



## ECIC Child Care Innovation Fund Competitive Funding Opportunity

### Regional Child Care Coalitions

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

If you have any additional questions or inquiries, please contact [technicalassistance@ecic4kids.org](mailto:technicalassistance@ecic4kids.org)

#### Eligibility

#### 1. Are child care providers eligible lead applicants?

This funding opportunity is **not** intended to benefit child care providers or businesses.

While a child care provider may not serve as a lead for this opportunity, individuals representing the child care sector, including child care programs which are licensed by the state of Michigan or Tribal programs.

#### 2. Who is an eligible lead?

Regional Child Care Coalitions must be led or co-led by an [economic development organization \(EDO\)](#). Regional Child Care Coalitions may include employers and other public, private, and/or philanthropic community or regional organizations with an interest in child care supply building.

#### 3. What is an eligible Coalition?

Any Coalition of regional partners is eligible if it includes the required partners. Eligible regional coalitions must include, at a minimum, the following members:

- EDO as lead or co-lead
- Local government staff members with local zoning knowledge and expertise
- Individuals representing the child care sector including child care programs which are licensed by the State of Michigan or Tribal programs
- Parents of young children with expertise in seeking and utilizing high quality child care for children from birth to age twelve
- [Intermediate School District \(ISD\)](#) Early Childhood Lead(s) from the region
- [Great Start Collaborative](#) Director(s) from the region
- [Great Start Family Liaison](#)(s) from the region
- [Great Start to Quality Resource Center](#) Director(s) from the region
- [TriShare Hub](#) Lead(s) from the region

## Regional Child Care Coalition

### 4. Do I need to have all coalition members confirmed in order to apply?

The strongest applications will have all required coalition members confirmed prior to application. Strong Coalitions will have members from the diverse organizations and business communities in their region. Strong Coalitions will be composed of individuals and organizations who are actively engaged in creating a more equitable and resilient regional economy for all families.

### 5. Should the coalition already be formed? Or can this be a newly formed coalition?

Coalitions can be already in existence or newly formed for the purposes of this project. However, all coalitions **MUST** include all the required members noted above in the response to question 3. This stipulation may require adding new members to already existing coalitions.

Whether this coalition has already been in existence or is new for the purposes of this funding opportunity it is expected to build on the previous work and utilize the child care action plan that has already been developed for the region.

You can access the completed regional child care action plans [here](#).

### 6. Does the application require the inclusion of a co-lead organization?

While the identification of a co-lead is not a requirement of the application - it is highly recommended. The most successful regional child care planning coalitions under Caring for MI Future had economic development organizations as either leads or co-leads with an early childhood organization as a co-lead or lead, respectively. Additionally, there are multiple questions in the current application for Regional Child Care Coalition funds that would not be able to be successfully answered without a co-lead organization.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to consider including a co-lead organization that previously participated in Regional Child Care Planning efforts, has a deep understanding of family and parent needs and preferences pertaining to child care, and has strong connections within the early childhood systems of the applicable region.

### 7. How can I find out more about existing efforts related to child care quality and supply building in my region?

Please reference the completed Summary Report and the regional child care action plans [here](#).

## Awards and Utilization of Funds

### 8. How many awards will be made?

The Child Care Innovation Fund anticipates making 10 awards (one award within each EDO Region) of up to \$100,000 each for the initial 6-month period of performance. Regional Child Care Coalitions can apply for up to \$100,000 for work to be conducted between April and September of 2025.

Selected subrecipients will receive robust technical assistance through a learning community format where coalitions across the state will connect to brainstorm, design, and implement innovative, out-of-the-box solutions to child care issues to meet the needs of working families in their respective regions.

## 9. Why are the awards limited to the 10 EDO regions in the state of Michigan?

MiLEAP has determined that regional coalitions must be led or co-led by economic development organizations in the 10 MEDC [EDO Regions](#).

Regions with more than one prior Regional Child Care Planning Coalition are strongly encouraged to collaborate in the submission of one application for their region.

## 10. How can the Regional Child Care Coalition award funds be used?

Allowable expenses for Regional Child Care Coalitions include but are not limited to:

- Implementing Regional Child Care Action Plan strategies that align with the required Scope of Work for this project
- Implementing the required Scope of Work for this project as detailed by the Regional Coalition RFP
- Development of additional partnerships
- Costs associated with convening the Regional Child Care Coalition
- Costs associated with supporting the participation of parents and child care providers in this project
- Costs associated with assessing and gaining additional insight into emergent and/or additional regional child care needs including understanding and addressing the child care needs and preferences of working families.

Funds cannot be used to pay for expenses expressly covered by another external source, i.e. previous Child Care Relief Fund Grants, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP), Head Start, etc. or to supplant other federal or state funds.

## 11. What does ECIC suggest as an appropriate amount for stipends for families and providers participating in Regional Child Care Coalitions?

- Depending on the project scope and funding source, ECIC recommends stipend amounts ranging from \$25-50 per hour, not including child care or travel reimbursements, with total time calculated based on the time spent *preparing, attending, traveling to and from, and completing post meeting work* for the meeting.
- Family Coalition members should be reimbursed for child care, if needed. ECIC's Child Care Reimbursement is \$10 per hour for each child or \$13 per hour for children with special needs, with a daily cap of \$90. Reimbursement is paid directly to the Coalition member.
- Family Coalition members should be reimbursed for all travel/travel-related expenses. ECIC uses the approved state travel rates for mileage, hotel, and meals.

ECIC strongly recommends supporting costs associated with technology, ensuring all Coalition members have an equitable opportunity to fully engage in this important work. This can include using funds to provide laptops/tablets/hotspots/etc. for Family Coalition members.

Updated 02/03/2025

ECIC's National Center for Family and Parent Leadership has developed the following supportive resource for further reference and review: ["Guidance & Best Practices: Parent Leader Compensation Scale Aligning Payments with Roles"](#).

If you'd like to have further information regarding the above information/resources, please contact [fpl@ecic4kids.org](mailto:fpl@ecic4kids.org) via email.

**12. What additional detail can ECIC provide on budget expectations specific to families participating on Coalitions and with the National Center for Family and Parent Leadership?**

Include funding sufficient for parent members of the Coalition to attend two in-person 1.5 day convenings in the Lansing area - May and September - where there will be significant content for Parent Leaders who are Coalition members. Typically, up to two parents would attend to represent the Coalition along with other members. This funding should support their time and expertise as well as reimbursement of mileage, coverage for hotels if necessary, and childcare supports. Above, in the response to question 11, is ECIC's guidelines for appropriate parent and family supports.

The budget line item would be "Participant support costs" and should include amounts sufficient to cover planned Regional Child Care Coalition prep including potentially office hours with ECIC/National Center staff for technical assistance, attendance at Coalition meetings and events, and debrief of parent members. This should support their time and expertise as well as reimbursement of mileage for in-person meetings and childcare if needed.

**13. Can Regional Child Care Coalition funds be used to purchase food for Regional Child Care Coalition meetings?**

These federal funds may be utilized to purchase food for Regional Child Care Coalition meetings if and only if the following conditions are met:

- The meeting occurring is an "all day" meeting where food would be required to support attendees in participating.
- All meeting participants record their attendance on a sign-in sheet at the beginning of the meeting to justify the food expense.
- The food is consumed during active working time, such as during a "working lunch" where attendees verbally discuss relevant and related topics to the work occurring (i.e. all attendees discuss/answer two to three prompts or questions together while eating)
- A "working lunch" or "lunch activity" is listed within the meeting agenda.

**14. Can Regional Child Care Coalition funds be utilized to purchase gift cards?**

The purchase of gift cards is not an expense that is allowable at this time. However, if this is an identified need of the coalition, aligned with the project plan and scope of work, please contact ECIC for further discussion.

**15. What activities or expenditures are not allowable for the Regional Child Care Coalition funds?**

Regional Child Care Coalition funds may not be used for the following:

- No funds shall be expended for the purchase or improvement of land, or for the purchase, construction, or permanent improvement of any building or facility.
- Funds cannot be used to pay for expenses expressly covered by another external source, i.e. previous Child Care Relief Fund Grants, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP), Head Start, etc. or to supplant other federal or state funds.

*The Regional Child Care Coalitions project is supported through a grant awarded by the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential using Child Care Development Funds (CCDF).*

## Application Completion

### **16. How do I get registered within the virtual application platform, Fluxx?**

Review this [Fluxx How To document](#) to learn more about registration in Fluxx. This document also describes how to access and submit the application.

### **17. How do I complete the attached templates within the virtual application?**

All required templates associated with this application can be found linked within the application in the Fluxx platform.

Please note, the linked templates are view only, and must be downloaded by the applicant and saved onto their own devices to complete. Once you have downloaded, completed, and saved your own copy of the relevant template as a PDF, you will be able to upload your completed PDF template to the application portal.

### **18. My organization submitted an organizational financial systems risk assessment with ECIC for a past funding opportunity, do I need to submit an additional risk assessment for this funding opportunity?**

If your organization has submitted an online financial systems risk assessment to ECIC within the last quarter (after October 1, 2024), you do not need to submit an additional risk assessment. However, ECIC highly recommends applicants look through the questions included in the application's linked risk assessment to ensure no organizational information needs to be updated and that the questions remain the same.

## Miscellaneous

### **19. When are applications due?**

Applications are due by 5:00pm EST on January 31, 2025. No late applications will be accepted.

### **20. What is the funding period?**

The funding period will be March 30, 2025 – September 30, 2025.