



DEREK S.K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR  
MICHAEL A. DAHLIG, MANAGING DIRECTOR

## News Release

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COUNTY OF KAUA'I  
OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
NALANI BRUN, DIRECTOR  
(808) 241-4946

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### OED announces FY 22-23 Innovation Grants recipients

LĪHU'E – The Office of Economic Development announces that the County of Kaua'i received 19 proposals for the Innovation Grants for FY 22-23. As part of the review process, OED invited the public to review the proposals for the Innovation Grants and provide feedback via the ConsiderIt platform. The public feedback was factored into the scoring as part of the selection process.

“We are pleased with the results of this grant process,” said Office of Economic Development Director Nalani Brun. “This process continues to bring greater focus on both innovation and problem-solving than in past years. We also received a lot of community input that helped with our evaluation.”

A selection committee reviewed and scored all the eligible projects and selected nine proposals to fund for a total of \$385,000. The Office of Economic Development is pleased to share the list of projects that received funding in this fiscal year.

#### **Agriculture:**

- **Ho'omalū Ke Kai & Kaua'i Sea Farm** – *This project designs and implements a land-based system for oyster cultivation utilizing fluidized cylinders.*
- **HAPA-Hawaii Alliance for Progressive Action** - *This project focuses on the 'Ai Pono challenge to increase awareness, demand and regular revenue for local food and farm businesses.*

- **Malama Kauai** – *Kauaʻi Farm to School Pilots will provide 100% funding to local K-12 schools via incentives for free local food to use in local school meals.*
- **Malama Kauai** – *The Farmers Enhancing Equitable Distribution (FEED) Mini-Grant Program will distribute grant funds directly to Kauai farmers to increase food production to fill market gaps at fair market value.*

### **Energy and Sustainability**

- **Kauaʻi Community Science Center-Climate Connect** *is a project that creates and executes a training course in creating virtual reality content for Kauai students that connects back to climate, climate change and being responsible stewards of the ʻāina.*
- **Aina Alliance-** *This project creates a strategic plan for the building of an off-grid Eco-Village on Kauai.*

### **Creative Industries**

- **Garden Island Resource, Conservation and Development**– *This project collects footage and produces a documentary about the last ʻakikiki, one of Kauai’s endemic forest bird species at the brink of extinction.*

### **Visitor Industry Destination Management/Cultural and Other Initiatives**

- **Royal Coconut Coast Association** – *This project provides Wailua Heritage Trail Enhancements by adding four more markers with interpretive plaques to this historical area and providing website education updates that links to this project.*
- **Kamawaelualani-***This project, called Awakening the Ancestors, showcases Kauaʻi Aliʻi using virtual reality and augmented reality providing an educational experience for three exhibits at the Kauaʻi Museum.*

As part of a request for proposals (RFP), this is the third year that OED has offered funding for Innovation Grants to support new programs or projects that advance innovation by identifying and solving local problems while supporting economic development.

Proposals were accepted in the areas of small business support, energy and sustainability, creative industries, agriculture, destination management and cultural opportunities, and circular economy in Kauai County. The goal of the grants is to provide funding for innovative projects to generate short-term and long-term economic growth and diversification on Kaua'i.

To learn more about the Innovation Grant proposals, you can view the proposals here: <https://oedinnovationgrant2023.consider.it/>.

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