

Part A: Funding Announcement

Call for Letters of Intent to Submit Proposals to Transform Early Childhood Education Lead Teacher Preparation Programs

Due: Monday, March 2, 2020, at 11:59 pm local time

The Early Educator Investment Collaborative (the Collaborative) will fund a limited number of two-year grants to interdisciplinary partnerships to innovatively transform early childhood education (ECE) lead teacher preparation programs. Eligible partnerships must be composed of at least one lead applicant four-year institution of higher education (IHE) with a bachelor's degree program for lead teachers and a state/territory/Tribal Nation. The Collaborative is committed to supporting efforts that promote diversity and inclusion in the ECE workforce. To that end, the Collaborative will prioritize funding for lead applicants from four-year institutions of higher education that demonstrate that they are meaningfully serving – or have a viable plan to begin serving – students who bring racial, ethnic, linguistic, or socioeconomic diversity to the field and that they are preparing educators to serve an equally diverse student population. These may include Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Tribal-serving colleges and universities, and other four-year IHEs with a successful record of preparing students who bring racial, ethnic, linguistic, or socioeconomic diversity to the field. The Collaborative will also prioritize applicants whose partnership includes a two-year, community college institution of higher education or whose proposal includes a detailed and viable plan for establishing a meaningful relationship with a two-year, community college institution of higher education to complete this work.

I. Background

The Collaborative is a group of national ECE-focused funders who envision a country in which opportunity and achievement gaps no longer exist so that all students, especially children from families with low incomes and children of color, make significant and sustained gains in cognitive, social, and emotional development. One way to manifest this vision is by ensuring that every young child has access to high-quality ECE programs led by well-prepared and appropriately compensated teachers. The Collaborative hopes to drive toward this vision by addressing the inadequacies of current ECE systems, with a focus on breaking down the barriers and addressing gaps in workforce preparation and compensation/financing systems. For more information about the Collaborative, please explore our website at <https://earlyedcollaborative.org/>.

The Collaborative strongly encourages prospective applicants to this opportunity to familiarize themselves with two consensus reports issued by the National Academies of Medicine that serve to ground the Collaborative's work. These reports are: the 2015 National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine report, "[Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation](#)" and the 2018 report entitled, "[Transforming the Financing of Early Care and Education](#)." The reports provide a robust evidence base to support investments in systems-oriented work on competency-based educator preparation and compensation. This funding opportunity **relies heavily** on recommendations in these reports.

II. Problem Statement

In the United States, there is no coherent policy framework for ECE. Instead, the system is a patchwork of federal, state, and local programs that vary in purpose, children’s age levels, workforce qualifications, funding, and quality. High-quality early learning systems are complex; a competent, sufficiently prepared and compensated ECE workforce is one of several important components. ECE professional roles and career pathways, however, are not clearly delineated from entry-to-expert level positions across the birth-to-age-8 continuum and across ECE settings. Further, early educator preparation programs face several barriers to effectively preparing teachers to support children and families, including the following:

- Wide variations in teacher qualification requirements;
- Lack of parity in compensation with K-12 teachers;
- Insufficient pipeline of higher education faculty to prepare ECE professionals;
- Degree obtainment does not signal mastery of an agreed upon set of competencies grounded in developmental science, which are needed to promote children’s healthy learning and development; and
- Limited understanding of the factors that account for high-quality clinical and academic teacher preparation and effective mechanisms to support degree candidates and faculty.

Moreover, ECE systems suffer from structural inequities in terms of low wages, uneven qualification requirements, and a lack of professional preparation supports, including access to affordable higher education opportunities. These structural insufficiencies affect the workforce overall but affect early childhood educators of color disproportionately. As such, the funding opportunity articulated herein is focused on transforming formal systems of teacher preparation in order to break down structural barriers, including but not limited to those that have historically limited:

- Access to higher education programs (e.g., geographic location, course times and offerings, supports for students with limited English proficiency, supports for students with different learning needs, release time);
- Affordability of traditional higher education programs;
- Culturally embedded and culturally responsive approaches to higher education; and
- Just and appropriate compensation for ECE teachers, aligned with a set of competency-based preparation requirements.

III. Overview of the Funding Opportunity

This funding opportunity is designed to address the structural barriers to ECE workforce preparation and compensation identified in the problem statement above.

Via this funding opportunity, the Collaborative will support partnerships that want to engage in efforts to catalyze transformative change for educator preparation (for educators working with children prenatal to age 8 and their families) and compensation in state/territory/Tribal Nation ECE systems. These transformations should be designed with the workforce itself in mind, understanding that the current structures for workforce preparation and compensation in the United States do not work for the current and future ECE workforce, which is predominantly composed of women of color who are being paid unjust wages. The Collaborative considers achieving professional compensation as essential to strengthening the ECE workforce across all settings and ages of children served. A first step toward this goal is to ensure compensation parity, meaning “parity for salary and benefits for equivalent levels of education and experience, adjusted to reflect differences in hours of work in private settings, and including payment for non-child contact hours (such as paid time for planning).”¹

The Collaborative understands that changes in compensation may not be fully realized/implemented as a result of this grant opportunity. Compensation, however, is a necessary element of workforce stability and success. As such, proposals should speak to how the proposed transformation links to and/or addresses the state/territory/Tribal Nation’s efforts to increase financial supports and/or remuneration for students preparing to become ECE educators, as well as financing for compensation for lead teachers, post-graduation. The Collaborative seeks proposals that consider ways to increase financial assistance and remuneration *across* an individual’s educational and career pathway, from student to teacher, especially when an individual is both at the same time, alongside efforts to increase compensation for lead teachers, aligned with the Collaborative’s vision.

The Collaborative will fund a small number of two-year grants to interdisciplinary partnerships. The Collaborative defines a partnership as a formal, substantive relationship in which partners cooperate with each other to achieve stated goals by coordinating, aligning, etc. on shared and/or distinct bodies of work related to their specified and/or joint responsibilities within ECE systems. Eligible partnerships must be composed of at least the following two entity types: 1) a lead applicant four-year IHE with a bachelor’s degree program for lead teachers; 2) a state/territory/Tribal Nation. When the Collaborative references “states/territories/Tribal Nations,” it is referring to the entity or entities that have authority to oversee higher education and teacher licensure within the state, territory, or Tribal Nation. These entities will differ by geography, but might include boards of education, state education or health and human service agencies, and/or the Governor’s executive office or councils of elders. Please note that the threshold for defining a partnership is not *solely* based on the existence of articulation agreements between two and four-year institutions, but such agreements are one example

¹ Whitebook, M. and McLean, C. (2017). In Pursuit of Pre-K Parity: A Proposed Framework for Understanding and Advancing Policy and Practice. Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley and New Brunswick, NJ: the National Institute for Early Education Research. Page 3.

of demonstrated evidence of a partnership. While not a requirement, the Collaborative will prioritize applicants whose partnership also includes a two-year, community college institution of higher education, or whose proposal lays out a detailed and viable plan for establishing a meaningful relationship with a two-year, community college institution of higher education to complete this work.

a. Commitment to Transforming Systems

Successful applicants will forge partnerships that want to pilot new approaches to competency-based teacher preparation aimed at transforming ECE lead teacher preparation programs resulting in a bachelor's degree grounded in the competencies laid out within the "Transforming the Workforce" report. Proposed approaches should be systems-focused. That is, applicants should explain how, across the continuum of professional preparation experiences, from student recruitment through educator induction/clinical practice, they intend to catalyze transformative change in the ECE educator preparation system. We are seeking ***contextually grounded and culturally relevant*** proposals for comprehensive systems change. Successful applicants will consider the entire continuum of educator preparation, including not but limited to:

- Recruitment and retention of racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse students;
- Curricula informed by recent developmental science of child development and adult learning, and that are culturally responsive in nature;
- High-quality, clinically based practicum experience across a variety of ECE settings;
- Induction supports provided in the early years of teaching;
- Financial supports for educators to access and complete a higher education program, including paid release time; and
- A proposed or piloted strategy to increase financial assistance, remuneration, and compensation across an individual's educational and career pathway as a student and teacher.

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to encourage innovative approaches to dismantling barriers in the current system in order to transform the system itself to better serve the current and future ECE workforce. Specific innovations proposed may focus on one or more of the elements above. For elements that the proposal does *not* focus on, applicants should explain how their proposal will at least serve as a driver for transformation of those elements. Applicants can incorporate extant effective strategies supporting some elements, but they must be combined with new proposed strategies for one or more element. Applicants must articulate how the extant *and* proposed new strategies form a comprehensive, holistic system aimed at improving early educator preparation, and why the new proposed strategy is innovative. The innovation itself could be expanding and linking previously extant disparate efforts across siloed elements of educator preparation, coupled with new strategies. Regardless of what aspect(s) of the continuum of educator preparation are the focus, the applicant must demonstrate how the proposed design transforms early educator preparation in the setting across the continuum to result in systems change. The transformation must also be contextually grounded and culturally relevant. Prospective applicants are,

for example, encouraged to explore and embed the principles, conceptual frameworks, and strategies included in the resource list in Appendix A of this document.

Proposed innovations may also benefit individuals seeking a range of ECE professional roles from entry to expert level and including ECE leadership. **However, the primary focus must be on preparing lead teachers with a competency-based bachelor's degree.** Applicants should also identify and, as needed, propose a plan to shift state/territory/Tribal Nation policy and regulatory conditions (e.g., related to funding streams and articulation agreements) that make the proposed improvements in educator preparation programs possible. Applicants should focus on either refining or expanding existing, research-based practices² in place in a state, territory, Tribal Nation, IHE, or higher education system, and/or on piloting and implementing new programs that transform IHE educator preparation. For additional guidance from the Collaborative on the nature of the reforms it is seeking to support, please review the “Characteristics of Strong Proposals” section below.

The Collaborative **will consider applications for innovations at various stages of development**, including proposals to:

- Pilot a new initiative or idea that has not been tested before and that, if successful, could be scaled to a larger system;
- Refine or enhance a current pilot or small initiative that has shown promise and needs additional investment to expand impact and support scalability; or
- Scale proven initiatives throughout larger systems and expand partnerships.

The Collaborative **will not fund planning grants** at this time. This means it will not consider proposals in which the majority of the time and resources budgeted are for establishing a new partnership or doing planning without implementation of an idea.

Partnerships may choose to focus on improving specific aspects of an ECE program (e.g., recruitment), but it must lead to a transformation of the educator preparation program. **If this approach is chosen, applicants will need to provide sufficient context and rationale for the selected approach to explain why it will result in transformative change.** As discussed below, the Collaborative **will issue grants of various sizes based on expressed need and the proposed reform's stage of development.**

b. Participation in a Learning Community

In addition to the work described above, grantees will participate in a learning community. The learning community will facilitate peer learning, identifying commonalities across projects, and collectively problem-solving challenges that arise during implementation. Learning and connection

² The Collaborative defines “research-based” as either: (1) the program has been evaluated and shown to be impactful or beneficial, or (2) the program’s interventions are based on educational research findings. The Collaborative includes in this definition non-Western approaches to research and evaluation including but not limited to approaches that make use of indigenous methodologies and frameworks, critical race theory, and neo-Marxist theories.

opportunities may include webinars, meetings, and site visits among grantees. As needed, the Collaborative will also make technical assistance from field experts available to grantees.

c. Funding Amount and Matching Funds Requirement

The total amount of funding to be awarded is approximately \$10 million over two years. Within these parameters, there is no set funding minimum or maximum per grant; the Collaborative desires to be responsive to funding needs to complete the proposed work. The Collaborative anticipates awarding a limited number of grants, though this will be highly dependent on the scope, scale, and number of proposals received. Grants will vary in size according to identified need and the proposed reform's stage of development, with minimum grant awards ranging from approximately \$200,000 to \$600,000 and maximum awards ranging from approximately \$3 million to \$5 million.

To be considered for funding, **each partnership must contribute at least 10 percent of the requested amount in matching funds (real or in-kind)** to the project during the grant period. The Collaborative will fund the remaining 90 percent. LOI applicants must describe how they plan to meet the matching funds requirement. Applicants selected to submit a full proposal must submit a letter of commitment from the entity(ies) providing matching funds along with their full proposal materials. To demonstrate a clear commitment to investing in the proposed reforms, a portion of this funding must be publicly available state/territory/Tribal Nation funding or funding from a participating higher education institution or higher education system. Matching funds may include private revenue, particularly committed philanthropic dollars, but cannot be all private dollars. The Collaborative encourages applicants to seek additional funding, as needed, for their efforts beyond the Collaborative's two-year support and the applicant's 10 percent match, though this is not a requirement of the grant.

Note that the limitations for overhead/indirect rate charges are either 15 percent or 15 percent of total personnel costs, whichever is lower.

IV. Request for Letters of Intent/Proposals

This funding opportunity is structured as a two-phase process. The first phase is an open call for letters of intent (LOIs). Anyone who meets the eligibility criteria below is invited to submit an LOI. From these applications, the Collaborative will select a subset of applicants to respond to a full Request for Proposals (RFP), which is the second phase in the decision-making process. What follows are the components of and requirements for responding to the request for LOIs. Requirements for responding to the RFP are also referenced, as applicable. Complete requirements for the proposal phase will be provided to applicants who are invited to respond to the RFP.

a. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to apply for this opportunity:

- Applicants may apply from any state, territory, or Tribal Nation.
- Applicants must apply as a partnership of at least one four-year IHE with a bachelor's degree program for lead teachers and one state/territory/Tribal Nation. Education systems with multiple schools that include a four-year IHE are also eligible to apply. A four-year IHE must be the lead applicant to receive the grant funding and then sub-grant or sub-contract to other partner(s). There is no limit on the number of partners that may comprise a proposed partnership. The partnership must demonstrate a commitment to working together to permanently transform the ECE educator preparation program.
- Applicants must incorporate the voices of early educators (e.g., lead teachers, teaching assistants, coaches), employers (e.g., executive directors and owners of private programs, principals and superintendents), and communities (e.g., families, aligned health and mental health professionals, community organizers) in its design and implementation, recognizing the importance of preparing a workforce to meet the real needs of racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse communities.
- Applicants must meet the matching funds requirements described above.
- Applicants must not use funding for lobbying. Per the policies of the Collaborative's fiscal sponsor, [Third Sector New England Mission Works \(TSNE Mission Works\)](#), grantees cannot use funds pursuant to this procurement for lobbying or to influence legislation, as defined by the IRS.
- [For the RFP phase] Applicants must be formally invited to submit a full proposal after receiving notification of a successful LOI.

b. Characteristics of Strong Proposals

As described above, a successful applicant partnership must propose a contextually grounded and culturally relevant plan to transform state/territory/Tribal Nation ECE educator preparation systems. These proposals:

- Are **oriented toward dismantling systems and structures** that impose barriers to **affordable, accessible, and culturally relevant educator preparation and compensation** for the ECE workforce.
- **Develop and pilot an innovative model** aimed at transforming an ECE lead teacher preparation program, across the continuum of professional preparation experiences. This includes but is not limited to student recruitment through educator induction/clinical practice.
- Focus on one or more of these elements of the continuum and **explain how other elements across the continuum will be addressed as part of how the innovative design works as a cohesive system to better prepare students**. Innovative models can incorporate extant effective strategies supporting specific continuum elements that are combined with new proposed strategies for one or more element.
- **Articulate how the extant *and* proposed strategies form a comprehensive, holistic system** aimed at improving early educator preparation, and why the new proposed strategy is innovative.
- Demonstrate an understanding of **why aligning with and reforming state/territory/Tribal Nation policies and regulations is important**, how this will be sustained, and how partners intend to change any existing policies and regulations that are standing in the way of implementing reforms. Applicants should have a clear understanding of the policies and policy barriers in place in the state/territory/Tribal Nation that will need to be addressed to advance this work. States/territories/Tribal Nations should either already have clear policies in place to advance reforms or demonstrate a clear intent/willingness to change or make exceptions (e.g., issue waivers) to policies that stand in the way of implementing the proposed reforms.
- Prioritize maintaining the racial, ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity of ECE educators by ensuring educator preparation programs support those who already work in the field. Furthermore, proposals **should leverage aspects of community and workforce diversity as assets**.
- Have a plan to replicate, sustain, and scale the proposed model beyond the grant period. If the transformation will require more than two years to complete, and/or will require additional supplementary funding to sustain, **applicants should lay out their vision for the entire transformation** and specify what will be achieved within the two-year grant period with funding from the Collaborative.

c. Measures of Success

If successful, proposed work could achieve the following outcomes:

- Students are prepared and achieve **mastery of strong ECE lead teacher competencies** that are grounded in developmental science and aligned with the recommendations set forth in the “Transforming the Workforce” report.

- Assessment systems are in place for students to demonstrate mastery of ECE lead teacher competencies, and IHEs issue a bachelor's degree to confirm this mastery. The bachelor's degree **should signal graduates are prepared** to provide children, from birth through age 8, with culturally relevant, contextually embedded, high-quality clinical and academic learning experiences grounded in the science of child development.
- IHE preparation programs/degree-program curricula make use of the most **up-to-date research** (including the “Transforming the Workforce” and “Transforming the Financing” reports) to improve its curriculum design.
- IHEs have supports in place to ensure **lead teachers achieve a bachelor's degree**, though they may also prepare other pre-service educators and/or ECE leaders, as well.
- The educator preparation system is inclusive of all current and aspiring ECE educators, **including practitioners in the field who need release time to attend school and who need compensatory supports in writing and mathematics.**
- IHEs are equipped to effectively serve **racially, ethnically, linguistically, or socioeconomically diverse students.**
- **A strong pipeline of racially, ethnically, and/or linguistically diverse higher education faculty is in place to prepare ECE professionals.** This should include planning efforts to invest in tenure-track ECE faculty, increasing advising support and continuity of faculty support for students, and connecting with existing efforts to bolster the preparation of faculty in critical areas of ECE curriculum and pedagogy (e.g., teaching dual language learners, early math skills, family engagement) and ECE policy (e.g., advocacy, policy processes, and policy leadership).
- **ECE policy and advocacy** content is included in the curriculum, in order to provide pre-service educators with the tools to understand the mechanics of ECE policy and to engage in policy advocacy once they are in the field.
- A system is in place to **distribute responsibilities for supporting preparation across partners** (IHEs, state/territory/Tribal Nations, and/or community organizations) based on their strengths and mandates. IHEs might not always be the appropriate entities to own all aspects of educator preparation, so they should draw on other partners, as needed.
- States/territories/Tribal Nations have **changed policies that stand in the way of implementing any proposed reforms.** The Collaborative envisions that the state/territory/Tribal Nation will take primary responsibility among the partners for addressing needed policy changes.
- States/territories/Tribal Nations **have made aligned improvements to their ECE workforce system**, including licensure and articulation agreements (including apprenticeship).
- States/territories/Tribal Nations have designed and begun to **implement and/or expand financial supports**, beyond tuition support, that will make access to higher education more affordable for all ECE teachers and improve ECE teacher compensation.

d. Assessment Criteria for LOIs/RFPs

Applicants will be assessed on **five** principal criteria, derived from the characteristics described above. Relatedly, the Collaborative will prioritize funding the following applicants (see “Application Questions” section below for more information on how the Collaborative will incorporate this prioritization into its LOI assessment):

- 1) Applicants from four-year institutions that demonstrate that they are meaningfully serving – or have a viable plan to begin serving – students who bring racial, ethnic, linguistic, or socioeconomic diversity to the field and that they are preparing educators to serve an equally diverse student population. These may include HBCUs, HSIs, TCUs, tribal-serving colleges and universities, and other four-year IHEs with a successful record of preparing students who bring racial, ethnic, linguistic, or socioeconomic diversity to the field.
- 2) Applicants whose partnership includes a two-year, community college institution of higher education or whose proposal includes a detailed and viable plan for establishing a meaningful relationship with a two-year, community college institution of higher education to complete this work.

The **five** criteria are as follows:

1. **Oriented Toward Transformation:** Funded proposals will be those that are highly innovative. The proposed work represents a fundamentally different way of conceptualizing and implementing aspects of the educator preparation system across the continuum of professional preparation experiences, from student recruitment through educator induction/clinical practice. It is designed to break down barriers to accessing, affording, and completing a higher education degree program. It leverages complex system-design work that prioritizes equity.
2. **Context and Culture:** The partnership presents a contextually relevant and culturally grounded plan to transform its ECE educator preparation program. It is compatible with the needs of the ECE workforce and was designed with input from and in collaboration with the ECE workforce and local community.
3. **Diversity and Belonging:** It ensures racial, ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity and equity, particularly reflected in the design and reach of the program and in the partnership’s staffing of the proposed project team. The partnership demonstrates a strong commitment to the concept of belonging as the next iteration of community-building, beyond inclusivity.
4. **Readiness and Capacity:** All members of the applicant partnership demonstrate a readiness within their own institutions to accomplish this work. Readiness indicators might include:
 - The presence of IHE leaders who are knowledgeable about and support ECE and are receptive to change;
 - The presence of faculty leadership on ECE and a depth of faculty with experience working on ECE;

- Evidence of institutional innovation and interdisciplinary activity; and
 - Evidence of a history of collaboration with the community and/or orientation to engaging in partnerships with the community.
5. **Risk Management and Mitigation:** The partnership presents a realistic timeline and staff capacity for driving change in its educator preparation program(s). The partnership presents a thoughtful assessment of the potential risks to its ability to complete its plan in the specified timeline and identifies options for addressing these risks.

e. Grant Requirements

Lead organizations that are awarded grants must be willing and able to:

- Provide regular updates to the Collaborative’s fiscal sponsor, TSNE Mission Works, its backbone organization, [Arabella Advisors](#);³ and the Collaborative Steering Committee.
- Participate in the Learning Community.
- As required by TSNE Mission Works, submit interim and final narrative and financial reports as described in the grant agreement and payment schedule. Selected grantees will receive reporting instructions and templates to assist them in preparing these reports.

³ Arabella Advisors provides the Collaborative with programmatic and implementation support. Arabella helps foundations, philanthropists, and investors who are serious about impact achieve the greatest good with their resources. Arabella helps its clients understand complex problems, develop and implement innovative solutions, and achieve social and environmental impact at scale. Critical to its mission is fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion in the field and within its own firm.

Part B: Funding Application

**Letters of Intent to Transform Early Childhood Education Lead Teacher
Preparation Programs**

LOI responses are due **by 11:59 pm local time on Monday, March 2, 2020.**

As described in the funding announcement, the Collaborative has issued a funding opportunity to support innovative approaches to transforming ECE lead teacher preparation and compensation systems in states/territories/Tribal Nations. This document provides detail on how prospective applicants should respond to the LOI and, if invited, the full RFP.

I. Phased Application Approach

The Collaborative is taking a phased approach in the funding application process. Phase one, the LOI phase, is an open call for respondents. Anyone who feels they meet the eligibility requirements may submit an LOI. In the second phase, a select number of respondents will be invited to submit a full proposal via an RFP. Note that the LOI and RFP requirements are aligned, with respondents being asked to do the bulk of the work in the LOI phase so that the Collaborative can obtain a robust and accurate understanding of the work being proposed, including the nature of the partnerships forged to undertake the work. The timeline and application requirements reflect that. The LOI and RFP requirements are outlined below in Table 1, and the timeline for submission and decision-making is depicted in Table 2.

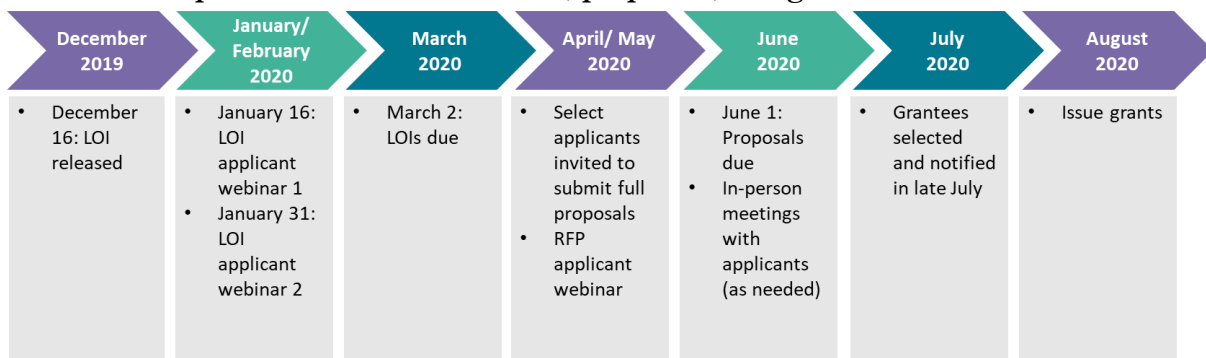
Table 1. Requirements for each phase of the application process

	For the Letter of Intent	For the Proposal ⁴
Responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to the Letter of Intent Questions (below) in a Microsoft Word document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to the Proposal Questions in a Microsoft Word document
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A completed budget worksheet (included as Appendix B) as a Microsoft Excel file A completed budget narrative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An updated budget worksheet as a Microsoft Excel file An updated budget narrative
Partnership Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indication of the primary four-year IHE applicant entity to receive the grant funding Primary contact person and contact information for all partners, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A staffing plan, including the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of your staff and leadership A position statement on how the IHE(s) and state/territory/Tribal Nation seek to address issues of

⁴ If invited to submit a proposal, applicants will receive the materials they need to complete these proposal requirements, including letters of commitment for the matching fund requirement and the learning community. Applicants will also be invited to submit a refined budget worksheet and narrative that reflect any changes applicants make between the LOI and the RFP phases.

	For the Letter of Intent	For the Proposal ⁴
	<p>including the state/territory/Tribal Nation entity(ies) and IHE(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A list of up to five related efforts or initiatives that the entities that comprise the partnership have engaged in either together or separately to support ECE educators in accessing high-quality training to prepare them to demonstrate strong ECE educator competencies 	<p>diversity, equity, and inclusion in their daily work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Names and documentation of any existing partnerships that the IHE(s) and state/territory/Tribal Nation have in place or are developing to advance the proposed educator preparation program reforms
Community Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indication of who from the ECE community in the geography being served will be involved in the work and <i>how</i> they will be engaged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A description about how community members will be involved with co-construction of the proposed work A list of individuals who will be involved in the design and implementation
Matching Requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within the LOI responses (question 1(e)), a description of how you will meet the Collaborative’s 10% matching funds requirement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A signed letter of commitment of at least 10% matching funding from the entity(ies) providing funds. To demonstrate a commitment to investing in the proposed reforms, a portion of this funding must be publicly available state/territory/Tribal funding or funding from the IHE(s) or higher education system
Learning Community	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A signed letter of commitment to participate in the learning community

Table 2. Anticipated timeline for the LOIs, proposals, and grant awards



II. Application Questions

Applicants must submit answers to the below questions that reflect the criteria listed above in a Microsoft Word document. **Please refer to the characteristics of strong proposals in “Part A: Funding Announcement” to ensure your responses address all characteristics.** Responses to the questions should not exceed the word counts specified below; words included in charts or visuals do count toward the word limit.

Note that the Collaborative has included here questions only for the first phase of the application process, the LOI. Applicants who are invited to submit a full proposal will be given an additional set of questions to respond to that are aligned with the LOI questions, so that respondents invited to submit a proposal can build on the work done in the LOI phase.

LOIs will be scored on a 100-point scale. Point totals for each section are indicated below. Partnerships that include HBCUs, HSIs, TCUs, tribal-serving colleges and universities, and other four-year IHEs with a successful record of preparing students who bring racial, ethnic, linguistic, or socioeconomic diversity to the field will automatically receive an additional 10 points on top of their “Partnership” score (Question 3). Additionally, partnerships that include a two-year, community college institution of higher education, or whose proposal lays out a detailed and viable plan for establishing a meaningful relationship with a two-year, community college institution of higher education to complete this work, will automatically receive an additional 10 points on top of their “Partnership” score (Question 3). This is a total of 20 possible additional points for the “Partnership” score. Therefore, the total number of possible points for an LOI is 120.

Questions for the Letter of Intent (LOI)

1. **Context and Rationale – 15 points [6,000-word maximum]:** Please describe the context in which your proposed work will take place. This should include information about who in the state/territory/Tribal Nation holds decision-making power for higher education and teacher credentialing, as well as the context for workforce compensation in the geography you propose to serve. Please also provide a rationale for why you think what you are proposing is innovative and needed to transform the ECE educator preparation system in your geography. If applicable, please describe how you demonstrate a successful record of preparing students who bring racial, ethnic, linguistic, or socioeconomic diversity to the field.
2. **Proposed Innovative Educator Preparation Program Reforms – 45 points [no limit]:** Describe your innovative plan to transform the ECE educator preparation program across the preparation continuum, including:
 - a. What is the specific problem you are trying to solve?

- b. What are the fundamentals of your teacher preparation program/institution, including its goals, structure, and intended outcomes? Why is it the right fit for the problem you seek to solve?
- c. What are the challenges or barriers you will have to overcome to create real change? What evidence do you have of previously attending to these challenges, and how will your proposed plan address them?
- d. Who is the population you are proposing to serve, and what barriers do they currently encounter? How will you dismantle these barriers, specifically?
- e. How are you uniquely positioned to serve a racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse student population and community? What are the ways in which you will incorporate equity and inclusivity/belonging into the design of your program?
- f. How do your proposed reforms build on previous success or address previous failures?
- g. How will your efforts focus on the following components of the spectrum of ECE lead early educator preparation:
 - i. Recruitment and retention of racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse students;
 - ii. Curricula informed by recent developmental science of child development and adult learning, and that are culturally responsive in nature;
 - iii. High-quality, clinically based practicum experience across a variety of ECE settings;
 - iv. Induction supports provided in the early years of teaching;
 - v. Financial supports for educators to access and complete a higher education program; and
 - vi. A strategy or plan to increase compensation following completion of a degree program.
- h. If applicable, provide rationale for why the innovations you propose will focus more closely on certain aspects of this spectrum, but still fit within a comprehensive system.
- i. What is innovative and potentially effective about your approach in your specific context?
- j. How are your proposed reforms contextually grounded and culturally relevant?
- k. How will or could, in the longer term, your proposed reforms result in comprehensive systems change, including possible changes to compensation?
- l. How do you plan to incorporate educator voice and engage the community, including employers, in designing and implementing your program?
- m. What ECE lead teacher competencies does your program use currently? How do these lead teacher competencies align or not align with the recommendations set forth in the “Transforming the Workforce” report?
- n. How will you assess throughout your preparation program and induction whether and how your students are demonstrating mastery of the knowledge and skills reflected in the ECE lead teacher competencies?

- o. How will those agencies/entities with authority over the state/territory/Tribal Nation's higher education system and teacher licensure be involved in your proposed reforms?
 - p. What policies does the state/territory/Tribal Nation already have in place to advance the proposed reforms *and/or* how will the state/territory/Tribal Nation change or make exceptions to any policies that may present barriers to implementing the proposed work?
- 3. Partnership – 25 points⁵ [3,000-word maximum]:** Describe the nature of your partnership between the IHE(s) and the state/territory/Tribal Nation, including:
- a. Who is in your proposed partnership? Which entity is the lead applicant?
 - b. If the partnership is not already formalized, what will it take for you to formalize this partnership?
 - c. [If applicable] If your existing partnership does not include a two-year, community college institution of higher education, but you plan to establish a meaningful relationship with a two-year, community college institution of higher education to complete this work, please provide information about the two-year, community college institution of higher education, how you plan to establish a relationship with it, and where you are in this process.
 - d. What experience do you have working together as partners and/or what experience do you have working on other successful state/territory/Tribal Nation and IHE collaborations?
 - e. What other stakeholders (including state/territory/tribal and IHE actors) need to and will be involved in designing and implementing your proposed educator preparation program reforms?
 - f. How will you meet the Collaborative's 10 percent matching fund requirement? Note that the signed letter of commitment is not required for LOI submission.
 - g. [For the IHE partner(s)] Please answer the following:
 - i. Please describe the level of knowledge and support for ECE among leadership at your institution(s), and how receptive they are to change?
 - ii. Please describe what faculty leadership on ECE looks like and the depth of faculty experience working on ECE at your institution(s).
 - iii. What evidence can you share about institutional innovation and interdisciplinary activity at your institution(s)?

⁵ As noted above, partnerships that include HBCUs, HSIs, TCUs, tribal-serving colleges and universities, or other four-year IHEs with a successful record of preparing students who bring racial, ethnic, linguistic, or socioeconomic diversity will automatically receive an additional 10 points on top of their "partnership" score. Partnerships that include a two-year, community college institution of higher education or who have a detailed and viable plan for establishing a meaningful relationship with a two-year, community college institution of higher education to complete this work, will automatically receive an additional 10 points on top of their "partnership" score. This is a total of 20 possible additional points for the "partnership" score in addition to the 25 points all applicants are eligible to receive in this section.

- iv. What evidence can you share of collaboration with the community and a department/faculty orientation to engaging in partnerships with the community at your institution(s)?
- h. [For the state/territory/Tribal Nation partner(s)] Please answer the following:
 - i. How do you intend to address policy barriers related to the implementation of your innovation program?
 - ii. How do you plan to make aligned improvements to your ECE workforce system to complement the innovation program, including related to licensure and articulation agreements?
 - iii. How do you plan to increase financial assistance, remuneration, and compensation across an individual's educational and career pathway as a student and teacher? What are the proposed initial implementation steps included in this grant proposal? How are these initial steps part of a longer-term, broader strategy to ensure access to higher education and improve ECE teacher compensation?
- 4. Approximate Timeline and Key Milestones – 5 points [2,000-word maximum]:** At a high level, describe your approximate timeline for your proposed reforms and key milestones. Note that grant funding will be available for two years only, beginning upon receipt of grant funding, likely in late summer 2020. If you propose that the transformation will require more time than two years to complete, please lay out your vision for the entire transformation and specify what will occur within two years and how you will use funding from the Collaborative to achieve that part of the work.
- 5. Budget and Budget Narrative – 10 points [1,500-word maximum for the narrative]:** Provide a budget narrative to accompany a completed budget worksheet found in Appendix B. Note that the limitations for overhead/indirect rate charges are either 15 percent or 15 percent of total personnel costs, whichever is lower. Budget adjustments might be needed to comply with this overhead/indirect rate cap. The budget narrative should include:
 - a. The requested grant amount
 - b. A description of how you propose to use funds, including your fees and a proposed capped expense budget, which TSNE will reimburse at cost
 - c. The percentage FTE professional staff assigned to the project will devote to it
 - d. The amount, source, and proposed use of the at least 10 percent real or in-kind matching funds
 - e. Any context regarding the budget that you believe is not conveyed in the worksheet

III. Submission Requirements and Additional Information

To ensure you receive all future information and updates related to this opportunity, including FAQs and webinar recordings, please sign up for the opportunity email distribution list [here](#).

a. Submission Requirements

Applications should be submitted in Microsoft Word format. Accompanying budgets should be submitted in Microsoft Excel format, using the template provided in Appendix B.

Applications should be submitted to EEICollaborative@arabellaadvisors.com by **Monday, March 2, 2020, 11:59 pm local time**.

Applications that do not respond to all LOI questions or are not received by 11:59 pm local time on Monday, March 2, 2020 will not be considered.

Applicants will receive a confirmation email within three business days of submitting their application.

b. Questions and Applicant Webinars

The Collaborative will host two webinars in January 2020 to address applicant questions. Please submit questions to the Collaborative at EEICollaborative@arabellaadvisors.com by the deadlines listed below, no later than one week in advance of each webinar. The Collaborative will do its best to address your questions during a webinar or in the FAQs document.

You must register for the webinars to receive dial-in information. Please use the following links to register:

Applicant Webinar 1: Thursday, January 16, 3:00-4:00 pm EST

- **Registration:** Register [here](#)
- **Deadline to submit questions:** Thursday, January 9, 11:59 pm local time; questions submitted after this deadline will be considered for the second webinar

Applicant Webinar 2: Friday, January 31, 1:00-2:00 pm EST

- **Registration:** Register [here](#)
- **Deadline to submit questions:** Friday, January 24, 11:59 pm local time

Following each webinar, all individuals who signed up for the opportunity's email distribution list will receive an updated FAQs document and webinar recording.

APPENDIX A – RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Applicants are not required but are *highly encouraged* to consider the following resources when developing their responses to the LOI and, if applicable, the RFP.

- The “[Transforming the Workforce for Early Care and Education](#)” report, specifically those chapters focused on [knowledge and competencies](#) and [higher education](#), and a [summary brief](#) from the report on competencies and their foundation
- Chapters from the “[Transforming the Financing of Early Care and Education](#)” focused on financing a highly qualified workforce
- A primer on [targeted universalism](#) for policy and practice
- The National Association for the Education of Young Children’s [Equity Position Statement](#)
- A primer on [systems thinking](#)
- The [2018 Early Childhood Workforce Index](#) and [State of Preschool Yearbook](#) reports, which provide recent information on the early childhood education policy landscape

**APPENDIX B – BUDGET WORKSHEET
(SEE EXCEL SHEET)**