

APPENDIX B: Child Care Challenge Fund Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. What is the purpose of the Iowa Child Care Challenge Fund?

The purpose of the fund is to encourage and enable businesses, nonprofit organizations, and consortiums to establish local child care facilities and increase the availability of quality, affordable child care for working Iowans. To support this work, the fund will award competitive grants to support community and regional initiatives. Iowa Workforce Development is seeking collaborative applications that propose new, cutting-edge ideas as well as proven strategies.

2. Who will decide which applications receive funding?

Iowa Workforce Development will identify an application panel to review and score proposals.

3. What will Iowa Workforce Development take into account when determining grant awards?

Iowa Workforce Development will evaluate applications based on a number of criteria including but not limited to the scoring guidance referenced in the to the scoring rubric. Whether the plan includes community engagement by including community partners or incorporating existing community programs.

5. Are applicants required to identify specific project goal(s)?

Yes, all applications must include performance measures that logically connect a project's goal(s) with proposed activities and a timeline. Performance measures should include to the extent possible whether the expected results were achieved.

6. If an application is not selected in the first round, will it automatically be considered in the next round or must it be resubmitted?

Iowa Workforce Development plans to announce additional application rounds for the Employer Innovation Fund, if funding is available after the first review process. Submitted applications that are not selected will not be automatically considered during future rounds. Iowa Workforce Development encourages applicants to re-apply once future rounds are announced.

7. How will Iowa Workforce Development ensure Child Care Challenge Funds are used as intended?

IWD will review programmatic and financial reports to evaluate grant progress. In addition, IWD may provide ongoing technical assistance to grantees, may schedule site visits and may coordinate in-person or desk reviews as needed.

8. How does the match work?

The Employer Innovation Fund provides a state match for regional investments of in-kind (labor and materials) and private dollars.

What this means is that the fund is intended to serve as a match for money raised privately as part of the application process. Applicants can request approval for an amount up to the amount of money they have secured for the project. The private funds must be expensed first, matching state dollars may be drawn down once all private funds are expended. Applicants need to plan to expend all private funds first. If more funds are requested than are available, funds will be awarded proportionately to eligible proposals to provide the greatest amount of support across all eligible applicants.

9. What are allowable expenses?

The fund can be used to support new construction of a child care facility, rehabilitation of an existing structure as a child care facility, or the retrofitting and repurposing of an existing structure for use as a child care facility. It cannot be used for administrative expenses of operating the program or implementing the project.

10. Who can apply?

Eligible applicants include businesses, non-profits and consortiums in good standing with the State of Iowa. IWD encourages applicants to cultivate partnerships to enhance project activities and outcomes. If an employer is not the lead applicant, applicants are required to include a letter of commitment from an employer as a key project partner with the application submission.

11. When is the application due?

February 12, 2021.

12. When will awardees be notified?

Not later than Feb 19, 2021.

13. What is the project timeline for expending the funds?

Successful applicants must provide proof to Iowa Workforce that privately raised funds have been expended in full, at which time, then matching funds may be drawn down. Awardees must be able to

draw down state funds by June 30, 2021. All matching funds must be utilized within 12 months of receipt and any unexpended matching dollars must be returned to Iowa Workforce Development thereafter.

14. Is there a maximum award?

\$100,000.

15. Will all applications be awarded?

Submission of an application does not guarantee an award.