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# Connecticut Early Childhood Funder Collaborative

A project of:



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## Strengthening Local Early Childhood Collaboration

May 25, 2021

### Organizational capacity & project support to strengthen local birth to age 5 systems

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The CT Early Childhood Funder Collaborative (CT ECFC), a project of CT Council for Philanthropy is accepting proposals from **existing** local early childhood collaboratives (LECCs) including STRIVE, Cradle to Career Coalitions, School Readiness Councils, former Discovery Early Childhood Collaboratives, DCF/Head Start Collaboratives, and Health Enhancement Community Collaboratives, etc.) for both operational and project support to strengthen organizational capacity and implement birth to age 5 system projects. Successful applicants will also be introduced to Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) training to enhance their planning, implementation and evaluation efforts.

This funding opportunity is limited to communities that did not receive funding in March 2020 (See Section 4 for a list of communities that will receive continuation funding via a separate RFP) for operational and project support to strengthen organizational capacity and implement birth to age 5 system projects. Communities seeking to establish regional early childhood collaboratives are eligible for larger grants.

“The project described is supported by the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Initiative (PDG B-5), Grant Number 90TP0071-01-01, from the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Office of Child Care, the Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.”

Proposals must be submitted in the form and manner specified in Section B to: [codonnell@ctphilanthropy.org](mailto:codonnell@ctphilanthropy.org).

Proposals will be accepted **until 5:00 p.m.** Eastern Daylight Time ("EDT") **Monday, June 21, 2021.**

Please send any questions to [codonnell@ctphilanthropy.org](mailto:codonnell@ctphilanthropy.org). Responses will be posted here: <https://ctchildrenscollective.org>

Detailed instructions for proposal submission are listed in Section 3.

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## **Section 1.** **Introduction**

Local collaboratives focused on young children and their families exist in more than 30 communities across the state. Over the last two decades, these entities have convened a broad range of interests committed to young children and their families including preschools, social service agencies, city and school officials, family child care providers, parents and philanthropy to better coordinate programs and services and implement systems solutions.

The CT Office of Early Childhood (OEC) recognizes the critical importance of these local collaboratives to the state's early childhood system. This recognition is evidenced in funding being included in the federal Preschool Development Birth to Five Grant (PDG) from the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services for operational and project support for strengthening local early childhood collaboratives. In 2020 the OEC awarded funding to the CT ECFC that oversaw a competitive grant process resulting in funding to 22 local early childhood collaboratives. CT ECFC is a project of CT Council for Philanthropy.

## **Section 2.** **Scope of Work**

**A. Eligibility:** Existing local early childhood collaboratives (LECCs) can apply for operational support to strengthen their organizational capacity and can also seek project support to implement early childhood birth to age 5 system building projects. It is not necessary to apply for project support if the applicant does not have a project ready to be launched in the short timeframe. Eligible entities can serve a broader age range but the funding available through this RFP is focused on birth to age 5 with an emphasis on broader systems coordination across multiple sectors and partners including health, behavioral health, education and social services.

**B. Definition:** B-5 Early Childhood State System per the federal Preschool Development Grant. -- The term "B-5 Early Childhood State System" refers to core early childhood care and education programs, including the Child Care and Development Fund and state child care, which may include center-based, family child care and informal care providers; Early Head Start and Head Start; the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, and other state or locally funded home visiting services; Part C and Section 619 of Part B of IDEA; state preschool programs; and programs funded by Title I of the ESEA. In addition, it also includes a wide range of early childhood care and education programs and services that strengthen, engage, and stabilize families and their infants and young children including supports that target health and wellness, such as Medicaid; the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP); Title V Maternal and Child Health Programs; Healthy Start; Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP); the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); and the infrastructure components that support these programs and services.

**C. Funding:** Grant funding in an amount up to \$25,000 for either operational or operational and project support will be awarded. Eligible entities seeking to expand their efforts to other communities resulting in a regional early childhood collaborative are eligible to apply for up to \$30,000 in funding.

### **D. Required components**

Each applicant will be required to undertake the following program components which should be addressed in your workplan and budget:

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- Identify and stipend 2 parent leaders to serve as parent ambassadors connecting to an OEC Regional Parent Cabinet member. The LECC parent leaders bring information from the OEC Parent Cabinet Member to the LECC & provide feedback to the OEC Cabinet via the Regional Parent Cabinet member. **See Section 5 for more information.**
  - Conduct a minimum of two (2) surveys, focus groups or other outreach to understand parents' needs
  - Establish a formal connection to local business, chamber of commerce or regional workforce board
  - Participate in 2 CQI trainings (4 hours total)
  - Participate in quarterly meetings of the CT Children's Collective
  - Work with other LECCS and OEC through the CT Children's Collective to develop common outcome measures
  - Conduct an annual self-reflection on equitable access & equity practice

#### **E. Operational funding**

Eligible expenses include additional hours for existing or new staff, consultation, grant writing/fund development, staff/board leadership training, data collection and related efforts. Funds must be expended **by December 31, 2021** and should relate directly to the following three areas of focus:

- 1) strengthening the LECC's efforts to build organizational capacity including increasing racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity of leadership in the collaborative
- 2) incorporating parent/family voice and feedback into collaborative decisions
- 3) increasing cross-system orientation of existing efforts to better include partners from all critical areas of support including early care and education, housing, home visiting, Medicaid and health care, child welfare, employment, social service and business.

#### **F. Project Support**

Funds can be used to implement new or expanded systems building efforts. Priority should be given to efforts included in your strategic or operational plans which have been developed with broad community input. Eligible projects should advance birth to 5 systems building.

#### **G. Project Timetable: July 1-December 31, 2021**

### **Section 3.** **Instructions to Applicants**

#### **A. What to Submit**

1. Applicant Information
2. Project narrative (3 page maximum)
3. Budget (form attached)

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#### **1. Applicant Information**

- a. Name of local collaborative including fiscal sponsor, where appropriate
- b. Permanent main office address
- c. Name, telephone number, email address, and physical address of the person to be contacted for the purpose of clarifying information
- d. Name of organization and address to receive payment (i.e., payee for the grant check)
- e. Name, title, email address for individual legally authorized to enter into a contract
- f. List of collaborative board members, affiliations, race/ethnicity.
- g. Current budget for the LECC noting revenue/sources and expenses
- h. If applicable, Attachment B signed by the fiscal sponsor

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## 2. **Project narrative:** (3 page maximum)

- a. Collaborative overview
  - 1) List your collaborative's current priorities. Note any changes in leadership or staffing.
- b. Operational support
  - 1) Describe your plans for the use of funds. Identify key staff/consultants.
  - 2) If applying for additional funding to establish a regional collaborative (i.e., multi town collaborative), please identify the target communities noting any discussions, joint planning or other efforts undertaken to date. State why it makes sense for a regional collaborative of the named communities.
- c. Project support
  - 1) Describe the 1-2 projects that you plan to undertake. Include a brief project plan in a table format noting major activities, timeline and projected outcomes.
  - 2) Describe briefly your plans for engaging parents as leaders, securing input on parents' needs and connecting to the business community.

## 3. **Budget**

- a. Format
  - 1) Use the attached form (Attachment A) to note your expenditures.
  - 2) Include funding in a minimum amount of \$2500 for parent stipends as detailed in Section 5.
  - 3) Include 4 hours to attend Continuous Quality Improvement training sessions.
  - 4) Include 8-10 hours to attend CT Children's Collective quarterly meetings and any additional meetings to develop common outcome measures. For further information on the CT Children's Collective, a network of local councils serving young children and their families, go to: [CT Children's Collective](#)

## B. **Form of Submission**

1. Proposals shall be submitted as a single pdf (portable document format), identified on each page with the applicant's name, signed by the chief executive or other authorized official and submitted to [codonnell@ctphilanthropy.org](mailto:codonnell@ctphilanthropy.org) **no later than 5:00 p.m. EDT on Monday, June 21, 2021.**

## C. **Award**

1. Applicants will be notified by email within 15 business days of submission.
2. Grantees will be required to execute a contract with the CT Council for Philanthropy, a tax-exempt organization under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)3 nonprofit. Your proposal and budget will be incorporated in the contract. Funding will be processed upon receipt of the signed contract.

## Section 4. **Continuation grantees**

- Alliance for Bloomfield's Children
- Branford Early Childhood Collaborative
- Bridgeport Prospers
- Bristol Early Childhood Alliance
- Collaborative for Colchester's Children
- Danbury School Readiness Council
- KITE of Enfield
- Children First Groton
- Hamden's Partnership for Young Children
- Manchester School Readiness Council
- CT Partnership for Children, Inc/Naugatuck Partnership for Children
- New Haven Early Childhood Council
- New London School Readiness Council
- Northeast Early Childhood Council
- Norwalk ACTS
- Early Childhood Collaborative of Southington
- Stamford Cradle to Career
- Torrington Early Childhood Collaborative/NW CT Community Foundation
- Waterbury Bridge To Success
- Great by 8 (West Hartford)
- West Haven Early Childhood Council
- Wethersfield Early Childhood Collaborative

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## Section 5: Parent Engagement and Leadership

### **Parent Engagement and Partnership Approach OEC Parent Cabinet and Early Childhood Collaboratives**

Local early childhood collaboratives serve a critical role of being the local to state connect, elevating how state decisions are impacting local communities. Local voice, especially those of families, can be strengthened and organized through the vehicle of the collaboratives serving as a local infrastructure and channel to the state.

#### **CT Office of Early Childhood (OEC) Parent Cabinet**

At the Office of Early Childhood, an OEC Parent Cabinet is forming and will launch for applications in early 2021.

*The mission of the OEC Parent Cabinet is to build connections, listen, and partner with Connecticut families, communities, and OEC to incorporate the expertise of all parents throughout the early childhood system to ensure family-driven equitable policies and programs*

**Cabinet Structure:** 15 member cabinet (2 members from each of the 6 DCF regions in the state plus 3 at-large seats). 60% of membership will be parents with young children ages 0-5 who use OEC supports such as subsidy, home visiting, early intervention, etc. and 40% will be comprised of parents with older children, community members, etc. Full Cabinet meetings will occur quarterly with monthly subcommittee meetings.

**Roles and Responsibilities:** The parent cabinet shall advise and inform the OEC Commissioner and staff on the following:

- Legislation that impacts children and families from the family perspective
- Policies and procedures to enhance the partnership with parents to support agency programs and operations to ensure that the OEC is responsive to community and parent needs
- Partnerships with other state agencies and statewide parent boards
- Strengthening the feedback loop from the local level up to the state

#### **Local Parent Ambassadors and Local Early Childhood Collaboratives**

Local early childhood collaboratives are encouraged to build practices and structures for fully engaging parents in decision making that reflect the unique needs, culture and diversity of the community. Collaboratives can use federal PDG funds for parent stipends, focus groups and other efforts to engage parents in sustained ways. In addition, individual and group consultation on parent engagement and leadership will be available to local early childhood collaboratives through the CT Children's Collective, the state-local intermediary and network of local early childhood collaboratives.

#### **Parent Ambassadors from the local early childhood collaboratives (LECCs) will:**

- Assist with recruitment of families into OEC Parent Cabinet activities. This may include focus groups, community cafes, and parent surveys
- Develop a relationship with the OEC Parent Cabinet member(s) from their region and keep them up to date on LECC meetings, announcements, challenges/successes, and opportunities
- Attend a virtual or in-person meeting with the OEC Parent Cabinet member(s) and other parent ambassadors from their region and/or the state four times per year to represent the LECC on parent issues
- Work with the OEC and Parent Cabinet to support data collection and analysis on parent and family issues

#### **Parent Stipends – 2 Parent Ambassadors per local early childhood collaborative**

- **Regional meetings with OEC Parent Cabinet member(s) and other parent ambassadors.**  
4/mtgs per year x 2 hrs. each x \$25/hr. = \$200

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- **Other activities in collaboration with the OEC Parent Cabinet**

12 hours per year (3 hours per quarter) = \$300

**Total: \$1,000 to be allocated for this role (\$500 per parent ambassador)**

Grant funding will also support at a minimum an **additional \$1,500** towards local collaborative parent engagement and leadership activities. These funds may be used to stipend at least 2 parents who take a lead and engage in local collaborative work by participating in meetings, engaging in the statewide development of common family engagement outcomes, and being a partner with other statewide activities of the CT Children's Collective.

**Total Funding to be allocated for parent engagement stipends - \$2,500**

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## Attachment A

### Budget

<b>Applicant:</b>		
		Explanation (e.g., cost per hour, etc.)
<b>Personnel</b>		
(name, title, # of hours, hourly rate) include hours for CT Children's Collective meetings, CQI training		
<b>Fringe Benefits (total personnel costs x %)</b>		
<b>Subtotal</b>	0	
<b>Operational expenses</b>		
Travel (mileage x .585), parking, etc.		
<b>Equipment</b>		
<b>Supplies</b>		
<b>Parent stipends</b>		
<b>Subtotal</b>	0	
<b>Project expenses</b>		
(consultation, outreach, training, surveys, supplies, etc.)		
<b>Subtotal</b>	0	
<b>Total Proposed Budget</b>	0	

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**Attachment B**  
**Fiscal Sponsor Form**

Local Collaborative: \_\_\_\_\_

Fiscal Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

The Fiscal Sponsor has reviewed and understands the responsibilities and essential qualifications for supporting the community collaborative listed above.

**1. RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Receive and manage grant resources at the direction of the local collaborative
- Provide the local collaborative with the staffing and other support services that are necessary in support of collaborative actions
- Administer the grant award
- Serve as one of the primary contacts for the grant

**2. QUALIFICATIONS**

- 501 (c) 3 status
- Fiscally sound and responsible
- Experience in the management of subcontracts for services, multiple interagency agreements and cross agency staff management and redeployment
- Capacity and willingness to provide financial reports in a timely manner

As Fiscal Sponsor, the undersigned agrees to accept the responsibility for supporting the collaborative in their management of the grant from the CT Early Childhood Funder Collaborative/CT Council for Philanthropy.

Authorized Signatory's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTATION WITH THIS SIGNED AGREEMENT**  
IRS 501(c) 3 Determination Letter