

2024 State Legislative Requests

Kansas State University

As a land-grant institution, Kansas State University is deeply committed to serving the needs of all 2.8 million Kansans. 102 of 105 counties in Kansas are designated as rural, which means the state places a critical focus on our rural communities. With a presence in all 105 counties, K-State has a distinctive role in serving rural communities and the future of our state, with the recognition that rural solutions are applicable and scalable to urban, suburban and global settings.

K-State proposes consideration of the following recommended strategic investments for the people of Kansas.

Biosecurity Research Institute Debt Payoff **\$2.2 million – recurring**

- The Biosecurity Research Institute (BRI) provides Biosafety Level 3 (BSL-3) and biosafety level-3 Agriculture (BSL-3Ag) research that was instrumental in securing the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility. Support for paying the debt service/bond payment would help to free up \$2.2 million per year that can be used toward research initiatives that protect Kansas from crippling animal diseases.
- When the BRI was built, there was an understanding between university leaders and state policymakers at the time that the state would assist the university in paying off the remaining balance on the facility. That understanding was not fulfilled.
- This funding would free up the \$2.2 million that is currently being used to pay down the debt, to instead be used to invest in the university research enterprise. This will result in greater research productivity and impact across multiple disciplines at the university.

Ag Innovation Initiative **\$25 million – one time/1:1 match**

- This \$25 million state investment will be specifically focused on developing innovative solutions and strategies to strengthen the Kansas livestock/animal industry, a top economic driver in the state.
- The Ag Innovation Initiative is a \$208 million initiative launched in 2022 to secure K-State's position as the leading public university for global food and agriculture research, teaching and engagement. With \$142 million raised through public (\$50 million) and private (\$92 million) sources, the first phases of this project are scheduled to open in 2025.
- A \$25 million state capital investment will be leveraged to ensure the remaining balance of \$41 million is secured from private and federal sources.

Kansas Water Institute **\$5 million – recurring**

- Conserving and extending the future of our water resources in Kansas will require interdisciplinary research and outreach and educating the next generation of water and natural resource professionals. This is the number one grand challenge for the state of Kansas.
- While K-State has a long history of expertise in water-related research, teaching and engagement, we are elevating this priority at the university level to bring together our existing expertise in new ways and grow our capacity to address our water resource challenges. This includes the establishment of the Kansas Water Institute, a universitywide, interdisciplinary water institute.
- The result of this initiative will be the implementation of research-based solutions to address the growing concerns related to water in Kansas and thereby offering solutions that can and will have global impact.

Animal Diagnostic Lab (Planning) **\$250,000 – one time**

- The Kansas Animal Diagnostic Laboratory located and operated by Kansas State University is a critical resource for the state's \$12.9 billion livestock industry and provides the testing for blue-green algae in the state. K-State, due to its expertise in animal science and disease, houses the Animal Diagnostic Laboratory for the state.
- Providing diagnostic and consultative services for the animal health community in Kansas is a strategic resource for the state. This investment will enable the university in partnership with the state to do the planning needed for a critical new facility to address the current and future needs of the animal industry. The current facility is in serious decline and creating risk for the state's animal/livestock sector.

Digital Ag/Data Analytics Institute **\$2 million – one time**

- The long-term goal is to advance transdisciplinary teaching, research and engagement activities — including extension, outreach, industry partners, etc. — in the Digital Ag and Data Analytics space. This will advance the recognition of Kansas as a top technology state, thereby improving resource stewardship and economic growth.
- This institute fosters the integration of data to develop and integrate analytical methods and digital technologies — including sensors, automation and robotics — that enhance food production and inform agricultural, environmental, socioeconomic and human nutrition decision-making for sustainable and resilient systems.
- The culmination of this collaborative effort will ensure K-State is positioned as a leader in digital agriculture with an effective foundation to develop state, national and internationally recognized programs that make tangible contributions to building critical physical and human-centric infrastructures. Additionally, the effort contributes toward developing the social capital needed to sustain the long-term competitiveness of agriculture in Kansas.

Central Immersive Training Hub (Salina) **\$2 million – one time**

- This initiative provides an economic and media lift to the state of Kansas, while also establishing it as an innovator of cutting-edge innovation in the technology sector. As a result, this facility has the potential to attract further investments in the technology sector, potentially leading to further job creation and economic growth, resulting in long-term positive effects on the state’s economy and technological advancement.
- Developing an immersive training hub at Kansas State University Salina Aerospace and Technology Campus will provide an operational proof of concept for enhancing security training for law enforcement and agencies protecting critical assets using virtual reality, full-body tracking and digital twin models.
- This technology allows forces and agencies from the hosting countries and cities to collaborate at the central hub strategically based out of Kansas, leading to a more unified and effective security strategy for major events. By training in advance of events without any disruption in physical location, security personnel and law enforcement agencies can significantly enhance their preparation for major events.

Total: \$36.45 million

Additional Priority:

Rural Education: In Collaboration with Kansas Board of Regents Institutions

\$5 million – recurring

- College of Education
 - Rural communities need strong schools and rural public education amid a statewide teacher shortage. Developing pathways for individuals from rural communities through bachelor’s degree completion will support Kansas families, businesses and communities.
 - Pathway programs that include collaboration between high schools, community colleges and the K-State College of Education will support Grow Your Own efforts by Kansas schools. This program will expand a current program to rural communities throughout the state by providing a pathway for students who want to become teachers and who intend to remain in their home community.
 - The program targets underserved populations, individuals who want to teach in rural areas. While still in high school, participants will attend K-State’s successful week-long immersive camp, the Kansas Advanced Teacher Academy (KATA).
- College of Arts and Sciences
 - Rural communities in Kansas face a need for additional content-area professional development for teachers, as well as additional opportunities for students to make progress toward university degrees.
 - K-State’s College of Arts and Sciences will address both needs by developing a land-grant pipeline for high school students in underserved, rural areas to provide students opportunities for in-person and synchronous online university courses.
 - Kansas State University will address these gaps in student access to pathways to higher education with a two-pronged approach. First, it will provide a combination of instruction, oversight and support that would give rural teachers the content training and oversight needed to teach approved concurrent K-State courses. Second, it will directly offer select synchronous online courses to be run in consultation with school districts at times convenient for students and with support in the high schools for those students.