

EARLY EDUCATOR INVESTMENT COLLABORATIVE

Professional Educators. Professional Compensation. Prepared Children.

Request to Submit Proposals to Innovate Financial Systems to Build Capacity for Increased and Sustainable Early Childhood Education (ECE) Compensation

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Questions in green were updated on March 9, 2023

Questions in purple were updated on February 16, 2023

Proposals are due by 11:59 pm local time on **Monday, June 5, 2023**

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Questions About The Collaborative

Q: What is the Early Educator Investment Collaborative (The Collaborative)?

A: The Collaborative is a national early childhood funder collaborative that has come together to transform the early childhood education (ECE) workforce. The Collaborative is working together to advance the highest standards of educator quality—and make them possible through equitable access to teacher preparation, ongoing professional learning, and compensation that reflects the transformational value of early educators.

Q: Who is involved with The Collaborative?

A: Funders and an advisory committee of experts, with deep experience in early childhood education. The Collaborative's Steering Committee includes the Ballmer Group, Bezos Family Foundation, Buffett Early Childhood Fund, David & Lucile Packard Foundation, Foundation for Child Development, Heising-Simons Foundation, and Stranahan Foundation. The Collaborative is fiscally sponsored by TSNE, an organization that provides grants and financial management, consulting, and training services to strengthen nonprofits.

Q: What does The Collaborative hope to accomplish?

A: Guided by the recommendations outlined in 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 Collaborative hopes to make big systems change in the ECE field by linking early educator professional competencies with professional compensation to transform the preparation of early educators. Our goal is to ensure that every child, parent, and community has access to professional early childhood educators who are equipped with a defined set of effective skills and competencies—and who receive the preparation, support, and compensation necessary to stay in the profession.

Q: How does The Collaborative hope to accomplish these goals?

A: We bring together early educators, advocates, policymakers, and higher education to think big, establish the ideal, and align resources to elevate all who are critical to helping our children reach their full potential. That means changing the current system by setting standards for educator competencies informed by research that lead to positive child outcomes, create equitable and affordable access to teacher preparation and professional development, and increase the compensation of all early educators to elevate the profession and reflect the importance and expertise of the profession.

Q: What has The Collaborative done so far to further their goal?

A: Along with our work to support racial equity, fund intensive research projects, and organize convenings for the field, The Collaborative awards grants centered around early educator competencies, preparation, and compensation. Learn more about our previous and ongoing work and grants [here](#).

Q: How can I apply for a grant from The Collaborative?

A: The Collaborative is currently requesting proposals to innovatively build capacity towards sustainable and equitable early childhood education (ECE) workforce compensation (wages and benefits) increases. Learn more about this funding opportunity [here](#). The Collaborative does not accept unsolicited proposals.

Q: What is The Collaborative's address?

A: If you need The Collaborative's address for documentation purposes, The Collaborative's address is: TSNE, 89 South Street Suite 700, Boston, MA 02111. Please do not mail proposals to this address. Proposals should be submitted by email to info@earlyedcollaborative.org.

Questions About the Grant Opportunity

General Questions

Q: What is this grant opportunity about?

A: The purpose of this grant opportunity is to encourage innovative financing approaches to dismantling barriers in the current system to better serve the current and future ECE workforce. This funding opportunity is designed to address the financial and structural barriers to increasing ECE workforce compensation, defined as salary and benefits. This funding opportunity is primarily concerned with the financial systems, including revenue generation and fiscal spending, that support the ECE system, including the compensation of the workforce. Via this funding opportunity, The Collaborative will support partnerships to engage in efforts to catalyze transformative change for educator compensation in state/local/territory/tribal ECE systems.

Q: What problem does this opportunity hope to address?

A: Compensation for early educators remains low and far behind other occupations with similar credentials. The resulting challenges of low compensation, which include high staff turnover and deterrence from joining the profession, ultimately lead to a lack of continuity of care for children and a reduction in the quality of care that is provided which affects program quality and child learning outcomes. These resulting challenges also

significantly affect opportunities for women in the larger workforce, as women are disproportionately induced to leave their jobs when childcare is scarce, unreliable, of lesser quality, and/or unaffordable. Existing financial systems and mechanisms continue to be siloed, redundant, and disconnected in ways that do not maximize the existing available revenue and funding streams that could be used to support the sector.

Q: How much money will be allocated in total towards this opportunity? What are the minimum and maximum grants The Collaborative will award?

A: The total amount of funding to be awarded is approximately \$10 million over up to three years. 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 \$400,000 to \$800,000 and maximum awards ranging from approximately \$2 million to \$4 million. Applications should reflect the true cost of the proposed work.

Q: When are proposals due for this opportunity?

A: Proposals are due by 11:59 pm local time on **Monday, June 5, 2023**.

Q: Will applications submitted after the proposal due date be accepted?

A: No. Incomplete proposals or proposals submitted after **June 5, 2023**, at 11:59 pm local time will not be considered.

Q: Where can I find the RFP materials, including the announcement and application document and the budget worksheet (referenced as "Appendix B" in the announcement and application document)?

A: The announcement, application document, and the budget worksheet (Appendix B) for this opportunity can be found [here](#).

Q: What documents are applicants required to submit for the proposal and in what formats?

A: Applicants should submit the following materials to info@earlyedcollaborative.org by Monday, **June 5, 2023**, 11:59 pm local time:

- Responses to the RFP application questions in a Microsoft Word document.
- A completed budget worksheet and budget narrative (noted as Appendix B and available for download from our [website](#)) as a Microsoft Excel file. The budget narrative must include a description of how you will meet the 10% matching funds requirement.
- Signed letters of commitment from entities providing the matching funds.
- **A Statement of Commitment** (previously referred to as "Memorandum of Understanding") signed by all team members (noted as Appendix C and available for download from our [website](#)).
- A signed letter of commitment to participate in the Community of Practice (noted as Appendix D and available for download from our [website](#)).
- A completed Implementation Team contact information worksheet (noted as Appendix E and available for download from our [website](#)).

Q: Who is required to sign the letter of commitment to participate in the Community of Practice (CoP)?

A: Only the lead applicant is required to sign the letter of commitment to participate in the CoP. Signatures from other partners are not required on this form. However, The Collaborative expects that the lead applicant is signing the form on behalf of its partners, meaning that all partners are aware of the CoP requirement and have agreed to participate as well.

Q: How should applicants format their responses to the proposal questions in the RFP?

A: Please submit your answers to the application questions in a Microsoft Word document. The Collaborative recommends that applicants restate the Section number and title, followed by all the Questions in that Section, before stating the response. The maximum word count does not include the Section or Questions text.

Q: Are graphics, tables, and embedded images acceptable in the Word Document application?

A: Yes.

Q: Will The Collaborative host informational webinars for potential applicants? Will the webinars be recorded?

The Collaborative hosted two webinars in February/March 2023 to address applicant questions. The webinar recordings are available on our website and via the links below.

- Applicant Webinar 1: Tuesday, February 14, 2023, 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm ET
 - [Webinar Recording](#)
- Applicant Webinar 2: Thursday, March 2, 2023, 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm ET
 - [Webinar Recording](#)

Q: Will The Collaborative meet with individual applicants or address applicant questions individually in advance of the proposal due date?

A: No. Unfortunately, due to the high volume of interest in this opportunity, The Collaborative is not able to meet with or hold calls with potential applicants or answer individual questions on a case-by-case basis, before the proposal due date.

Q: Will The Collaborative share a list of the organizations that have shown interest in this opportunity (e.g., those who participated in the webinars or those that apply)?

A: No. The Collaborative wishes to respect the confidentiality of interested applicants and will not share out names or organizations that have shown interest in the opportunity.

Q: Is there a way to know who is applying so we can partner with them and not have duplicative proposals?

A: The Collaborative wishes to respect the confidentiality of interested applicants and will not share out names or organizations that have shown interest in the opportunity.

Q: Can a proposal focus on both the combination of comprehensive health and education initiatives? For both center based, family child care, as well as home visiting programs?

A: We seek comprehensive systems solutions aimed at improving professional compensation of the ECE workforce, defined as salaries and benefits. Benefits are inclusive of the myriad supports for workers including, but not limited to, health care, dental care, vision care, mental health care, and retirement support. Ideally, both efforts to support wage and salary increases and benefits will be proposed. However, we will consider proposals that focus on either wages or benefits.

Q: Should proposals address all four vision statements of The Collaborative?

The Collaborative's core beliefs and vision are reflected throughout the RFP, including the Characteristics of Strong Proposals, Assessment Criteria, Measures of Success, and Proposal Questions sections. Strong proposals will address and respond to the items outlined in the RFP.

Q: Are you able to provide references to current practices or examples of strategies you are seeking?

A: We cannot opine on specific strategies. However, several states and the District of Columbia have created durable compensation increases for the workforce over the past two years that would be viable strategies if replicated.

Q: The idea is for better salaries and benefits for teachers that teach up to 3rd grade; for centers that serve children up to 5th grade, can those teachers be included for this effort as well?

The Collaborative welcomes proposals that benefit a range of ECE professional roles, including teaching staff and administrative staff, in the variety of settings in which early care and education occur. All viable proposals must include lead teachers in settings that serve children ages birth to five.

Definitions

Q: How does The Collaborative define "early childhood?"

A: The Collaborative defines "early childhood" as a developmental period that begins prenatal and continues through approximately age 8. This developmental period coincides with early learning experiences (formal and informal) that begin at birth and continue through grade 3. Proposals for this opportunity should focus on building capacity towards sustainable and equitable workforce compensation increase for educators who work with children in this age/grade-range.

Q: How does The Collaborative define "workforce?"

A: The Collaborative defines "workforce" as the professionals who provide early care and education to children ages birth to eight in a myriad of setting types, including family homes, centers, and public schools. We also mean those who provide direct care and instruction and those who administer programs for young children.

Q: How does The Collaborative define an ECE "lead teacher" and related degrees and certifications?

A: The Collaborative defines an ECE lead teacher as the educator of record and the decision-maker who is directly responsible for the instruction of children and supervision of staff in all types of ECE classrooms and care settings. Lead teachers may include family child care providers who meet this definition.

Q: What is included in The Collaborative's definition of ECE workforce compensation?

A: Through this opportunity, The Collaborative seeks to catalyze transformative change in the ECE workforce compensation system, including wages and benefits. Benefits are inclusive of the myriad supports for workers including, but not limited to, health care, dental care, vision care, mental health care, and retirement support. Proposals may focus on salaries/wages and/or benefits.

Eligibility

Q: Who is eligible to apply for this opportunity?

A: To be eligible to apply for this opportunity, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Applicants may apply from any state, locality, municipality, territory, or tribal community. We acknowledge the varied governance structures in tribal communities and will entertain proposals that reflect the relevant context needed to accomplish the grant goals.
- Applicants must apply as a partnership that includes a **Core Implementation Team** that must include leadership and/or senior staff from the following governmental agencies/entities or their applicable equivalents in the applicant's context:
 - The fiscal entity that controls the administrative budget such as the Office of Management and Budget (or equivalent)
 - The administrative entity with authority over child care funding
 - The administrative entity with authority over public education funding
 - The administrative entity with authority over preschool/pre-kindergarten programs and funding
 - The administrative entity with authority over higher education programs and/or funding
 - The administrative entity with authority over any Special Revenue Funds (if applicable)

Q: Are early childhood education providers eligible to apply (e.g., Child care centers, family child care, Head Start centers, or state pre-K centers) as the lead or co-lead applicant?

A: No. The lead or co-lead applicants must be government bodies in states/localities/municipalities/territories/tribal communities. However, early childhood education providers may be a part of the larger partnership team.

Q: Can an early childhood education provider/program apply for funding to increase compensation for their staff/teachers?

A: No, individual centers and programs are not eligible to apply for this funding. This funding opportunity has a system-wide focus, and the lead or co-lead applicants must be government bodies in

states/localities/municipalities/territories/tribal communities. Additionally, this funding opportunity will not fund the direct or actual compensation or benefit increases of the workforce.

Q: In a state that requires nonprofits to administer public dollars regionally, can the nonprofit agency that oversees public funding apply for the grant as the lead applicant, provided that they have approval and collaboration with the appropriate government entities?

A: Yes, the nonprofit agency that oversees public funding can apply as the lead applicant – but they need to explain the mechanism through which the state and/or government agencies authorize them to disburse funds, and a clear, formal, and durable collaboration must be in place.

Q: May a nonprofit agency apply as a co-lead applicant with a government body?

A: Yes, a nonprofit agency may apply as a co-lead applicant with a government body. In that instance, the applicant's proposal must clearly explain the role of the non-profit or NGO in the process.

Q: In a state with local control and regional authority over workforce and education, is it allowable to have an Implementation Team made up of individuals from various different government authorities?

A: Yes. We are open to proposals of team configurations that are appropriate for your context. If the requirements of the Core Implementation Team configuration are not appropriate for your context, please explain that to us in the proposal. If you are proposing an alternative team configuration given your context, please explain this rationale in your application. Core Implementation Team members may span geographies and may include a mix of state, local, municipal, territory, and tribal team members.

Q: May a co-led application designate a non-government body as the fiscal agent?

A: Yes, the partnership team may identify a fiscal agent that is not a government entity to be the conduit to receive the grant funds.

Q: Are there any requirements around the type of organization that could act as a fiscal intermediary or sponsor?

No, The Collaborative has not specified any requirements regarding fiscal intermediaries. The government agency or agencies would need to describe its reasons for choosing the organization as the fiscal agent and the rationale for this approach.

Q: How many members do you expect in the advisory committee? Can lead teachers be compensated/provided stipend for their time and participation?

A: There are no limits or requirements for the number of members. There is nothing in the RFP to prevent teachers or others from being compensated for their participation.

Q: Can members of the Core Implementation Team also be on the advisory body?

A: Yes, members of the Core Implementation Team may also serve on the advisory body.

Q: What do you think about involving the child care providers union as an advisory board member?

A: The proposed advisory body composition will be evaluated based on the match with the work that is proposed. There is nothing in the RFP to bar union representatives from being a part of this group.

Q: Does the budget agency have to be a governmental entity? Can a nonprofit be the lead fiscal entity as long as the local government organization are members of the implementation team?

The budget agency that has authority over the funding streams proposed to be used by prospective grantees to address compensation issues must be a part of the Core Implementation Team. Alternatively, a nonprofit agency that oversees public funding can be a part of the Core Implementation Team – but they need to explain the mechanism through which the state and/or government agencies authorize them to disburse funds, and a clear, formal, and durable collaboration must be in place.

Q: How do partnerships demonstrate a commitment to working together to permanently transform the ECE finance and compensation systems.? Do you require letters of support from all applicant partners?

A: Letters of support from all applicant partners are not required, but all implementation team partners must sign a **Statement of Commitment** (previously referred to as “Memorandum of Understanding”) that documents their commitment to the project. Additionally, applicant should provide examples of the partnerships’ experience working together as partners and/or working on other successful collaborations as part of the RFP response.

Q: Does the strength of the applicant partnership affect the appeal of an application?

A: Yes. The Collaborative is looking for evidence of strong partnerships.

Q: Will the Collaborative consider multiple applicants per state/locality/municipality/territory/tribal community?

A: Yes. The Collaborative will consider funding multiple applicants per state/locality/municipality/territory/tribal community, though it is unlikely that The Collaborative would fund in overlapping geographies, especially if the work that is proposed is duplicative.

Q: Can a lead applicant submit multiple proposals with different partners and/or different focuses?

A: No. Lead applicants may only be a part of one application.

Q: Are nonprofits eligible to serve as partners?

A: Yes.

Q: Are school districts eligible to serve as partners?

A: Yes.

Q: Are ECE community centers eligible to serve as partners?

A: Yes.

Q: Is a community action agency eligible to apply?

A: Yes, a community action agency may be part of the partnership team that applies for this grant opportunity. As a nonprofit agency, a community action agency is also eligible to apply as a co-lead applicant with a government body. In that instance, the applicant’s proposal must clearly explain the role of the community action agency in the process.

Q: Are there any restrictions on the number of partners that can comprise a partnership?

A: No. There is no limit as to the number of partners that can comprise a partnership.

Q: How do the Core Implementation Team entities apply to a local context?

A. We are open to proposals of team configurations that are appropriate for your context. If the requirements of the Core Implementation Team configuration are not appropriate for your context, please explain that to us in the proposal. If you are proposing an alternative team configuration given your context, please explain this rationale in your application. Core Implementation Team members may span geographies and may include a mix of state, local, municipal, territory, and tribal team members.

Q: Does the Collaborative have preference for statewide transformation versus a local/regional system transformation?

A. No. We are open to proposals that span a range of contexts including state and local.

Q: Are you encouraging States to apply or can Cities apply? How will you treat Cities that apply in geographies where the State may also apply?

A: Cities can apply. We will evaluate the merits of all individual proposals submitted, though it is unlikely that The Collaborative would fund in overlapping geographies, especially if the work that is proposed is duplicative.

Q: May the grant proposal include two neighboring counties instead of one?

Yes. The Collaborative is open to proposals that constitute a mix of geographies including multiple localities and/or municipalities. The rationale for the geographic configuration that constitutes the proposal should be explained in the application.

Q: Are RFP applications accepted from a local government entity that has already recently launched an early educator compensation initiative? Or is the expectation that grants will be awarded to entities yet to embark on establishing increased wages/compensation?

A: Grant funds may be used to develop a new program or pilot, expand, and scale an existing program.

Q: Are institutions of higher education (with campus child care) eligible for this grant as a lead?

A: The administrative authority over higher ed programs and/or funding must be part of the Core Implementation Team, and that entity may be the lead/co-lead applicant. Institutions of higher education without authority over higher ed funding in your context may not apply as the lead/co-lead.

Q: Can national organizations that provide TA be able to support states with their grant applications and be part of a team?

A: Yes, technical assistance providers may be a part of the larger partnership team.

Q: Are private schools serving early learners able to apply?

A: Private schools serving early learners may be part of a partnership team, but they cannot be the lead/co-lead applicant, nor a member of the Core Implementation Team. They may also be part of the Advisory Body that informs the design and implementation of the grant project.

Q: Can an individual entity represent administrative authority over multiple funding sources? (i.e., childcare funding and pre kindergarten funding)

A: Yes. If that is the structure in your context, please explain in your application.

Funding

Q: If awarded, will the lead partner receive funds directly or will they be reimbursed?

A: Funds will be awarded directly to the lead applicant state/locality/territory/tribal community, or designated fiscal agent, on a yearly basis. There is no expectation that applicants will need to expend funds (beyond the 10% match) and be reimbursed.

Q: When will the grant funds be dispersed and by when will grantees need to spend them?

A: The Collaborative plans to issue grants through its fiscal sponsor, TSNE, in August 2023. Grantees must use grant funds by the end of the grant period.

Q: Can grant funds be expended beyond the three-year grant period?

A: No. While proposed plans may extend beyond the three-year grant period, the grant period will only be for three years, and applicants may only use grant funding within the initial three-year period.

Q: What funding level is typically likely to receive a grant award, and across how many years?

A: The funding level and timeframe 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, so we do not have a typical funding level and timeframe in mind. Proposals should reflect the true cost of the anticipated work and applicants may propose grant terms of up to three years.

Q: Who is responsible for providing the 10% matching funds?

A: Each partnership team (i.e., all partners collectively) must contribute at least 10% 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. The entire 10% match does not need to come from the partners themselves. Applicants must describe how they plan to meet the matching funds requirement and must submit a letter of commitment from the entity(ies) providing matching funds along with their full proposal materials. Matching

funds may include public dollars and/or private revenue, including committed philanthropic dollars. However, all matching funds cannot be private dollars. Public investment in early childhood education is pivotal. Matching public funds may come in the form of staff time towards the grant or other public resources. The Collaborative encourages applicants to seek additional funding, as needed, for their efforts beyond The Collaborative's three-year support and the applicant's 10 percent match, though this is not a requirement of the grant.

Q: What are the limits on in-kind funds for the match?

A: The required financial match may include in-kind contributions, but in-kind contributions should comprise no more than 50 percent of the match. The rest of the match must be in real dollars. The Collaborative defines in-kind as any non-cash contributions of value, including personnel (dedicated staff members/time), goods, and services. The Collaborative defines real dollars as monetary support for the project (e.g., cash contributions, public funding streams, private philanthropic dollars).

Q: Can matching funds include federal funds or funds from a federal program?

A: Yes. Matching funds may include federal funds or funds from a federal program.

Q: Are philanthropic dollars considered real or in-kind funds?

A: Philanthropic dollars are considered real dollars, except if supporting uses of funds The Collaborative has identified as in-kind (personnel, goods, and services).

Q: Is there a maximum of the private amount for match? For example, would 1% state/federal funds and 99% private be acceptable?

A: At least 25% of the matching funds must be public dollars. These may be real or in-kind dollars. As a reminder, in-kind contributions should comprise no more than 50 percent of the match. The rest of the match must be in real dollars.

Q: What types of funding are envisioned for the match since the entire 10% cannot be comprised of private funds?

A: We are requiring public investment. At least 25% of the matching funds must be public dollars. Public investment may be in-kind or real dollars. The Collaborative defines in-kind as any non-cash contributions of value, including personnel (dedicated staff members/time), goods, and services. The Collaborative defines real dollars as monetary support for the project (e.g., cash contributions, and public funding streams).

Q: Does the entirety of the match need to be in hand within the first 12 months of the grant period?

A: The Collaborative requires that applicants have the entirety of the match committed within the first 12 months of the grant period. The matching funds should be used across the entire grant period and must be expended in full by the end of the grant period. Applicants should use the matching funds breakdown in the budget template to demonstrate when you anticipate using matching funds from each contributing entity and how you intend to use them.

Q: If a state has already received the PDG grant, could those funds be used towards the match? Or do the matching funds need to be secured during the first 12 months of the grant period?

A: Yes, PDG funds can serve as a match. Matching funds must be secured during the first 12 months of the grant period.

Q: Can paying for a new staff member count towards the 10% match as in-kind funds?

A: Yes. Grantees may count paying for staff salaries towards the 10% match as in-kind funds as long as it is within reason and clearly contributes to accomplishing the goals of this grant opportunity.

Q: Given that indirect costs are capped at 15%, can any indirect costs that a state/locality/territory/tribal community incurs above 15% count towards the 10% match as in-kind funds?

A: No. Any indirect costs incurred by any partners above 15% may not count towards the match as in-kind funds.

Q: Can funds be used for teacher scholarships, incentives, and wages, or just for the implementation costs of the grant?

A: Funds may not be used for teacher scholarships, incentive, or wages. Grant funds may only be used towards implementation costs of the grant.

Q: Can grant funds be used for project-related personnel costs?

A: Yes, grant funds may be used towards the salary of personnel who are working on this project. The RFP emphasizes the need for increased staff capacity for this work, particularly staff with expertise in budgets and financing.

Q: Is research on the impact of the program/pilot an acceptable expense? Is there a maximum that can be spent on research?

Yes, research or evaluation of the impact of the program is an acceptable expense. For example, developing or expanding data and evaluation systems to better understand and/or track compensation efforts. We do not specify a maximum amount for any fund use activity.

Q: Do you anticipate this funding opportunity will be available annually?

A: The Collaborative has not yet determined whether additional funds will be available beyond the initial three-year grant period.

Timeline and Budget

Q: What is the maximum timeline for this work?

A: Applicants' proposed timeline or grant period cannot be longer than three years.

Q: When should the timeline/grant period for this work begin?

A: The timeline for your work/proposed grant period start date may be as early as August 2023 and no later than January 2024. Please make sure your partnership's desired grant period, including the start date, is reflected in the timeline you submit in your proposal.

Q: If an application proposes a 2-year term, but as a course of implementation does not fully expend funds within 2 years, could the grant term be adjusted to the maximum term of 3 years?

A: In that instance, a no-cost extension of the grant period may be requested and will be considered depending on the context and grant performance.

Q: How much time should awardees plan to spend participating in Community of Practice and rapid cycle evaluation activities?

A: While The Collaborative has not finalized the exact time commitment for the CoP, we estimate that grantees will likely spend 2-4 hours per month participating in CoP activities, plus 1-2 full day meetings a year.

Q: Can time to participate in the Community of Practice activities be included in the budget to ensure that all partners are able to join as needed?

A: Time to participate in the CoP activities can be included in the budget.

Q: Do applicants need to budget for travel related to the Community of Practice?

A: No. The Collaborative will directly reimburse any required travel costs incurred by grantees related to the grantee Community of Practice.

Q: What are the limitations on indirect costs for the budget?

A: Limitations for overhead/indirect rate charges are capped at 15 percent or 15 percent of total personnel costs, whichever is lower. Any indirect costs incurred by applicants above 15 percent may not count towards the match. The 15 percent cap applies only to the overall lead applicant budget submitted to the Collaborative; it does not apply to sub-grantee budgets.

Q: Should personnel costs in the budget include fringe benefits?

A: Yes. Personnel costs should include fringe benefits if they will be paid through this grant. Note also that the indirect rate is capped at either 15 percent or 15 percent of total personnel costs, whichever is lower.

Q: Should the budget be broken down by year or should applicants just provide the total budget for the entire grant period?

A: The proposal budget template (Appendix B) requests that applicants provide a breakdown both by year and the total budget for the project. This includes how much per year and in total you are requesting from The Collaborative.

Q: Do applicants need to provide budgets for subgrantees?

A: No. The proposal budget template (Appendix B) requests that applicants provide a budget breakdown for the lead applicant's budget only. This should include the total amounts allocated to subgrantees or contractors, but you do not need to provide a detailed breakdown of each subgrantee or contractor's budget. If your institution requires this or this is your typical practice, and you want to share that detail, you may do so, but it is not required.

Proposal Assessments

Q: How strict will the Collaborative be with word limits?

A: The Collaborative will be strict with word limits. Our goal is to strike a balance to give you enough space to clarify and address questions, while also not being burdensome on the review committee. We are being strict about word limits because shorter, quality responses are better to make sure our review committee can efficiently review your proposals.

Q: Will applicants be able to see their exact scores for their proposals and a breakdown of those scores?

A: No. The Collaborative is not sharing information about the review committee's scores with applicants at this time, given the high volume of applicants.

Q: Is the selection process determined 100% by written proposals or is there an interview and discussion process included towards final determination?

A: There may be some follow up correspondence with members of the review committee to clarify any information in the proposal. Additionally, some applicants may be asked to participate in an interview or discussion process with members of The Collaborative's Steering Committee before final award decisions are made.

Reporting

Q: If awarded, what is the deadline for the final report after the grant period ends?

A: The Collaborative's fiscal sponsor, TSNE, requires that grantees submit annual (interim) reports that include financial and narrative project updates, as well as a final report. Final reports will be due within two to three months of the end of the grant period.

Q: Will there be reporting requirements for sub-grantees?

A: No. As required by TSNE, grantees will need to submit interim and final narrative and financial reports. While grantees may need to collect information from their sub-grantees to effectively complete these reporting requirements, sub-grantees themselves will not be required to submit their own reports.