



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

Access to Quality Child Care Expansion Grant Pre-Application Meeting Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The Request for Applications (RFA) is available on the [OSSE website](#).

General Information

1. Question: What is the amount of expansion grant?

Answer: The total funding available for this award period is approximately \$9,000,000. Grant funds will be made available over the three-year period of the grant, in accordance with the grantee's work plan and budget as approved by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE).

2. Question: Does OSSE use the same system for all OSSE grants (e.g., if grantees submitted for SOAR previously, is it the same system)?

Answer: Yes, all OSSE grants use the same system for all application submissions: Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS): www.grants.osse.dc.gov. Each grant requires a separate application.

3. Question: The OSSE Monitoring Policy is mentioned in the RFA. Can OSSE share that?

Answer: OSSE will provide the most recent and effective version to the grantee.

Eligibility

4. Question: What entities are eligible for the grant?

Answer: Eligible applicants include non-profit organizations, however, these non-profits are not required to provide direct child care services to infants and toddlers to be eligible for grant funds. Additionally, eligible applicants must have a proven track record of success in providing financing and investment approaches and technical assistance in child development facility financing and development, and specifically in grant-making related to child development facilities.

5. Question: How can for-profit organizations participate in the grant program?

Answer: In partnership with non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations could work as contractors under the grantee. For-profit entities may be eligible for sub-grants distributed by the grantee for increasing high quality child-care seats.

6. Question: How could for-profit organizations make contact with non-profits that may be applying?

Answer: Organizations are encouraged to reach out to one another about potential collaborations for grant applications. OSSE does not have a role in facilitating partnerships for these grant applications.

7. Question: Do you already have an organization in mind for these funds, and do you know when this clearinghouse would be available to give grants to organizations currently providing and expanding child care?

Answer: As this is a competitive grant, OSSE encourages all eligible organizations to apply and they will be evaluated based on the grant application requirements. Once the grant is awarded, the sub-grant competition and issuance of sub-grants directly to child development facilities is expected to take place

in late spring 2018. OSSE will share information about these sub-grant opportunities when they are available.

Subgrant Competition

8. Question: Is the grant limited to centers with NAEYC accreditation or that participate in the Quality Improvement Network (QIN)?

Answer: This grant will be issued to a non-profit organization that will then issue sub-grants to eligible child development facilities. The eligibility requirements of the sub-grant will be determined by the grantee, as approved by OSSE and informed by the child care supply and demand study.

9. Question: Will grants be issued to facilities with minor instances of non-compliance?

Answer: This grant will be issued to a non-profit organization that will then issue sub-grants to eligible child development facilities. The eligibility requirements of the sub-grants will be determined by the grantee, as approved by OSSE and informed by the child care supply and demand study.

10. Question: Does OSSE have a view on who the subgrantees should be (e.g., for-profits vs. non-profits, child development centers vs. homes)?

Answer: There is no preference for who specifically the sub-grantees should be, however the competition shall be informed by the findings of the child care supply and demand study. See the specifications regarding the sub-grantee of the RFA (pg. 9-10).

11. Question: Are the subgrant dollars being held to wage laws in DC?

Answer: Yes.

12. Question: Is there a minimum of subgrantees that should be included?

Answer: There is no minimum number of subgrantees. The applicant will need to show many potential subgrantees in their budget in order to satisfy the requirements of the RFA. Please see the Cost Estimation section of the RFA (pg. 15).

13. Question: Should grantees target real estate spaces or existing providers' spaces to expand?

Answer: This depends on the findings of the child care supply and demand study as well as the program proposed by the grantee. Applicants should explore the costs of both. Please see the Cost Estimation section of the RFA (pg. 15).

Purpose of Funds

14. Question: Why isn't OSSE issuing funds directly to the facilities?

Answer: OSSE has decided to issue one grant to an expert non-profit organization who will then sub-grant to facilities. OSSE believes this approach allows the process to be more flexible and responsive to child development provider needs, including providing technical assistance.

15. Question: Would the conversion of existing pre-K seats to infant/toddler slots count toward the goals for new supply?

Answer: It is an allowable option for subgrantees who receive these funds to use them to convert pre-K classrooms into infant and / or toddler classrooms.

16. Question: Are grantees expected to be able to tell how their program will be sustained after the grant period has ended?

Answer: Grantees are expected to discuss how the slots created will be sustainable beyond the grant period. As noted in the RFA, grantees are to design a sub-grant competition that includes prioritization that reflects that the purpose of the grant is to increase the number of *sustainable* infant and toddler slots by 1,000 over three years in the District. Grantees are also expected to demonstrate how an investment in the facility will result in a sustainable quality child care slot.

17. Question: Regarding the goal to add 1,000 infant/toddler slots by September 2020, can you clarify that the expectation is that all 1,000 seats be completed and operational by that deadline?

Answer: The RFA specifies creation/expansion of 1,000 seats.

18. Question: Is there a targeted number of providers that OSSE would like to see supported through this fund?

Answer: At this moment, OSSE has not identified a targeted number of providers.

19. Question: We are wondering if there is anything you can share regarding background data or information that OSSE used to determine the goal and funding level? We think there is some tension between the funding limitations (especially given the Davis Bacon requirement) and the size of the goal over such a short timeframe (less than three years if the slots must be completed by September 2020). This pressure may lead to a funding program that prefers a small number of large operators that already have projects conceived and prepared and that have the internal capacity to move a project of this scale quickly, potentially moving away from a more equitable distribution of funding (particularly away from small and family-based providers).

Answer: The goal and funding level was determined by the law which created the fund: the Access to Quality Child Care Amendment Act, section 4103 of the Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Support Act of 2017, available here: <http://lims.dccouncil.us/Download/37853/B22-0244-SignedAct.pdf>. The grant has four purposes: (i) establish new child development facilities; (ii) renovate existing facilities; (iii) expand facilities; and (iv) other activities necessary to expand access to child care and improving the quality of child care services provide. Furthermore, the child care supply and demand study will help inform the type of projects needed across the city.

Evaluation and Data Collection Plan

20. Question: The RFA instructions say that the Work Plan should focus on the first year of the three-year grant. Would you like the Evaluation and Data Collection Plan, with its specific program objectives and outcomes, to cover all three years of the grant?

Answer: All application sections should focus on the first year of the grant. Applicants are able to discuss plans for years 2 and 3 in Process to Provide and Monitor Sub-Grants (see RFA pg. 15).

Staffing Plan

21. Question: Should applicants include partners (contractors) to their staffing plan?

Answer: A staffing plan shall only include salaried employees, not contractors. Anyone that is not a salaried employee is considered a contractor and should be listed in the Professional Services category.

Detailed Planned Expenditures / Budget

22. Question: When should grantees start their budget date?

Answer: The budget date begins on the award date. Because the award date is not finalized, OSSE recommends using February 2018 as the budget date. There will be opportunities to edit the budget before the grant is awarded to allow for necessary adjustments.

23. Question: Are costs for technical assistance included in the 90 percent for subgrantees or the 10 percent for the grantee?

Answer: Applicants must demonstrate a plan for the provision of technical assistance. OSSE expects costs for technical assistance to be included in 10 percent for the grantee, unless the applicant can demonstrate a clear rationale for the incorporation of technical assistance into the 90 percent for subgrantees.

24. Question: Can more clarification be given on the 50 percent to be provided for subsidy-eligible child care slots?

Answer: Per the RFA, at least 50 percent of the amounts sub-granted shall be used to improve the supply of child care slots for infants and toddlers eligible for subsidized child care. Applicants should demonstrate a plan to reach this target in their applications.

25. Question: Should grantees include subgrantee and contractor information in EGMS under the Budget and Funding Summary section?

Answer: No, this should only be filled in for the main grantee.

26. Question: Does OSSE want to see a yearly budget or a three-year budget?

Answer: Please provide a one year grant in EGMS and describe plans for the second and third years of the grant in the Financial Management section (see RFA pg. 15).

27. Question: Can grant funds be applied to add staff to classrooms in order to allow facilities to serve the maximum number of children per the licensed capacity?

Answer: No, these funds should be used to create new and sustainable infant and toddler seats. Using funds to add staff to classrooms is not an allowable use.