



**ACCESS AND QUALITY GRANT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL AND APPLICATION
DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 21, 2008**

The Washington Area Women's Foundation (www.TheWomensFoundation.org) has established the Early Care and Education Funders Collaborative (the "Collaborative") to focus on improved access to quality early care and education for low-income families in the Washington metropolitan area. A multi-year, multi-million dollar collective funding effort prompted by pressing social and economic needs, the Collaborative is supported and directed by corporate funders and local and national foundations. Members of the Collaborative believe that strategic partnerships can create meaningful change in early care and education by improving the overall quality of services and influencing public decisions.

MISSION

The Collaborative's mission is threefold: To increase the capacity and institutional stability of early care and education programs in the region, to enable these entities to develop and manage their resources more effectively, and to improve early care and education programs through grantmaking, training and technical assistance.

GRANTMAKING PRIORITIES

The Collaborative is soliciting proposals from organizations committed to implementing effective strategies that can promote, ensure and sustain opportunities to expand access and improve the quality of services for low-income families and their young children. Because creating comprehensive early childhood services is a challenge, the Collaborative has prioritized discrete strategies to promote systems integration, as well as governance and structural mechanisms to support and sustain long-term success.

Successful proposals will make the case and present a viable and detailed plan to achieve improved access to quality programs for low-income families. Applicants, who must be committed to long-term tracking of outcomes, could propose to meet this objective through multiple proven or promising strategies:

- Promoting systems reform, and not direct program strategies.
 - Example of potential grant: Strategic program implementation to expand accessibility and improve the quality of developmentally appropriate early care and education programs. The Collaborative would consider funding new programs identified as a "need" to promote comprehensive services for low-income families (e.g. the

- Collaborative would consider funding programs promoting/providing comprehensive services for low-income families that will lead to systemic changes.)
- The Collaborative **WOULD NOT** consider funding an existing parent education program.
- Supporting the implementation of needed change in early care and education practices that will expand access to and improve the quality of care among the very young (ages birth to 5).
 - Example of potential grant: Professional development to improve the quality of early care and education programs. The Collaborative would consider funding agencies working to support the creation of credentialing programs linked to advancement opportunities.
 - The Collaborative **WOULD NOT** consider funding a scholarship program for teachers.
 - Investing in public education efforts to increase the “public will” for early care and education. Advocacy and Public Education efforts to build “public will” and educate key stakeholders in order to ensure systemic change.
 - Some examples the Collaborative would consider funding include: an organization working to expand accessibility of subsidized child care or an organization working to increase reimbursement rates.
 - The Collaborative **WOULD NOT** consider funding a program to pay for subsidized child care slots.

GRANT AWARD RANGE

The Collaborative will award approximately \$300,000 in Access and Quality grants during this grant cycle. The Collaborative expects to make awards of up to \$50,000 for activities that will occur in a 12-month grant period (January 2009– December 2009).

CRITERIA FOR GRANT PROPOSAL

Eligibility: To be eligible, organization(s) must:

- Have a proven track record of working to support early care and education;
- Have demonstrated the organizational capacity to plan for and implement the strategy selected or support its implementation with specified partner organizations;
- Be led by community and thought leaders who have demonstrated commitment to high levels of collaboration;
- Be willing to work with The Women’s Foundation, the Collaborative and other Grantee Partners to collectively achieve Collaborative goals and objectives;
- Be a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization;
- Be governed by a board of directors;
- Be non-proselytizing programs;
- Have principal place of business and focus in the District of Columbia; Arlington County, City of Alexandria, Fairfax County, VA; Prince George’s County, and Montgomery, MD; and
- Have audited financial statements from the previous fiscal year.

The Collaborative will not fund direct services (i.e. center-based slots, or home-based, center-based programs.) In addition, the Women’s Foundation generally will not consider requests to fund:

- Individuals;
- Scientific or medical research;
- Endowments;
- Capital improvements, construction or renovation projects; and/or
- Debt retirement.

PROGRAM EVALUATION / ASSESSMENT

Grantee Partners will submit a six-month and end of the year report that will be used to analyze outcomes and determine grant renewal qualifications. The Women’s Foundation, in consultation with the Collaborative Steering Committee, will evaluate all reports.

The Collaborative will contract an external firm expert in evaluating early care and education efforts to conduct a multi-year assessment of the grantmaking process and Grantee Partners. The firm will provide periodic briefings to The Women’s Foundation and the Collaborative’s Steering Committee, as well as the Grantee Partners. In addition, this external research firm will produce an annual evaluation report that will be used to share outcomes with key stakeholders through printed and on-line materials.

GRANTEE PARTNER BENEFITS AND COMMITMENTS

A sample of specific benefits and commitments is outlined below.

Benefits:

- Financial resources (grant);
- Targeted technical assistance from experts in a variety of areas (e.g., evaluation, fundraising, marketing/communications);
- Networking opportunities with other Grantee Partners, as well as other leading community organizations and partners;
- Leadership development opportunities (e.g., public speaking, access to community leaders); and
- Promotion of your work (e.g., website, brochures, media, public events).

Commitments: Participation in the Collaborative will require a significant commitment of Grantee Partner organizations’ staff time toward the following mandatory activities:

- Participation in community education and engagement events;
- Evaluation activities, including training and technical assistance;
- Development of an evaluation plan;
- Data collection; and
- Completion of interim and final grant/evaluation reports (every six months).

Organizations are advised to consider whether they have the capacity and staff resources to devote to the activities described above before submitting a proposal.

PROPOSAL OUTLINE

I. **Cover Sheet** (see attached)

II. **Narrative** (up to 8 pages, double-spaced)

Proposals will be evaluated against the sections of the narrative listed below. Organize your narrative according to the outline provided below and be sure to address each item. When writing your narrative:

- Include a cover sheet (see attached), narrative and attachments.
- Before each response in your proposal, re-type each bold heading in the outline below.
- Type and double-space the proposal, using standard typeface no smaller than 11-pt. type.
- Include a 1-inch margin on all sides of each page.
- Do not exceed 8 pages (excluding the cover sheet); number all pages, except the cover sheet.
- Include your organization's name at the top of each page.
- Provide all required signatures. On the original document, the signature should be signed in a color other than black ink.
- Do not staple or bind any pages of the original (separate with paper clips, blank sheets or dividers).

A. **Project Goal and Approach:** To provide context of the project, as well as make the case for how the need addressed and/or population served relate to the Collaborative objectives.

- Detail the specific objectives of the project.
- Discuss the strategies for reaching your goal and objectives. Explain why/how you chose the strategies. Describe how your strategies and activities are targeted to and tailored for low-income families.
- Describe any other community entities that are collaborating on this project and/or how you are leveraging the work of others.

B. **Results and Evaluation:** To gain an understanding of the project's target outcomes and how these will be measured.

Detail the specific outputs and outcomes of the project for the next year, based on the overall goal stated in Section A. *Note: These outputs and outcomes will be used in developing your grant agreement.*

Briefly discuss how your outcomes will contribute to the Collaborative's objectives.

- C. Organizational History and Capacity:** To give an overview of the organization; roles, responsibilities and capacity for growth; and how the organization would work within the larger context of the Collaborative and with other Grantee Partners.
- Briefly describe the mission, history, and current programs (including the project described in this proposal).
- D. Sustainability:** To determine the financial sustainability of the project.
- Provide a brief overview of the financial history/trends of the organization(s). Refer to the required financial attachments if appropriate.
 - Provide a brief narrative of the project budget (e.g., how you determined allocations).

III. Attachments

A. Financial Information

- Audited financial statement from most recently completed year, showing actual expenses.
- The organization's current fiscal year budget, including income and expenses.
- Project budget, including income and expenses. Please list, as a separate line item, the allocation of staff time.
- List of all current sources of income toward the project, including the names of corporations, foundations, and government organizations from which you are requesting additional funds, with dollar amounts. Indicate whether sources are committed or pending.

Note: Our review of your proposal may include a review of your organization's most recent Form 990 tax return available at www.guidestar.org.

B. Other Supporting Material

- Copy of the applicant's determination letter for 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.
- List of all staff and board members (with their affiliations).
- Brief biographical sketches of key team members (staff, board, consultants, and/or volunteers) essential to the success of the project.
- Most recent annual report, if available.

SUBMITTING A GRANT PROPOSAL

1. To submit a grant proposal, please e-mail the following in Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and/or PDF format (other electronic formats will not be accepted):

- ___ Cover sheet (use the accompanying form);
- ___ Narrative responding to the "Proposal Outline" (up to 8 pages, double-spaced); and
- ___ Attachments (if available electronically).

E-mail your proposal (cover sheet, narrative, and attachments)
by **5 p.m. on November 21, 2008** to programs@wawf.org

2. In addition, please submit one hard copy (collated without staples) **of your proposal** (cover sheet, narrative, and all attachments) **postmarked by November 21, 2008 to:**

Washington Area Women's Foundation
Attn: Early Care and Education Funders Collaborative
1411 K Street, NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005

Direct inquires to: HyeSook Chung, Early Care and Education Program Officer
202.347.7737 x217, or hchung@wawf.org.

Applications that are received or post marked after the deadline, faxed, handwritten or incomplete **will not be accepted.**

TIME FRAME

The grant selection process for the Access and Quality Grants is comprised of several stages; *being selected to move forward from one state to the next in no way guarantees eventual funding of the request.*

1. **RFP released** (October 22, 2008)
2. **Informational Conference Call or Breakfast** (November 7, 2008 at 8:30am-10:00am)
3. **Proposal Deadline** (November 21, 2008)
4. **Site Visit** (for organizations selected to move forward, completed by December 10, 2008)
5. **Review Process with Steering Committee** (December 19, 2008)
6. **Final approval by The Women's Foundation Board of Directors and The Collaborative Steering Committee:** December 2008.

QUALITY PLANNING FUND COVER SHEET
(To be filled out by each organization, if a collaborative grant request)

Name of organization

Federal Tax-Exempt Number

Address of organization

City, State, Zip Code

Phone

Fax

Website

Contact person

Title

Daytime phone

Fax

E-mail

PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Amount requested \$ _____ (12-month period)

Summary of request _____

Geographic area(s) served

Total project budget: _____ Total organizational budget (current year) _____

AUTHORIZATION

The Executive Director or a principal administrator must sign below.

I, the undersigned, attest to the accuracy of the information submitted in this application and provide assurance that the Board of Directors has authorized the submission of this application.

Executive Director or Administrator signature

Printed name

Title

Date