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Grant Program to Support Local, Early Care Partnerships Begins Today

(MADISON) – The Department of Children and Families (DCF) opened applications today for a new grant program – Community Innovation Grants (CIG) – designed to expand available early care and education opportunities for young children ages birth to five and their families. The grants are funded from the state’s Preschool Development Grant – Birth to 5 (PDG B-5) award.

The department plans to award up to \$850,000 in CIGs, which will be issued on a competitive basis. All proposals must include a partnership between two or more applicants, with public-private partnerships strongly encouraged. Applicants will be asked to focus on the needs of their local community and the collective impact of early care and education. CIG funds can be used to launch new programs, to expand existing work, or to support collaboration across programs and partners. Proposals must be aligned to the [Birth to 5 Statewide Strategic Plan](#), released last week as part of Wisconsin’s ongoing work to implement the PDG B-5 grant. Funds for early care and education programs must be used to address issues of equity, workforce, access, affordability, quality, kindergarten readiness, and local collaboration.

“Access to high-quality, affordable early care is vital to the success of any community,” said DCF Secretary Emilie Amundson. “We know there are exciting pilots, partnerships, and ideas well-suited to solving the unique challenges of Wisconsin’s diverse regions. These grants are an opportunity for local partners to work together to grow their early care and education opportunities and make those plans a reality.”

CIG applications are open now to all who meet the criteria. Multiple awards in the amounts of \$50,000, \$100,000, or \$150,000 will be given to qualified applicants in [each region of the state](#). The grant application, instructions, and other applicable documents are available on the [DCF Grants page](#). The application window closes at 2 p.m. on December 11, 2020.

The PDG B-5 is a one-year federal grant which allows Wisconsin to complete a needs assessment and a strategic plan to improve our early childhood state system. This week, Wisconsin applied for a second round of funding. The second grant would provide funding for an additional three years and allow the state to build and expand upon the work of the first grant. More information about the Preschool Development Grant and the CIG is [available on the DCF website](#). The department also created an [informational flyer in English](#) and [Spanish](#) to raise awareness about the CIG funding opportunity.

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