**PDG Community Innovation Grant FAQs**

Updated 12/9/2020

**Q: Are the grants utilizing the eSupplier system?**

A: Community Innovation Grant applications will not be published in eSupplier. DCF is using a new process for distributing some grants. This is intended to help simplify and streamline the application process.

**Q: Can other federal funds be used as match?**

A: Match is not a requirement of the grant application; however, it is expected that partners contribute in-kind funds to the project. Applicants should be careful to not supplant in-kind dollars from DCF or any other funding source.

**Q: What might be considered a conflict of interest in applying for Community Innovation Grants?**

**A:** Staff employed by the Department of Children and Families are not eligible to apply for funding and may not directly assist applicants in the writing of Community Innovation Grant proposals, as this would be considered a conflict of interest.

However, State and Regional DCF staff may respond to questions and provide general assistance in accordance with their regular job duties as assigned.

**Q: Are previous subrecipients and contractors of PDG funds eligible to apply for Innovation Grants?**

A: The application is open to any organization in Wisconsin with an idea to start or expand services for children ages 0-5 years. All applications should have a collaborative cross-sector focus.

Proposals cannot supplant any other funds. This opportunity is separate from other DCF contracts or potential future funding.

**Q: Do all applications have to have a collaborative partnership? Can I launch a new program or expand my existing business without a partner?**

A: All applications must have a lead and co lead representing two separate organizations.

**Q: What is the difference between private and public partners?**

Public vs Private refers to the type of organization.

Public organizations include City and County Human Service Agencies, Public Health Departments, Tribal entities, Libraries, School Districts, etc.

Private organizations may include local businesses such as child care centers, factories or retail outlets. Private organizations also include non-profits, such as the United Way and service organizations, like the Lions Club.

This list is intended to provide examples and is not exhaustive of the types of partners that may be included in a Community Innovation Grant proposal.

**Q: Who will be monitoring the Grants?**

A**:** PDG staff at DCF will monitor the grants. Grant recipients will be required to submit data showing the outcomes of their activities.

**Q: Is a child care center that is part of YoungStar considered part of a collaboration?**

A: Participation in YoungStar is an indicator of program quality and does not qualify as a collaborative partnership.

**Q: Why is the contract only 10 months and not a full year?**

A: Funds for Innovation Grants will be available pending a federal No Cost Extension to the PDG. Activities under the No Cost Extension must be completed by October 31, 2021 in order to meet federal reporting requirements.

**Q: Is land purchase, construction or capital improvements an allowable expense?**

A: [Capital expenditures](https://www.law.cornell.edu/definitions/index.php?width=840&height=800&iframe=true&def_id=43b21a1cb11a2654c1d64fb7d38e02eb&term_occur=999&term_src=Title:45:Chapter:A:Subchapter:A:Part:75:Subpart:E:Subjgrp:39:75.439) for general purpose equipment, buildings, and land are not allowed.

**Q: Is food purchasing an allowable expense?**

Funds may be used to purchase food with the intent to improve young children’s access to local foods; improve nutrition in early childhood; incorporate local foods and snacks in ECE-provided meals; and/or enhance children’s learning opportunities with food (e.g. planting/gardening).

The purchase of food for personal use or entertainment (staff meetings, incentives, etc.) is not allowed.

Food purchases related to conference hosting or attendance must adhere to state procurement and [per diem rates](https://dpm.wi.gov/Documents/BCER/Compensation/PocketTravelGuide.pdf).

**Q: Can child care centers under the same company umbrella each apply for a Community Innovation Grant?**

A: Child care centers with the same parent company could each apply for Community Innovation Grants as long as each application addresses a different community need and includes different activities and partners.

If child care centers under one parent company will address the same needs and activities, it is recommended that the parent organization submit one application.

**Q:** **Can an organization submit more than one application?**

A: An organization may submit more than one Community Innovation Grant if each application addresses a different community need and includes different activities and partners.

**Q: Does a proposal need to target a specific community or Region?**

A: Proposals should target a specific community with an identified need and activities should be prioritized that will best meet those community needs. Please describe how you define community in your application, i.e. zip code, city, county, region, etc.

Statewide projects may be considered after community projects are funded in each of the 5 regions.

**Q: Can you provide more details about what to include in an application?**

A: Applications should include a clear plan of what you will do with the grant funds and why. Applications should address all 6 scored areas identified in the application form. The 6 areas are:

* Local Data
* Family Engagement
* Strategic Plan Areas
* Activities
* Collaboration
* Budget Response

Read the application carefully to determine expectations in each of these areas.

**Q: Who is considered the lead applicant for the proposal?**

A: The organization submitting the Community Innovation Grant is considered the lead organization. The co-lead should be clearly identified in the narrative of the proposal.

**Q: Is the application form included in the 7-page limit?**

A: The application form is not part of the 7-page limit. You may use all 7 pages to address the 6 sections outlined in the grant requirements

**Q: Is allowing a sub-grantee to purchase food for a community engagement event okay?**

A: Community Innovation Grant funds may be used for events considered conferences, seminars, advisory committee meetings, training sessions, public hearings and/or awards ceremonies. Events falling under these categories may provide food to participants. The cost of meals cannot exceed $7 per person. The purchase of alcohol is strictly forbidden.

**Q: Can the funds be used to incentivize participation in family/community engagement with gift cards for gas, etc.?**

A: If Community Innovation Grant funds are used to purchase gift cards for family/community engagement they must be managed securely. An agenda and sign in sheet from the event identifying who received the gift cards and which gift cards were given will be required documentation with expense claims. If there is no agenda or sign in sheet, a document/memo signed by the recipient stating that they received the gift card must be provided to DCF as part of your reporting. The type and amount of the gift card will also need to be reported.

**Q: Are statewide organizations eligible to apply for Community Innovation Grants?**

A: Statewide organizations are eligible to apply for Community Innovation Grants.

**Q: The application requires a DUNS number. What does that mean?**

A: A DUNS number is a unique 9-digit number for businesses. Visit <https://www.dnb.com/duns-number.html> for more information about requesting a DUNS number. We will accept applications without a DUNS number but a DUNS number must be obtained before an award will be made.

**Q: Is the co-lead required to contribute monetarily to the project?**

A**:** The co-leader does not have to contribute monetarily if they are providing other resources in-kind. It is your responsibility to identify all the necessary resources and how they will come together to meet the needs of your proposal including how the activities will be sustained when the grant ends.

**Q: Does this grant require a fiscal agent?**

A**:** The fiscal agent should be the lead organization under whose name the application should be submitted. The lead organization will be required to have a DUNS number and may be asked to demonstrate financial stability. More information about how an organization may be asked to prove financial stability can be found at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/doingbusinesswith/financialstability>

**Q: Is the budget required to be submitted at the same time as the application?**

A: Both the application form and the budget worksheet must be submitted together, no later than 2pm on December 11, 2020.

**Q: Can funds be used to provide supports and services to unregulated child care providers?**

A: Yes, supports and services may be provided to both regulated and unregulated child care.

**Q: Are letters of support required to be included with the applications?**

A: Letters of Support are not required as part of the application. Any letters of support submitted will be counted as part of the page limits. Only the first 7 pages will be evaluated.

**Q: Where do I submit the application materials?**

A: The application form, narrative and budget sheet should be emailed to [DCFProcurement@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DCFProcurement@wisconsin.gov) no later than 2:00 pm on December 11, 2020.

**Q: Do I have to use all 7 pages for the application narrative?**

A: The *maximum* is 7 pages. As long as you clearly address all the requirements in the application you do not have to use all 7 pages.

**Q: Is the provided Budget Narrative Form (the excel spreadsheet) counted as part of the 7 page limit?**

A: The excel budget worksheet is *not* counted as part of the 7 page limit.

**Q: Will we receive a confirmation of receipt after submitting the application?**

A: You will get an email response confirming your application was received.

**Q: If we submit a budget for $150,000 could we be considered for $100,000 or $50,000?**

A: Your budget should reflect the actual costs to your proposal and match your proposed activities to assure successful implementation.

Applications will be scored based on their technical merit. Awards will be made to the top scoring applications. It is possible that some *awarded* proposals will be asked to modify their budgets and activities based on available funding.

**Q: Should the budget document reflect our organizations entire budget or just the budget for the proposed grant project?**

A: Your budget should reflect the actual costs of your proposal that will be charged to the PDG Community Innovation Grant.

You may discuss your overall organizational budget and how it will contribute to the success of your project proposal, without supplanting, in Section 6 of the Application Requirements.

**Q: What formats will be accepted for the application proposal?**

A: It is preferred that application proposals be submitted as Word documents, in your email submission.

**Q: Does the application form cover sheet need to be in the same document as the proposal?**

A: The application form cover sheet can be submitted as a separate document from the proposal narrative.

**Q: Can more than two organizations be included in an application proposal?**

A: While we require a minimum of two organizations to apply together, we welcome and encourage collaborations that include *more* than 2 organizations. Extra points may be awarded for collaborations that include more than two organization/industry types.

**Q: Can you provide additional examples of capital expenditures that are *not* allowed in the Community Innovation Grant application?**

A: Besides land, building and construction costs, other capital expenditures would include; vehicles, appliances (oven, refrigerator, furnace, etc.), remodeling a room or space, etc., and are not allowable expenses for the Community Innovation Grants.

Classroom set-up materials, including small electronics, are allowed if under $5000 (in order to not be considered a capital expenditure).  A clear justification must be provided to show how the purchase will help fulfill the needs identified in section 1 of the Application Requirements