



United Way of Greater Kansas City 2017 Early Learning Request for Proposals

United Way of Greater Kansas City (UWGKC) has a longstanding commitment to supporting the availability of quality early learning programs in the community, particularly for low income households. In its most recent Community Impact Agenda, United Way has reaffirmed this commitment through the establishment of a *Healthy Beginnings* aspect of the Cycle of Success framework. Under the Healthy Beginnings area, UWGKC will invest in programs and initiatives that will support home visiting programs for at-risk families with young children prenatal to age five, center-based early learning programs serving children from birth to age five, and systems-level programming that supports the collective capacity of early childhood providers.

Under this Request for Proposals, UWKC will award grants to programs that fall into two groups: Early Learning Centers and Early Learning System Supports. Only previously funded grantees in each category are eligible to apply for 2017-18 funding.

Purpose of Grants

United Way will award grants to support operations of early learning centers that serve low-income families and which provide full-day care (or a combination of full- and part-day care). Grants are intended to support the operations of core center-based programs.

Applicant organizations must submit proposals and related budgets that focus on center-based programming and the services that comprise it. To the extent that the organization provides other services, such as after-school care, emergency assistance, health clinics, home visiting services, etc., these services should be excluded from the proposal—including the program narrative and program budget. Opportunities may exist for grants to support these other programs through another United Way RFP, but the early learning grant opportunity is exclusively for the core aspects of center-based early learning programs. (NOTE: to the extent that Head Start and similar programs take a holistic approach to serving children, ‘family advocate’ services, health screenings, and referral services are considered a core part of the program and should be included in the funding proposal.)

Organizations operating multiple early learning centers may seek funding for multiple centers. Separate proposals must be submitted for each center. (It is permissible, however, to simply “cut and paste” responses to questions in the proposal that are the same for multiple centers.)

Funding Levels

United Way will award grants ranging of at least \$20,000 and not in excess of \$250,000 per center.

Funding Timeframe

Grants awarded will be for a one-year period from May 1, 2017 through April 30, 2018. Grants to programs in good standing are renewable for two years without reapplication. Annual progress reports including demographic and outcomes data will be required.

Eligibility Criteria for Center-based Programs

All applicant center-based programs must demonstrate that they:

- Are located in Cass, Clay, Jackson, Johnson or Platte County;

- Operate year-round, full-day programming, which, in addition to providing a rich early education experience also provide full-day child care for parents who are working;
- Adhere to a set of quality standards, either through a recognized accrediting body (such as NAEYC or MO Accreditation of Programs for Children and Youth) or through a partnership with Head Start;
- Serve a substantial number of low-income families by showing:
 - That 40% or greater of enrolled children qualify for state subsidies to cover program fees, and/or qualify for free/reduced price meals; OR
 - That the program serves low-income children in the program at a level equal to or greater than the rate of low-income (200% of poverty) for young children in the program’s home county (see table below).

Cass County, MO	33%
Clay County, MO	37%
Jackson County, MO	40%*
Johnson County, KS	23%
Platte County, MO	27%

*Actual 200% of poverty rate for Jackson County is 55%, but threshold for eligibility for Jackson County programs is 40%.

- Or, if not eligible based on above low-income criteria, a program can demonstrate that no other similar, appropriate service is available in their immediate geographic area, special consideration will be given to that program. United Way’s goal is to build access and program capacity to serve low income persons. For any exceptions to the criteria as outlined above, United Way may restrict program dollars for uses that increase low-income access, such as scholarships.

Early Learning System Supports Grants

In addition to awarding grants to early learning centers, United Way will award grants to support operations of programs that work to strengthen the Kansas City area’s early childhood development system. This includes programs that offer non-center based pre-K direct services to families, those that work with service providers to strengthen and expand their capacity, and those that conduct public policy advocacy to expand access, promote quality and engage the public in supporting these goals. Only organizations previously funded under this investment area are eligible to apply for a 2017-18 grant.

Grant Review Timeline

Release of RFP	Oct 14, 2016
Letter of Intent Due Date	November 7, 2016
Proposal Due Date	January 12, 2017
Proposal review Meeting with United Way representatives	February and March 2017
United Way review team deliberation	March 2017
United Way Board of Trustees approval of grants	April 2017
Funding notifications sent	end of April 2017

Proposal Forms and Method of Submission

Each category—Early Learning Centers and Early Learning Systems Supports—has their own set of proposal forms. A version of the proposal forms is available in Word and Excel format.

Funding proposals must be submitted through United Way's web-based application system. Applicant organizations should use the Word/Excel version to prepare their funding proposal and then transfer the content to the online application forms. (It is recommended that you not write the first draft of the proposal directly in the online application.)

Program Review Criteria

All applicant programs will be reviewed against standard review criteria that consider program design, outcomes, capacity and the quality of the proposal and responses to questions. For the full criteria, refer to [United Way's general request for proposals](#), page 19.

Required Letters of Intent

Applicant organizations must submit a letter of intent expressing their intent to seek a grant, including the following information:

- Brief (one paragraph) description of the program;
- Amount of funding requested.

If seeking funding for more than one center, the applicant organization should provide the amount of funding requested broken out for each center.

Letters of Intent should be submitted to United Way by November 7th. They may be emailed to Trish Brashears at trish.brashears@uwgkc.org.

Deadline for Submission of Funding Proposals

Funding proposals and supporting documents must be submitted to United Way of Greater Kansas City by **Thursday, January 12, 2017**.

Proposal Review Interviews

All applicants will have the opportunity to meet briefly with the United Way funding review team to which each funded program is assigned. Thirty-minute in-person meetings will be held between representative(s) of applicant organizations and United Way review teams. The purpose of the meeting is to answer questions about the funding proposal and does not include time for a formal presentation (other than five minutes of opening remarks by an agency representative).

Questions?

For answers to your questions or to discuss your organization's funding proposal, contact Jim MacDonald at jim.macdonald@uwgkc.org or 816-559-4659.

