



Application Guidance

Overview

The Buell Foundation values the early childhood councils. By sustaining a network of local, community-driven entities, it is possible to disseminate programming and best practices throughout the state as well as to gather diverse perspectives from Colorado's many regions. This is the only formalized network that exists in Colorado that crosses all domains and is charged with facilitating development of a coordinated system that supports children by influencing their relationships, environments and communities. In addition, the Buell Foundation supports efforts to improve the access, quality and equity of the three early childhood domains as detailed in the Early Childhood Colorado Framework. As a unique network, the councils are an important lever for systemic change that impacts families with children ages zero to five, and it is imperative that councils function at a high level.

In response to the changed state early childhood context and ever-increasing demands being placed on councils, it is more important than ever before that all councils have the capacity to fulfill their full purpose. In an effort to ensure a strong and effective network of councils, the Buell Foundation seeks to increase investments in this area. Our strategy for funding early childhood councils starts with funds available to strengthen council infrastructure and systems building efforts. We believe that this infrastructure must be in place before other activities can be successful. All councils will be required to describe their needs in this area and apply for funding to support those needs. The next level of funding, which builds upon infrastructure and systems building, is available for three related focus areas: Workforce & Professional Development, Quality Improvement and Increased Access to Child Care. In addition, the Buell Foundation will consider requests for direct services on a case-by-case basis; however, these projects are not our priority.

Infrastructure & Systems Building



Buell Focus Areas:

Workforce & Professional Development
Quality Improvement
Increased Access to Child Care

Each council should identify their needs as related to each type of funding available. Below are the definitions of funding opportunities to help guide this effort.

Type of funding	Description
Infrastructure & Systems Building	<p>Through a detailed review of the legislation that formed the councils, requirements of the state and other documents, Buell Foundation staff identified core infrastructure components. These include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability and Internal Capacity of the Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Council Governance ○ Communications ○ Evaluation/Assessment ○ Strategic Planning ○ Resource Development ○ Fiscal Management • Strategic Partnerships • Public Engagement • Policy/Advocacy <p>The identified components support the following goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A statewide network of organizations understands the Early Childhood Colorado Framework and the local resources (current and needed) required to actualize the Framework objectives. 2. Councils are positioned to speak locally, regionally and statewide about policy changes and government alignment of resources to help children thrive. 3. Every region has the human and organizational capacity necessary to provide quality, affordable, accessible programming for young children and their families.
Buell Focus Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Workforce & Professional Development</u> activities must include a focus on improving the qualifications of early childhood professionals through the PDIS. This may include college scholarships, community-based trainings from PDIS-certified trainers, career counseling, CDA acquisition, etc. The Buell Foundation will continue to emphasize efforts that support early childhood teacher and director certifications, associate’s degrees, and bachelor’s degrees (when appropriate). • <u>Quality Improvement</u> activities should target licensed providers working to improve or maintain quality and may include coaching, materials, training, improved business practices, etc. • <u>Increased Access to Child Care</u> may include activities related to increasing the number of slots in a catchment area, pre-licensing training, support for FFN, resource and referral, tuition assistance, etc.
Direct Services	<p>Funding for direct services provided by councils has not historically been a priority for the Buell Foundation. In some communities, the council has been identified as the best-positioned organization to provide specific services (e.g., home visiting). We will continue to consider these proposals on a case-by-case basis. Please call your Program Officer to discuss a specific request.</p>

The Process

All councils are eligible to apply for their normal operating grant only at the **May deadline**.



Step 1

Call your Program Officer to discuss your funding request and the activities that you hope to complete in the coming year. Your Program Officer will be able to talk with you about your request amount and set you up for success from the start.

Step 2

Complete the updated application and report (interim), and then submit one copy by email by 5:00 p.m. on May 3, 2021. Applications should be sent to **grants@buellfoundation.org**.

Step 3

Your Program Officer will set up a site visit with you to discuss your request, work with you to identify your technical assistance needs, and set expectations for next steps.

Step 4

Your Program Officer will present your request to the Board of Trustees. It is important to note that while the Buell Foundation seeks to maintain our increased investment in councils, there are still **limited dollars available**. Not all councils will receive all funds requested.

Step 5

You will receive a contract by email if funds are awarded.

Step 6

Contracts will be sent and payments made.

Step 7

Ongoing support will be provided by your Program Officer.

Step 8

Submit a final report detailing your successes, challenges and lessons learned during the grant period. This report is due one month after the end of your grant period.

Application Section Guidance

If you have any questions as you complete your proposal, don't hesitate to call your Program Officer.

Summary Sheet – Please include your specific request per type of funding on this Summary Sheet. The amounts listed here should match those identified in the budget portion of your application packet. Make sure that the sheet is signed when it is returned.

Narrative – Our intent with the questions is to gain a full understanding of all that the council does. Use this section to tell the story of your council. How do all of the parts fit together? Where do you wish you could spend additional effort? How might Buell funds be used to allow you to more fully support your community?

Self-Assessment – If it is easier to answer any of the sections across domains, merge the cells and provide information in that way. **Don't forget to mark your perception of proficiency in each section.**

Attachments

Budget – The attached template will allow Buell staff to understand all of the costs associated with running your council and the specific work taking place in our focus areas. It is intended to be a flexible template that you can individualize based on the line items that your council uses. Each section of the template aligns with the areas of funding offered by the Foundation. Only complete the sections of the

budget template that are relevant to your council. If you do not have professional development activities, for instance, leave that section blank.

- Infrastructure & Systems Building – These are the items that allow your council to exist; they are your general and administrative costs. You might include here the coordinator or other central office staff salaries, occupancy costs, communications, etc. Funding in this area allows you to do your core work. Buell funding in this area is flexible funding and can be moved as your needs change.
- Buell Focus Areas – We ask that you identify expenses related to each of our focus areas. Please adjust line items to make it relevant to the work of your team. We understand that within these activities, some funds go directly to the community (e.g., scholarships for early childhood professionals, tuition assistance for families, etc.). We have highlighted lines to note those expenses that are redistributed within each focus area. There will still be some level of flexibility here as well, but only within each subcategory.
- Direct Services – Complete this section with all line items appropriate to the program(s) for which you are applying. This will take the place of the “program budget” that councils have submitted in the past.

Financial Statements – Please provide financial statements (Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Statement) for the council. Some councils that are part of governmental agencies may not be able to provide a Balance Sheet. If that is the case for your council, please include a note so that your Program Officer understands what is available for review.

Sources of Income Table – Please complete this for your council, not for the fiscal sponsor or for a larger agency that houses the council.

All other attachments should be self-explanatory. Remember all Fiscal Sponsor attachments if needed for your council. Don't hesitate to contact your Program Officer with questions.

Staff Contact Information

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- Application Deadline
May 3, 2021 by 5:00 p.m.
- E-mail applications to
grants@bue llfoundation.org
or mail applications to
Buell Foundation
1873 S. Bellaire St., Suite 600
Denver, CO 80222

**Questions?
Call or email your
Program Officer**