

General Application Feedback and Suggestions for Early Education Grant Fund Applicants

Thank you to those who applied in the spring cycle to the Early Education Grant Fund. We received 52 application requests totaling \$15 million. The process was highly competitive with nine applicants out of 52 receiving awards (17%).

The Early Education Funders Collaborative is requesting your feedback through a separate survey and will continue to learn and develop the grant program to ensure it best increases access and quality in Kansas City's early childhood education sector. We also want to provide feedback to current and future applicants as well. Below are items reflecting strengths and challenges that were common across a large number of applicants. We will provide similar reflections following the fall grant cycle.

What successful grantees did well

- 1) Developed budgets that justified the amount they were requesting (ranged from \$38,000 to \$500,000).
- 2) Clear outputs and outcomes related to the work described in the grant – even for operating costs. (“This is how you as funders will know if our work is successful”).
- 3) Well-written and succinct proposals answering each question and including additional information when necessary.

General feedback for all applicants

- 1) Consider if asking for the maximum amount is justified in what you propose to do. The budget should reflect what is needed, but also what is reasonable given past fundraising and what exactly the funding will go to support.
- 2) Clearly articulate the results you expect to achieve. Here are examples for your reference for ways to word goal statements:

Specific goal example 1

By May 31, 2017 we will serve 15 more students qualifying for low-income subsidies than our 2016 baseline as measured by our student roster and submission of appropriate forms.

Specific goal example 2

By May 31, 2017 at least 80 percent of students in our program age four or higher will be assessed as kindergarten-ready as measured by annual administration the “KS K-ready Assessment” (an increase of 10 percent).

- 3) Ask a peer or colleague with grant-writing experience outside your organization to review your application and provide feedback before submitting.