

BETTER TOMORROWS EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA ECI FUNDING GUIDELINES

Better Tomorrows Early Childhood Iowa is pleased to offer funding to qualified organizations/agencies/groups. Proposals for funding must be targeted toward 0–5-year-olds in Benton and Tama Counties.

Accessing and Submitting Request for Proposal (RFP) Materials

This year, the FY24 RFP guidelines and application for new applicants as well as current contractors are available in multiple formats and multiple locations. Applicants have the choice of downloading and electronically submitting their funding proposal or to complete the proposal in a survey format.

No paper copies are required, proposals will be submitted electronically. An email confirming receipt of the proposal will be sent within 24 hours.

The RFP materials are available to download from either of these two locations:

1. All RFP materials are available for download at www.bettertomorrowseci.org . The forms can be found in the “What’s New” and the “Applications” tabs. Once completed, the application can be emailed to director@bettertomorrowseci.org.
2. All RFP materials are also available for download in this Google drive: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1AOs_QZ2XmJZDOIfmJqIUvjLET1idCiq4?usp=sharing Once downloaded, complete and submit the documents to director@bettertomorrowseci.org .

Applicants also have the option of completing the application in survey form rather than downloading and completing the document.

1. The surveys are available here: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1AOs_QZ2XmJZDOIfmJqIUvjLET1idCiq4?usp=sharing

To aid in completion of the funding applications, the Better Tomorrows Early Childhood Iowa ECI 2023-2024 RFP The Better Tomorrows Early Childhood Iowa ECI community and strategic plan for 2022-2026 is available to view or download at www.bettertomorrowseci.org under the ‘More’ and ‘What’s New’ tabs and in this Google drive:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1AOs_QZ2XmJZDOIfmJqIUvjLET1idCiq4?usp=sharing

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:

- General Liability – One million dollar per occurrence
- Workers compensation as required by Iowa law
- Automobile Liability – Two million dollar per occurrence, if transporting children
- Better Tomorrows Early Childhood Iowa Board must be listed as additional insured.

Funding Guidelines

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

- **Quality Child Care Environments**
 - Child care consultants, technical assistance
 - Child care nurse consultants, health and safety considerations
 - Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) and national accreditation supports o Environmental rating scale supports (ITERS, ECERS)
 - Curriculum supports
- **Emotional/behavioral supports**
 - Early Childhood – Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (EC-PBIS)
 - Mental health and behavioral services
 - Parent-Child Interactive Therapy
 - Play therapy
- **Quality improvement incentives and business practice supports**
 - Business Investment Program (refer to state ECI website for additional information: <https://earlychildhood.iowa.gov/toolkit>)
 - National Accreditation Commission (NAC)
 - First Children's Finance
 - Iowa Small Business Development Centers (aka: America's SBDC Iowa)
- **Professional development, and educational degrees**
 - Child Development Associate (CDA)
 - T.E.A.C.H. and WAGES
 - Associate and bachelor's degrees in child development/early childhood education
- **Developing capacity for child care**
 - Recruitment of providers
 - Developing capacity for mildly ill child care
 - Developing capacity for second or third shift child care
 - Developing capacity for infant care
 - Wrap around child care, Emergency child care, Quarantine/Sick child care

- **School readiness initiatives**
 - Enhance linkages with Head Start, Early Head Start, child development programs and child care programs.
 - Early Childhood Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports training, support and implementation
 - Early literacy programming
 - Summer kindergarten preparation program
 - Preschool tuition for children whose families are at or below 200% of poverty
 - Preschool scholarship coordination
 - Transportation to and from preschool
 - Curricula enhancing field trips
 - Extension of the preschool day/wraparound programming
- **Health services**
 - Increasing awareness and understanding of brain health in early childhood.
 - Dental care, preventive dental care and education
 - Prenatal and perinatal care and education
 - Lead services
 - Strategies to address transportation barriers to accessing medical care
 - Affordable housing
- **Family support programs**
 - 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; and;
 - Group-based parent education – program is designed to provide a standardized curricula in a group setting. A core function of a group-based parent education program is to facilitate peer support.
 - Group-based parent education lasts a minimum of six sessions or be provided through-out the year. 3 See the following state ECI tool for additional guidelines: [https://earlychildhood.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2019/01/tool ff - approved 1-11-19.pdf](https://earlychildhood.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2019/01/tool_ff_-_approved_1-11-19.pdf)
- **Quality Improvements and Other Services**
 - Quality improvement efforts that are evidence-based, quality practices and services that positively affect outcomes for children and align with the Better Tomorrows Early Childhood Iowa ECI community plan and identified priorities. The community plan can be found at: www.bettertomorrowseci.org.

- Supports for 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.
- Personnel (e.g., staff for inclusive settings, to perform screenings, salaries)
- Program enhancements to meet, increase or maintain quality preschool accreditation or quality levels/standards (evidence-based curriculum, materials, etc.);
- Professional development targeted toward quality initiatives and standards (evidence-based curriculum, assessment, program standards, EC-PBIS, etc.).
- Technical assistance and coaching (from a qualified provider) to foster the development of quality initiatives and preschool programming.
- Funds cannot be used to purchase real estate or construction.

Budget Definitions

- **Home Visitation Programs:** Better Tomorrows Early Childhood Iowa ECI prefers to utilize a per visit and/or per group rate determined by providers providing home visitation services.
- **Salaries/Wages:** Identify anyone to be paid from this grant. Give the title of the individual, percent of time he/she will devote to this project and the amount requested. Include staff time that will be devoted to providing supervision/consultation for direct service staff as well as staff providing administrative services.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Travel:** Include 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. Better Tomorrows Early Childhood Iowa will reimburse the least expensive mode of transportation which will require written documentation reflecting that the lower rate was utilized.
- **Mileage:** Personal mileage for the commute to and from office is not allowed.
- **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 the Travel category.)

- **Program Supplies:** Expendable office supplies, such as paper, pens, pencils, staples, etc. may be shown as a lump sum.
- **Operational Expenses:** Operating expenses must be listed separately, such as rent, telephone, office machine rental, postage, etc. Other (please specify): Items that reward or entice participation in programs such as stipends, incentives, family meals. Or it can be used to explain budgetary items that do not readily fit in the other categories.
- **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 5% of the Sub-total. Multiply the Sub-Total by 5% to obtain the maximum administrative cost. Do not prorate expenses.

All budget amendment requests must be submitted in writing to the Better Tomorrow's Early Childhood Iowa Director. If the request involves a reallocation between line items totaling 10% or less of the total budget, the Better Tomorrow's Early Childhood Iowa ECI Director will be allowed to authorize the reallocation. If the request involves reallocation of more than 10% of the total budget or if additional funding is requested, the Director will forward the request to the Better Tomorrow's Early Childhood Iowa Board to consider.

Proposal Review Criteria/Awarding of Grants

The Better Tomorrow's 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 Better Tomorrow's 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, Better Tomorrow's Early Childhood Iowa priorities, availability of funds and past performance.

The Better Tomorrow's Early Childhood Iowa ECI Request for Proposal Application must be utilized when requesting funding.

Timeline

- Questions and requests for clarifications regarding this RFP are due to be submitted electronically to director@bettertomorrowseci.org by 4:30 p.m. on April 5, 2023. All questions and answers will be posted online with other RFP documents.
- Monday, April 10, 2023, at 4:30 p.m.: Proposals are due to be submitted electronically. Proposals may be submitted by email to director@bettertomorrowseci.org or by completing the survey. No applications will be accepted after this deadline. An email confirming receipt will be sent within 24 hours.
- May 3, 2023: Better Tomorrows Early Childhood Iowa ECI board will award contracts.
- July 1, 2023: Anticipated date by which contracts will be executed.

Length of Commitment

Contracts for fiscal services will be written for a one-year (1) term. Subsequent agreements will be contingent upon the Better Tomorrows Early Childhood Iowa ECI recommendation of any future proposals and subsequent action of the Board. Funding is contingent upon the state available funds and may be reduced.

Questions and Requests for Technical Assistance

Bidders are invited to submit written questions and requests for clarifications regarding this RFP. Any ambiguity regarding this solicitation shall be addressed through the question and answer process and will be published with other RFP documents 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 April 5th, 2023. All questions and requests for technical assistance should be submitted in writing to director@bettertomorrowseci.org.

Board members are not authorized to answer questions regarding this 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 Better Tomorrows Early Childhood Iowa.

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 director@bettertorrowseci.org within ten (10) business days of the date of the email notification of funding decisions to the applicant. It is the responsibility of the applicant to assure appeals are emailed 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 Better Tomorrows Early Childhood Iowa ECI 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 Better Tomorrows Early Childhood Iowa Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting;
- The Better Tomorrow Board will determine if there has been a violation of the process and rule on the appeal.