



***Inclusive Futures Capital Grant Program***  
**For Boston Early Childhood Education and Out-of-School Time Programs**  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

March 28, 2022 - revised

The Children's Investment Fund (CIF) announces the availability of capital grants to improve the accessibility of early childhood education and out-of-school time facilities in Boston. Funding for this grant program is made possible by the Liberty Mutual Foundation.

**Funding Categories:**

Children's Investment Fund solicits proposals for physical environment modifications that will increase accessibility and support the inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in early childhood education and out-of-school time programs, including but not limited to:

- Outdoor play space renovation targeting access and inclusion for children with disabilities  
*(Please note that additional preference points will be given to projects that address this need in particular)*
- Exterior building access and circulation
- Interior access and circulation
- Bathroom accessibility
- Furnishings and equipment to support children with disabilities

See *Appendix A* at the end of this document for more detailed information.

**Grant Amount and Readiness:**

Grants will range from \$50,000 to \$100,000. Priority will be given to projects that have secured detailed cost estimates, are ready to proceed, and can be completed by April 30, 2023.

**Eligibility:**

Your program must meet **all** the following criteria:

- Be a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization
- Operate EEC-licensed, center-based care at the project site
- Be located in the city of Boston  
*Includes Allston/Brighton, Back Bay/Beacon Hill, Charlestown, Chinatown, Dorchester, Downtown, East Boston, Fenway/Kenmore, Hyde Park, Jamaica Plain, Mattapan, Mission Hill, Roslindale, Roxbury, South Boston, South End, and West Roxbury*
- Offer early childhood education and care on a full-day, year-round basis and/or out-of-school



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time programming year-round (including summers)

- Serve a minimum of 25% low-income children at the project site, as defined as at least 25% of the enrollment comprised of children receiving Department of Early Education and Care child care subsidy or attending a Head Start slot as of April 29, 2022, or a later date
- Own the project site or demonstrate a lease term of at least five years (through at least August 2027)
- Demonstrate that your organization has the financial and organizational resources to continue to serve children and families
- Demonstrate that none of the staff members, board members, or other individuals connected to the organization would profit financially from the grant award.

Please note that family child care programs, for-profit centers, public schools, and municipal sites are **not** eligible for these funds.

Multi-site organizations may submit only one proposal, for only one of their sites.

This grant program will not fund work that has already been completed as of the date of the application, May 18, 2022. However, the grant could reimburse you for certain related consultant costs incurred since January 1, 2022, for example if you paid an architect to draft plans.

If this grant will not cover all of your total project costs, any additional funding sources must be committed and in-hand, not pending, at the time of the application.

### **Application Process:**

If your program meets the eligibility requirements, please sign up [here](#) for the Zoom information session being held Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, from 1PM – 2PM.

Following the information session, we will hold virtual “office hour” appointments on April 11<sup>th</sup>, April 12<sup>th</sup>, and April 20<sup>th</sup> so that interested applicants can receive initial feedback on their proposal concept. More information will be shared during the April 5<sup>th</sup> information session.

Grant applications are due by **4pm on May 18, 2022**. Please prepare your application using the Application Form, but note that you will enter your responses and upload required attachments online.

Competitive applicants will take part in an in-person site visit in June with the review team. We will work closely with you to ensure that COVID-19 and other safety protocols are followed.

Award announcements will be made by July 29, 2022. Grant awardees must consent to work with Children’s Investment Fund to photograph the improvement project before and after the renovations.

**Timeline:**

April 5, 1pm-2pm	<a href="#">Zoom information session</a> for interested applicants
April 11, 20, 26	<a href="#">"Office hour" feedback sessions via zoom</a>
May 18, 4pm	Application due date
June	In-person site visits for select applicants
July 29, 2022	Grant awards announced

**Evaluation of Proposals:**

The review team will review proposals based on several factors, including:

- The positive impact of the proposed improvement on the center's accessibility
- Completeness of the application
- The applicant's ability to carry out the project in a timely manner (by April 30, 2023)
- The availability of funding

**Questions:**

For any questions about the application process, don't hesitate to contact Kira Wilke at [kwilke@childrensinvestmentfundma.org](mailto:kwilke@childrensinvestmentfundma.org) or 617-727-5944, ext. 140.

## Appendix A – Detailed List of Funding Categories

For informational purposes only; not to be submitted with the application

### Key overall tips:

- *For almost all items, we will likely recommend that you consult with a design professional as soon as possible to come out and take a look at your site, ensure that the proposed solution will be compliant with codes, and draft a conceptual plan that you can submit with your application. See the list of recommended architects posted on our website.*
- *Be realistic about which modifications are feasible for you, given the grant size.*
- *Prioritize inclusive design that benefits all children, regardless of ability, and encourages a variety of activities.*

This capital grant can be used to offset expenses in each of the following areas, including, but not limited to, the specific items listed below.

**Category One:** Outdoor play space renovation targeting access and inclusion for children with disabilities

- Rubberized surfacing
  - Pathways to provide access to, around, and through play spaces
  - Play equipment such as
    - Adaptive swings
    - Sensory panels or stations
    - Elevated water and sand tables
  - Site engineering associated with play space renovation
- *Key consideration:*
- *If you will be disturbing soil and other existing surfacing, you will need to complete environmental testing if awarded the grant, which may add time and cost to your project.*

**Category Two:** Exterior building access and circulation

- Mobility ramps
  - Entry/exit modifications
  - Curb cuts to sidewalks
  - Creation of accessible parking spaces
- *Key consideration:*
- *Exterior work may necessitate special permitting from the city, which might add time to your project timeline if you are awarded the grant.*

**Category Three:** Interior access and circulation

- Automatic door openers
- Door widening
- Lever door handles
- Interior ramps
- Elevator repairs
- Vertical platform or inclined platform lift
- Limited use limited application (LULA) elevator

➤ *Key consideration:*

- *If you will be disturbing drywall or other interior surfaces, you will need to complete a hazmat study if awarded the grant, which may add time and cost to your project.*

**Category Four:** Bathroom accessibility

- Fixtures – touchless faucets, grab bars, motion sensor lights
- Size/ reconfiguration of space

➤ *Key considerations:*

- *There are specific dimensions and guidelines for accessible bathrooms, which design professionals are familiar with. You will also likely need to complete a hazmat study if awarded the grant, which may add time and cost to your project.*

**Category Five:** Furnishings and equipment to support children with disabilities

- Classroom furniture, such as alternate seating options or to create soft/cozy retreat spaces
- Adaptive gross motor equipment

➤ *Key consideration:*

- *Classroom toys, books, technology, and other individual materials are not eligible for funding.*