

# EARLY CHILDHOOD LOCAL FINANCING SUPPORT OPEN OPPORTUNITY

**Review:** Proposals are by invitation only and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

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**Organizational Overview:** Founded in 1962, the Buell Foundation is a private foundation dedicated to supporting the positive development of children across the state of Colorado through grants and partnerships with nonprofit organizations. Grants are primarily awarded in the areas of early childhood education and development and teen pregnancy prevention. Since inception, the Buell Foundation has awarded more than \$200 million in grants.



**Introduction:** In alignment with **Supporting Families, Children, and the Caregiving Workforce: A Local Financing Toolkit for Colorado**, the Buell Foundation is pleased to announce a new funding opportunity. We are interested in supporting the infusion of new revenue into the early childhood system. It is clear that the early childhood system will benefit from a significant infusion of resources to ensure that high-quality child care is available and accessible to Colorado families. At the Buell Foundation, we recognize that a well-funded system that promotes quality care also includes improved pay, benefits, and working conditions for early childhood caregivers.

Buell is growing its focus on increasing revenue at the local and regional level. State and federal funding streams are often very prescriptive and, while they are a key component of a well-funded system, we know that each Colorado community is different. Local funding can maximize the use of local assets while being responsive to the unique realities and needs across the state.

We are excited that national and local polling consistently shows support for increased funding for early childhood needs. According to a Children's Funding Project poll from 2021, there is broad support for maternal and infant health services (75%), high-quality infant and toddler care (70%) and high-quality preschool programs (69%). It is also exciting to see local communities across Colorado signal their support for additional investment using local revenue from sales taxes to lodging taxes to meet local needs.

As a private foundation, we cannot engage in lobbying or electioneering, but we are able to support local funding efforts in many other ways. Outside of providing funding support, Buell can connect advocates and community leaders to educational resources, administrators who are already overseeing publicly supported ECE initiatives, and consultants/nonprofit leaders with specific knowledge related to local community challenges.

Below are opportunities that the Buell Foundation is interested in funding.

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| <b>PHASE 1: LEARN</b>          | <b>Convening Grants</b> support an established leadership group, learning from other communities and experts, opportunities for engagement with under-represented individuals, shared education, and learning the steps necessary to seek local financing.  |
| <b>PHASE 2: LOCALIZE</b>       | <b>Local Realities Grants</b> support data and needs assessment; qualitative storytelling projects that address opportunities, explore issues, and examine trends in early childhood locally; policy planning; estimating costs, and reconciling vision with available revenue.   |
| <b>PHASE 3: FINALIZE</b>       | <b>Readiness Grants</b> support public opinion polling, building out a campaign plan and costs associated with educating decision makers prior to titling a ballot measure.   |
| <b>PHASE 4: CAMPAIGN</b>       | <b>The Buell Foundation cannot provide funds that seek support for a titled ballot measure.</b>   |
| <b>PHASE 5: IMPLEMENTATION</b> | <b>Implementation Grants</b> invest in programs that have been approved. Grants could fund learning from experts on governance and programmatic delivery or the piloting of smaller projects that may be funded when additional local dollars are available. Children are only four years old once; smart, planful implementation of early childhood funding streams is essential. This opportunity includes planning grants for cities/counties that have lodging/marketing district taxes available to support early childhood needs. |
| <b>PHASE 6: REAUTHORIZING</b>  | <b>Reauthorization Grants</b> provide limited support for communities that have sunset provisions or other temporal limitations for local funding. Funds can be used for data collection, storytelling, polling, and education.   |



# GRANT DETAILS AND HOW TO APPLY

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| <b>ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS</b>               | <p>Nonprofit organizations, including coalitions, government entities, or associations (e.g., Chambers of Commerce) are eligible. Applicants must show evidence of broad community engagement, including local funding and engagement with the local early childhood council.</p> <p>Organizations seeking support for a single center are not eligible to apply.</p>  |
| <b>DURATION OF GRANT</b>                 | <p>This Early Childhood Local Financing Support opportunity is envisioned to span multiple years. Grants will have a maximum of one-year terms with renewal grants possible if key goals and objectives are met. Awards for the grant should not be considered a promise of future funding.</p>  |
| <b>FUNDS AVAILABLE</b>                   | <p>Depending on project scope, most grants will range in size from \$5,000 to \$50,000. A single grant will not exceed \$100,000. This is a competitive grant opportunity with projects being evaluated on an ongoing basis.</p>   |
| <b>REVIEW</b>                            | <p>Staff at the Buell Foundation will review all proposals and conduct site visits as needed to award the grant. Review will consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evidence of initial research and due diligence, which should include engagement with national resources and local experts</li><li>• Evidence of meaningful community engagement and diverse stakeholder partnerships</li><li>• Local support</li><li>• A potential roadmap to future funding</li><li>• A realistic vision for what can be accomplished with local funding</li><li>• The ability of the applicant to move quickly once funds are awarded, including capacity to manage the project</li></ul> |
| <b>APPLICATION PROCESS AND DEADLINES</b> | <p>Interested parties should reach out to Jason Callegari: <a href="mailto:jcallegari@buellfoundation.org">jcallegari@buellfoundation.org</a> or 720-994-5583 to discuss their project before applying. Only those projects deemed ready and in clear alignment with the goals of the initiative will be invited to submit a full proposal.</p> <p>If invited to apply, applicants will receive a short information sheet via email, which will be used to create a record in the Buell Foundation's online grant platform, GivingData. The formal application will be completed through that platform. Email confirmation of proposal receipt will be sent after an application is submitted.</p>           |