# Grant Application Guide

| Grant Application Questions | Definitions | Suggested method of response | Sample (brief) Grant Application Responses |
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| **Project Description:** Enter a general description of your project or program. Include a description of your target audience, including age, gender, etc., as well as an estimated number of residents of our county that you will serve. Please finish with a statement describing the end result you are working toward. (limit 300 words) | | Narrative response | We as seeking to expand our Early Childhood Education (ECE) program to serve additional Muskegon County youth ages 3-6. ECE meets the needs of children by providing a safe and nurturing environment which has been shown to yield benefits in academic achievement, behavior, educational progression and attainment, among other skills. Our target audience is children ages 3-6, living in Muskegon, Muskegon Heights, and Holton. |
| **Project Goals and Objectives:** List the goals(s) of your project, as well as up to three objectives. (limit 300 words) | **Goal:** a broad statement about what you want to accomplish **Objective:** a step toward accomplishing that goal | Data, including comparisons to previous years if applicable | **Goal:** All Muskegon County children enter school kindergarten ready. **Objective 1:** By 2017, we will provide 75 additional high quality preschool slots for children living in poverty in Muskegon, Muskegon Heights, and Holton. |
| **Need:** What need will your project address and how was that need determined? Please share research, data, community stories, and observations that highlight why now is the right time to pursue this particular project. (limit 250 words) | | Data and a Narrative Response | There are currently 5,300 children between the ages of 3-6 residing in Muskegon County. According to the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District, only 50% of these children are currently enrolled in preschool, and only 56% of youth entering kindergarten present as "kindergarten ready" when they start school in September. |
| **Program Components and Activities:** Describe the services you will provide, how often you will provide them, and where you will provide these services. (limit 250 words) | | Narrative response | All students will be visited in their homes prior to starting preschool, at the conclusion of the school-year, and intermittently during the year should need arise. Students are bussed to preschool four days/week September-May, and wrap around care is provided before/after school if needed (DHS subsidies are accepted for payment). Parents are invited to join the children for bi-weekly parent days in the classroom. Teachers will host conferences three times per year. All teachers have an early childhood teaching certification and attend monthly professional development sessions. |
| **Achieving Your Goal:** What evidence do you have that the activities listed above will achieve your stated goal? Please provide data from past years or similar programs (250 words) | | Data from documented research or studies | Many decades of research clearly demonstrates that high-quality preschool programs produce both short- and long-term improvement in cognitive and social development for children. Many families aren't able to afford quality private programs or face other barriers to participation, such as transportation or access to before/after care. Expansion of ECE to low-income families removes income and transportation barriers to participation. |
| **Program Timeline:** Please provide a detailed timeline for your project. (limit 250 words) | | | **April - June -** Recruitment. **July- August 2016-** Professional Development Trainings for teachers, teachers aides, paraprofessionals, and staff. **August 2016-** Fall Kick-Off Community Party. **September 2016-** School begins/Pre-Test conducted on students. **December 2016/March 2016-** Mid-Year Test conducted to gage students progress. **June 2016-** Post-Test conducted. **July 2016-** Tests scored and evaluated, methods for improvement suggested. |

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| **For Muskegon Applicants:** How does your program/project align with current community initiatives, such as Thrive, Read Early. Read Often., 1 in 21, or the Muskegon Area Plan? (limit 250 words) | | Direct reference to a community goal | This project is in direct alignment with the Thrive goal: "Preschool available to all who desire it." Reading and literacy is a major part of ECE curriculum, and the messaging of Read Early. Read Often. will be shared with families consistently. |
| **For Muskegon Applicants:** The Community Foundation for Muskegon County has adopted three leadership goals: building an inclusive community, providing hope and opportunity for our children, and supporting more collaborative community goals and decision-making. Tell us how your program or project contributes positively to any/all of these goals. (limit 250 words) | **Inclusive Community:** A welcoming, accepting community that respects difference and actively promotes full participation by all people, creating a place where everyone has the opportunity to share their voice, to participate in decisions that affect their lives, and to have access to all the community has to offer. **Hope and Opportunity:** Empowering our youth to have aspirations for a bright future and creating opportunities for them to realize their dreams. | Narrative response | This program aims to create hope and opportunity for Muskegon County youth. By targeting these students, we foster a sense of the potential for exponential growth by exposing them to skills that will help them develop into productive citizens of the community, equipping them with the necessary skills to succeed. In addition, the program mixes students of all socioeconomic and racial backgrounds in a single classroom, creating proximity with diverse populations and promoting formation of relationships that lead to a more inclusive community. |

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| **Collaboration:** Describe how you are collaborating with other organizations and what role they play in the proposed project. Letters of support from collaborating organizations may strengthen your application. (250 words) | **Collaboration:** Supporting active partnerships that are working together sharing power, resources, and decision-making for the common good. | Narrative Response, include specific collaborating organizations | This program is a collaboration between the Muskegon, Muskegon Heights, and Holton school districts. Rather than running and administering three separate programs, we'll centralize administration, including recruitment, training, payroll, and reporting. We will also connect families to community resources such as DHHS, Michigan Works, and Read Muskegon to meet individual family needs, increasing the likelihood of family success. |
| **Community Impact:** Please share the measurable outputs and outcomes of your project. You will be asked to describe the actual impact when reporting on your grant. (limit Describe how you are collaborating with other organizations and what role they play in the proposed project. Letters of support from partner organizations are recommended - you can upload those letters in the supporting documents section of this application.) | **Outputs:** What are you going to do? **Outcomes**: What *difference* will it make? | Numbers, including comparisons to previous years if applicable | 100% of students participating in the preschool program will improve their Kindergarten readiness score by at least 30%. 75% of student participants will score at or above the kindergarten readiness threshold. We will host 12 parent days - 100% of parents will attend at least one parent day. Recruitment efforts will target diverse communities - enrollment in ECE by students from diverse backgrounds will increase by at least 10%. |
| **Evaluation:** 1) How will you measure the impact of your project as desired above? 2) How will evaluation results be used by your organization? (limit 250 words) | | Narrative response | 1) We conduct a series of pre-test, mid-year tests, and post-test based on Michigan Department of Education standards in order to monitor student progress towards kindergarten readiness. Parent participation is monitored by teachers. 2) Pre- and mid-year tests will be used to gauge progress and course-correct if necessary. |
| **Sustainability:** Please comment on the sustainability of this project. If you do not receive the full amount requested, how will this project change in the short-term? If this project is ongoing, how will you fund it long-term? (limit 100 words) | | Narrative response | Administration of the program will be funded by ongoing support from the state and federal government. Local fundraising - our target is the business community - will be necessary to sustain the additional slots unless government funding increases - we continually lobby for increased investment in education at the state and national level. The business community has indicated support of additional high quality preschool - they recognize and educated community leads to a stronger workforce. |
| **Budget Narrative:** Please provide supplemental explanations. (limit 5000 characters) | | Numbers and a narrative response | The total cost of ECE for the three districts is nearly $500,000 - this request allows us to utilize the existing framework to expand the number of classroom slots. Because the administration is covered by existing programming and the building space is provided in-kind by the district, the cost to add additional students is much lower than it would be start a new program. Teacher salaries are standard ($24,000). $1,500 will be used for instructional materials, and $1,500 is needed for the fall kick-off party (used for refreshments and books for all children). |