



# RURAL CHILD CARE MARKET STUDY GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Child care is a challenge across rural communities in Iowa and across the nation. However, the solutions are often more complicated than the construction of a new facility. Many factors need to be carefully analyzed to first determine the market feasibility for development of a child care center, expansion of an existing one or support for in-home providers.

The Rural Child Care Market Study Grant program seeks to support the use of data and analysis by rural communities to determine the specific needs and solutions for their area. Through greater understanding of their geographic market, demographics, competition, and other factors, communities can be armed with the information they need to make proactive steps towards addressing their child care challenges. Funding from the program will empower communities to partner with a third party to assess their current child care market environment and develop strategies.

The program, defined in Iowa Administrative Code, is administered by the [Center for Rural Revitalization](#), a division of the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA), in consultation with the Governor's Empower Rural Iowa Initiative Task Forces.

## Timeline

### March 1 | Application Window Opens

Application available online through [iowagrants.gov](http://iowagrants.gov), an online application portal

### May 3 | Application Deadline

Deadline to apply for funding is 11:59 p.m., May 3.

### June 1 | Funding Decision Notification

Applicants notified of funding decisions by June 1.

### June 15 – June 30, 2023 | Funding Period

All project activities and incurred expenses must occur within the eligible contracted funding.

## Eligibility Requirements

### Eligible Use of Funding

The Rural Child Care Market Study Grant Program provides funding for market data collection, analysis and development of strategic goals for child care through a professional third-party partner.

## Eligible Applicants

The following entities are eligible:

- City and county governments or federally recognized tribal governments physically located in Iowa;
- 501(c)3 or 501(c)6 nonprofit agencies and foundations;
- public and private schools serving grades pre-K through 12 and physically located in Iowa; and
- higher education institutions located in Iowa.

The study must benefit and take place in a community in Iowa with a population of 20,000 or fewer and not contiguous to a city with a population of 40,000 or greater. If a county-wide application, must be within one of the 88 least-populous counties in Iowa. An eligible applicant may submit an application that includes one or more partners and may apply on behalf of multiple cities or an entire county if the county is one of the 88 least-populous counties in Iowa.

## Eligible Project Requirements

Requirements for Rural Child Care Market Study awards include, but are not limited to the following:

- Applicants must demonstrate the capacity for grants administration.
- Applications must provide 1:1/2 cash match.
- Applications must agree to contract with a professional third-party partner for completion of the market study and strategic goals.
- Applicant communities must identify the third-party organization in their application that will conduct the analysis and planning process. The third-party partner should include an in-depth research process, facilitated community sessions and a final report with action steps.

## Funding

### Grant Request Amount

Applicants may request funding for eligible project expenses incurred and expended within the eligible funding period.

- Minimum Grant Request: \$1,000
- Maximum Grant Request: \$10,000

### Match Requirement

Applicants are required to demonstrate investment in projects by providing a minimum of 1:1/2 cash match. The cash match must be secured, dedicated to eligible expenses, a legitimate part of the proposed project and must be expended within the eligible funding period. Cash match constitutes actual cash contributed to direct project expenses by the applicant or other funding sources. The 1:1/2 match requirement may be raised through a combination of public and private sources but may not include in-kind donations of goods or services, unsecured funding or loans. For example, an applicant requesting \$10,000 in grant funds must have at least \$5,000 in cash match.

## Funding Period

All project activities and incurred expenses must occur within the eligible contracted funding period of June 15, 2022 – June 30, 2023. Funding is awarded on a reimbursement basis after expenses have been incurred for approved project activities within the eligible funding period. Expenses incurred before or after the eligible funding period are not eligible for reimbursement.

## Disbursement of Funds

Disbursements will be made on a reimbursement basis. Disbursement claims must be for an amount equal to or greater than \$500 per request. All claims must be made through [lowagrants.gov](http://lowagrants.gov). When submitting a claim, the following items are required:

- An invoice and proof of payment.
- A status report for the claim period. Status reports must be received once per quarter. If no funds are requested, recipients should still file a status report.
- Additional documentation requested by IEDA, as needed.

## Reporting Requirements

### Quarterly Reports

Each quarter, the recipient must provide an update on the percentage towards completion and a narrative of the activities taken place.

Recipients shall also provide a narrative description of any deviations from the proposed timeline, tasks and objectives during the reporting period. If the reported deviations impact the remainder of the project, the recipient must also notify the program manager via email.

## Final Report

- The final report will be submitted via [iowagrants.gov](http://iowagrants.gov) within 120 days of the project completion date.
- The IEDA will withhold 5% of project funds until the final report is received and approved by the program manager.
- The final report shall contain the following information:
  - Executive Summary
  - Timeline of the completion of each goal or objective
  - Narrative description of grant activities undertaken to support the project
  - Narrative description of project achievements
  - Benefit the end product provides or will provide
  - Narrative description of any deviation from the original budget, timeline or any grant activity

## Online Application Submission

Applicants must create a login to view the full program application. Applications must be submitted via [iowagrants.gov](http://iowagrants.gov) and will not be accepted in any other format. Late, incomplete or ineligible applications will not be accepted.

## Review Process

Applications will be reviewed for completion, eligibility and adherence to published guidelines. Eligible applications will be referred for competitive review by a volunteer panel, including the Governor's Empower Rural Iowa Initiative task force members and expert professionals (grant review committee). The grant review committee reserves

the right to recommend conditional funding and partial funding. Funding recommendations will be submitted by the committee to the IEDA Director for consideration and approval. The applicant's authorized official will receive award notification, and all funding decisions are final.

## Local Child Care Steering Committee

Applicants are asked to establish a local steering committee to guide the process and serve as a liaison between the third-party partner and the community. The recommendation is that the steering committee be comprised of seven to 10 individuals - such as elected officials, school administrators, child care providers, chamber or economic development staff, representatives from real estate and finance, non-profits, major employers and residents - that share an interest and commitment in addressing local child care needs.

## Scoring Rubric

### Eligibility Review

Applications must demonstrate evidence of the following:

- Eligibility
- Funding request meets eligible project and expense requirements
- Proof of cash match
- Proposal from professional third-party partner
- Project duration does not exceed contract period
- Complete application submitted through [iowagrants.gov](http://iowagrants.gov)

## Application Review

The Rural Child Care Market Study Grant Scoring Rubric will be used to evaluate applications. Each section has criteria and corresponding point values to ensure a fair review process. The rubric is on a scale of 45 points.

<b>1 – APPLICANT PROFILE: 5 points possible</b>		
5	3	1
Applicant clearly identifies strategic priorities and appropriateness in initiating the study.	Applicant adequately identifies strategic priorities and appropriateness in initiating the study.	Applicant does not adequately identify strategic priorities and appropriateness in initiating the study.

  

<b>2 – PURPOSE: 5 points possible</b>		
5	3	1
Proposal clearly identifies the identified child care challenge as well as how the study will address the challenge and how the information will be broadly shared publicly.	Proposal adequately identifies the identified child care challenge as well as how this study will address the challenge and how the information will be shared publicly.	Proposal does not adequately identify the identified child care challenge or how the information will be shared publicly.

  

<b>3 – TIMING: 5 points possible</b>		
5	3	1
Proposal clearly identifies recent momentum, demonstrating excellent timing for completion of the market study.	Proposal identifies recent momentum, demonstrating appropriate timing for completion of the market study.	Proposal does not adequately identify recent momentum, demonstrating inappropriate timing for completion of the market study.

  

<b>4 – THIRD PARTY PARTNER: 5 points possible</b>		
5	3	1
Proposal identifies professional third-party partner to complete the market study. Partner proposal demonstrates exceptional experience and clear objectives.	Proposal identifies professional third-party partner to complete the market study. Partner proposal demonstrates adequate experience and objectives.	Proposal identifies professional third-party partner to complete the market study. Partner proposal includes minimal information.

  

<b>5 – STEERING COMMITTEE: 5 points possible</b>		
5	3	1
Proposal clearly identifies an active child care steering committee with multiple, diverse partners. Key partner roles and responsibilities are well defined and will enhance the success of the process.	Proposal identifies a child care steering committee with multiple, diverse partners. Key partner roles and responsibilities are defined.	Proposal does not identify an active child care steering committee with multiple, diverse partners. Key partner roles and responsibilities are not well defined.

<b>6 – PARTNERS: 5 points possible</b>		
5	3	1
Proposal identifies and describes in detail the community roles of a variety of partners.	Proposal identifies and briefly describes the roles of a variety of partners.	Proposal does not adequately identify or describe the roles of partners.

<b>7 - BUDGET: 5 points possible</b>		
5	3	1
Project budget and intended use of funds are clear and appropriate.	Project budget and intended use of requested funds are identified and adequate.	Project budget and intended use of requested funds are unclear or inadequate.

<b>8 – BUDGET LOCAL SUPPORT: 5 points possible</b>		
5	3	1
Majority of the applicant match is from local, including county and city government or private sources.	Over half of the applicant match is from local, including county and city government or private sources.	Less than half of the applicant match is from local, including county and city government or private sources.

<b>9 – CASE FOR SUPPORT: 5 points possible</b>		
5	3	1
Case for support is exemplary and merits investment from the State.	Case for support is adequate.	Case for support is inadequate or does not merit State investment.

<b>10 - GRANTSMANSHIP: 3 points possible</b>		
5	3	1
The application is clear, concise and well composed.	The application is clear.	Application is unclear or poorly composed.

## Contact

Potential applicants are encouraged to review all published material and contact Rural Community Revitalization Program Manager Liesl Seabert at 515.348.6154 or [rural@iowaeda.com](mailto:rural@iowaeda.com) with questions well in advance of application deadlines.