



GENERAL FAQ

What is the Kansas Volunteer Commission?

The vision of the Kansas Volunteer Commission is to empower all Kansans to meet community needs through service. The Commission is a program of the Kansas State Department of Education and manages a \$2.5 million AmeriCorps portfolio that includes 13 AmeriCorps programs and a \$120,000 Volunteer Generation grant that includes six subgrantees. It operates Mentor Kansas, a statewide youth mentoring partnership; provides funding opportunities and resources to enhance mentoring, volunteerism and national service; and promotes civic engagement of all Kansans, particularly youth. For more information, visit <https://kanserve.ksde.gov/home>.

What is the source of the funding?

The Commission receives funding from AmeriCorps, a federal agency, to operate as a state service commission. We have designated a specific amount of funds to support national days of service and to increase mentoring, civic engagement, and volunteer engagement. Since the source comes from federal funding, then Commission must adhere to federal requirements and regulations.

What is AmeriCorps?

AmeriCorps is the federal agency for volunteering, service, and civic engagement. The agency engages millions of Americans in citizen service through its AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps Seniors programs and leads the nation's volunteering and service efforts. For more information, visit www.americorps.gov.

Who reviews and make decisions about the mini-grant applications?

At least three Commission staff members will review, score and rank mini-grant applications. Staff will use the criteria listed in the Mini-Grant Guidelines to determine eligibility of projects. In addition, the reviewers will rank applicants based on their funding needs, proposed activities, use of volunteers, geography and the impact on community, volunteers and the organization.

If I wasn't awarded the mini-grant, does the Commission provide reasons for not funding a project?

The Commission will notify all applicants if they are funded or not funded. If a program is not funded, they will receive a sample of a funded application as a model for future applications.



BUDGET AND MATCH FAQ

What does it mean to “match” funds?

Simply put, “match” is the non-federal share of costs that the grantee or the grantee’s partners are required to contribute to accomplish the purposes of the grant. Any funder may require that a grantee “match” some portion or all of the funds that they provide. When a federal grant requires the grantee to match funds, there are standard regulations that govern what can be counted as match and how these funds must be documented. With rare exceptions, federal funds cannot be used to match a federal grant.

Native American tribes have a legislatively created exception to this rule. For most federal grant programs, tribes are allowed to use their Indian Self-Determination or Self-Governance funds (often referred to as “638 funds”) as non-federal match.

Unless otherwise stated, the Kansas Volunteer Commission requires a dollar-for-dollar match on ALL mini-grants. This means if an applicant requests \$500 in Commission grant funds, they will need to match with their own \$500 for a total project cost of \$1,000.

What can be counted as match?

Matching funds may include:

- Non-federal public or private funds
- Funds that are not used as match for any other federal program
- Either cash or in-kind, fairly evaluated

In other words, match can be either an actual expenditure (cash) or a virtual cost (in-kind contribution).

Cash Match

The most common type of match, and the easiest to track, is cash match. Cash match is either the grantee organization’s own funds (general revenue) or cash donations from non-federal third parties (i.e. partner organizations), or by non-federal grants. A cash match contribution is an actual cash contribution.

In-Kind Match

In-kind match is typically in the form of the value of donated personnel, goods, and services. In-kind match contributions may come from the grantee organization or other

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non-federal third parties. Grantees and third parties simply need to document the contributed resource of value through an in-kind form.

What are examples of in-kind match?

Examples of in-kind match includes, but is not limited to:

- Supplies (paint, tools, curriculum, etc.)
- Snacks & meals for volunteers
- Transportation such as buses, vans or trucks to transport volunteers or materials
- Facilities costs (hall rentals for volunteer reflection and celebration ceremonies)
- Consulting services/Trainers
- Advertising & promotion
- Printing (flyers, posters, t-shirts)

Are there any tips for acquiring match?

1. To acquire in-kind match, one good strategy is to explore possible partners. Potential partners that can provide in-kind match are universities, corporate or business partners, non-profit partners, other tribal or governmental departments, community partners, or even individuals.
2. Project-related training events may be used toward obtaining in-kind match. When consultants lead a training event and do not charge the organization, then their time, the expenses incurred traveling to and from the event, and the time and travel expenses for those attending the event may be included as match. If the training takes place in donated office or large meeting space, the market value of renting that space may also be counted.
3. Every item that is documented for the purpose of in-kind must have a defensible method for assigning a fair market value. The best method to value the time a volunteer is contributing their professional expertise to a project, is to use the published range for that position within that person's organization, or rates consistent with those ordinarily paid by other employees for similar work in the same labor market. Donated travel expenses such as airline tickets or bus fares should be recorded at receipt value.
4. Remember that it is not required, nor advisable, to over match. Going over the level of required match is easy to do with a good system for capturing in-kind, but whatever you report is subject to audit. When a grantee meets its match goal, it is fully permissible to simply stop counting.

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How do I write the budget?

- Do not include unexplained amounts, amounts for miscellaneous or contingency costs, or unallowable expenses such as entertainment costs.
- Round all figures to the nearest dollar. Do NOT include partial dollar amounts.
- The budget narrative must provide a full explanation of associated costs including their purpose, justification, and the basis of your calculations.
- Where possible, your calculations should be presented in an equation format, identifying the number of persons or items involved and the per person or unit cost. For example, 20 books X \$10 each = \$200.
- The second column, titled Commission Share, is the amount of money being requested from the Commission for that item.
- The third column, titled Grantee Share, is the amount of money (cash or in-kind) that the applicant is matching for that item.
- Grantees are required to provide a dollar-for-dollar match.

UEI Number and SAM Registration

In order to receive funding applications must include an active Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number and an Employer Identification Number (EIN). The UEI number does not replace an EIN. UEI numbers may be obtained at no cost by applying online: <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/>.

After obtaining a UEI number, all applicants must be registered and active with the Systems for Award Management (SAM) at <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/>.

The SAM collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of Federal agency contracts, grant awards, cooperative agreements, and other forms of federal assistance. All grant recipients are required to maintain a valid SAM registration, which must be renewed annually. Applicants that are not already registered with SAM are urged to begin the registration process immediately in order to avoid any delays in submitting applications. Applicants must have a UEI number in order to register with SAM. To register online go to <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/>.