

Application Submittal Checklist

The following items are required for submittal of the grant application. Please verify and check off that the items have been included in the application packet.

- 1) Hawaii Compliance Express Certificate (If the Applicant is an Organization)
- 2) Declaration Statement
- 3) Verify that grant shall be used for a public purpose
- 4) Background and Summary
- 5) Service Summary and Outcomes
- 6) Budget
 - a) Budget request by source of funds ([Link](#))
 - b) Personnel salaries and wages ([Link](#))
 - c) Equipment and motor vehicles ([Link](#))
 - d) Capital project details ([Link](#))
 - e) Government contracts, grants, and grants in aid ([Link](#))
- 7) Experience and Capability
- 8) Personnel: Project Organization and Staffing



AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

PRINT NAME AND TITLE

DATE



STATE OF HAWAII
STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE

CERTIFICATE OF VENDOR COMPLIANCE

This document presents the compliance status of the vendor identified below on the issue date with respect to certificates required from the Hawaii Department of Taxation (DOTAX), the Internal Revenue Service, the Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR), and the Hawaii Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA).

Vendor Name: NA LEO 'O HAWAII', INC.*

DBA/Trade Name: Na Leo TV

Issue Date: 12/23/2025

Status: **Compliant**

Hawaii Tax#:

New Hawaii Tax#:

FEIN/SSN#:

UI#: XXXXXX6360

DCCA FILE#: 93930

Status of Compliance for this Vendor on issue date:

Form	Department(s)	Status
A-6	Hawaii Department of Taxation	Compliant
8821	Internal Revenue Service	Waived
COGS	Hawaii Department of Commerce & Consumer Affairs	Exempt
LIR27	Hawaii Department of Labor & Industrial Relations	Compliant

Status Legend:

Status	Description
Exempt	The entity is exempt from this requirement
Compliant	The entity is compliant with this requirement or the entity is in agreement with agency and actively working towards compliance
Pending	A status determination has not yet been made
Submitted	The entity has applied for the certificate but it is awaiting approval
Not Compliant	The entity is not in compliance with the requirement and should contact the issuing agency for more information



Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

CERTIFICATE OF GOOD STANDING

I, the undersigned Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs of the State of Hawaii, do hereby certify that

NA LEO 'O HAWAI'I, INC.

was incorporated under the laws of Hawaii on 12/17/1993 ; that it is an existing nonprofit corporation; and that, as far as the records of this Department reveal, has complied with all of the provisions of the Hawaii Nonprofit Corporations Act, regulating domestic nonprofit corporations.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, at Honolulu, Hawaii.

Dated: November 18, 2025

Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

**DECLARATION STATEMENT OF
APPLICANTS FOR GRANTS PURSUANT TO
CHAPTER 42F, HAWAI'I REVISED STATUTES**

The undersigned authorized representative of the applicant certifies the following:

- 1) The applicant meets and will comply with all of the following standards for the award of grants pursuant to Section 42F-103, Hawai'i Revised Statutes:
 - a) Is licensed or accredited, in accordance with federal, state, or county statutes, rules, or ordinances, to conduct the activities or provide the services for which a grant is awarded;
 - b) Complies with all applicable federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, creed, sex, age, sexual orientation, or disability;
 - c) Agrees not to use state funds for entertainment or lobbying activities; and
 - d) Allows the state agency to which funds for the grant were appropriated for expenditure, legislative committees and their staff, and the auditor full access to their records, reports, files, and other related documents and information for purposes of monitoring, measuring the effectiveness, and ensuring the proper expenditure of the grant.
- 2) If the applicant is an organization, the applicant meets the following requirements pursuant to Section 42F-103, Hawai'i Revised Statutes:
 - a) Is incorporated under the laws of the State; and
 - b) Has bylaws or policies that describe the manner in which the activities or services for which a grant is awarded shall be conducted or provided; and
- 3) If the applicant is a non-profit organization, it meets the following requirements pursuant to Section 42F-103, Hawai'i Revised Statutes:
 - a) Is determined and designated to be a non-profit organization by the Internal Revenue Service; and
 - b) Has a governing board whose members have no material conflict of interest and serve without compensation.
- 4) The use of grant-in-aid funding complies with all provisions of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii (for example, pursuant to Article X, section 1, of the Constitution, the State cannot provide "... public funds ... for the support or benefit of any sectarian or nonsectarian private educational institution...").

Pursuant to Section 42F-103, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, for grants used for the acquisition of land, when the organization discontinues the activities or services on the land acquired for which the grant was awarded and disposes of the land in fee simple or by lease, the organization shall negotiate with the expending agency for a lump sum or installment repayment to the State of the amount of the grant used for the acquisition of the land.

Further, the undersigned authorized representative certifies that this statement is true and correct to the best of the applicant's knowledge.

Nā Leo 'O Hawai'i

(Typed Name of Individual or Organization)



(Signature)

January 22, 2026

(Date)

Ashley Kierkiewicz

(Typed Name)

President & CEO

(Title)

Application for Grants

If any item is not applicable to the request, the applicant should enter "not applicable".

I. Certification – Please attach immediately after cover page

1. Hawaii Compliance Express Certificate (If the Applicant is an Organization)

If the applicant is an organization, the applicant shall submit one (1) copy of a Hawaii Compliance Express Certificate from the Comptroller of the Department of Accounting and General Services that is dated no earlier than December 1, 2025.

(Attached)

2. Declaration Statement

The applicant shall submit a declaration statement affirming its compliance with [Section 42F-103, Hawaii Revised Statutes](#).

(Attached)

3. Public Purpose

The applicant shall specify whether the grant will be used for a public purpose pursuant to [Section 42F-102, Hawaii Revised Statutes](#).

(1) The name of the requesting organization or individual:
Nā Leo 'O Hawai'i (Nā Leo TV / NLTV)

(2) The public purpose of the grant:
The purpose for this grant is to support Nā Leo TV to establish and operate a Community News Division that strengthens civic engagement and community well-being by expanding public access to reliable, hyperlocal information. The project will train youth and residents in responsible journalism and communication skills and will produce and distribute community-centered news that documents local challenges, solutions, and opportunities in communities across Hawai'i Island.

(3) The services to be supported by the grant:
Grant funds will support the establishment and operation of Nā Leo TV's Community News Division, including the following public services: journalism training and workforce development; community-based news gathering and reporting; production and distribution of hyperlocal news content; regional supervision and mentorship; school and community partnerships; and program oversight, evaluation, and reporting. These services will strengthen civic

engagement, expand public access to hyperlocal information, and build workforce-ready skills in journalism and media production.

(4) The target group:

The target group for this grant will Hawai'i Island residents, particularly youth and individuals interested in using broadcast journalism to increase civic engagement.

(5) The cost of the grant and the budget:

Grant: \$439,996 Total Budget: \$439,996

II. Background and Summary

This section shall clearly and concisely summarize and highlight the contents of the request in such a way as to provide the State Legislature with a broad understanding of the request. Please include the following:

1. A brief description of the applicant's background;

Nā Leo 'O Hawai'i (Nā Leo TV / NLTV) is Hawai'i Island's community access television station and creative industries workforce incubator. For more than 30 years, this 501(c)3 nonprofit has provided free and open access to broadcast platforms, training, production equipment, and professional facilities for residents islandwide. NLTV exists to ensure that the tools of media production and content distribution are accessible to the public, not limited by income, geography, or institutional gatekeeping – directly advancing State priorities related to educational access, workforce readiness, civic participation, and equity for neighbor island communities..

NLTV's mission is to elevate community voices, encourage civic engagement, and advance workforce development through media. We do this by:

- (1) Nurturing Hawai'i Island's creative economy;
- (2) Developing a skilled, locally rooted media workforce prepared for employment and entrepreneurship in the creative industries; and
- (3) Providing accessible resources and platforms for authentic community storytelling, strengthening media literacy and civic participation.

NLTV serves all Hawai'i Island residents, with a focus on youth, emerging creatives, and underserved communities that have historically lacked access to media resources and career pathways. With fully equipped studios in both East Hawai'i (Hilo) and West Hawai'i (Kona), NLTV ensures islandwide access to facilities, programming, and community-centered training opportunities.

Over the past several years, under new visionary leadership, NLTV has reintroduced itself to the community with a comprehensive rebrand, a strategic

plan for action, and renewed alignment with its decades-long community access mission. This revitalization has resulted in expanded partnerships, increased community participation, and a stronger focus on workforce development, education, and civic storytelling. NLTV's work has been recognized nationally by the Alliance for Community Media, earning multiple awards for original programs such as informational series, public service announcements, high school sports broadcasts, and coverage of major community events.

NLTV understands that meaningful public impact is achieved through collaboration. The organization works alongside community members, schools, nonprofits, local businesses, and public institutions to deliver relevant, innovative, and community-driven programming that serves the public interest and aligns with State goals for education, workforce development, and civic engagement.

2. The goals and objectives related to the request;

The purpose of this funding request is to support the establishment of a Community News Division at Nā Leo TV. This new division will provide Hawai'i Island residents – particularly youth and emerging journalists – with structured training and hands-on experience in the fundamentals of broadcast journalism. Training will include reporting, interviewing, research, ethics, storytelling, and production, with a focus on neighborhood-level issues and human interest stories that reflect the lived experiences of Hawai'i Island communities.

The Community News Division is designed to respond to the growing “news desert” conditions affecting neighbor island communities. At the same time, it embraces a “news garden” approach, cultivating locally rooted stories that matter to residents and allowing community voices to flourish. By placing the tools of communication directly into the hands of the people, this initiative supports self-representation, cultural expression, and the creation of locally relevant news, information, and dialogue. It empowers residents to engage more deeply with their communities while providing a meaningful alternative to mainstream commercial content.

As media ownership consolidates and decision-making becomes increasingly centralized, local news coverage has declined, particularly outside of O'ahu. Hawai'i Island lacks a strong, locally grounded media identity. Print outlets are owned by a single corporation that often recycles content across publications, while most broadcast news operations are based on O'ahu. As a result, Hawai'i Island stories are underreported, oversimplified, or framed through an external lens that does not reflect community realities. In an era marked by polarization, misinformation, and declining trust in traditional media, community-driven journalism is both timely and essential.

When Hawai'i Island coverage does occur, it is frequently limited to crises or negative events, reinforcing the "if it bleeds, it leads" narrative. This narrow focus overlooks local solutions, cultural heritage, community resilience, innovation, and everyday civic life, contributing to public disengagement, misinformation, and a weakened sense of shared responsibility for community well-being.

The Community News Division will counter these trends by cultivating a boots-on-the-ground, community-powered journalism model grounded in the belief that:

- Local news is essential to meaningful participation in civic life;
- A healthy local news ecosystem strengthens connection and sense of community;
- People can understand complex issues and make informed decisions when given the tools to analyze, discuss, and contextualize information; and
- Bringing people of different backgrounds and perspectives together around shared information builds trust and supports collective problem-solving.

Through this initiative, NLTV will train residents to elevate community concerns, document lived experiences, identify solutions, and tell stories that reflect the full spectrum of Hawai'i Island life, supporting both democratic participation and workforce skill development.

3. The public purpose and need to be served;

The Community News Division serves a clear public purpose by strengthening community storytelling, local documentation, and civic connection across Hawai'i Island. By expanding access to relevant, hyperlocal information, this initiative supports informed public dialogue, democratic participation, and community problem-solving.

This initiative amplifies voices that are often excluded from or underrepresented in mainstream media while preserving community knowledge, cultural memory, and local history. In doing so, the division fosters a more engaged, informed, and connected public.

Hawai'i Island faces a significant gap in consistent, neighborhood-level news gathering and information sharing. Many residents lack access to coverage that reflects local priorities, lived experiences, and community-driven solutions. This absence of locally rooted journalism contributes to civic disengagement, misinformation, and a disconnect between residents and the issues that directly affect their daily lives. At the same time, there is a growing need for media literacy,

critical thinking, and storytelling skills to navigate an increasingly complex and polarized information environment.

The Community News Division responds to these needs by equipping residents with the skills, tools, and platforms necessary to research issues responsibly, develop accurate and ethical stories, and share information that strengthens community decision-making and resilience. By centering local voices and experiences, the initiative builds trust, supports civic engagement, and reinforces the public's capacity to shape its own narrative and future.

4. Describe the target population to be served; and

The primary target population for the Community News Division is Hawai'i Island residents, served through an islandwide approach with two interconnected areas of focus:

1. Youth and Schools: NLTV will partner with schools, educators, and youth-serving organizations to build early foundations in civic awareness, journalism, and media literacy, preparing young people to participate actively in community life, develop critical thinking and communication skills, and explore pathways to careers in media and related fields.
2. Community-at-Large: The program will engage residents of all ages, backgrounds, and communities in community reporting, storytelling, and local news production, ensuring that diverse perspectives and lived experiences inform public dialogue and decision-making.

5. Describe the geographic coverage.

The Community News Division will operate from NLTV's primary production studios in Hilo and Kona, with strategic partnerships and trained community correspondents in more rural and underserved areas, including Puna, Ka'ū, Waimea, Kohala, Hāmākua, and Waikoloa. This distributed, islandwide model ensures broad access and representation across Hawai'i Island, reflecting the geographic, cultural, and economic diversity of its communities.

By decentralizing news gathering and empowering local contributors, the initiative strengthens community presence, responsiveness, and relevance in areas that are often underrepresented in traditional media coverage.

III. Service Summary and Outcomes

The Service Summary shall include a detailed discussion of the applicant's approach to the request. The applicant shall clearly and concisely specify the results, outcomes, and measures of effectiveness from this request. The applicant shall:

1. Describe the scope of work, tasks and responsibilities;

Nā Leo TV will establish and operate a Community News Division designed to function as an integrated education, workforce development, civic engagement, and rural equity initiative. The division will train residents in responsible, ethical, and community-centered journalism while producing consistent hyperlocal news content that reflects the lived realities of Hawai'i Island communities.

The scope of work includes program design, workforce training, content production, community engagement, and evaluation. Key tasks and responsibilities include:

Program Design and Governance (Workforce Development + Civic Engagement)

- Engage experienced local news journalists as consultants to assist with curriculum design, editorial standards, ethics guidelines, and newsroom workflows, ensuring alignment with professional journalism practices and public access values.
- Develop a Community News Division operational framework, including roles, responsibilities, production workflows, editorial review processes, and accountability protocols that balance journalistic rigor with community representation.
- Establish clear standards for accuracy, fairness, transparency, cultural sensitivity, and community accountability to promote trust and credibility.

Training and Capacity Building (Education + Workforce Development)

- Have dedicated staff with structured training to manage and oversee the Community News Division.
- Recruit and train youth and community members to serve as Community News Ambassadors, building transferable skills in communication, research, and critical thinking aligned with workforce readiness goals.
- Deliver instruction in news gathering and research, interviewing techniques, story development and scripting, media ethics and responsible reporting, production workflows for broadcast and digital platforms, and media literacy and critical analysis.
- Offer hands-on, project-based learning through mentored reporting assignments, newsroom-style collaboration, and real-world production experiences, reinforcing experiential education models.

Content Production and Distribution (Civic Engagement + Rural Equity)

- Produce consistent hyperlocal news segments and features focused on civic issues, community events, local challenges and solutions, cultural

heritage, and public interest topics.

- Distribute content through NLTV's broadcast channels, digital platforms, and partner networks to maximize public access and community reach.
- Ensure geographic and demographic representation from multiple regions and communities across Hawai'i Island.

Community Engagement and Partnerships (Education + Equity)

- Collaborate with schools, nonprofits, civic groups, and cultural organizations to identify story ideas, educational opportunities, and community priorities.
- Create accessible pathways for residents to contribute story leads, participate in reporting, or engage in public dialogue informed by community-based coverage.

Program Management and Oversight (Accountability + Compliance)

- Coordinate scheduling, assignments, training delivery, editorial review, participant mentorship, and content broadcast/distribution.
- Track participation, training completion, content outputs, and geographic reach.
- Ensure compliance with all grant requirements, fiscal accountability standards, reporting obligations.

2. Provide a projected annual timeline for accomplishing the results or outcomes of the service;

Quarter 1 – Planning and Program Development

- Engage journalism consultants and finalize program design.
- Develop curriculum, editorial standards, and training materials.
- Identify and prepare internal staff for program oversight.
- Begin outreach to potential Community News Ambassadors, schools, and community partners.

Quarter 2 – Training and Pilot Launch

- Conduct training sessions for staff and first cohort of Community News Ambassadors.
- Launch pilot reporting assignments with mentorship and editorial support.
- Produce initial hyperlocal news segments and features.
- Refine workflows based on early implementation feedback.

Quarter 3 – Expansion and Regular Production

- Transition from pilot phase to consistent content production.
- Expand geographic coverage and deepen topical reporting.

- Strengthen partnerships with schools and community organizations.
- Conduct mid-year evaluation and make program improvements.

Quarter 4 – Assessment and Sustainability Planning

- Continue regular news production and distribution.
- Evaluate program outcomes against established measures.
- Document lessons learned and best practices.
- Develop recommendations for program continuation, scaling, and long-term sustainability.

3. Describe its quality assurance and evaluation plans for the request. Specify how the applicant plans to monitor, evaluate, and improve their results; and

NLTV will implement a continuous improvement framework to ensure quality, effectiveness, community impact, and public trust.

Quality assurance measures include:

- Editorial review by trained staff and journalism consultants to ensure accuracy, balance, and ethical standards.
- Standardized production checklists and story approval workflows.
- Ongoing training refreshers and mentorship for participants.
- Regular internal reviews to assess content quality, consistency, and relevance.

Evaluation methods include:

- Tracking participation data, training completion, and content output.
- Monitoring content production volume, geographic coverage, and topic diversity.
- Collecting feedback from participants, partners, and viewers through surveys and structured interviews.
- Reviewing geographic and demographic representation in coverage.
- Conducting periodic staff and consultant assessments of program effectiveness.

Findings will be used to refine curriculum, improve workflows, strengthen community engagement, and enhance program impact.

4. List the measure(s) of effectiveness that will be reported to the State agency through which grant funds are appropriated (the expending agency). The measure(s) will provide a standard and objective way for the State to assess the program's achievement or accomplishment. Please note that if the level of appropriation differs from the amount included in

this application that the measure(s) of effectiveness will need to be updated and transmitted to the expending agency.

The following objective, reportable measures will be provided to the State agency through which grant funds are appropriated:

Workforce Development

- Number of Community News Ambassadors trained within the first year, with the goal of at least 12 residents who contribute news stories regularly.
- Number of training hours completed per participant.
- Percentage of participants demonstrating competency in core journalism and media production skills.

Content Production

- Number of hyperlocal news segments or stories produced and aired, with the goal of weekly 15-minute segments in Quarters 1 & 2, then increasing to 30-minute weekly segments in Quarters 3 & 4.
- Frequency of news programming distributed through NLTV broadcast and digital platforms.
- Number of communities or geographic regions represented in coverage.

Community Engagement

- Number of partnerships established with schools or community organizations within the first year of the program, with the goal of at least four schools and two islandwide community organizations contributing news stories regularly.
- Number of community-sourced story leads or contributions.
- Viewer or audience engagement metrics, where available.

Program Quality

- Percentage of content meeting established editorial and ethical standards.
- Participant and partner satisfaction ratings collected through surveys.

IV. Financial

Budget

1. The applicant shall submit a budget utilizing the enclosed budget forms as applicable, to detail the cost of the request.
 - a. Budget request by source of funds
 - b. Personnel salaries and wages

- c. Equipment and motor vehicles
- d. Capital project details
- e. Government contracts, grants, and grants in aid

(See attached budget documents.)

2. The applicant shall provide its anticipated quarterly funding requests for the fiscal year 2027.

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total Grant
\$400,000				\$400,000

3. The applicant shall provide a listing of all other sources of funding that they are seeking for fiscal year 2027.

Nā Leo TV is pursuing other sources of funding to include County of Hawai'i Waiwai GIA, corporation and private foundation grants totalling \$250,000.

4. The applicant shall provide a listing of all state and federal tax credits it has been granted within the prior three years. Additionally, the applicant shall provide a listing of all state and federal tax credits they have applied for or anticipate applying for pertaining to any capital project, if applicable.

N/A

5. The applicant shall provide a listing of all federal, state, and county government contracts, grants, and grants in aid it has been granted within the prior three years and will be receiving for fiscal year 2027 for program funding.

Nā Leo TV has received the following grants directly:

- FY 25 – Dept. of Research & Development Impact Grant – \$21,300 to provide a Creative Media Workshop series (Nov. 2025 - Sept. 2026)
- FY 25 – Kosasa Foundation – \$100,000 – to produce a mele and mo'olelo series (Sept. 2025 - Aug. 2026)
- FY 24 – Atherton Foundation – \$15,000 – for documentary production (Oct. 2024 - March 2025)

Nā Leo TV was a recipient of grant funding through strategic partnerships:

- FY 25 – Castle Foundation Hawai'i Youth Apprenticeship Network Design Sprint (Partner: 'Ewalu Industries) – \$6,750 for the development of a

pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship program in the creative industries (Aug. 2025 - Feb. 2026)

- FY 24 – P20 Workbased Learning Initiative (Subcontractor/Workforce Intermediary for Vibrant Hawai'i) – \$40,000 for youth initiatives including summer media camps and school presentations (Jan. 2025 - Dec. 2026)

6. The applicant shall provide the balance of its unrestricted current assets as of December 31, 2025.

\$781,608.01 (Unaudited Balance Sheet Entry)

V. Experience and Capability

1. Necessary Skills and Experience

The applicant shall demonstrate that it has the necessary skills, abilities, knowledge of, and experience relating to the request. State your experience and appropriateness for providing the service proposed in this application. The applicant shall also provide a listing of verifiable experience of related projects or contracts for the most recent three years that are pertinent to the request.

Nā Leo TV possesses the skills, institutional knowledge, technical capacity, and demonstrated experience necessary to successfully establish and operate a Community News Division serving Hawai'i Island.

For more than 30 years, NLTV has functioned as Hawai'i Island's community access television station, providing residents with training, facilities, equipment, and platforms to produce and distribute media in the public interest. The organization has deep expertise in broadcast operations, workforce development, and civic storytelling, core competencies that directly align with the proposed Community News Division. Across multiple initiatives, NLTV has demonstrated its ability to identify community and industry needs, mobilize professional experts, manage complex productions, and deliver hands-on learning that connects participants to real-world workforce and entrepreneurial opportunities.

Nā Leo 'O Hawai'i is governed by a Board of Directors, recognized leaders in business, government, and community:

- Chair – Mel Ventura, Hawai'i Community First FCU
- Vice-Chair – Wally Lau, Hawai'i Island Fentanyl Task Force
- Treasurer – Nancy Kelly, Former County of Hawai'i Budget Administrator
- Secretary – Audrey Takamine, Takamine Construction
- Board of Directors – Ross Birch (Mauna Lani), Aaron Chung (Attorney-at-Law), Ryan Kadota (Kadota Liquor), Micah Kane (Parker Ranch),

Ka'iu Kimura ('Imiloa Astronomy Center), Barret Otani (Waiākea Elementary),
Jennifer Zelko-Schleuter (Hawaiian Electric)

The following projects from the most recent three years demonstrate NLTV's direct experience and capacity relevant to the establishment and operation of a Community News Division:

- Production Assistant (PA) Bootcamp (2025). NLTV developed and delivered a Production Assistant Bootcamp in partnership with IATSE Local 665 and professional production companies to prepare Hawai'i Island residents for employment on the television series *Temptation Island*. The program provided structured, industry-informed training in set operations, professional conduct, teamwork, and production workflows. Of 23 participants, 10 were hired directly into PA roles.
Relevance: This program demonstrates NLTV's ability to design industry-aligned training, engage professional partners, and transition participants into real-world production environments, an essential model for preparing Community News Ambassadors for newsroom-style reporting, field production, and professional journalism practices.
- Technical Training Workshops (2024 - Current). NLTV has delivered a series of technical training workshops covering advanced lighting, live sports broadcasting, and sports hosting/commentary. These workshops expanded the local talent pool capable of supporting NLTV's award-winning high school sports broadcasts and other live productions.
Relevance: The workshops demonstrate NLTV's capacity to train residents in time-sensitive, technically complex broadcast environments, skills directly transferable to live or deadline-driven community news production.
- Revamped Community Creators Certification (2025 + Ongoing). NLTV refreshed its core Community Creators Certification program to strengthen foundational competencies in camera operation, editing, and basic storytelling. In conjunction, NLTV launched "NLTV Monthlies," a recurring initiative designed to build confidence among new creators, maintain engagement with certified creators, and foster year-round connection with the creative community.
Relevance: This initiative illustrates NLTV's ability to build structured learning pathways, reinforce media literacy, and sustain ongoing participation, key components of a Community News Division that relies on trained, engaged, and accountable community contributors.

- Youth Media Opportunities (2024 - Current). In 2024, NLTV launched the Youth Media Challenge, providing youth the opportunity to have PSAs, short films, and digital artwork recognized through an annual competition. In 2025, NLTV designed and implemented one-week Summer Media Camps for middle and high school students focused on hands-on creative production using iPads. Participants learned to create public service announcements and digital art while developing skills in project management, client engagement, and public presentation. Students worked with local nonprofits, businesses, and government agencies and presented their work to live audiences.

Relevance: These programs demonstrate NLTV's strength in youth engagement, civic-oriented storytelling, and experiential education—directly supporting the proposed division's focus on early civic awareness, media literacy, and youth journalism pathways.

- Internship Programs. NLTV offers flexible, customized internship experiences for high school and college students ranging from one to four months. Interns receive mentorship, contribute to active productions, and build professional portfolios, leaving the program with increased confidence and readiness to create and innovate.

Relevance: This model provides a proven framework for integrating trainees into active production environments, mirroring how Community News Ambassadors will gain real-world journalism experience under professional supervision.

- Work-Based Learning Opportunities. Recognizing the technical and collaborative nature of media work, NLTV has prioritized learning-by-doing. Community members and youth creators regularly participate in NLTV productions, including live broadcasts, ongoing program series, documentaries, and podcasts.

Relevance: This approach directly aligns with newsroom-style training, field reporting, and content production essential to a functioning community news operation.

Nā Leo TV is uniquely positioned to deliver the proposed Community News Division due to its:

- Established broadcast infrastructure and islandwide facilities.
- Experienced professional staff and leadership, supported by a robust network of industry experts engaged for specialized projects.
- Trusted relationships with communities, schools, and public institutions.

- Proven ability to manage grant funds, comply with reporting requirements, and deliver measurable outcomes.
- Mission alignment with State priorities in education, workforce development, civic engagement, and rural equity.

This combination of experience, capacity, and community trust ensures that NLTV can successfully implement the proposed service and deliver meaningful, measurable outcomes aligned with State priorities and public purpose.

2. Facilities

The applicant shall provide a description of its facilities and demonstrate its adequacy in relation to the request. If facilities are not presently available, describe plans to secure facilities.

Nā Leo TV operates fully equipped production facilities in both Hilo (East Hawai'i) and Kona (West Hawai'i), providing islandwide access to professional media infrastructure. These facilities are currently operational and are fully adequate to support the establishment and ongoing operation of the proposed Community News Division. No additional facilities are required to initiate the project.

Hilo Facility (East Hawai'i)

The Hilo facility serves as NLTV's primary production and training hub and includes:

- Studio A, a large, flexible space suitable for broadcast productions, public forums, screenings, industry mixers, and community meetings and presentations;
- Studio B, designed for smaller productions, includes a green screen, and paired with an adjacent live mix control room;
- A Mini Podcast Room and a Podcast Lounge for interview-based programming and audio storytelling;
- Four edit bays equipped for professional post-production;
- A professional kitchen to support in-studio cooking shows;
- A full inventory of camera, audio, and lighting equipment available for checkout by trained community creators; and
- A mobile live-broadcast trailer stationed at the Hilo facility and deployed islandwide to support live broadcast events.

Kona Facility (West Hawai'i)

The Kona facility provides complementary production capacity and serves as a critical access point for West Hawai'i communities. It includes:

- A large bullpen space suitable for trainings, meetings, and community gatherings;
- A mini theater for review of work and more intensive trainings;

- A dedicated podcast stage, and professional sound studio for audio and multimedia production;
- Multiple edit bays and production rooms for video and audio work;
- A variety of flexible spaces to support small- and mid-scale productions; and
- A full complement of camera and production equipment available to community creators.

The Kona facility also houses The Wave at 92FM, providing additional broadcast infrastructure and opportunities for radio and audio journalism training that complement the Community News Division's goals.

Facility Adequacy & Readiness

Together, NLTV's Hilo and Kona facilities provide the technical capacity, geographic reach, and flexibility necessary to support newsroom operations, journalism training, content production, and distribution. The combination of fixed studios, mobile broadcast capability, edit suites, and equipment checkout ensures that community news production can occur both in-studio and in the field across Hawai'i Island.

NLTV currently possesses all required facilities, equipment, and technical infrastructure to carry out the proposed project. As such, no facility acquisition or construction is anticipated as part of this request.

VI. Personnel: Project Organization and Staffing

1. Proposed Staffing, Staff Qualifications, Supervision and Training

The applicant shall describe the proposed staffing pattern and proposed service capacity appropriate for the viability of the request. The applicant shall provide the qualifications and experience of personnel for the request and shall describe its ability to supervise, train and provide administrative direction relative to the request.

Nā Leo TV proposes a staffing structure that is scalable, regionally distributed, and professionally supervised, ensuring the viability of the Community News Division while maintaining high standards of journalism, fiscal accountability, and public service. The proposed staffing pattern leverages existing organizational leadership and infrastructure, supplemented by part-time regional managers and professional consultants, to support consistent islandwide content production and workforce development.

Leadership & Program Oversight

Ashley Kierkiewicz, President & CEO, will provide executive oversight for the launch and operation of the Community News Division, ensuring alignment with NLTV's mission, strategic priorities, and State public purpose. Responsibilities

include overall project management, partner engagement, and high-level supervision of program leadership. To further strengthen program quality, the President & CEO is in the process of obtaining a Modern Journalism Certificate from New York University, which will directly inform curriculum development, ethics standards, and training design for the Community News Division.

Kyle Kawano, Executive VP, and Cheryl Matsumura, Business Manager, will oversee all fiscal and administrative aspects of the project, including budgeting, financial controls, grant compliance, and reporting to the State expending agency.

Production & Training Support

David Alvarez, Director of Production, will ensure that NLTV's production staff, facilities, and equipment are fully prepared to support the Community News Division. Responsibilities include ensuring technical training for Community News Ambassadors, with a focus on camera operation, lighting, audio capture, editing workflows, and effective b-roll techniques, ensuring participants are trained in professional production standards and can reliably deliver broadcast-ready content.

The following individuals will be scheduled to provide technical training:

- Chris Parayno, Production Supervisor
- Richard Gonzalez, Senior Producer
- JE Orozco, Producer & Outreach Ambassador
- Jasmine Gardner, Producer
- Jeremy Kalima, Social Media Manager
- Lia-Lucine Cary, Producer & Outreach Ambassador
- Ke'ala Kekaulua, Producer & Outreach Ambassador
- Lehia Coloma, Producer & Outreach Ambassador

Regional Program Management & Service Capacity

Community News Division Managers (Part-Time; Four Positions): NLTV will employ four part-time Community News Division Managers, each assigned to a specific region: Hilo, Kona, Ka'ū, and North Hawai'i. These managers will provide direct supervision and mentorship to Community News Ambassadors within their regions. Responsibilities include:

- Supporting ambassadors in identifying, developing, and producing stories;
- Ensuring adherence to editorial standards, deadlines, and ethical guidelines;
- Coordinating regional coverage to reflect diverse community priorities; and
- Partnering with one school in their assigned region to support student-generated news content and early civic journalism experiences.

This distributed management model strengthens rural equity, ensures geographic representation, and increases NLTV's service capacity by embedding support directly within communities.

Community Contributors & Workforce Pipeline

NLTV's service capacity includes training a cohort of 12 regular Community News Ambassadors islandwide who will contribute content on a weekly basis.

Ambassadors may include youth, emerging journalists, and community members. Participation begins with training and mentorship; stipends are provided only after individuals demonstrate proficiency in journalism ethics, storytelling, and production standards. This competency-based approach ensures quality, accountability, and workforce readiness while providing meaningful pathways into journalism and media careers.

Professional Expertise & Quality Assurance

Project Consultants (Local News Journalists): NLTV will engage experienced local news journalists with Hawai'i Island roots as project consultants to support program design, deliver training on broadcast journalism standards, and provide ongoing mentorship to both Community News Division Managers and Ambassadors. Consultants will assist with editorial review, ethics guidance, and quality assurance, ensuring that all content meets high professional standards while remaining community-centered and culturally responsive.

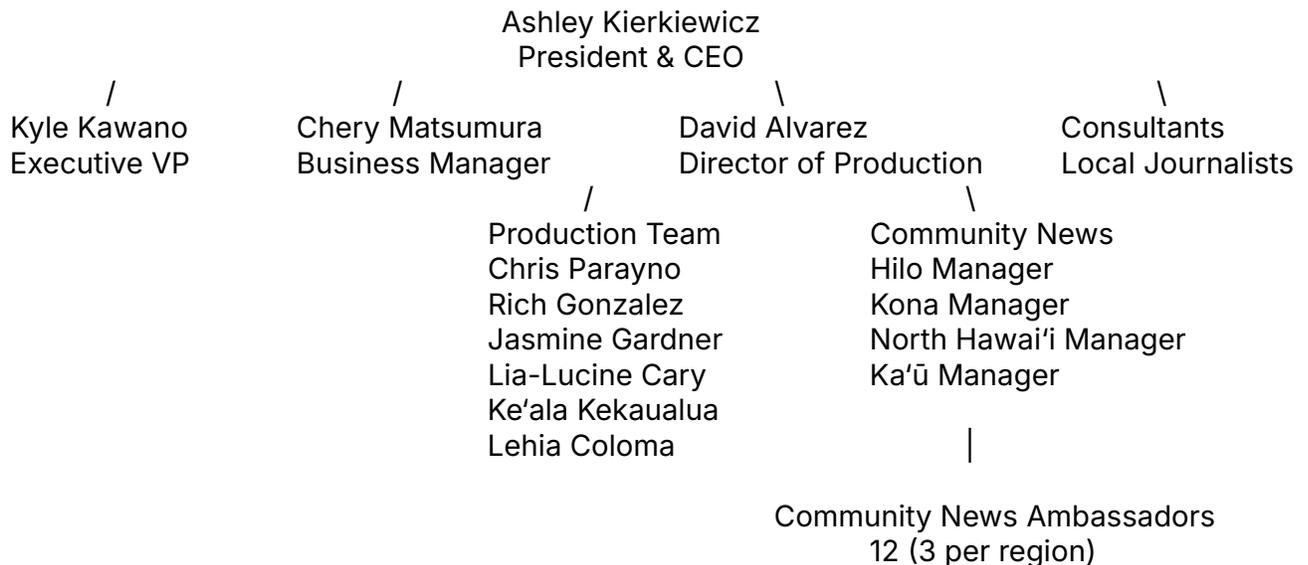
Supervision, Training, and Administrative Direction

NLTV has demonstrated capacity to supervise and administer complex, multi-faceted programs. Clear reporting lines will be maintained:

- Community News Ambassadors report to Regional Community News Division Managers;
- Managers and the Director of Production report to the President & CEO;
- Fiscal oversight and compliance are managed by the Executive VP & Business Manager.

2. Organization Chart

The applicant shall illustrate the position of each staff and line of responsibility/supervision. If the request is part of a large, multi-purpose organization, include an organization chart that illustrates the placement of this request.



3. Compensation

The applicant shall provide an annual salary range paid by the applicant to the three highest paid officers, directors, or employees of the organization by position title, not employee name.

Position	Annual Salary Range
President & CEO	\$120,000 - \$140,000
Executive Vice-President	\$60,000 - \$80,000
Director of Production	\$60,000 - \$80,000

VII. Other

1. Litigation

The applicant shall disclose any pending litigation to which they are a party, including the disclosure of any outstanding judgement. If applicable, please explain.

There is no pending litigation.

2. Licensure or Accreditation

The applicant shall specify any special qualifications, including but not limited to licensure or accreditation that the applicant possesses relevant to this request.

Nā Leo 'O Hawai'i is the Public, Education & Government Public Access Television Station designated by the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs to operate and provide content for three unique television channels on the Island of Hawai'i. Nā Leo 'O Hawai'i is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

3. Private Educational Institutions

The applicant shall specify whether the grant will be used to support or benefit a sectarian or non-sectarian private educational institution. Please see [Article X, Section 1, of the State Constitution](#) for the relevance of this question.

Not applicable.

4. Future Sustainability Plan

The applicant shall provide a plan for sustaining after fiscal year 2027 the activity funded by the grant if the grant of this application is:

- (a) Received by the applicant for fiscal year 2027, but**
- (b) Not received by the applicant thereafter.**

If Nā Leo TV receives Grant-in-Aid funding for Fiscal Year 2027 but does not receive continued State support thereafter, the organization will sustain the Community News Division through a diversified strategy focused on institutionalization, revenue development, and scalable service delivery.

This request represents the design and launch of a new initiative. The FY2026 investment will fund the foundational program elements, including curriculum development, staffing structure, training, and pilot-year operations, so that the Community News Division can transition into a stable and enduring component of NLTV's core public service mission.

NLTV will pursue the following sustainability strategies:

- Diversification of funding sources – NLTV will actively pursue complementary funding to sustain the division, including: Federal, State, and private grants aligned with education, workforce development, civic engagement, and rural equity; corporate foundation grants and philanthropic partnerships supporting local journalism, youth development, and media literacy; and sponsorships and underwriting from local businesses and mission-aligned partners.
- Partnership-Based Support and Cost Sharing – NLTV will formalize partnerships with schools, nonprofits, and civic institutions to support ongoing training and content production through shared resources, in-kind contributions, and collaborative programming.
- Earned Revenue & Program Integration – Where appropriate, NLTV will incorporate earned revenue opportunities, such as workforce training workshops, facility rentals, underwriting, and fee-for-service production contracts, to strengthen organizational cash flow and support operational costs of the division.
- Scaled Operations & Phased Growth – If future external funding is reduced, NLTV will sustain the Community News Division through a scalable model that prioritizes core outputs (training and weekly hyperlocal reporting) and adjusts cohort size, production volume, or geographic expansion based on available resources.

BUDGET REQUEST BY SOURCE OF FUNDS

Period: July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025

Applicant: Nā Leo 'O Hawai'i

BUDGET CATEGORIES	Total State Funds Requested (a)	Total Federal Funds Requested (b)	Total County Funds Requested (c)	Total Private/Other Funds Requested (d)
A. PERSONNEL COST				
1. Salaries - 4 Community News Div. Mgrs.	145,600			
2. Payroll Taxes & Assessments	12,124			
3. Fringe Benefits	42,272			
TOTAL PERSONNEL COST	199,996			
B. OTHER CURRENT EXPENSES				
1. Airfare, Inter-Island				
2. Insurance				
3. Lease/Rental of Equipment				
4. Lease/Rental of Space				
5. Staff Training - Journalist Consultants	50,000			
6. Supplies				
7. Telecommunication				
8. Utilities				
9. Ambassador Stipends	150,000			
10.				
11. Indirect Costs (10% of grant)	40,000			
12 (Grants Mgmt + Technical Support)				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				
TOTAL OTHER CURRENT EXPENSES	240,000			
C. EQUIPMENT PURCHASES				
D. MOTOR VEHICLE PURCHASES				
E. CAPITAL				
TOTAL (A+B+C+D+E)	439,996			
SOURCES OF FUNDING		Budget Prepared By:		
(a) Total State Funds Requested		Kyle Kawano	(808) 935-8874	
(b) Total Federal Funds Requested		Name (Please type or print)	Phone	
(c) Total County Funds Requested			Jan. 22, 2026	
(d) Total Private/Other Funds Requested		Signature of Authorized Official	Date	
TOTAL BUDGET	439,996	Ashley Kierkiewicz, President & CEO		
		Name and Title (Please type or print)		

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - EQUIPMENT AND MOTOR VEHICLES

Period: July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025

Applicant: Nā Leo 'O Hawai'i

DESCRIPTION EQUIPMENT	NO. OF ITEMS	COST PER ITEM	TOTAL COST	TOTAL BUDGETED
N/A			\$ -	
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
TOTAL:				

JUSTIFICATION/COMMENTS:

DESCRIPTION OF MOTOR VEHICLE	NO. OF VEHICLES	COST PER VEHICLE	TOTAL COST	TOTAL BUDGETED
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
TOTAL:				

JUSTIFICATION/COMMENTS:

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - CAPITAL PROJECT DETAILS

Period: July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025

Applicant: Nā Leo 'O Hawai'i

N/A

FUNDING AMOUNT REQUESTED						
TOTAL PROJECT COST	ALL SOURCES OF FUNDS RECEIVED IN PRIOR YEARS		STATE FUNDS REQUESTED	OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDS REQUESTED	FUNDING REQUIRED IN SUCCEEDING YEARS	
	FY: 2022-2023	FY: 2023-2024	FY: 2024-2025	FY: 2024-2025	FY: 2025-2026	FY: 2026-2027
PLANS						
LAND ACQUISITION						
DESIGN						
CONSTRUCTION						
EQUIPMENT						
TOTAL:						
JUSTIFICATION/COMMENTS:						

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS, GRANTS, AND / OR GRANTS IN AID

Applicant: Nā Leo 'O Hawai'i

Contracts Total:

61,300

	CONTRACT DESCRIPTION	EFFECTIVE DATES	AGENCY	GOVERNMENT ENTITY (U.S./State/Hawaii/ Honolulu/ Kauai/ Maui County)	CONTRACT VALUE
1	Dept. of Research & Development - Impact Grant	11/2025 - 09/2026	County of Hawai'i	Hawai'i	21,300
2	Workforce Intermediary Partner - P20	01/2025 - 12/2026	HIDOE (sub for Vibrant Hawai'i) - State		40,000
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					
21					
22					
23					
24					
25					
26					
27		10			Application for Grants