



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

Building and Sustaining Quality Early Care and Education Grant Competition Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

General Grants Administration Questions

1. Where can I find information on Office of the State Superintendent of Education's (OSSE's) grants?

All Notices of Funding Availability (NOFAs) are published in the DC Register:

<https://www.dcregs.dc.gov/Common/DCR/SearchIssues.aspx?AgencyID=1>.

Office of Partnerships and Grants Services (OPGS) District Grants Clearinghouse: All District grant opportunities are posted here: <https://opgs.dc.gov/page/opgs-district-grants-clearinghouse>.

OSSE-wide forecast: This is the landing page where each school year's forecast will be posted: <https://osse.dc.gov/page/grants-and-funding-0>.

2019-20 School Year Forecast: This is the forecast specific to the 2019-20 school year. All forecasted grants funded by OSSE for the next school year are posted with relevant links. Changes are made regularly: <https://osse.dc.gov/page/osse-school-year-2019-20-grant-forecast>.

Early Learning grants and funding: Changes are made regularly and new documents are added to the specific grant pages under "attachments": <https://osse.dc.gov/service/early-learning-grants-and-funding>.

2. What is a NOFA and what is a Request for Application (RFA)? What is the difference?

A NOFA, or notice of funding availability, is published at least 14 days before a full RFA. The NOFA indicates the intent of the relevant agency to put forth a funding opportunity. When the RFA is released, the grant period is open. For more information about NOFAs and RFAs, please see the Citywide Grants Manual and Sourcebook: <https://opgs.dc.gov/book/citywide-grants-manual-and-sourcebook/70-nofa-and-application-process>.

Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS) Questions

1. Where can I find a recording of the June 26 EGMS technical training?

This page includes a recorded presentation, which provides an overview of the EGMS to familiarize potential or current grant applicants with the components of the system in advance of submitting a grant application: <https://osse.dc.gov/multimedia/egms-overview-training-applicants>.

2. What is “central data”?

The central data collection is designed to capture information that applies across multiple funding applications and other collections for each local education agency (LEA) /community-based organization (CBO) or other applicants throughout the fiscal year. Common assurances must be agreed to by any applicant who wishes to submit one or more funding applications within this fiscal year to OSSE. Such assurances are located within central data so that each applicant will only complete these in one location, rather than in multiple applications during the year. Additional assurances that are specific to one program may also be required within their respective funding application.

3. What is a “master collection form”? Is this just something we need to fill out for ourselves or is it something we need from each partner?

The purpose of the District of Columbia Master Collection Form (MCF) is to collect additional information about certified vendors providing services and goods to the District of Columbia. The lead organization submitting an application is the only organization that needs to submit a MCF in addition to their W-9, in order to receive reimbursements.

4. How do we submit the application in EGMS? Why is there a “lock application”?

To submit a completed application, you navigate to the grant application, click “open” and then click the “submit” tab. Three buttons will appear on this page: consistency check, lock application and unlock application. You will click the “consistency check.” Any errors in the application will appear in red in the top left-hand side. If no errors exist or once all errors are resolved, the “submit to OSSE” button will appear. Please click this to submit to OSSE. All applications are due by 3 p.m. on Aug. 8, 2019.

5. Can you upload more than one document in the “other attachments” and “staffing plan” tabs?

Yes. To upload the first document, select a file to upload, click the “upload” button and then save the page. To upload additional documents, repeat this process.

6. If we are applying as a partnership, should we include a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or partnership agreement in EGMS?

Yes, please include the MOU or partnership agreement in “other attachments.”

7. Do professional services have to be a one-time service?

No. They can be one-time or recurrent services. In the case of this grant competition, they could be consortium members working on a particular program area. It could also be a contracted staff member who works on the grant.

8. The budget says salaries and benefits, but the staffing plan only discusses salary. What should we do?

Make the connection between the staffing plan and detailed planned expenditures clear by using the same unit of analysis. If you would like to have two separate line items per person in the detailed planned expenditures (one for salary and one for benefits), then the staffing plan should have only salary. If you would like to have one line item per person in the detailed planned expenditures (combined salary and benefits), then the staffing plan should do the same.

9. How do we know what line items to budget in each cost category and EGMS subcategory?

In the detailed planned expenditure section of EGMS, there are two helpful documents available: one includes instructions (available here: <https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/publication/attachments/RR-Instructions.docx>) and one provides examples of where different types of costs should be budgeted both in terms of the cost category (available here: <https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/publication/attachments/RR-ProgramCategoryDescriptions.docx>) (e.g., salaries and benefits, professional services, equipment, supplies and materials, fixed property costs and other objects) and EGMS sub-categories (e.g., 10 - Instruction, 20 - Support Services, 30 - Administration, 40 - Operations and Maintenance, 50 - Student Transportation, 80 - Other Expenses, 90 - Training and 100 - Travel).

10. Indirect Costs: Are all entity types including for-profits permitted to claim 10 percent indirect? Indirect costs are allowable expenses in the proposed budget but must be requested by contacting the Program Contact listed in Section 1.1.5. The standard indirect cost rate offered by OSSE/DEL is 10 percent, unless the applicant has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) with the federal government that allows them to budget a different rate.

For-profits are not eligible to receive indirect cost unless they have a NICRA. If you would like indirect cost loaded in your grant application, please contact Tara Dewan-Czarnecki at Tara.Dewan-Czarnecki@dc.gov as soon as possible.

RFA Questions

Eligibility/Consortium Structure

1. Is this grant for child care providers?

The eligibility section of the RFA (page 17) states the following: OSSE/DEL will accept applications from eligible applicants. Only not-for-profit, for-profit community based organizations, faith-based organizations, and agencies are eligible for this grant. Eligible applicants must have experience in business and financial management, system design, early childhood and a working knowledge of the District's early childhood landscape. Additionally, eligible applicants must demonstrate knowledge of child development facility licensing regulations and knowledge of child development and developmentally-appropriate practice in early childhood education. If your organization fits within this description then yes, you would be eligible to apply.

2. Are public charter schools eligible?

Eligibility requirements are listed on page 17. If this describes your organization, then yes, please apply. The first paragraph from this section is copied below. Please also note that applicants will be required to serve the entire early childhood landscape of the District of Columbia.

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3. Subcontracting. Please provide more details on the expectations for the budget. Should budget lines be itemized with program area note included? (The primary grantee may not subgrant any funds to a consortium member.)

The primary grantee may not subgrant funds but they may issue funds through a contract to another entity. For the purposes of budgeting, a single line item for the contractor to cover the appropriate program area (e.g., "contractor to cover program area 1") along with a draft partnership agreement or MOU detailing responsibilities will suffice.

4. Can an applicant be the lead on two separate consortium applications?

No, although the RFA does state "entities may apply as part of more than one consortium", the intent of that statement was not for an entity to apply as the primary applicant more than once. As stated on page 17 of the RFA, for a consortium application, the grant is in the name of the primary applicant who is fiscally responsible for the administration of the grant and for achieving progress towards the grant objectives. Additionally, EGMS does not allow

more than one application per organization. However, one organization may be part of two separate consortium applications by being the primary applicant on one application and a consortium member (contractor) on another application. The primary applicant may list example organizations in their application that will work on other program areas and must submit draft partnership agreements to demonstrate the scope of responsibilities of the contracted partners, to be selected.

5. Within a consortium, can one contractor work across different program areas?

Yes, you would indicate what program areas they are working on in one budget line item (a lump sum will suffice). Example: Contractor to cover Program Area 1 and the amount. This would be supplemented by an attached MOU or partnership agreement detailing the responsibilities.

6. Can my organization be part of a consortium and still submit a separate application?

Your organization may apply as a primary applicant and appear as a consortium member (contractor) on another application. See question 4 in the “eligibility/consortium” section for more information.

7. What are the different options to apply for this grant?

See questions 4 and 6 in the “eligibility/consortium” section for more information.

8. For consortium members included in the budget as contractors, what are the procurement requirements?

Selected grant recipients must maintain records to document the procurement process for selection of any contractors named in the grant application, including consortium members. This should be done in accordance with grant requirements for procurement (see below) and can be done prior to the grant due date with the statement that awarding of funds to any contractor is contingent upon awarding of the grant and final approval from OSSE. The grant application is subject to final approval by OSSE and any contractors specifically named must be selected using appropriate procurement requirements. OSSE will not reimburse any funds obligated prior to award.

The grant recipient’s procurements must be consistent with the requirements of the D.C. Procurement Practices Act, D.C. Code §2-351.01 *seq.* and its implementing regulations, including, but not limited to, in the selection of the following procurement methods:

- Small Purchase Procurements (D.C. Code § 2-354.07 and 27 DCMR Chapter 18);
- Procurement by Competitive Sealed Bidding (D.C. Code § 2-354.02 and 27 DCMR Chapter 15);
- Procurement by Competitive Sealed Proposal (D.C. Code § 2-354.03 and 27 DCMR Chapter 16); or
- Sole Source Procurements (D.C. Code § 2-354.04 and 17 DCMR Chapter 27) may only be used when the grant recipient submits a written request and receives approval from OSSE.

9. Will our organization receive additional points for naming a consortium member specifically as opposed to putting a placeholder line item for “consortium member to cover program area 1”?

No. OSSE will be evaluating the history, experience and program approach, including the structure, proposed by the primary applicant. The ceiling for the total point value is higher in cases where applicants are applying for more than one program area, with the maximum point value reserved for applicants applying for all three program areas. However, applicants that name specific organizations (through appropriate procurement procedures, see question 8) and applicants that put in a placeholder line item and name the qualities they are looking will be considered as equal in this area. In either case, draft MOUs or partnership agreements should be provided and applicants must demonstrate their plan to ensure uninterrupted services.

10. How is a consortium partnership different than a relationship vendor?

The consortium member will be budgeted as a contractor. The nature of the partnership between the organizations should be detailed in partnership agreements or memorandums of understanding, to be included in “other attachments.”

11. If my organization is planning to apply as a primary applicant leading a consortium, can I also apply individually to one program area?

No, organizations can only submit one application, whether as a primary applicant on a consortium covering more than one program area or as a lone applicant applying to one program area. You may indicate in your executive summary that you also wish to be considered for only one program area. The grant application in its entirety is subject to OSSE’s approval and OSSE may choose to award less than the amount requested.

All Program Area Question

1. To what extent does the primary applicant need to engage with Early Childhood (EC) Share DC?

Applicants should describe a plan to leverage and market the materials in EC Share DC. Please also detail any innovative proposals on how to maximize this platform (e.g., how to enhance access for culturally and linguistically diverse populations, including Spanish and/or Amharic speaking communities).

Program Area Specific Questions

1. Program Area 1: Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS): Is Capital Quality just for centers or for home providers as well?

Capital Quality includes both child development centers and homes. There are currently a total of 173 centers and 53 homes in Capital Quality. All child development facilities that enter into and maintain the provider agreement for subsidized child care services with OSSE are required to participate in Capital Quality. Facilities that have not entered into this

agreement may voluntarily elect to participate in Capital Quality. For more information, please visit the Capital Quality webpage: <https://osse.dc.gov/page/capital-quality-qris>.

2. Program Area 2: Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR): Are trainings expected to be held at OSSE or are they expected to be held at the venue described in the Request for Proposal (RFP)? (Excerpt from RFP: The physical space must accommodate site-based appointments, meetings and large group training sessions?)

Currently, they are held at both the CCR&R locations, as well as OSSE. It does not need to be just one or the other.

3. Program Area 3: Shared Services Business Alliance: What is considered a “small center”? Where are the small centers located in the city?

A small center is defined on page 27 of the RFA as a center with four classrooms or less. This is a change from prior years of the grant. This change is based on the feedback that small centers face many of the same operational and administrative challenges as child development homes. We have not specified the range of children at the small center to allow room for flexibility for the applicant. This may be refined after the grant is awarded. Adding in small centers is a pilot. We are relying on applicants to propose realistic and reasonable activities to support this pilot.

We do not currently have a list of where the small centers are located in the city. We encourage applicants to use publicly available information, including My Child Care DC and the EC Share DC map, to inform program design and inclusion of small centers in program area 3.

Budget/Detailed Planned Expenditures

1. If someone is 50 percent on the grant and this is their only job, is he/she 50 percent on staffing or 100 percent on staffing?

If someone is a fully paid employee and this grant is their only job, they should be 100 percent on staffing.

2. For continuity, can someone work across all areas, like a data analyst?

Yes, this can work. Job descriptions can be uploaded to the “staffing plan” for salaried employees and draft contracts can be uploaded to “other attachments” for any contractors or consortium members (also contractors).

3. How much of the grant is federally funded?

We currently anticipate that \$750,000 of the entire \$3,150,000 amount will be federal funds.