Request for Proposals

**for a**

**Shared Service Alliance**

*(sample language)*

*Intro Copy*

Early care and education programs operate within an economically fragile business model. In the best of times, early care and education providers operate with razor-thin margins as a result of the misalignment between the actual cost of providing care and the ability of families to afford it. The pandemic further challenged early learning providers, adding safety-related expenses while substantially eroding enrollment, which serves as the lifeblood of early education operations.

To help sustain existing high-quality providers, influence the affordability of service and enable early childhood leaders to focus their scarce time and resources on the business of learning, (*Name of issuing agency*) seeks to foster regional shared service models that provide members with various business and pedagogical services to build operations and enable resources to be redirected toward learning outcomes.

(*Issuing agency*) is funding multiple pilot projects to develop shared services that improve the sustainability of early childhood programs in (*service area*). These projects may serve either center or home-based providers, or a mix of both in one project. Selected grantees will launch a shared service Hub that provides members with various business and pedagogical services to build operations and enable resources to be redirected toward learning outcomes. Hubs must understand their local early childhood education landscape, exhibit a pattern of execution success and be prepared to lead change with providers.

*Eligibility*

Applicants must be a tax-exempt nonprofit organization, etc., whose mission is aligned with the provision of support services to early learning programs.

List other criteria here:

* Xxx
* Xxx
* Xxx

*Grant Details*

Eligible organizations may submit a proposal for up to ($xxx) to launch a shared service hub. Grant funds must be used to cover costs related to the start-up implementation of a shared service model. Examples of allowable expenses include:

* one-time startup costs,
* a technology solution,
* initial operating expenses and
* implementation-related consulting services.

Awardees may request uses outside those described; these requests must include an explanation of the justification for intended spending. Funds may not be used for direct programming.

*Proposal Narrative*

Target Region

* What is the target region for your Hub services? (city/town/county/counties)
* Explain the current local ECE landscape, access barriers, and needs.
  + What challenges do you anticipate when launching a Hub in this region? What strategies will you take to address them? Examples may include language barriers for providers, educational barriers for teachers, lack of community investment in quality, etc.

Organizational Readiness

* Describe your organizational history of work in ECE/with ECE providers within the past three years.
* Describe your organizational history of collaborative change efforts within past 3 years.
* Describe any local, regional, state or national resources your organization can leverage to support the launch and implementation of your shared service Hub. These may be financial, operational, collaborative partnerships, etc.

Hub Operations

* Explain the proposed governance structure for your Hub
* Explain the staffing model necessary to operate your Hub. Staffing models should maximize access to needed expertise and minimize cost. Considerations for your staffing model include:
  + can your organization’s existing staff, consultants and subcontracts with other organizations be leveraged?
  + do you envision staffing from existing personnel, or the recruitment of new staff? how would you identify staff to manage services (current or future)? (

Hub Services

* Select all services that will be offered with the launch of your Hub.
* Proposed metric(s) for [service]
* Explain your plan for baseline and ongoing data collection and analysis.
* Describe the alignment between the identified barriers and needs for ECE providers in your target region and the services proposed.

Technology

All shared service Hubs must offer a technology solution to support provider operations and data collection to track business metrics that will show the impact of Hub participation.

* Describe your organization’s current technology infrastructure. What tools and resources does your organization currently use to manage operations, track revenue/expenses, maximize collections, manage reporting to funders, etc.?
* Explain your proposed Hub technology solution(s). Please note that your technology solution should facilitate implementation and deliver cost savings for the services your Hub offers.

Hub Marketing

* Describe your organization’s marketing infrastructure. What tools and resources does your organization currently use for communication and marketing tactics to ensure you reach your intended audience?
* Explain the pitch your Hub will offer to potential members. Consider promises such as “Through Hub membership you will \_\_\_\_\_” or “Through Hub membership you will no longer \_\_\_\_\_.”
* Describe the approach to ongoing marketing for your Hub.
* Identify 5-15 initial members your Hub could target for membership.

Budget

Applicants may use the template provider or provide their own format. Budgets must address both the launch implementation (funded by grant) and ongoing operations (funded by membership). Components of the budget must include:

* Timeline
* Awarded organizations will have 12 months to expend funds in support of their Hub launch.
* Describe your detailed timeline to launch your Hub. Include key milestones such as hiring, training, marketing, anticipated launch, etc.

Sustainability Plan

Grants will support the launch and implementation of a shared service Hub. Hubs are expected to continue operations beyond the timeline of the grant.

* Explain how your proposed Hub will sustain operations beyond launch.