



Natural & Cultural Heritage Conservation Grant Program 2023 Grant Application Guidelines

BACKGROUND

The Heritage Conservation Council of Douglas County promotes the conservation of our cultural and natural heritage to honor our past, enrich our present, and inspire our future. The Heritage Conservation Council makes recommendations to the Douglas County Commission on how to best establish a framework to conserve our natural & cultural heritage for future generations and to enhance economic benefits of tourism, local agriculture, and other endeavors based on such conservation efforts. The Natural and Cultural Heritage Grant program is the primary use of tax dollars allocated for heritage conservation efforts. The Heritage Conservation Council has determined that the most appropriate use of these funds is for the Douglas County community to propose and implement important heritage conservation projects.

GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Douglas County Commission has authorized grant funds up to **\$210,000** for the 2023 Douglas County budget to assist with the development and implementation of natural and cultural heritage conservation projects. This is part of an ongoing effort to secure the benefits of our heritage for present and future generations.

In 2023, there will be **an additional \$75,000** for projects that help Douglas County develop an Open Space plan (see Open Space Grants below for more information).

The **first step** in the grant application process is for the applicant to **schedule a meeting with the Heritage Coordinator** to review their project idea. This meeting must take place by **April 21, 2023**. The purpose of this meeting is to help the applicant develop a grant proposal that is competitive, ensure that the applicant has considered all grant guidelines, and confirm that the proposed project is eligible to receive funding from this program. To schedule this meeting, call 785.330.2878 or email kammerlaan@douglascountyks.org with preferred times and method for meeting (in-person, Zoom, or over the phone).

A majority of the grant amount will be used for one substantial project each year. These **Major Grant** projects will be a visible testament to the ongoing value of the County's significant conservation accomplishments. The remainder of the funds will

be directed to **Target Grant** projects and **Seed Grant** projects that meet smaller and equally important projects of local organizations and qualified individuals working to conserve our heritage.

Beginning in 2023, presentations are no longer required for grantees. **All application materials must stand on their own.**

Major Grants - \$40,000-\$74,000

A Major Grant proposal is defined as a proposal requesting at least \$40,000 and no more than \$74,000. Grant projects falling in this category should be large enough to have a major impact on the conservation of our natural and/or cultural resources. These grants are competitive and not every applicant should expect to be awarded funding.

Target Grants – \$5,000- \$39,999

Target Grant proposals are equally important for conserving Douglas County’s natural and/or cultural heritage and applicants may request up to \$39,999. These grants are competitive and not every proposal should expect to be awarded funding.

Seed Grants- Up to \$5,000

Seed Grant proposals should be used to plan the first phase of a multi-phased project, to initiate a project and secure future funding from a variety of sources, and to implement projects that are smaller in scope and require less funding from this grant program to achieve its goals.

Open Space Grants

As part of the American Rescue Plan Act, the Heritage Conservation Council has an additional support of \$75,000 to be used in the 2023 grant cycle. This Open Space specific funding must be used to ensure that community-led natural conservation projects are funded alongside County efforts to develop an Open Space Plan. These projects should help inform and promote Open Space planning. Applicants that intend to apply for these Open Space specific projects must indicate so in an initial meeting with the Heritage Coordinator (no later than April 21, 2023) and be prepared to work closely with Douglas County staff dedicated to developing the Open Space Plan. These Open Space specific grants may be **Major, Target, or Seed Grants**. Since Open Space specific grants are federally funded, the applicant must demonstrate that they meet the following criteria for these projects:

1. have adequate finance policies, procedures and internal controls in place with respect to expenditure of federal funds;
2. be able to obtain a Universal Entity Identifier (UEI) and have an active *SAM.gov registration;
3. have the sufficient capacity to administer a federal grant award and maintain compliance with federal laws and regulations; and

4. be able to meet federal reporting requirements and reporting deadlines in a consistent and timely fashion.

*Obtaining a DUNS and activating a SAM registration is free of charge.

Open Space grants will be evaluated by an Open Space specific evaluation committee to ensure compliance with ARPA funding and compatibility with overall Open Space goals.

ELIGIBILITY TO APPLY

Who May Apply?

Non-profit organizations, universities, K-12 schools, libraries, for-profit businesses including agricultural businesses, cemetery associations, or any unit of local government within Douglas County, Kansas.

Individuals, families, businesses, or out-of-county organizations, or units of government outside of Douglas County must have a Douglas county partner (as listed above) to apply.

Form 990: All 501(c)(3) non-profit applicants must be in current good standing with the IRS regarding their Form 990 filing requirements. A copy of the organization's most recent Form 990 must be submitted as part of the grant application. Cemetery Associations that are not owned by units of local government or that do not have 501(c)3 status must be in good standing with the Kansas Secretary of State.

For projects on properties or related to historic structures, the applicant must hold title to the property or demonstrate full consent of the property owner.

SHPO Approval - For projects that involve physical work related to historic buildings, historic trail swales, and/or properties, structures, or sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places or Register of Historic Kansas Places, the applicant must have the proposed work reviewed and approved by the Kansas State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Written approval must be submitted with the grant application.

Project Geographic Location

All grant projects must occur in Douglas County, Kansas.

IMPORTANT GRANT PROGRAM DATES

Date	Item
March 15, 2023	2023 Grant Guidelines and Application Materials Released
March 28, 2023, at 6-7:30 p.m.	<p>Grant Information Session. This grant information session will be held in-person at Lawrence Public Library, Meeting Room C. A pre-recorded version of the presentation will be available on the HCC web page following the information session.</p> <p>Applicants are not required to attend to be eligible to apply.</p>
April 21, 2023	Deadline for required meeting with Heritage Coordinator in person, or via phone/ Zoom.
May 4, 2023, at 5 p.m.	Application submission deadline. Submit grant online. For technical support, please reach out to the Heritage Coordinator.
May 18, 2023 (and May 25, 2023, if additional time is needed)	<p>Deliberation</p> <p><i>*The deliberation process is open to the public to view. No public comment.</i></p>
Early June 2023	The Heritage Conservation Council will make final recommendations for grant award to the Douglas County Board of Commissioners for consideration at a Board of County Commissioner meeting in mid-late May.
Late June 2023	Awarded Grant Projects sign Grant Agreement and receive first payment.
June 2025	Fiscal Year 2023 grant projects are expected to be completed within a 24-month time period from the project start date. The project start date cannot begin until <i>after grant awards are announced. This should take place in June/July 2023.</i>

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

- Submit grants online at the Heritage Conservation website.
- In order to submit, all questions in the application must be completed unless they are indicated as optional.
- Save your work often! - Submit your completed application online by **May 4, 2023 at 5pm CST**. The application will close at this time. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted. Please do not wait until the last minute.
- Contact the Heritage Coordinator at kammerlaan@douglascountyks.org or 785.330.2878 if you experience any technical difficulties or need assistance with the application. If you do not have reliable access to internet, the Heritage Coordinator will work with you to accommodate your needs.

**Grant applications are subject to the Kansas Open Records Act (KORA). Please see the Douglas County website for the KORA policy and procedures at <https://www.douglascountyks.org/depts/district-attorney/kansas-open-records-act-kora>. If you feel that your application may contain information that would be exempt from KORA (namely archaeological or sensitive cultural information), please notify the Heritage Coordinator immediately.*

COMPETITIVE PROJECT CRITERIA

Projects must fall into at least one of the following categories:

- Intangible Cultural Heritage
- Tangible Cultural Heritage
- Natural Heritage

Subcategories:

The Heritage Conservation Council's Strategic Planning for 2023-2026 determined the following areas to be priority for funding:

- a. Elevating under told stories or magnifying the narratives from indigenous communities, immigrant or refugee populations, BIPOC, LGBTQIA or marginalized groups. Projects that are led by people with lived experiences or from an own- voices perspective will be prioritized.
- b. Give visibility to little known places.
- c. Inform Douglas County Open Space planning.
- d. Conserve prairie, woodlands, or waterways.
- e. Incorporate habitat restoration.
- f. Record oral histories.

- g. Protect, build, or maintain recreational trails.
- h. Protect or maintain historic trails.
- i. Audit existing conservation efforts with a lens of diversity, equity, justice, and inclusion.
- j. Preserve landscapes that are culturally important.
- k. Preserve and promote the viability of working farms.
- l. Conserve high quality agricultural soils.
- m. Promote agritourism or public access to heritage farms.
- n. Promote the adaptive reuse of historic structures.
- o. As appropriate, provide increased access to and/or education about historic sites, including cemeteries.
- p. Promote the conservation of designated structures, districts, and landscapes.

Projects with matching funds and those that have demonstrated an ongoing sustainability plan will be given additional priority.

Any projects relating to a specific time in history should be able to describe its significance.

Any projects that are related to archaeological sites and/or unmarked burials must consult with the State Archaeologist, impacted communities, and associated Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPO) to ensure compliance with the Unmarked Burial Sites Preservation Act, Antiquities Act, and THPO guidelines.

Projects that involve a historic (50+ years) structure should consult with the Heritage Coordinator to discuss status/eligibility of listing on the State or National Register of Historic Places. If the property is listed, these projects must include approval letter from the State Historic Preservation Office.

All applicants should be aware that, in addition to the subcategories defined above, the HCC will evaluate applications based on: the overall quality of the application; project urgency; community impact; connectivity to physical sites and interpretive stories; demonstrated collaborative efforts between agencies or organizations; educational/interpretive value; public access; appropriateness of budget; feasibility of project; and the capacity of applicant to accomplish project goals.

If a proposed project does not provide substantial benefit to the conservation and preservation of natural and/or cultural resources, it will not be considered for funding.

APPLICATION EVALUATION & SELECTION

After the application deadline, the Heritage Coordinator will distribute application materials to each of the HCC members for evaluation using the competitive project criteria listed above.

The grant reviewers are committed to the following principles in their grant deliberation:

1. **Fairness:** Evaluation will be based on the use of a scoring matrix that incorporates stated competitive project criteria. This matrix is meant to minimize bias and score grants based on merits and appropriateness of project to fulfill goals of the grant program. Any member of the deliberation team who has a conflict of interest with an application must recuse themselves from the deliberation process.
2. **Excellence:** Grantees are required to meet high expectations for quality of overall application and demonstrated ability to follow-through.
3. **Transparency:** The deliberation process, where all funding decisions are made, will be open to the public. Evaluation will be based on the criteria outlined in these guidelines which are available to all applicants and reviewers. All County Commission meetings, where the final decision is made, are open to the public.

Beginning in 2023, presentations are no longer required for grantees. All application materials must stand on their own.

The HCC will forward grant award recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners in June 2023. The Board of County Commissioners will make all final funding decisions.

**Grant applications are subject to the Kansas Open Records Act (KORA). Please see the Douglas County website for the KORA policy and procedures at <https://www.douglascountyks.org/depts/district-attorney/kansas-open-records-act-kora>. If you feel that your application may contain information that would be exempt from KORA (namely archaeological or sensitive cultural information), please notify the Heritage Coordinator immediately.*

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- Awarded grant applicants must sign a project agreement with Douglas County before their proposed project can begin.
- Due to the competitive nature of this grant program, grant project requests may be only partially funded.
- In some instances, conditions specific to the awarding of a particular grant may be added to the project agreement as amendments to the grant agreement. The Heritage Coordinator and HCC will work with the grant applicant to ensure these amendments benefit the impacts of the project and the capacity of the applicant.
- **Overhead or indirect costs** are not to exceed 25%.
- **Seed Grant** recipients will receive the full amount of their award at the beginning of their projects upon full execution of the project agreement.
- All recipients receiving a **Major** or **Target Grant** will receive a distribution of 30% of their grant award at the beginning of the project upon full execution of the project agreement. Subsequent payments may be requested using the Payment Request form. The final 10% of **Major** and **Target Grant** awards will be held until the Final Report is submitted. Upon approval, the final 10% will be reimbursed.
- All **Major** and **Target Grant** projects with a duration of more than six months are required to submit quarterly reports.
- **All grant projects are required to file a final report to remain in good standing with the grant program and be eligible for future Natural and Cultural Heritage Conservation grants.**
- Payment Request and Reporting forms will be made available on the Heritage Conservation website.
- **For projects on properties or related to structures:** The applicant must hold title to the property or demonstrate full consent of the property owner as part of the application.
- Individuals or organizations with an open or completed Natural & Cultural Heritage Grant award from 2011-2022 may apply for 2023 grant funds. Applicants may apply for multiple grants to fund separate projects.

- For projects listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places, application materials and project agreements must include approval letter from the State Historic Preservation Office. Project Directors on these projects must communicate with the SHPO to ensure compliance with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards throughout the duration of their grant.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS, RESOURCES, AND TAX CREDIT INFORMATION

- National Preservation Institute- Traditional Cultural Places:
<https://www.npi.org/seminars/identification-planning-and-evaluation/traditional-cultural-places>
- Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings:
<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/secretary-standards-treatment-historic-properties.htm>
- National Parks Service- Technical Preservation Services and Resources: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm>
- Kansas Tax Credit Program:
<https://www.kshs.org/p/state-historic-rehabilitation-tax-credit/14666>
- Kansas Historical Society- Preservation Office (SHPO):
<https://www.kshs.org/shpo>
- United States Department of Agriculture- Conservation Practice Standards:
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/conservation-practices>
- United States Department of Agriculture- Conservation Programs:
<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/index>
- Kansas Farm Service Agency:
<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/Kansas/index>
- Society for American Archaeology- Archaeology Law and Ethics:
<https://www.saa.org/about-archaeology/archaeology-law-ethics>
- American Association of Museums- Code of Ethics:
<https://www.aam-us.org/programs/ethics-standards-and-professional-practices/code-of-ethics-for-museums/>
- Oral History Standards:
<http://www.oralhistory.org/?s=Standards>