
Connecticut Early Childhood Funder Collaborative

A project of:



Strengthening Local Early Childhood Collaboration

Request for Proposals

January 15, 2020

Organizational capacity & project support to strengthen local birth to age 5 systems

The CT Early Childhood Funder Collaborative (CT ECFC), a project of CT Council for Philanthropy is accepting proposals from **existing** local early childhood collaboratives (LECCs) as defined in the scoring rubric (such as STRIVE, Cradle to Career Coalitions, School Readiness Councils, former Discovery Early Childhood Collaboratives, DCF/Head Start Collaboratives, and Health Enhancement Community Collaboratives, etc.) for both operational and project support to strengthen organizational capacity and implement birth to age 5 system projects. Successful applicants will also be introduced to Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) training to enhance their planning, implementation and evaluation efforts.

“The project described is supported by the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Initiative (PDG B-5), Grant Number 90TP0041-01-00, from the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Office of Child Care, the Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.”

It is recognized that these grants have a short duration for implementation due to Federal deadlines. The Office of Early Childhood was recently awarded a three-year Federal Preschool Development Grant to continue this work. A second round of funding is planned for Spring 2020.

Proposals must be submitted in the form and manner specified in Section B to: codonnell@ctphilanthropy.org.

Proposals will be accepted **until 5:00 p.m.** Eastern Standard Time ("EST") **Friday, February 7, 2020**
No proposals will be accepted after that time.

Detailed instructions for proposal submission are listed in Section 3.

Questions should be submitted in writing to Carol O'Donnell, executive director, CT ECFC, codonnell@ctphilanthropy.org no later than Monday, February 3, 2020. Responses that are applicable to multiple applicants will be posted here: [CT Childrens Collective](#).

Section 1. Introduction

Local collaboratives focused on young children and their families exist in more than 30 communities across the state. Many of these were initiated with the support of the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund through its Discovery initiative and focus on children birth to age 8. Others are School Readiness Councils established by PA 97-259 and charged with coordinating programs and services for young children or emerged from the DCF/Head Start meetings. Other communities focus on young children as part of a continuum of coordinated supports through ages 18-24 (e.g., STRIVE or cradle to career coalitions). Over the last two decades, these entities have convened a broad range of interests committed to young children and their families including preschools, social service agencies, city and school officials, family child care providers, parents and philanthropy to better coordinate programs and services and implement systems solutions.

The CT Office of Early Childhood (OEC) recognizes the critical importance of these local collaboratives to the state's early childhood system. This recognition is evidenced in funding being included in the federal Preschool Development Birth to Five Grant (PDG) from the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services for operational and project support for strengthening local early childhood collaboratives. The OEC awarded funding to the CT ECFC due to the CT ECFC's deep knowledge and commitment to the local collaboratives. CT ECFC is a project of CT Council for Philanthropy.

Grant funding in an amount up to \$30,000 for either operational or operational and project support will be awarded. It is anticipated that 20-25 grants will be awarded with available funds. **Only one grant per community will be awarded.**

Section 2. Scope of Work

Eligibility: Existing local early childhood collaboratives (LECCs) can apply for operational support to strengthen their organizational capacity and can also seek project support to implement early childhood birth to age 5 system building projects. It is not necessary to apply for project support if the applicant does not have a project ready to be launched in the short timeframe. Eligible entities can serve a broader age range but the funding available through this RFP is focused on birth to age 5 with an emphasis on broader systems coordination across multiple sectors and partners including health, behavioral health, education and social services.

Definition: B-5 Early Childhood State System per the federal Preschool Development Grant. -- The term "B-5 Early Childhood State System" refers to core early childhood care and education programs, including the Child Care and Development Fund and state child care, which may include center-based, family child care and informal care providers; Early Head Start and Head Start; the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, and other state or locally funded home visiting services; Part C and Section 619 of Part B of IDEA; state preschool programs; and programs funded by Title I of the ESEA. In addition, it also includes a wide range of early childhood care and education programs and services that strengthen, engage, and stabilize families and their infants and young children including supports that target health and wellness, such as Medicaid; the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP); Title V Maternal and Child Health Programs; Healthy Start; Child and Adult Care Food Program

(CACFP); the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); and the infrastructure components that support these programs and services.

A. Operational funding

Eligible expenses include additional hours for existing or new staff, consultation, grant writing/fund development, marketing/communication, staff/board leadership training, data collection and related efforts. Funds must be expended **by June 30, 2020** and should relate directly to the following three areas of focus:

- 1) strengthening the LECC's efforts to build organizational capacity including increasing racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity of leadership in the collaborative
- 2) incorporating family partnership and feedback into collaborative decisions
- 3) increasing cross-system orientation of existing efforts to better include partners from all critical areas of support including early care and education, housing, home visiting, Medicaid and health care, child welfare, employment, and assistance programs (SNAP, TANF, etc.).

B. Project Support

Funds can be used to launch and/or expand specific projects that align with one of the three areas of focus (see above). Additional areas of project support are:

- 1) Increasing referral and service coordination partnerships between local child care, home visiting, Birth to Three providers, Child Development Infoline, healthcare services, WIC offices, homeless shelters, etc. w
- 2) Increasing inclusion of historically underserved families in the Birth to Five system

Given the timeline for fund expenditure, these should be *existing efforts* that can be expanded or proposed projects where design and planning are complete such that implementation can commence with funds expended **by June 30, 2020**.

Project Timetable: March 1, 2020 – June 30, 2020

(A future RFP with additional/continuing funds will be released in Spring 2020 with funds from the next Federal Preschool Development Grant recently awarded to the state.)

Section 3. **Instructions to Applicants**

A. What to Submit

1. Applicant Information
 2. Project narrative (2-3 page maximum)
 3. Budget (form attached)
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1. **Applicant Information** - Shall include the following:
 - a. Name of local collaborative including fiscal sponsor, where appropriate
 - b. Permanent main office address
 - c. Name, telephone number, email address, and physical address of the person to be contacted for the purpose of clarifying information
 - d. Date collaborative established
 - e. IRS determination letter with tax identification number(s)
 - f. Name, title, email address for individual legally authorized to enter into a contract
 - g. List of collaborative board members, affiliations, race/ethnicity
 - h. Current budget for the LECC noting revenue/sources and expenses
 - i. If applicable, Attachment B signed by the fiscal sponsor

2. **Project narrative:** (2-3 page maximum)
 - a. Collaborative overview
 - 1) Describe your collaborative's founding and mission as well as leadership, membership, birth to five system partnerships and current meeting structure and activities.
 - 2) What are your current priorities and major accomplishments both in terms of governance and operations to: 1) build a birth to 5 system by coordinating services across multiple sectors (e.g., health, social services); 2) address racial and ethnic disparities and promote equity and 3) advance parent voice and leadership in local decision making.
 - b. Operational support
 - 1) Describe your plans for the use of funds across all three operational focus areas listed in "Section 2, Operational Support". Describe and how the additional funds will strengthen your organization, advance your LECC's priorities, and how this funding will be a foundation for future efforts to build leadership reflective of your community? Identify key staff/consultants, their backgrounds and roles.
 - c. Project support
 - 1) Describe how additional funding for existing or "shovel ready" projects in one or more of the focus areas will enhance your collaborative's impact. Will you serve more children and families, improve the quality of the original project, address racial inequities in current programs or enhance coordination with other local efforts serving children birth to age 5? Include a brief project plan noting the major activities, key partners and major milestones. Identify key staff/consultants, their backgrounds and roles.

3. Budget

a. Format

- 1) Use the attached form (Attachment A) to note your expenditures.
- 2) Include 10 hours and travel expenses to attend Continuous Quality Improvement training sessions in Hartford and 8 hours to attend CT Children’s Collective meetings in Meriden. For further information on the CT Children’s Collective, a network of local councils serving young children and their families, go to: [CT Childrens Collective](#)
- 3) Identify other funds (cash and in-kind) supporting your efforts, where appropriate.

B. Form of Submission

1. Proposals shall be submitted as a single pdf (portable document format), identified on each page with the applicant’s name and the RFP title, signed by the chief executive or other authorized official and submitted to codonnell@ctphilanthropy.org **no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on February 7, 2020.**

C. Award

1. The Committee anticipates giving the successful applicants a Notice of Award within thirty (30) days of the deadline for proposal submission.

2. Successful applicants will be notified by email and will be required to execute a contract with the CT Council for Philanthropy, a tax-exempt organization under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)3 nonprofit. Funding will be processed upon receipt of the signed contract.

Section 4.

Evaluation and Selection Criteria

Representatives of the CT Office of Early Childhood, academia and others with a deep knowledge of CT’s early childhood system will review the proposals using the following rubric:

Criteria	Points
Eligibility: Applicant is an early childhood collaborative by evidence of 1) established leadership and membership; 2) has regular meetings or activities to support collaboration at the local level between programs that serve families with young children and 3) has the ability to receive funding either through their own non-profit status or through a fiduciary organization.	Eligible yes/no.
Comprehensive Collaborative: Collaborative structure, partners, and activities reflect the full range of birth to five system (see definition on page 2)	20 points
Alignment with Existing Community Priorities and Plans: Proposal demonstrates funded activities align with existing community needs, priorities and plans.	10 points
Operational Focus Area 1: Clearly describes and has reasonable costs for activities to strengthen the LECC’s efforts to build organizational capacity including increasing racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity of leadership in the collaborative.	15 points
Operational Focus Area 2: Clearly describes and has reasonable costs for activities to incorporate family partnership and feedback into collaborative decision-making.	15 points
Operational Focus Areas 3: Clearly describes and has reasonable costs for activities to increase cross-system orientation of collaborative to better include partners from all critical areas of the birth to five system (see definition on page 2).	20 points
Feasibility of Proposed Activities: Proposal demonstrates that activities (operation and project support) can be reasonably expected to be completed by grant end date and account for short duration of this round of funding.	20 points
TOTAL	100

Attachment A

Budget

Local ECE capacity building	Applicant:	
		Explanation (e.g., cost per hour, etc.)
Personnel (name, title, # of hours, hourly rate)		
Fringe Benefits (total personnel costs x %)		
Travel (mileage x .585), parking, etc.		
Equipment		
Supplies		
Contractual: (name of contractor or subgrantee, # of hours, cost per hour)		
Total Proposed Budget	0	

**Attachment B
Fiscal Sponsor Form**

Local Collaborative: _____

Fiscal Sponsor: _____

The Fiscal Sponsor has reviewed and understands the responsibilities and essential qualifications for supporting the community collaborative listed above.

1. RESPONSIBILITIES

- Receive and manage grant resources at the direction of the local collaborative
- Provide the local collaborative with the staffing and other support services that are necessary in support of collaborative actions
- Administer the grant award
- Serve as one of the primary contacts for the grant

2. QUALIFICATIONS

- 501 (c) 3 status
- Fiscally sound and responsible
- Experience in the management of subcontracts for services, multiple interagency agreements and cross agency staff management and redeployment
- Capacity and willingness to provide financial reports in a timely manner

As Fiscal Sponsor, the undersigned agrees to accept the responsibility for supporting the collaborative in their management of the grant from the CT Early Childhood Funder Collaborative/CT Council for Philanthropy.

Authorized Signatory's Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature

Date

SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTATION WITH THIS SIGNED AGREEMENT

IRS 501(c) 3 Determination Letter

Current budget noting revenue/sources and expenses

List of Board Members