

Kansas State University

**Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement
Reclassification Application**

**Executive Summary
2026**

K-State Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Reclassification

The Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Classification is a national recognition granted to higher education institutions that demonstrates an institutional commitment to community engagement. It defines community engagement as the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities.

Kansas State University, as the nation's first operational land-grant university, has received this community engagement classification since 2010. We applied for K-State's second reclassification in 2025.

This reclassification supports K-State's mission to integrate engagement across teaching, research, and service. It enhances the university's visibility, demonstrates strategic alignment with the Next-Gen

K-State plan and strengthens its position as a leader in public service and outreach while addressing social challenges through engaged teaching, research, and outreach.

This milestone aligns directly with K-State's identity as Kansas's land-grant institution, where community engagement is central to our mission. It affirms our long-standing dedication to serving the public good through collaboration with partners at the local, regional, state, national, and global levels. As the next-generation land-grant university, K-State is integrating engagement across all we do.

Carnegie Foundation Definition of Community Engagement

The Carnegie Foundation defines **community engagement** as the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities, whether local, regional, national, or global, for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.

This approach emphasizes shared goals and mutual respect, recognizing that both academic institutions and community partners contribute valuable perspectives and expertise. The purpose of such engagement is to integrate university resources—such as scholarship, research, teaching, and service—with community-identified needs and opportunities. In doing so, community engagement enriches learning, fosters civic responsibility, advances democratic values, addresses critical societal issues, and contributes to the public good.

Why This Classification Matters

The Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Classification affirms K-State's excellence in community engagement and serves as a catalyst for ongoing improvement. Specifically, the classification provides:

- **National recognition** from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
- **Validates K-State's public service mission** and commitment to civic engagement
- **Enhances institutional credibility** and opens new opportunities for funding, partnerships, and policy influence
- **Demonstrates leadership** in community-based education, research, and outreach

K-State's Commitment to Engagement

Kansas State University focuses its engagement on creating a more responsive, meaningful, and impactful approach to serving Kansans and addressing society's most pressing challenges. By fully integrating engagement, outreach, and extension into the university's land-grant mission alongside teaching and research, the university amplifies its role as a catalyst for public good. These initiatives exemplify our commitment to reach all 105 counties and tribal areas, strengthening local economies, enhancing resilience, and promoting statewide prosperity.

This integrated approach prioritizes the K-State opportunity agenda that focuses on 1) community health and well-being, 2) food security and biosecurity, 3) sustainability, and 4) the advancement of enabling technologies. Through inter-disciplinary collaboration and strong community partnerships, the university is developing innovative, evidence-based solutions that directly respond to the evolving needs of Kansas communities.

By embedding engagement in every aspect of university life, Kansas State University is cultivating a culture where faculty, staff, and students contribute to real-world impact. Together, we are shaping a more sustainable, healthy, and secure future locally and globally by aligning institutional strengths with the urgent needs of our communities.

Community Engagement Impact

- K-State's institutes and centers, including the Kansas Water Institute, drive sustainability initiatives and advance research excellence.
- Programs in agriculture, public health, youth development, economic vitality, and community resilience
- K-State Research and Extension operates in all 105 Kansas counties

- K-State engaged communities across Kansas through community visits to prioritize engagement and drive impactful partnerships that address real-world challenges.
- Deep, long-standing partnerships that reflect our commitment to accessibility, relevance, and impact

The Carnegie Foundation Classification will continue to be published over a three-year period. This classification reinforces Kansas State University's role as a catalyst for positive change in Kansas and beyond. It challenges our university to continually evolve and lead as an institution that learns with, not just from, its communities advancing knowledge, equity, and the public good.

Selected Carnegie Signature Partnerships

The Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Elective Classification application highlights a selection of significant collaborations, designated as **Signature Partnerships**, in recognition of their sustained impact and strategic importance.

The Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Elective reclassification application provides institutions with the opportunity to spotlight exemplary State & Community partnerships. The following 14 initiatives have been selected to represent our ongoing commitment to community engagement and institutional collaboration. Many of these initiatives were also featured in the 2020 application, demonstrating their continued relevance and effectiveness in addressing community needs and advancing shared goals.

Advanced Manufacturing and Bulk Solids Technology Center

Impact: Advances industry innovation by partnering with companies to improve the efficiency, safety, and sustainability of bulk solids processing.

Contributors: **Jonathan McPherson**, Bulk Solid/Advanced Manufacturing and Bulk Solids Technology Center, Kansas State University, Olathe, KS Campus; **Taylor Cunningham**, Polymer Chemist, Oldcastle APG

College of Veterinary Medicine Mobile Surgery*

Impact: Expands access to critical veterinary services for underserved animal populations, while providing students with real-world training.

Contributors: **Dr. Elizabeth Davis**, College of Veterinary Medicine, **Dr. Ron Orchard**, College of Veterinary Medicine

Extending College Education for Lifelong Learning Program - EXCELL*

Impact: Empowers underserved youth through mentorship, leadership development, and college readiness programs that strengthen community ties.

Contributors: **Dr. Warren J. White**, Professor of Special Education, Counseling and Student Affairs, Kansas State University, EXCELL; **Lucas Shivers**, Director of Elementary Education, USD 383, Manhattan, Kansas

Flint Hills Summer Camp*

Impact: Provides inclusive outdoor education experiences that promote environmental stewardship and youth development in rural communities.

Contributors: **Kathrine Schlageck**, Associate Curator of Education, Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art, Flint Hills Summer Fun Camp, **Kim Richards**, Education Assistant, Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art, Flint Hills Summer Fun Camp; **Sahra Bennett**, Manhattan-Ogden Public Schools (USD 383)

From Making the Leap to Kansas Treaties Project*

Impact: Enhances historical awareness and civic education through community-engaged scholarship focused on Indigenous history and treaty rights.

Contributors: **Mary Kohn**, Executive Director for Chapman Center for Rural Studies; **Charlene Brownson**, Riley County Genealogical Society

Ft. Riley Partnership Program*

Impact: Strengthens military-community relations and supports soldier and family well-being through education, outreach, and workforce initiatives.

Contributors: **Dr. Arthur DeGroat**, Lieutenant Colonel Retired, The Colonel H. Duane Saunders Executive Director of Military and Veterans Affairs & Director, Military Affairs Institute; **Ben Van Beclaeere**, U.S. Army 1st Infantry Division & U.S. Army, Garrison, Ft. Riley, KS

Johnson Cancer Research Center- Cancer Research Initiative

Impact: Drives lifesaving cancer research while engaging students, faculty, and the broader community in scientific discovery and public health education.

Contributors: **Dr. Sherry Flemming**, Johnson Cancer Research Center; **County Home Resident - Ellsworth, Russell and Lincoln counties and Extension**

K-State 105

Impact: Bolsters economic prosperity across Kansas' 105 counties through research-based extension services, innovation, and workforce development.

Contributors: **Jessica Gnad**, Director, K-State 105; **Erik Pedersen**, President and CEO, Network Kansas

Rural Grocery Initiative (RGI)*

Impact: Sustains essential food access in rural communities by supporting locally owned grocery stores through research, policy, and technical assistance.

Contributors: **Rial Carver**, Rural Grocery Extension Specialist with K-State Research and Extension; **Jenny Osner**, Associated Wholesale Grocers

Tap to Togertherness Across Populations*

Impact: Fosters intergenerational connection and well-being through creative movement programs that unite families, communities, and service providers.

Contributors: **Julie L. Pentz**, Professor of Dance, CEO, Founder and Director, Tap to Togetherness Across Populations

Testing Ag Performance Solutions (TAPS)*

Impact: Engages farmers in hands-on, competitive learning to improve agricultural practices, resource efficiency, and decision-making.

Contributors: **Dwane Roth**, Western Kansas Research-Extension Center, Testing Ag Performance Solutions (TAPS), **Kelsey Stremel**, Communications and Marketing Specialist, Western Kansas Research-Extension Centers, Agricultural Research Center-Hays

Thrive! *

Impact: Builds paths out of poverty through community-based coaching and support systems that promote self-sufficiency and economic stability.

Contributors: **Dr. Elaine Johannes**, Associate Professor, Extension Specialist, Thrive!

Water Technology Farms/Innovation Systems and Education (WISE)*

Impact: Demonstrates cutting-edge water conservation techniques through partnerships with producers to promote sustainable agricultural practices.

Contributors: **Dr. Susan Metzer**, Director, Strategic Interdisciplinary Program Development, **Dr. Daniel Devlin**, Water Technology Farms/Water Innovation Systems and Education (WISE), Kansas State University

Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI)*

Impact: Cultivates global leadership and cross-cultural collaboration by equipping African leaders with tools for civic engagement and entrepreneurship.

Contributors: **Del'Sha Roberts**, Administrator of Student Programs, Staley School of Leadership
Salif Kanoute, Salif Kanoute and Ibrahim Yunus, YALI

*These partnerships, in part, were selected for application renewal based on 2020 reporting.

Contact ooengage@ksu.edu for further questions regarding partnerships or contributors

Kansas State University Carnegie Reclassification Contributors:

Academic Success and Student Affairs
College of Agriculture
College of Arts and Sciences
College of Business Administration
College of Education
College of Health and Human Sciences
College of Veterinary Medicine
Engagement Ambassadors
Institute for Civic Discourse and Democracy
K-State Career Center
K-State Extension
K-State Olathe
K-State Salina Aerospace and Technology Campus
Office of External Engagement
Office of the President
Office of the Provost
Office of the Registrar
Staley School of Leadership Studies

Letter of Support from Dr. Richard Linton, President of Kansas State University



Office of the President

March 5, 2025

Carnegie Community Engagement Reclassification Committee
Carnegie Foundation
51 Vista Lane
Stanford, CA 94305

Dear Review Committee,

Kansas State University is transforming to become the next-generation land-grant university. Launched in July 2022, this ambitious initiative responds to the evolving needs of our communities, state and world, requiring bold vision and transformative change.

K-State's mission emphasizes excellence in student experience, research, discovery, extension and engagement activities. We are expanding our definition of "student body" to encompass all 2.9 million Kansans, enabling us to better serve our state's diverse needs.

To institutionalize this commitment, we have established the Office of Engagement under the Executive Vice President for External Engagement and Chief of Staff. This effort explicitly recognizes community engagement as an important focus for the university, shifting it to a universitywide approach that everyone can partake in. Additionally, we designated engagement ambassadors who coordinate with our Office of Engagement to identify areas of engagement happening across the university.

Our vision prioritizes interdisciplinary research while maintaining disciplinary excellence. By building on our institutional strengths, we will drive large-scale research initiatives that address grand societal challenges and reinforce K-State's position as a thought leader and innovator.

We are integrating community engagement into our academic core through the Applied Learning Initiative, which provides every degree-seeking student with an applied learning experience before they graduate. This includes community-engaged learning, education abroad, internships and undergraduate research, bringing our students to the communities through purposeful experiences.

As a land-grant institution with a presence in all 105 Kansas counties, we are uniquely positioned to develop solutions that serve both local and global needs. We are strengthening our engagement efforts and extension serves to maximize collective impact across communities.

The Next-Gen K-State plan integrates community engagement throughout our institution, fostering economic prosperity and positive change in Kansas. Every interaction with K-State creates an opportunity for meaningful impacts in people's lives.

As One K-State, we are committed to service and engagement as it distinguishes us from other institutions, establishing benchmarks of expectations for our faculty, staff and students.

Moving forward, we will continue to align our resources and capabilities with community needs, fully embodying our role as a next-generation land-grant university.

Richard H. Linton
President
Kansas State University