



Kansas Fights Addiction - Framework for Responsive Grant Making

The primary role of the Kansas Fights Addiction (KFA) Board is to receive and consider applications for grants of money from the KFA Fund. The Board may adopt rules and procedures for its operation, conduct hearings, receive testimony, and gather information to assist in its powers, duties, and functions. In December, Sunflower Foundation (SF) staff suggested the KFA Board develop a framework for how it will initially (next 12 months) allocate KFA dollars to communities and fulfill its grantmaking duties. Below is a brief overview of the two funding approaches the board requested SF staff outline for its consideration.

Grantmaking

In grantmaking, all funders have their own approach—and that approach may evolve from year to year. **Typically, funders select an approach that is either strategic, responsive, or some blend of the two.** As the KFA Board begins its work to allocate grant dollars from the KFA Fund, SF recommends the board consider a blended approach to funding. This blended approach allows the board to be strategic in addressing specific needs that have already been identified through the Kansas Prescription Drug and Opioid Advisory Committee (KPDOAC) state strategic plan, while also providing needed flexibility to fund projects that might not fit a prescribed RFP but are still vital to addressing the needs of Kansas communities. The beauty of grantmaking is that it is not restricted to one method, and many funders use responsive and strategic approaches in tandem to pursue promising solutions while keeping the door open to new ideas.

Strategic Grantmaking

The framework designed to support a strategic approach to grantmaking is typically structured around focused goals and a defined set of strategies for how the funder wants to accomplish those goals. In this approach, the funder tends to drive the agenda rather than the grantees, although it is best to include grantees in the creation of the goals and strategies. In the case of KFA funding, the request for proposals (RFP) the board plans to release this spring fit under the strategic grantmaking approach. The RFPs are being developed around the six specific focus areas of the KPDOAC state strategic plan and corresponding strategies. Organizations applying for funds through these RFPs will be asked to select the specific focus area(s) and strategies they wish to impact with KFA grant dollars. This represents a very defined, strategic approach to funding.

Responsive Grantmaking

Responsive grantmaking represents a more open, flexible approach to funding. With this approach, funders are open to receiving proposals and ideas from any eligible organization. This does not mean that a funder does not have core areas of focus, but it does mean that within those areas it wishes to be responsive to the needs organizations and communities feel most keenly. Responsive grantmaking sends a message that the funder does not have all the answers and is open to learning and funding projects and strategies that might not be on their radar. Funders that intentionally want to remain open

to a variety of ideas that emerge from the community often use a responsive approach. And for some funders, responsive grantmaking is simply the best fit for their missions — particularly those whose missions are very broad and highly localized

In the case of KFA funding, a responsive approach would allow the board to fund immediate needs and innovations that are driven by what it learns from partner organizations and Kansas communities. These needs and innovations may be identified when individuals and groups come to present to the board, or they may originate through the work of SF staff and board members as they meet with partners and communities and hear of promising strategies being deployed in other states. Responsive funding provides needed flexibility to the board and provides an additional avenue for funding the work of organizations and communities that might not fit more rigid formalized RFPs. As a board, it is impossible to anticipate and know all the needs and innovative ideas that may arise across the various disciplines associated with substance use disorder (SUD), a responsive grantmaking strategy would leave the door open and allow the board to be intentional about promptly meeting needs and funding innovations.

Proposed Responsive Grantmaking Process

With the board's approval, SF staff will develop a responsive grant application to use when the board wishes to pursue a particular need or innovation outside of a formal RFP. As described above, the KFA board may consider hosting hearings or inviting partner engagement presentations, and other public comments during KFA board meetings or other sessions to learn more from the field and those impacted by SUD. SF staff and board members may also hear of innovative approaches through their own work with communities and other states that the board might wish to consider supporting. When the board identifies strategies or innovations it wishes to fund outside a formal RFP, SF staff would work directly with the organization/community proposing the project to complete a responsive grant application. Responsive grant applications would then be reviewed and approved/denied by the KFA board as they are received.

Like all grants funded through the KFA RFP process, any project eligible for responsive funding would be required to qualify as an approved use of funds as outlined in Exhibit E (List of Opioid Remediation Uses) of the Janssen agreement.

Partner Engagement/Public Comment Sessions

Hearing from organizations and communities doing the work to address SUD, those with lived experience, and entities and researchers that provide needed insight on the evolving state of SUD in Kansas through data collection, analysis and interpretation is central to the work of the KFA board. As the board prioritizes its work in 2023, SF staff suggests developing a more formal schedule for when the board engages with partners, individuals and communities.

The board may want to consider if they are able to accept presentations and/or public comments during every scheduled board meeting, or on a more staggered schedule. Whatever schedule the board suggests, SF recommends the board entertain partner engagement presentations on a more regular basis with open public comment sessions occurring on a less frequent basis-possibly quarterly. Also, board meetings will need to be scheduled/structured to accommodate these presentations/sessions, ensuring adequate time for both the formal business of the board and partner engagement.

Given the intense amount of work to develop, release, review and fund applications received through the upcoming RFP process, it may be best to consider implementing partner/public engagement sessions towards the end of summer/early fall of this year. In general, the board might also want to consider not hosting partner and public comment sessions while a formal funding opportunity is open, removing any perception of bias or conflict if an applicant presents to the board during this time.

To support this work, SF staff are happy to assist the Office of the Attorney General in reviewing presentation requests and developing a summary of recommendations for the board's consideration. SF staff can also work with the presenters to schedule their presentations and provide any needed guidance regarding their meeting with the board (securing slide presentations in advance, ensuring partners understand shared information will be made public, etc.).

Recommendations to the Board

SF staff recommends the board consider the following:

1. Instruct SF staff to develop a responsive grant application to use when the board wishes to fund a particular need or innovation outside of a formal RFP.
2. Instruct SF staff to begin collecting and compiling presentation requests from external parties. SF could then create a prioritized list and recommendations for the board's consideration and develop an appropriate schedule for the board to host partner/community/individual comments.