available to public-sector, private-sector, research, and industry partners, including any anticipated user access model.

### **Performance Measures**

The proposal must include measurable performance indicators, a timeline of the project's major phases, and anticipated completion dates. These should align with the proposed project and enhance BVLOS operations that support accelerated commercialization.

### **Return on State Investment**

The proposal must identify how the proposed project maximizes the impact of the State's investment and the economic opportunities expected to result from the project. Additionally, the proposal should describe expected outcomes of how the project positions Kansas for continued growth in advanced aviation beyond completion of the initial investment or advances BVLOS capabilities in Kansas and supports the BVLOS ecosystem. Please include any collaboration among public and private partners, any measurable economic development opportunities created, and additional support that helps ensure continual operation and expansion of a Kansas-based UAS test range.

### **Sustainability**

Explain how the proposed project will continue generating value after state funding is expended. Include, as applicable:

- Future operational funding
- Private investments
- Federal funding
- Revenue-generating activities
- Long-term partnerships
- Planned continuation of project activities

### **Commercialization and Industry Impact**

Please provide information on any planned technology demonstrations, pilot projects, industry engagement, customer validation, business recruitment support, technology transfer, workforce development, and other activities that support commercialization or broader adoption of BVLOS technologies.

### **Proposed Project Cost**

The Technical Project Proposal should include a detailed budget that identifies all costs associated with implementing the proposed project. Possible costs include equipment, infrastructure, software, professional services, project management, travel, and other direct project costs. The cost proposal should be appropriately scaled for the available funding. Include any matching funds, private investment, federal funding, or other leveraged resources that expand the impact of the State's investment.

## **Submission Instructions**

Applications are to be submitted through the Salesforce platform. Applicants will need to create an account or log in to an existing account before completing the application. If there are any technical questions about Salesforce, please contact [KDC\\_Salesforce.Admin@ks.gov](mailto:KDC_Salesforce.Admin@ks.gov). For any program-related questions, please contact [KDC\\_Air.Ks@ks.gov](mailto:KDC_Air.Ks@ks.gov). Once in the Salesforce portal, navigate to the AIR KS grant application. Complete the required prompts on the funding opportunity. Applicants can

save their progress in the portal. After you successfully submit the grant application, the primary email associated with the application will receive a confirmation email with a PDF attachment of the application.

## **Late Applications**

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

## **Application Review Information**

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

## **Selection Criteria**

Kansas Commerce will announce the amount of funds available for the AIR KS grant subject to funding availability. All 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 compliance with the threshold criteria, as outlined in the guide. Eligible applications will then be reviewed and rated according to an established rubric and scoring matrix.

All awards must be approved by the Secretary of Commerce.

## **Award Notification**

Kansas Commerce strives to notify applicants of awards in a timely manner. Both awarded and declined applicants will be notified through email and United States Postal Service.

## **Provisions**

This one-time targeted investment is intended for a Kansas-based UAS test range focused on attracting and developing agriculture, rural healthcare, defense, and other emerging technologies, as referenced in 2026 HB2513.

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.

## Performance Expectations

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

1. Complete all proposal activities within the funding period
2. Include only allowable expenses in the proposal budget
3. Comply with all funding administration requirements:
  - Provide the required information for the funding award agreement
  - Sign and return the funding award agreement to Commerce within 30 calendar days of receipt
  - Request approval for any changes to the funding award agreement
  - Complete a final report no later than July 30, 2029
  - Maintain complete and accurate records, including all documentation related to the project till the end of the funding 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 funding in all publications. See the funding contract for credit requirements

## Accountability and Reporting

Quarterly reporting will begin in the first full quarter following execution of the Agreement and will continue until the project is completed. At that time, a final report will be due at the end of the funding award agreement, which will require:

- Completed and signed quarterly compliance report (provided by Commerce) Final close out report on completion of agreement.
- Compliance reports (provided by Commerce) until the end of the agreement will include expenditure statements or spreadsheets that include the date, amount, short item description, and vendor. Cash flow statements that include CIP are acceptable. Expenses that have been capitalized for depreciation are not acceptable proof of expenses.

## Payments

Payments will be distributed in 50% installments following execution of the Kansas Unbound Investment Agreement and at the time Awardee demonstrates performance measurements determined at the time of contract negotiations.

## 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.

## Contact Information

For more information about this grant, please contact:

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