

Providence Early Learning Infrastructure Support Program 2023 Info Session



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Agenda

1. 2023 Program Overview
2. Eligibility and Priority Criteria
3. Your Project
4. Grant Requirements
5. Online Application Walk-Through
6. Selection Process
7. Technical Assistance/Resources
8. Questions



2023 Program Overview



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Facilities

High quality, affordable child care directly influences parents' ability to work and children's healthy development.

A facility is not merely where a program takes place, it's part of the formula for success.

Every child deserves equal access to affordable, developmentally-appropriate, high-performing early learning facilities.



Providence's Investment

The City of Providence has dedicated **\$1,570,350** for facility planning, repair, and renovation grants to improve the health, safety, and quality of Providence-based child care programs.

These funds are made available through the **American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA)**'s Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) to mitigate economic harm from the COVID-19 pandemic.



Use of Funds

Facilities Improvement Grants include:

1. Planning Grants to provide resources to develop a comprehensive indoor and/or outdoor facility plan. This is a critical step in a facility project!

2. Capital Grants for moderate repairs and renovations to address issues related to licensing compliance, health and safety and physical space barriers to quality improvement.



Availability of Funds

A total of **\$1,570,350** is available through a competitive application process to licensed child care providers serving infant-preschool aged children, including: Head Start centers, public-school preschools, family child care providers (sole proprietors are eligible with appropriate Schedule C tax return), and State pre-k classrooms

These grants are funded through the City of Providence's **federal ARPA dollars**.



Disbursement of Funds

This is a **reimbursement-based** grant program.

If approved for grant funding, grant-funded expenses must be approved, incurred, and paid for during the grant term prior to receiving reimbursement (evidence of expense and payment such as invoices and cancelled checks will be required).*

**If you are approved for funding to address an urgent, documented health and safety issue, you may be eligible to receive an advance of grant funds by meeting certain milestones in your grant-funded project. LISC will work with you individually to determine if your project is eligible for a funding advance.*

A photograph of a backyard featuring a large area of artificial green grass. In the background, there is a wooden fence decorated with colorful paper flowers. A wooden bench with blue patterned cushions is positioned against the fence. A wooden play structure with circular openings is on the grass. The foreground shows a border of reddish-brown bricks and some plants. A blue semi-transparent box is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Eligibility and Priority Criteria

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Who is Eligible to Apply

Eligible providers will meet the following requirements:

- Licensed to provide child care services (license is in good standing)
- Operating in good standing in the State of Rhode Island
- BrightStars rated and actively working to improve quality rating
- Providing services to children with high needs
- Located in the City of Providence
- Assigned a Unique Entity ID (SAM.gov) - if you do not currently have a Unique Entity ID, please visit SAM.gov to get one assigned to your business entity

If you are unsure about whether you meet these eligibility guidelines, please don't hesitate to contact us!

Priorities for Decision-Making

For organizations meeting eligibility requirements, funding priorities are:

- Programs currently enrolling substantial numbers of children with high needs
- Programs proposing to provide some level of matching funding for the project
- Programs that can demonstrate the capacity to manage the proposed project
- Programs that can clearly link their project to compliance with health and safety codes/regulations and/or quality benchmarks



Priorities for Decision-Making

For organizations meeting eligibility requirements, funding priorities are:

- Programs that demonstrate long-term site control
- Programs seeking grant funds to address the following issues:
 - Compliance with Regulations
 - Health and Safety: Overall Building Condition
 - Health and Safety: Playground
 - Physical space barriers to program quality and/or expansion



Funding Priorities Examples

Examples of Funded Project Types

- Site Control
- Demonstrated commitment to quality
- History of personal investment
- Urgent health and safety concerns
- Issues impeding regulatory compliance
- “Fully baked” projects
- High needs population

Examples of Project Types NOT Likely to be Funded

- Landlord responsibilities
- No long-term site control
- No detailed and/or approved plan
- Plan not aligned to best practice
- Low or no high-needs children
- Low capacity to manage project and / or grant
- Fiscal issues
- Large climbing structures will NOT be funded through this program

How to Pick/Prioritize Your Project

Focus on grant **priority areas**:

- Programs with documented health and safety issues should address these priority areas
- Programs with documentation that there are facility issues impacting their BrightStars rating/ ERS scores should include those items for consideration
- Programs that could expand quality programming with necessary facility renovations

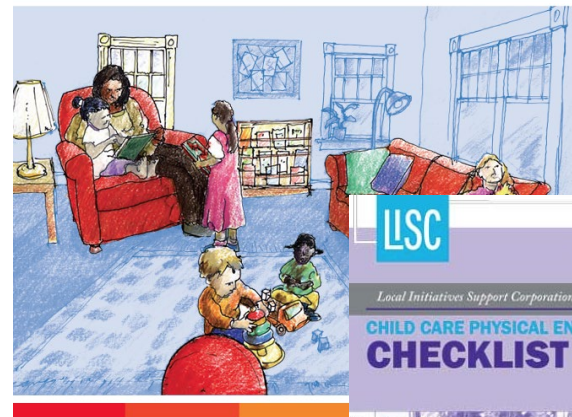


How to Pick/Prioritize Your Project

If you are looking for a place to start with identifying facilities improvements, try

- Do you see health and safety concerns?
- How do children move around the space?
- What would make supervision easier, materials more accessible, routines flow better, etc.?

A checklist can be a helpful tool – LISC has checklists available for both Center-based and Home-based Programs (English and Spanish)!



How to Pick/Prioritize Your Project

Examples of items that may be considered for capital playground funding:

- Removal of unsafe equipment
- Repair/replacement of unsafe fencing
- Installation of necessary safety surfacing under existing structures *which have been deemed in compliance with CPSC and ASTM guidelines*
- Sheds for the storage of “loose parts” such as riding toys, balls, hula hoops, push and pulling objects, etc.
- Addition of age-appropriate activities and activity areas (such as sand and water play, outdoor building, nature and science activities)
- Addressing items related to improving safety, such as repairs or modifications to existing play equipment in consultation with a qualified professional, or the installation of a shade structure



How to Pick/Prioritize Your Project

Focus on **project feasibility**:

- Can the project realistically be completed before **November 30, 2024**?
- Can the project realistically be completed with the funding you have available to you?



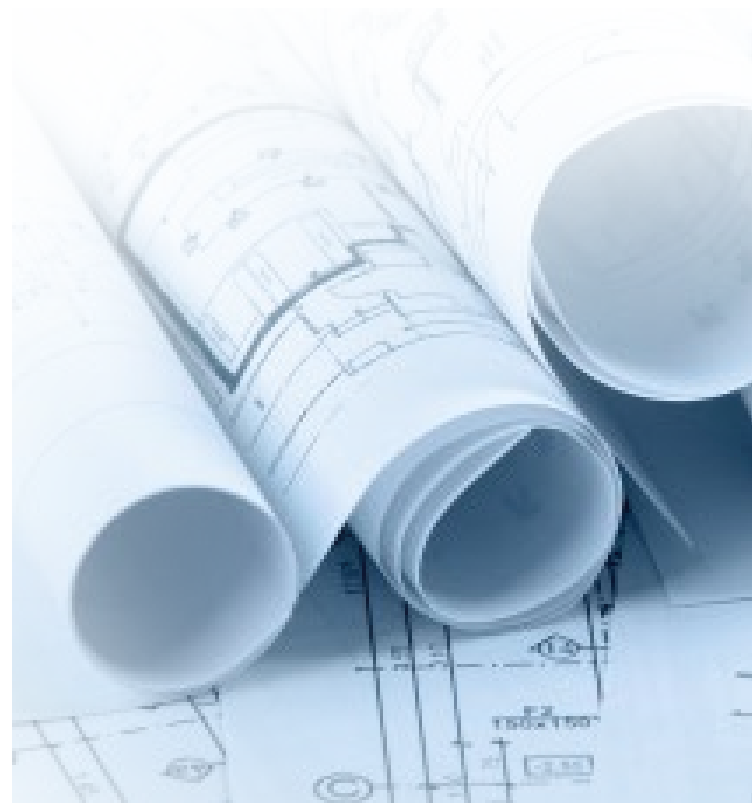
Grant Requirements



Written Estimates

- **The application requires** a written estimate from a licensed designer and/or contractor (depending on your project) for each project proposed.
- **If you are selected*** to receive grant funding you will be required to seek out 3 bids including solicitation of MWBE entities and document your selection process prior to beginning work.

**NOTE: YOU DO NOT NEED 3 ESTIMATES FOR APPLICATION PURPOSES, ONLY IF YOU ARE SELECTED FOR A GRANT AWARD*



Estimates vs. Bids

An estimate is:

- A close approximation of the price that will be charged to do a job based on the information that is available at the time of estimate
- Typically provided for projects where full plans are not yet in place

A bid (also referred to as a “quote”) is:

- The actual price a contractor states they will perform the work for based on a well-defined scope of work/plan.
- Changes in the scope of work or alterations to the plan will impact the price – this is typically specified in the bid/quote

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Rhode Island Child Care Early Learning
Facilities Fund *Fast Facts*

What is a Cost Estimate?

WHAT IS A COST ESTIMATE?

A cost estimate is a rough calculation of the total cost for a design or construction project that is typically prepared by either an architect or contractor. Cost estimates are helpful to aid in determining the feasibility of a scope of work, or to identify and itemize the key costs for a project; including overhead, profits, and contingencies.

Example



The image shows a sample letterhead for a cost estimate. It includes a header with the date, recipient information, and subject line. A gear and wrench icon is positioned to the right of the header. Below the header, there is a salutation and a brief description of the project. At the bottom, a note states that the costs outlined include overhead and profits.

Today's Date

Director of Childcare Center
123 Fourth Street
Rhode Island

Re: Cost Estimate

Dear Director of Childcare Center:

Below please find a preliminary cost estimate for the renovated Room #1 at your center. The costs outlined below include overhead and profits.

Selecting Professionals

When choosing a professional to work with, it is important the company:

- *Has appropriate licensure,*
- *Carries proper insurance, and*
- *Follows all appropriate building and fire codes.*

If you are selected to receive *capital grant funding*, the selected contractor must follow the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Davis Bacon Wage Act, and RI General Law (prevailing wage laws). Davis Bacon prevailing wage language must be included in your contracts with your professionals hired.



Selecting Professionals - Contractor

Selecting a contractor

Visit the RICCELFF.org website for additional information on selecting qualified contractors.

Compliance

Can be located and licensed confirmed on the contractor's Registration and Licensing Board.

Can manage a Davis Bacon/RI General Law compliant project.

Experience

Has experience with projects similar (in size and type) to yours.

Has good references.

Is familiar with your local area and building officials/ codes/ requirements

Flexibility

Can perform construction in a way that is least disruptive to your program (for example during hours that the program is not in session)

Davis Bacon

- If you are seeking capital grant funding, alert the professionals providing you with estimates and/or bids that they will be required to comply with all aspects of the Davis Bacon Wage Act and RI General Law.
- If you receive capital grant funding, the contract you sign with the professional you select to complete the work must include language that guarantees that they will comply with all aspects of the Davis Bacon Wage Act.
- Davis-Bacon labor standards clauses must be included in contracts funded entirely or partially with facilities improvement capital grant funds



Selecting Professionals – Planning and Design

If you are applying for a **planning grant**, you will need to select a playground design professional, architect or landscape architect to assist you with this process.

Look for:

- Individuals who have experience with similar projects
- Individuals with good references from organizations like yours
- Someone you feel understands your vision

Research:

- Talk to others who have completed successful projects
- Obtain a list from the RICCELFF of professionals who have designed LISC-funded projects
- Talk to people you respect in the community about professionals they have used for similar types of projects

Requirements if Funded

If you are awarded a **grant**, there are a few other requirements you will need to consider

Retention Period

Grantees must maintain documentation of all grant-related work and expenditures for a period of ten (10) years

Project Reporting

- Provide monthly written project updates
- Allow LISC and the City to visit project site
- Comply with requests for additional information regarding project activities as needed

Grant Documentation

- Copies of signed agreements for grant-funded work, invoices, receipts, cancelled checks, bank statements
- Financial reports of revenue and expenditures of grant funds
- Records of signed financial reports for each disbursement request certifying the use of the funds are true and accurate
- Records of your process for hiring professionals for grant-funded work including obtaining multiple bids and decision rationale

Application Walk-Through



Application Walk-Through

Application features to consider:

- The application is electronic and works best in the Chrome or Edge web browsers
- The full list of questions is available to you for reference - you can download/print them to help gather information and documentation
- You will have the option to save your application by entering your email and a password; please keep your password safe as we are unable to retrieve or reset passwords

**City of Providence Early Learning Facilities Improvement Grant
Application/ Solicitud de Subvención para Mejora de Instalaciones de
Aprendizaje Temprano de la Ciudad de Providence**

About Your Program / Información Acerca de su Programa

Please note, if your program does not currently serve any high risk children (as described in the application instructions), or if you are not actively participating with BrightStars, you are not eligible for a facilities improvement grant at this time. Grant funds may not be used for overhead or indirect costs./

Por favor tenga en cuenta que si su programa actualmente no brinda servicio a niños de alto riesgo (como se describe en las instrucciones de la solicitud), o si usted no está participando activamente con BrightStars, usted no es elegible en este momento para subvenciones para mejora de instalaciones. Los fondos de las subvenciones no pueden ser utilizados para costos indirectos o generales.

Legal Name of Organization / Nombre legal de la organización *

Name of Program / Nombre del Programa *

Application Walk-Through

Application attachments

There are two required documents that will need to be uploaded into your application:

1. A cash flow projection
2. Narrative – PLEASE USE TEMPLATE PROVIDED

There is also a section to upload optional documentation such as a design plan.

It is recommended that you complete and save these attachments before beginning your electronic application form.



Narrative

Please type your narrative below and then save this file and upload as part of your application process. Be sure to answer all of the following items in the proposal narrative as incomplete applications will not be considered. Proposals should be no more than 4 pages in length.

1. **Brief summary of your organization including mission, history, goals and key achievements:**
Click or tap here to enter text.
2. **Overview of organization's structure and programs:**
Click or tap here to enter text.
3. **Summary of key leadership staff and board members including a summary of their qualifications:**
Click or tap here to enter text.
4. **Describe your proposed project – what do you want to do?**
Click or tap here to enter text.
5. **Provide an anticipated project budget:**

Application Walk-Through

You must fill out separate applications if:

1. You are applying for both a planning and capital grant for multiple projects
2. You are applying for multiple locations – one application per facility



Application Walk-Through

Specific Capital or Planning Request: <i>Install sinks in infant and toddler classrooms</i>				
Is issue based on...	Cite specific licensing regulation, ERS indicator, CECE or other specific standard	Details of concern	How will this request address the issue	Estimated time frame and cost for this item
<i>ERS</i>	<i>ITERS - Health Practices</i>	<i>Hand washing not attempted at required times by adults</i>	<i>Installing appropriate sink in classroom will ensure teachers have opportunities to wash hands at required times</i>	<i>\$17,000 – work can begin April 10 and will take 2 weeks</i>
<i>ERS</i>	<i>ITERS - Diapering/Toileting</i>	<i>When the same sink is used for hand washing after diapering and before feeding, it needs to be sanitized between uses</i>	<i>Installing additional sinks in classroom will address this issue</i>	<i>(see above estimate/time frame)</i>
<i>ERS</i>	<i>ITERS - Schedule</i>	<i>Observed multiple instances of children waiting more than 3 minutes for hand washing</i>	<i>Installing additional child sinks will minimize wait times for children</i>	<i>(see above estimate/time frame)</i>

Application Walk-Through

Specific Capital or Planning Request: <i>Renovate or replace playground fencing on south side of playground to meet 4 foot requirement</i>				
Is issue based on...	Cite specific licensing regulation, ERS indicator, CECE or other specific standard	Details of concern	How will this request address the issue	Estimated time frame and cost for this item
<i>CECE</i>	<i>It is required that the space for outdoor gross motor play be enclosed by a 4 foot high fence</i>	<i>On the south side of the playground, the 20 year old fence has sunk into the ground to a height of 40 inches</i>	<i>A renovation of the old fence to restore the height to 48 inches or the installation of a new fence will address this concern</i>	<i>Renovation for \$8,000 (3 days to complete), or new installation for \$18,000 (1 week to complete) – work can begin April 27th</i>

Application Due Date

Applications will be accepted until the end of the business day on:

**Friday, March 31,
2023**



Decision-making Process



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Decision-making Process

1. Online applications will first be reviewed by LISC staff to ensure basic eligibility and completeness
2. Eligible, complete applications will be evaluated by a review committee using a scoring rubric to guide the funding recommendation process
3. The City of Providence will give final award approval based on the results of the committee meeting



Decision-making Process

In addition to meeting eligibility and priority criteria, recommendations will also be based on:

1. Application clarity and completeness,
2. A site visit assessment prior to the final decision to award funding, and
3. The availability of funding.



Scoring Rubric

Each eligible application will be evaluated on the following competitive criteria (100 Points)

CRITERIA	Maximum Points Available
Project and Organizational Readiness (Maximum 50 Points)	
The organization has shown the ability to sustain this project and its overall operations	25
Applicant has demonstrated project readiness- includes estimates for scope of project, design plans where appropriate (or request is for planning support), accurate budget, and realistic timeline established	25
Technical Proposal (Maximum 25 Points)	
Proposal clearly demonstrates how the project will have a specific and measurable impact on regulatory compliance, health and safety, and/or quality rating.	25
Other Priorities (Maximum 25 Points)	
Level to which applicant enrolls children with high needs	10
Long-term site control established	5
Proposes matching funding for project (evidence such as bank statements to verify the availability of proposed matching funds may be requested)	5
Solicits and/or includes participation of businesses certified by state Office of Diversity, Equity & Opportunity (ODEO), including design firms, construction companies or development team members in the project	5
TOTAL	/100

Decision-making Process

1. Applications will be reviewed and scored/prioritized by a committee of stakeholders led by the RICCELFF and the City of Providence.
2. Site visit assessments or virtual site visits will be conducted prior to final grant award decisions
3. Applicants will be notified of the status of their application by **Friday, April 21, 2023**





Additional Resources

Tools and Resources

- **LISC Technical Assistance** – If you are in any stage of this process or even just considering starting this process, please contact us! There is a brief electronic form to be completed.
- **Facility Project Readiness Worksheet**
- **Site Evaluation Checklist**
- **Space Planning Worksheet**
- **Loans and Recoverable Grants**



LISC Loans and Recoverable Grants

Recoverable Grants

A very competitive pool of recoverable grant funds are available to qualified organizations that are looking to expand quality child care or early education programming for low-income families. Recoverable grants, which typically range in size from \$10,000 – \$100,000 can be used to support pre-development costs, such as an option on a site, architectural drawings, environmental and engineering review, legal and project management fees.

Loans

- Eligible Borrowers: Nonprofit and for-profit early childhood program operators; community development corporations and other mission-driven development organizations providing space for early childhood centers. Priority to projects in LISC sites.
- Interest Rate: 5-8%
- Product Term:
 - Bridge Loan: n/a
 - Predevelopment: 2 years
 - Acquisition: 3 years
 - Construction: 3 years
 - Permanent: 20 years
- Loan Fees: Up to 1.5% of loan amount plus legal fees



Questions?
Comments?



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RICCELF website: www.riccelff.org

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