

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Program Funding

CONTRACT YEAR: 2021-2022

North Iowa Children's Alliance



CERRO GORDO, HANCOCK, AND WORTH COUNTIES
EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA AREA

RELEASE DATE: March 22, 2021
CONTRACT PERIOD: JULY 1, 2021 – JUNE 30, 2022
PROJECT PERIOD: JULY 1, 2021 – JUNE 30, 2022

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

I. Purpose

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to effectively utilize Early Childhood Iowa state funds to ensure young children are properly nurtured and stimulated in safe and healthy environments so they are ready to learn and succeed when they enter school, and to increase the availability of quality child care to support parents in obtaining or retaining employment.

II. Estimated Maximum Funding Available for New Applications

<i>School Ready Funds-</i>	\$171,834
<i>Early Childhood Funds-</i>	\$0
Total Funding Available	\$171,834

SECTION 2 ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

I. Eligibility Requirements

Grants are made to non-profit organizations and governmental agencies that:

- i. Serve Cerro Gordo, Hancock, and/or Worth Counties.
- ii. Adhere to the principle that no discrimination will be practiced as to race, religion, sex, or national origin.
- iii. Are a not-for-profit organization, government entity, or a 501(c)(3).
- iv. Are proposed by a single lead agency, even if developed jointly by more than one agency or organization. Participating agencies and organizations must be included as co-participants, sub-grantees, or subcontractors.
- v. Can demonstrate the ability to implement programs/services that support the purpose and program goals.
- vi. Propose non-construction projects.
- vii. Do not duplicate any services funded by North Iowa Children's Alliance, State Government, Federal Government, or a private organization in the three-county region.

II. Issuing Officer

The Issuing Officer, identified below, is the sole point of contact regarding the RFP from the date of issuance until selection of the successful applicant.

Alyse DeVries
North Iowa Children's Alliance
CG Public Health
2570 4th Street S.W. Suite 1
Mason City, Iowa 50401
Email address: director@nichildrensalliance.com

III. Restriction on Communication

From the issue date of this RFP until announcement of the successful applicant, applicants may contact only the Issuing Officer. The Issuing Officer will respond only to questions regarding the procurement process and questions related to the interpretation of this RFP. If the applicant gains information from a Board member or any others than the Issuing Officer, the applicant is at their own risk of misinformation. This misinformation may result in point loss or disqualification.

IV. Schedule of Important Dates

EVENT	DATE
RFP Issued	March 22, 2021
Letter of Intent Due	April 8, 2021
Applications Due	April 29, 2021
Notice of Intent to Award	May 13, 2021
Begin Contract	July 1, 2021

V. Description

Applicant agencies are encouraged to submit applications for consideration by the North Iowa Children’s Alliance Board; multiple applications will be allowed and considered. Submitted applications will be reviewed by the Board members and considered based on the following criteria: (1) Impact of use of funds on prenatal through age five year old youth within three-county area, (2) alignment with local indicators (see Question 2 of application), and (3) fit with Early Childhood Iowa 2019 State Performance Measures-
<https://earlychildhood.iowa.gov/document/fy-19-statewide-performance-measures>.

The total number of awards and average award size will be based on project submissions. There are no minimum or maximum award amounts within the scope of the available funds.

VI. Submission of Proposal

The Issuing Officer must receive the completed application before 4:30 pm, central standard time, April 29, 2021. This is a mandatory requirement and will not be waived by the Board. Any proposal received after this deadline will be rejected and returned unopened to the applicant. Applicants mailing proposals must allow ample mail delivery time to ensure timely receipt of their proposals. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that the proposal is received prior to the deadline. Postmarking by the due date will not substitute for actual receipt of the proposal. Electronic mail and faxed proposals will not be accepted. Applicants must furnish all information necessary to evaluate the application. Applications that fail to meet the mandatory requirements of the RFP will be disqualified. Verbal information provided by the applicant shall not be considered part of the applicant’s proposal.

One (1) original and 10 copies of the proposal shall be submitted to the Issuing Officer. In addition, an electronic copy in Microsoft Word shall be provided via e-mail. Completed applications should be emailed and mailed or dropped off to the Issuing Officer at:

Alyse DeVries
North Iowa Children's Alliance
CG Public Health
2570 4th Street S.W. Suite 1
Mason City, Iowa 50401

Email address: director@nichildrensalliance.com

VII. Costs of Preparing the Proposal

The costs of preparation and delivery of the proposal are solely the responsibility of the applicant.

VIII. Rejection of Proposals

The Board reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, in whole and in part, received in response to this RFP at any time prior to the execution of a written contract. Issuance of this RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by the Board to award a contract. This RFP is designed to provide applicants with the information necessary to prepare a competitive proposal. This RFP process is for the Board's benefit and is intended to provide the Board with competitive information to assist in the selection of an applicant to provide services. It is not intended to be comprehensive and each applicant is responsible for determining all factors necessary for submission of a comprehensive proposal.

IX. Disqualification

The Board may reject outright and shall not evaluate proposals for any one of the following reasons:

- i. The applicant fails to deliver the proposal by the due date and time.
- ii. The applicant failed to send a Letter of Intent.
- iii. The applicant's narrative section exceeded the 6-page limit.
- iv. The applicant failed to include or complete the Performance Measures.
- v. The applicant did not include or did not complete the budget in detail.
- vi. The applicant did not include or did not sign the No Conflict of Interest document.
- vii. The applicant did not include or did not sign the Authorization to Release Information document.
- viii. The applicant failed to include required information to evaluate program.
- ix. The applicant's contract period differed from the required 07/01/20 to 06/30/21.
- x. The applicant stated a service requirement could not be met or changed a requirement and limited the rights of the Board.
- xi. The applicant did not state an appropriate priority indicator area(s).
- xii. The applicant did not follow requirements for Funding of category.

- xiii. The applicant did not follow required performance measures.
- xiv. The applicant failed to serve population of 0-5.
- xv. The applicant fails to respond to the Board's request for information, documents, or references.
- xvi. The applicant presents the information requested by this RFP in a format inconsistent with the instructions of the RFP.
- xvii. The applicant provides misleading or inaccurate responses.

X. Use of Funds

Grant funds may be used to support all budget categories identified in the budget page form provided in this document. Questionable costs or costs not addressed clearly via these cost categories should be gauged against the following cost restrictions to determine whether they are acceptable. Any additional information on what funds can be used for or silo and Iowa code requirements please see documents in tool kit at the Early Childhood Iowa website. <https://earlychildhood.iowa.gov/early-childhood-iowa-area-funding>

- i. Grant funds cannot be used to supplant other federal, state, or local funds
- ii. supporting existing programs or activities (e.g., child care assistance or subsidy to eligible recipients).
- iii. Grant funds cannot be used for construction, renovation, or land acquisition.
- iv. Grant funds cannot be expended for the payment of real estate mortgages or taxes; dues to organizations or federations; costs for social activities not related to the purpose of this program; costs related to political activity; interest costs, fines, penalties, law suits or legal fees; contingencies such as pending litigation possible liabilities, etc.; and contributions and donations.
- v. Grant funds cannot be used for the purchase of fixed assets such as automobiles, or fixtures unless the Board has specifically approved such purchases during or after the contract negotiation period of this grant award process.
- vi. Other Items not allowable either as direct or indirect costs; alcoholic beverages, Audit services, Bad debts, Bonding costs, Entertainment, Fines and penalties, Fund raising and investment management costs, Clothing, Signs promoting the Agency, Other personnel attending NI Children's Alliance activities, Costs of agency sponsored conventions, meetings, or other events related to other activities of the agency, Costs of advertising and public relations designed solely to promote the agency, Memberships, subscriptions, and professional activities (e.g. memberships in business, technical, and professional organizations; civic, and community, social organizations; or lobbying organizations.), College classes and state licensures unless prior authorization from the North Iowa Children's Alliance Board has been given.

XI. Progress Reporting

Funded programs shall be required to submit a quarterly progress report. Due

dates for the reports are October 15, January 15, April 15, and July 15. The annual report is due July 30. North Iowa Children's Alliance will provide standardized report formats for all programs/services. The progress report format is subject to change. All reports must follow the prescribed format. All entities not following the format are subject to having their funding allocation withheld until the proper format is submitted and approved. Funded programs shall be required to submit a monthly financial report, format provided by the Board. With required financial report, receipts of products and services must be provided for reimbursement.

SECTION 3 EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

I. Introduction

This section describes the evaluation process that will be used to determine which proposal provides the greatest benefits to the Board. The evaluation process is designed to award the contract not necessarily to the applicant of least cost, but rather to the applicant with the best combination of attributes to perform the required services.

II. Technical Review

All submitted applications will go through a thorough technical review by the Issuing Officer before any applications move forward to be reviewed by the North Iowa Children's Alliance Board. The technical review will be looking for applications that do not duplicate existing services in the area and ensuring that all applications connect to at least one of the local priority indicators and State performance measures. The Issuing Officer will also ensure that all proposals meet silo funding requirements by the Code of Iowa. The review will be based on the disqualifiers listed in the RFP section IX. If an application is proposed to be disqualified at this point, the Issuing Officer will meet with the Board Chair to proposal the disqualification. If both the Issuing Officer and the Board Chair agree the application meets a disqualification requirement, the application will not be reviewed by the Board. If the application meets all guidelines, and no concerns are present, the application will be reviewed and scored by the North Iowa Children's Alliance Board.

III. Evaluation

The Board intends to conduct a comprehensive, fair and impartial evaluation of proposals received in response to this RFP. The Board will review and evaluate the applications based on the completeness of the application, alignment of program focus with Board priorities and thoroughness of the project plan. The Issuing Officer will be present for technical advisement in the review but will not officially score the applications. To the best of its ability, the Board will have no perceived or actual conflict of interest. The North Iowa Children's Alliance Board will select the applicants to receive the award. All applicants submitting proposals will receive either a written acceptance or rejection of the proposal submitted.

IV. Appeal Process

Applicants have the right to appeal the funding decisions based upon a

showing that the policies (RFP Process, and By-Laws) and procedures governing the grant selection process have not been properly applied. The appeal process begins on the postmarked date of the written notification to the applicant of the grant committee's decision. Appeals should be in writing and filed with the Director of North Iowa Children's Alliance, Alyse DeVries, within ten working days of the date of written notification of funding decisions to the applicant. It is the responsibility of the applicant to assure that appeals are received before 4:30 p.m. on or before the tenth working day of the appeals process. Appeals received after 4:30 p.m. on the tenth day will not be reviewed.

All appeals shall be delivered to the office of the North Iowa Children's Alliance Director.

- All appeals shall clearly state how North Iowa Children's Alliance 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.
- The North Iowa Children's Alliance Board will review the appeal and gather information regarding any infractions of the process.

SECTION 4 CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

I. Contract Terms and Conditions

The contract that the Board expects to award as a result of this Request for Proposal will be based upon the application submitted by the successful applicant and this solicitation. The contract between the Board and the successful applicant shall be a combination of the specifications, terms and conditions of the RFP. This includes the terms contained in the contract, the offer of the applicant contained in the technical and cost proposals, written clarifications or changes made in accordance with the provisions herein, and any other terms deemed necessary by the Board. By applying, each applicant acknowledges its acceptance of these specifications, terms and conditions without change except as otherwise expressly stated in its proposal. If an applicant takes exception to a provision, it must state the reason for the exception and set forth in its proposal the specific contract language it proposes to include in place of the provision. Exceptions that materially change these terms or the requirements of the RFP may be deemed non-responsive by the Board, in its sole discretion, resulting in possible disqualification of the application. The Board reserves the right to either award a contract without further negotiation with the successful applicant or to negotiate contract terms with the selected applicant if the best interests of the Board would be served.

II. Contract Length

The term of the contract will be one year and will commence on 7/1/20 and end on 06/30/21.

III. Contract Negotiations

Contract negotiations will commence once the Board has a final vote for funded programs. Items that may be negotiated are startup times and budget items. If concerns of time frames or budget items are viewed in the review, items will be addressed in negotiations to meet the needs of a program and the North Iowa Children's Alliance Board.

SECTION 5 FORMAT OF APPLICATIONS

I. **Instructions**

These instructions describe the format and content of the proposal. They are designed to facilitate a uniform review process. Failure to adhere to the proposal format will result in the disqualification of the proposal or point loss in the evaluation.

- i. Applicant must use the provided Microsoft Word application shell.
- ii. The proposal shall be typewritten on 8.5" x 11" paper (one side only).
- iii. Application questions must not exceed the corresponding maximum word count.
- iv. One (1) original hard copy and one (1) electronic copy of the proposal shall be submitted to the Issuing Officer. In addition, an electronic copy in Microsoft Word shall be provided via e-mailed.
- v. Applications shall be submitted in Arial 12-point font or Gotham Book 12 point font, all narrative information must have a one inch margin. Tables, figures, or maps may have a font size of less than 12 point.
- vi. Proposal paragraphs may be single or double spaced. All pages are to be sequentially numbered (1,2,3....) and word limits adhered to.
- vii. Proposals shall not contain promotional or display materials.
- viii. Attachments shall be referenced in the proposal.
- ix. If an applicant proposes more than one method of meeting these requirements, each should be labeled and submitted separately. Each will be evaluated separately.

II. **Technical Assistance**

All applicants have the opportunity to get technical assistance from the Issuing Officer in regard to writing the application and if programming will fit into North Iowa Children's Alliance guidelines. All technical assistance needs to be requested by April 03, 2020.

III. **Budget Category Definitions**

- i. **Salaries:** Identify all staff to be paid via this grant. Provide title of individual, the annual salary, the percent of time he/she will devote to this project and the amount requested, and amount requested; Example: Program Coordinator \$32,000/annual salary X 75% of time = \$24,000. Program staff members are those directly involved with the implementation of the identified program/service.
- ii. **Benefits:** List any personnel benefits that are associated with the salary section, such as Social Security, worker's compensation, unemployment insurance, health insurance and other benefits. The total amount may be calculated as a percentage of salaries.

- iii. **Training:** For training or conferences. The number of personnel, registration fees, the name of the institution and place must be shown if known at the time of application or estimations.
- iv. **Travel/Mileage:** Itemize all in-state and out-of-state travel. Include costs for meals, lodging and mileage; cannot exceed the State of Iowa rates for in-state and out-of-state travel, mileage reimbursement, meals, and lodging. Grant funds may not be used for out-of-state travel not specified in the application request. Additional travel reimbursement guidelines can be found at the Iowa Department of Administrative Services website at http://das.sae.iowa.gov/travel_relocation/index.html.
- v. **Contract Services:** Identify any contractual or consultant agreements that will be entered into as part of this grant. Provide a brief explanation of the contractor's or consultant's role in the project. Provide hourly or daily rate for individual contract or consultant services, and total cost of the contract/consultant.
- vi. **Supplies:** Include only supplies that can be associated with this program and specialized things like brochures, printed pens, etc. Promotional and incentive items need to be limited to items that can be directly related to increasing the success of meeting outcomes and goals. These items need to be listed and not in a general category of etc.
- vii. **Equipment:** Items costing over \$2,000. Itemize each item to be purchased including the description and cost. Grant funds cannot be used for the purchase of fixed assets such as automobiles, computer equipment, or fixtures unless such purchases have been specifically approved by the board during or after the contract.
- viii. **Miscellaneous:** Include any proposed expenses that do not fit within any of the above listed categories. Other costs may include, but are not limited to, stipends or incentives.
- ix. **Administrative/Indirect Costs:** Indicate indirect cost in a percentage or at a specific indirect rate. Include any other administration cost that may not be suitable in other areas. Indirect rate may not exceed 15% unless approved for a federal rate. (Indirect rate is for things like rent, power and lights, copier rental, paper, office supplies, employee services that are not directly associated with project. Indirect is for charges that cannot be 100% divided out for project operations.)

IV. Supporting Documents

One complete set of attachment must accompany the original narrative proposal.

- Current copy of IRS determination ruling letter indicating that you are a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or equivalent.
Note: If your organization is a subsidiary of a nonprofit organization or government unit, attach a copy of that organization's IRS ruling as well as a verification letter signed by an official of their governing body.
- Letters of support, (optional)

- Letters of commitment or agreement, memos of understanding (required if subcontracts occur).

V. Certification of Independence and No Conflict of Interest

The applicant shall sign and submit with the proposal the document included in which the applicant shall certify that it developed the proposal independently. The applicant shall also certify that no relationship exists or will exist during the contract period between the applicant and the Board that interferes with fair competition or is a conflict of interest. The Board reserves the right to reject a proposal or cancel the award if, in its sole discretion, any relationship exists that could interfere with fair competition or conflict with the interests of the Board.

VI. Authorization to Release Information.

The applicant shall sign and submit with the proposal the document included in which the applicant authorizes the release of information to the Board.