



## Knowledge Alliance Breaking Boundaries Grant

*Breaking Down Policy and Networking Barriers for  
Small Organizations that are Minority and/or Women Led/Owned through Full KA Membership*

### Who We Are

[Knowledge Alliance](#) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization committed to the greater use of research-based knowledge in education policy and practice. KA is committed to the greater use of high-quality and relevant data, research, evaluation and innovation in education policy and practice at all levels. Collectively, KA has spent the last 50 years supporting a set of education programs focused on building and disseminating evidence to improve teaching and learning in our nation's classrooms. KA believes the effective development, dissemination, and use of research-based knowledge is essential to improving instruction and increasing student achievement. KA is comprised of leading education organizations that are dedicated to solving some of the biggest problems facing our schools today through the development and use of high-quality, relevant research.

### Breaking Boundaries Grant

Knowledge Alliance (KA) is inviting applications for a grant to fund two small minority and/or women-led/owned education organizations for full membership in KA for a two-year term. Membership in KA is open to any partnership, corporation, public agency, or other recognized legal entity (i) whose purpose is consistent with the mission of KA, and (ii) operates as a producer of knowledge and/or knowledge-based products and/or services that are provided in support of education.

#### This grant will cover:

- KA Membership dues of \$10,000 per year for a total of \$20,000 over two years.
- A scholarship to partially subsidize the organization's costs of participating in KA, such as travel to meetings. In year one (1) the grant will provide \$3,000 and in year two (2) \$1,000 for a total of \$4,000 over the two-year grant.<sup>1</sup>
- Additional support and resources to help organizations make the most of their membership. Upon gaining membership, KA will meet with the organization to learn where they see themselves needing support. KA, with support from Penn Hill Group (PHG), will craft support that meets their needs and goals.

#### KA membership includes:

##### Opportunities to Advocate for KA's Federal Policy Agenda

- Engage in policy and appropriations advocacy for IES, RD&D, RELs, EIR, CCs<sup>2</sup>
- Provide input on legislation (e.g., ESRA, WIOA, Appropriations)

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<sup>1</sup> The stipend is not intended to cover the full cost of participation or travel.

<sup>2</sup> Institute of Education Sciences (IES), Research, Development and Dissemination (RD&D), Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs), Education Innovation and Research (EIR), and Comprehensive Centers (CCs).

# knowledge alliance

- Provide input on comment letters on KA policy priorities (e.g., IES large data sets, NASEM reports, SBMH)
- Meet with Federal policymakers specific to education research and technical assistance (2 times a year).
- Meet with IES, ED, and NSF program officers
- Meet with Federal policy makers in special meetings (e.g., NASEM report authors, CFPB, etc.)
- Receive policy updates and strategic advice from PHG (daily & weekly)
- Access to PHG for consulting on policy questions/advocacy support
- Resources, tools, & support to increase policy and advocacy capacity
- Assistance with organizational priorities and activities
- Policy intelligence on grants and Federal contract opportunities

## **High Quality Internal Communications**

- Information on coalition activities/events
- KA weekly and monthly newsletters

## **High Quality External Communications and Organizational Visibility**

- Organizational visibility with Federal policy makers (e.g., Issue Brief, Blogs, through President's outreach)
- Exposure through KA social media
- Collective responses to media (e.g., articles in EducationWeek)
- Elevating member events and reports/briefs on KA social media and PHG/KA newsletters

## **Networking and Professional Development Opportunities**

- Executives Forums: The Executives Forums are reserved for CEOs, heads of company, owners, and/or individuals leading the education division of a larger company. The forum is intended to provide a space for individuals who have decision-making authority over their company (or education division) to discuss challenges, successes, ongoing initiatives, and other issues related to operations and the future of our field.
- Two in-person Issue Forums (networking and learning opportunities): Topics vary based on membership interest and often include guest speakers, funders, program officers, and opportunities for peer networking.
- Opportunities to attend events with other peers in the research and policy community.

## **Eligibility**

This grant opportunity is available to organizations that would be considered as Tier I organizations per KA's existing dues tiers structure. Knowledge Alliance has the following methodology for determining the membership tiers:

ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS ANNUAL RECEIPTS:	DUES
TIER I. \$5 MILLION OR LESS	\$10,000
TIER II. \$5 MILLION TO LESS THAN \$17.5 MILLION	\$20,000
TIER III. \$17.5 MILLION TO LESS THAN \$25 MILLION	\$25,000

The dues tier level for member organizations (both nonprofit and for-profit) is determined using the Small Business Administration methodology and current Federal regulations for calculating average annual receipts ([CFR § 121.104](#)).

## **Time and Effort Expectations of Grant Recipients:**

Membership in KA is an opportunity to network, advocate and build an agenda around research and evidence nationally and federally. The work of KA is as strong as its member participation. Every KA member has an important voice and role to play. Therefore, grantees must agree to full member participation which includes:

- **PAG Meetings:** Monthly, one-hour Policy Action Group (PAG) meetings to discuss policy priorities and objectives. The Applicant CEO must identify themselves and/or a staff member to be on the PAG. All PAG meetings are virtual. Organizations (PAG members) are often asked to provide feedback on policy recommendations at special meetings and/or by email. In a typical year, KA provides policy recommendations on a dozen requests for information or policies.
- **Board Participation:** There are 2 in-person and 2 virtual Board of Directors meetings per calendar year. The virtual Board meetings range from 2-4 hours and the in-person meetings may be a half-or-full day long. These meetings are used for members to participate in professional development and discuss KA business. Applicant must agree that their CEO will be the KA board member.
- **KA DC Days:** Two day-long advocacy days a year, one virtual and one in-person in Washington D.C.
- **Issue Forums:** Two day-long, in-person Issue Forums where KA members discuss top of mind issues and topics for members. While the grant would cover travel expenses for attendance, the applicant must commit to sending the CEO and/or a member of their organization to each Issue Forum.
- **Executives' Forums:** Two executives' forums a year where executives who have decision-making authority over their company (or education division) can discuss challenges, successes, ongoing initiatives, and other issues related to operations and the future of our field. The applicant must commit to sending one executive from their organization to the forums.
- **Note:** Organizations (Board and/or PAG members) are often asked to prepare in advance of meetings or participate in discussions/votes/feedback via email.
- **Note:** From time to time, there are meetings and events where the identified Board member/CEO may invite additional team members to participate to grow development and capacity in the grantee's organization.
- **Note:** KA members are expected to make every effort to attend all called meetings, conference calls, and special events that require attendance. Active participation is crucial for effective organizational function, promotes informed decision making, harnesses diverse expertise, and fosters collaboration among members. Active participation is critical to the good health of the organization.

## Application Instructions:

### Part I:

To apply for this opportunity, please send an email to Rachel Dinkes [rdinkes@knowledgeall.net](mailto:rdinkes@knowledgeall.net) by **October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023** that includes the following information:

1. **Applicant Information:**
  - a. Organization name, mission, and contact details.
  - b. Brief background information about the organization, including its mission, goals, and types of work (technical assistance, evaluation), any Federal funding or Federal engagement, and any previous collaborations or partnerships with KA or KA [member organizations](#) (if applicable).
2. **Objectives: In roughly 300-500 words:**
  - a. State the purpose of seeking membership in KA through the grant and explain how membership in KA aligns with the organization's mission and goals, specific objectives the organization aims to achieve through KA membership, and the anticipated impact or outcomes resulting from KA membership.
3. **Expected Impact: In roughly 200-300 words:**
  - a. Describe the organization's plan for evaluating the impact of the KA membership and how the organization would sustain the benefits gained from the membership beyond the grant period.
4. **Supporting Documentation:**
  - a. Attach any relevant supporting documents, such as project examples or letters of recommendation, which reinforce the application's interest and need for the grant.
5. **Confirmation of Commitment:** Please confirm affirmatively to the following statements in your application.
  - a. The CEO will serve as the KA Board Member and commit to preparing for and attending Board Meetings.
  - b. The CEO will identify themselves or a senior staff member to be on the PAG and commit to preparing for and attending PAG meetings.
  - c. The CEO and/or a senior staff member will commit to preparing for and attending KA's forums.
  - d. The CEO and/or a senior staff member will commit to participating in KA's DC Days.
6. **End of Grant Activity:** Please confirm affirmatively to the following statements in your application.
  - a. At the end of the grant, agree to participate in a reflection activity to see if/to what degree goals were met through participation, what they learned or surprised them, and what they might recommend to the next cohort.