

UNCOMMON LEADER AWARD

Impact Award Reference Form

All reference forms must be submitted by August 15, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. CT.

_____ has been nominated for the Uncommon Leader Impact Award and has named you as a personal reference.

The Uncommon Leader Impact Award is designed to recognize leaders who are making a lasting impact within the metropolitan Kansas City region. In this inaugural year, the award will be given to a full-time, non-C-suite employee at a 501(c)(3) public charity aligned with the Foundation's mission to advance economic mobility, and who demonstrates significant contributions to the Kansas City region's well-being, growth, and empowerment.

Thank you for supporting a nominee for the Uncommon Leader Impact Award. Your reference is a valuable part of the evaluation process and helps us better understand the nominee's contributions and character. Your input helps us honor those who make a real difference in our communities.

Please follow the instructions below to complete and submit your reference. You may either:

- Use the attached fillable PDF reference form, or
- Upload a signed reference letter on official letterhead.

All submissions must be in PDF format.

References will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of selecting award recipients. Your responses, along with input from the nominee and one other reference, will provide the Review Committee with further insights about their work experience. If you are not able to complete a reference within the deadline, let the nominee know immediately so that they can identify another reference.

Instructions

1. **Read the Criteria:** This award honors individuals who have made a significant, positive difference in their community through community impact and service, innovation, leadership, equity, and systems change. This work must be aligned with the Foundation's mission to advance economic mobility and demonstrate significant contributions to the Kansas City region's well-being, growth, and empowerment.
2. **Complete All Sections:** All reference sections on the fillable PDF must be filled for submission. If submitting a letter on letterhead, be sure to include and address each section. Incomplete references may not be considered.
3. **Provide Specific Examples:** When describing the nominee's contributions, focus on key accomplishments related to the award criteria. Use concrete examples, data, or testimonials about their work where possible that illustrate their impact. Additional comments on integrity, leadership, perseverance, or other traits may add weight to their achievements.
4. **Deadline:** All reference forms must be submitted by August 15 at 11:59 p.m. CT.
5. **Submission:** Upload the completed PDF using the link in your nomination email.

Section 1. Reference Contact Information

This section is to collect information from you, as the reference. This information is important to determine authenticity of the submission, and to have a contact in case further questions arise about the nominee.

1. First Name
2. Last Name
3. Organization Affiliation (if retired, please list organization from which retired)
4. Email Address
5. Phone Number
6. Relationship to the Nominee
7. Length of time known nominee

Section 2. Nominee Information

Provide the following information about the person you are providing a reference for.

1. First Name
2. Last Name
3. Email

Section 3. Award Criteria

There are five award criteria, outlined below, that define the ideal nominee for the Uncommon Leader Impact Award. The award criteria are based on Mr. Kauffman's core values of community impact, innovation, equity, collaboration, and economic mobility.

In order to submit your reference, you are asked to provide a short, concise response on how the nominee meets the following award criteria. **Do not exceed two paragraphs per criterion.**

- 1. Community Impact.** Please describe how the nominee has actively contributed to initiatives or projects over the past three years that have led to meaningful improvements in the Kansas City region. *You may include outcomes, populations served, and any measurable or observed changes. Include any professional, volunteer, or community leadership roles.*
- 2. Innovation.** How does the nominee’s work demonstrate leadership and inspire others to take action or drive change? *Please describe any innovative practices, programs, or ideas you’ve led or contributed to.*

3. **Equity.** How does the nominee's work amplify underrepresented voices or address systemic inequities? *Please include specific actions, strategies, or examples of inclusive practices and intentional equity efforts.*
4. **Collaboration.** How does the nominee collaborate with others to achieve collective goals? *You may highlight partnerships, shared leadership, or co-created initiatives.*

5. **Focus on Economic Mobility and Systems Change.** How does the nominee's work support economic mobility and address systemic barriers within the community? *Please provide examples of strategies or initiatives aimed at long-term, scalable change.*

I agree that the Foundation may collect and use my personal information in conjunction with the Kauffman Uncommon Leadership Award program including (but not limited to) using the information to evaluate my recommendation, sharing my information with reviewers of my recommendation and in making public announcements regarding my consideration for and/or receipt of a Kauffman Uncommon Leadership Award. The Foundation may also use my personal information consistent with its [privacy policy](#) to communicate with me about the Foundation and programs I may find interesting, to personalize my experience on Foundation websites, conduct academic/charitable research, and share my data with Trusted Foundation Affiliates.

I confirm and agree with the above statement.