Quality Enhancement Grants Program

2021

Frequently Asked Questions

How does the review process work?

Applications are first screened for eligibility. Those eligible are then reviewed and scored using the school and center rubric or the support organization rubric. The review committee meets to consider the rubric scores and supporting information from the application to make funding decisions. Organizations will be notified of their application status by June, 2021.

How can I learn more about the Early Learning Program Profile (ELPP)?

The ELPP is the Kansas City region's quality indicator system, developed locally by Mid-America Regional Council with the support of community partners. The profile includes the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) assessment by a third party in addition to a structural quality questionnaire completed by the early learning program. The completed profile is reviewed by program leadership collaboratively with staff from The Family Conservancy to develop a quality improvement plan and to identify resources to support the improvement work. If you'd like more information, you can contact Kyle Matchell with Mid-America Regional Council at matchell@marc.org

Can for-profit child care programs apply for funding?

For-profit child care programs are eligible to apply if the current or pre-COVID (2019-20) enrollment serves at least 90 percent families from lower-income households.*

Lower-income households are defined by eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch, federal/state child care assistance, Head Start, or a public assistance program based on family income (e.g. SNAP, TANF, WIC, etc.).

Note: Applicants may use pre-COVID (2019-20) enrollment data when completing eligibility section of the application.

Can non-profit support organizations applying for funding to work with for-profit organizations?

In some cases, Quality Enhancement Grants can support the work of intermediaries (i.e. agencies that provide support to partner organizations) with for-profit child care centers. These programs must meet all other eligibility criteria of the grant program and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. It is recommended that you schedule a time for application assistance to discuss whether your organization is eligible for funding in this situation.

Can general operating support or salaries be included in the grant budget?

Up to 20 percent of the grant budget can be in support of general operations for qualifying non-profit organizations. For-profit programs are not able to request general operating support due to IRS restrictions. In reviewing applications, the committee considers and scores the ability of the organization to sustain work beyond the grant period. It is encouraged to develop a financial plan for these staff positions if they are part of the grant request in order to make the organization's application more competitive.

Which requests will not be considered?

Organizations seeking funding to support general operations (up to 20 percent of the grant budget is allowable for qualifying non-profit organizations only) or capital improvements (building, construction, renovation, etc.) will not be considered for funding.

My organization is requesting funding for staff professional development. What information should be included in the application?

Consider referencing the Professional Development Guide for information on local trainings and associated costs. It is helpful to the review committee if you have already selected an organization to provide the training, as well as number of hours, and which staff will be participating. Best practices show that training paired with ongoing, onsite coaching is most effective. Funding can be requested for off-duty pay for teachers, CDA/college coursework, meals, training materials, and completion incentives for staff. If you'd like to discuss your professional development plan, please sign up for an application assistance session here.

What is considered an indirect cost?

The QEG program considers an indirect cost to be a budget item not directly associated with the programmatic work outlined in the grant request. If the item is necessary for the programming to take place, it is likely not an indirect cost. Up to 20 percent of the grant budget can be in support of general operations. Feel free to schedule an application assistance session if you have questions about your grant budget.

What does "organizational strengthening" mean for this grant program?

Organizational strengthening includes activities such as: strategic planning, board development, financial planning, program evaluation, accreditation facilitation, executive coaching, etc. In this context, organizational strengthening does not refer to expanding the number of families served or opening new sites.