

BVCS EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FUNDING GUIDELINES

Vision – Every child beginning at birth will be healthy and successful.

Mission – To improve the quality of life for children & families by strongly supporting safe environments, lifelong learning, and facilitating a coordinated system for community services.

Guiding Principles:

- Develop partnerships to improve communication, cooperation, and collaboration
- Provide opportunities that are innovative and creative
- Be culturally sensitive
- Utilize best practices to enhance quality
- Be future oriented

BVCS Early Childhood Iowa Community Plan - Identified Community Priorities:

- Mental Health for a Young Child's Development
- Quality, Affordability, and Accessibility of Child Care & Preschool
- Accessible Health Services for Children
- Building, Connecting, and Education about Community Services

The Board determined the areas of need identified through a community assessment, Community Plan and BVCS Early Childhood Iowa Board Strategic Plan. Needs were grouped as follows:

- ***Mental Health for a Young Child's Development***
 - Available Resource Information
 - Safe and Stable Homes for Children
 - Knowledge of Child Developmental Milestones
 - Child Developmental Screenings
 - In-Home Parent Education
- ***Quality Childcare and Preschools***
 - Available Resource Information
 - Child Behavior/Emotional Supportive Services
 - Child Care Homes/Centers
 - Quality Environments
 - Preschool Programs
- ***Accessible Health Services***
 - Child Developmental Screenings
 - Children's Health Services
 - Dental Care for Young Children
 - Prenatal Education/Care for Expecting Moms
- ***Building, Connecting, and Education about Community Services***
 - Networking among providers, business, and community leaders
 - Collaborative efforts within early childhood stakeholders

Early Childhood Funding Guidelines: These funds shall be used to increase the quality and capacity of child care environments. Child care environments are registered child development homes, DHS licensed child care centers and legally operating non-registered child care homes.

Examples of the type of activities allowable include but are not limited to:

- Quality Child Care Environments including:
 - Child care consultants, technical assistance
 - Child Care resource and referral services
 - Child care nurse consultants, health and safety considerations
 - Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) and national accreditation supports
 - Environmental rating scale supports (ITERS, ECERS)
- Curriculum supports
- Emotional/behavioral supports
 - Early Childhood – Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (EC-PBIS)
- Quality improvement incentives and business practice supports
 - Business Investment Program (refer to state ECI website for additional information: <https://earlychildhood.iowa.gov/toolkit>)
- Business practice supports
 - National Accreditation Commission (NAC)
 - First Children's Finance
 - Iowa Small Business Development Centers (aka: America's SBDC Iowa)
- Skilled Child Care workforce
 - Professional development (refer to the Early Childhood Iowa Performance Measures for more information about types of professional development).
 - Certificates and educational degrees
 - ChildNet certification
 - Child Development Associate (CDA)
 - Program for Infant and Toddler Care (PITC)
 - T.E.A.C.H.
 - Associate and bachelor's degrees in child development/early childhood education

Estimated funding available for Early Childhood Program Services: \$98,530.00

Contingent on funding allocation from the Early Childhood Iowa.

School Ready Funding Guidelines: The purpose of funds is to support a comprehensive school ready child plan. There are many programs, services, and activities a board may fund to support children prenatal through age 5 and their families based on a comprehensive need's assessment and the area's community plan.

General Aid: The purpose of these funds is to support the early care, health and education for children prenatal through age five and their families based on a comprehensive needs' assessment and the area's community plan.

- Demonstrate the effectiveness of programs, services and activities funded through performance measures.

- Early Childhood Iowa Area boards are to support:
 - Preschool services for children at risk and
 - Family support services and parent education programs.

Preschool Programming Support for At-Risk Families:

- Funding is used to help families whose income is up to 200% of the federal poverty guidelines with tuition for preschool that is not covered under Iowa Code chapter 256C, Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children.
- Based on the board's comprehensive needs assessment and community plan, the board can also fund supportive services for preschools.
- Children ages three, four or five, who are not attending kindergarten, are eligible.
- If sufficient funding is available after addressing the needs of families that meet the income eligibility requirement, the board may provide tuition assistance to families over 200% of the federal poverty guidelines using a sliding scale or other copayment provision. See Tool CC for more information.

Family Support Prenatal through Five:

Boards are strongly encouraged to support programs implementing evidence-based family support and parent education practices. See Tool FF for more information. The school ready funds used for family support services and parent education programs must be used to directly support individuals who function in the role of parents. Sixty percent of state funds that the local board expends on family support programming must include a home visitation component.

Family support programs are classified into three categories:

- Long-Term Home Visitation – program is designed to provide weekly or at a minimum of twice monthly, home visits to participating families. Services are designed to be provided over a period of at least one year or longer.
- Short-term Home Visitation – program is designed to provide services to participating families for less than one year. Typically, short-term home visitation programs have a singular focus which includes assessments to determine referrals to long-term or intensive home visitation programs.
- Group-based parent education – program is designed to provide a standardized curriculum in a group setting. A core function of a group-based parent education program is to facilitate peer support. Group-based parent education may last a minimum of six sessions or be provided through-out the year.

Estimated Funding for Family Support: \$340,000.00

Estimated Funding for Preschool Support: \$64,400.00

Estimated Funding for Other Services: 17,800.00

Contingent on funding allocation from the Early Childhood Iowa.

Quality Improvements: Boards are to use these funds to improve the quality of early care, health and education programs and services within the Early Childhood Iowa Area.

- Funding for staff to help the board meet administrative responsibilities associated with board member's roles and responsibilities in Iowa law.
- Align with the Early Childhood Iowa Area community plan and identified priorities.

- Evidence-based, quality practices and services, that positively affect outcome for children.
- Produce and document expected performance outcomes.
- Support quality improvement efforts.

Estimated Funding for Quality Services: The BVCS Early Childhood Iowa Board utilizes these funds to meet administrative responsibilities.

Budget Definitions:

Indirect Costs/Administration: Administrative costs are those that are incurred for common or joint objectives and therefore cannot be identified readily and specifically in regard to a particular program, but are nevertheless necessary to the operations of the organization. For example, the cost of operating and maintaining facilities, depreciation, fiscal agent, data management and supervisory support are generally treated as indirect costs. The applicant may charge an Administrative cost not to exceed 15%.

Salaries/Wages: Include agency staff that provide the program services directly related to the recipients being served (direct staff). Include base salary/hourly rate of direct staff, include any formulas used (hourly rate), include percent of time involved in this project - FTE (full time or part time equivalence).

Personnel Benefits: List any personnel benefits that are associated with the salary section. These could include Social Security, Workman's Compensation, Unemployment Compensation and/or Health Insurance.

Mileage/Travel: Mileage associated with providing a service of the program. BVCS Early Childhood Iowa will reimburse mileage at the programs established rate (State or Federal) based on the employers Policy/Procedures. Personal mileage for the commute to and from the office is not allowed. Travel includes costs for meals, lodging, ground transportation, airfare and/or mileage. While traveling instate a maximum reimbursement of \$75 plus taxes per night for lodging. Meals will be reimbursed at rates not to exceed \$8 for breakfast, \$9 for lunch and \$18 for dinner (no alcohol) and includes tax and tip up to 15%. Costs for out-of-state travel will be handled on a case-by-case basis. BVCS Early Childhood Iowa will reimburse the least expensive mode of transportation which will require written documentation reflecting that the lower rate was utilized.

Staff Professional Development: Registration fee to attend training and conferences to increase staff knowledge and capacity. (Travel expenses to attend training are to be placed in Travel category.)

Operational Expenses: Operating expenses must be listed separately, such as rent, telephone, office machine rental, postage, etc.

Program Supplies: Expendable office supplies, such as paper, pens, pencils, staples, etc. may be shown as a lump sum.

Contracted Services: Identify any contractual or consultant agreements that will be entered into as part of this grant to directly support implementation (e.g. transportation, child care). This section is not for services that indirectly support program operations. (e.g. accounting, data management). Provide an explanation of the contractor's or consultant's role. Provide hourly or daily rate for individual contract or consultant services, and the total cost of the contract/consultant.

Other (please specify): Items that reward or entice participation in program such as stipends, incentives, family meal. Or it can be used to explain budgetary items that do not readily fit in the other categories.

All budget requests must be submitted in writing to the BVCS Early Childhood Iowa Director. If the request involves 10% or less of the total budget being transferred between line items, the Director will be allowed to make the determination regarding the transfer of funds. If the request involves more than 10% of the total budget being transferred between line items, or if additional funding is needed, the Director will forward the request to the BVCS Early Childhood Iowa Board who will make the determination. The BVCS Early Childhood Iowa Board will approve any transfers in approved budget line items or increases in approved dollar amounts, prior to expenses being incurred.

Proposal Review Criteria/Awarding of Grants: The BVCS Early Childhood Iowa board reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part to advertise for new proposals, to abandon the need for such services, and to cancel this Request for Proposals at any time prior to the execution of the written contract. The costs of preparation and delivery of the bid proposal are solely the responsibility of the Bidder.

By submitting a proposal, the Bidder agrees that it will not bring any claim or have any cause of action against the BVCS Early Childhood Iowa ECI board, based on any misunderstanding concerning the information provided herein or concerning the Board's failure, negligent or otherwise, to provide the bidder with pertinent information as intended by this Request for Proposals.

Proposals will be awarded funding based on guidelines, BVCS Early Childhood Iowa priorities, availability of funds and past performance.

The BVCS Early Childhood Iowa Request for Proposal Application form must be utilized when requesting funding.

Timeline:

- Wednesday, March 17, 2021, at 4:00 p.m.: Proposals are due. Submit two copies (one original and one copy) of the proposal in writing to: BVCS Early Childhood Iowa, PO Box 174, Breda, IA 51436 and one copy submitted electronically to: bvcs.eci.director@gmail.com. No applications will be accepted after this deadline.
- May 26, 2021: BVCS Early Childhood Iowa board will award contracts, based on the contingency the estimated funds are allocated to the Early Childhood Iowa Area.
- June 30, 2021: Anticipated date by which contracts will be executed.

Length of Commitment: Contracts for fiscal services will be written for a one-year (1) term, with the option for renewal, not to exceed two years. Subsequent agreements will be contingent upon the BVCS Early Childhood Iowa recommendation of any future proposals and subsequent action of the Board. Funding is contingent upon the state available funds and may be cut if needed.

Eligibility: The applicant must be willing to sign a contract, complete required reports and provide a copy of their Certificate of Liability Insurance showing coverage of:

- o General Liability – One million dollar per occurrence
- o Workers compensation as required by Iowa law
- o Automobile Liability – Two million dollar per occurrence, if transporting children

Questions and Requests for Technical Assistance

Bidders are invited to submit written questions and requests for clarifications regarding this Informal Solicitation. Any ambiguity regarding this solicitation shall be addressed through the question and answer process and will be sent to all parties who have submitted questions or requested a copy of responses to the questions.

Technical assistance will be available to bidders and potential bidders through March 10, 2021. All questions and requests for technical assistance should be submitted in writing to bvcs.eci.director@gmail.com. Board members are not designated to answer questions regarding this or any RFP.

Definition of Contract

The full execution of a written contract shall constitute the making of a contract for services and no bidder shall acquire any legal or equitable rights relative to the contract services until the contract has been fully executed by the apparent successful bidder and the BVCS Early Childhood Iowa.

Mail or hand deliver completed and RFP applications to:

BVCS Early Childhood Iowa, Annette Koster
PO Box 174
Breda, IA 51436

Appeal Process: Applicants have the right to appeal the funding decisions based upon a showing that the policies and procedures governing the grant selection process have not been properly applied. The appeal process begins on the date the written notification was sent to the applicant of the Board's decision. Appeals should be in writing to bvcs.eci.director@gmail.com within ten (10) business days of the date of the e-mail notification of funding decisions to the applicant. It is the responsibility of the applicant to assure appeals are e-mailed on or before the tenth (10th) business day of the appeal process. Appeals e-mailed after the tenth (10th) business day will not be reviewed.

- All appeals shall clearly state how BVCS Early Childhood Iowa failed in following the rules of the grant process as governed by the policies and procedures outlined in the application material provided to all applicants. The request must also describe the remedy sought;
- An independent committee will review the appeal and gather information regarding any infractions of the process;
- The committee will make a report and a recommendation to the BVCS Early Childhood Iowa Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting;
- The BVCS Early Childhood Iowa Board will determine if there has been a violation of the process and rule on the appeal.