

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: GRANT OPPORTUNITY

RFP Issue Date: February 21, 2025

Submission Deadline: April 15, 2025

Submission Review and Funds Released: June 2025

Amount Available to Each Community: Up to \$25,000

Introduction and Background

The Early Learning Nation (ELN) Collective is an initiative supporting local leaders in building systems and services that help children from prenatal through age 8 and families in their communities thrive. A network of local and national partners, the ELN Collective works to equip parents & caregivers, providers & educators, community leaders & advocates, and government & elected officials to drive decisions on policies, practices, and resources that best serve children and families. The ELN Collective is currently supported with initial funds from the Bezos Family Foundation.

The Early Learning Nation Collective (ELN Collective) is pleased to announce the availability of a **Local Action Fund** to support the innovative ideas, work, and priorities of local leaders aimed at building an early learning nation.

Funding Opportunity:

We invite proposals designed to accelerate progress, strengthen representative leadership and address systemic challenges to create new opportunities within their communities. Currently eligible proposals are those from 501(c)3 organizations, or coalitions sponsored by a 501(c)3 organization, participating in an existing Early Learning Nation (ELN) programmatic opportunity. More information about those opportunities is [available at this link](#).

Eligibility and Submission Requirements:

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Be a 501(c)3 organization or demonstrate that your coalition or team is sponsored by a 501(c)3 organization. Please prepare to upload an IRS determination letter as part of the grant application process.
2. Operate within a local community that is part of the Early Learning Nation (ELN) Collective. Please describe how the proposed activities align with and advance existing priorities of your local coalition and leaders.



3. The Local Action Fund cannot be used to support direct service early learning programs, scholarships for individuals, capital campaigns, influencing legislation or otherwise participating in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

Proposal Submission Guidelines:

To submit your proposal, please reflect on the following and complete this application form [link].

1. Describe the composition and vision of your coalition or community team.
 - i. How are you now or how have you been engaged with your community?
 - ii. How are you engaged with the Early Learning Nation (ELN) Collective?
2. How would you describe the early learning landscape in your community and your current role and impact on it?
3. Describe your proposed work. What need(s) will your proposed work address?
4. What are the anticipated outcomes, outputs, or impact of the proposed work?
5. How will this grant help you advance your commitments to equity and power-sharing within your community?
6. Provide a clear budget that aligns with the proposed activities.

Evaluation Criteria

1. **CLARITY:** Proposal descriptions clearly outline a plan for the grant, the need(s) met, and the anticipated outcomes, outputs, and/or impact.
2. **ALIGNMENT:** The proposal demonstrates connection to Early Learning Nation (ELN) Collective's programmatic footprint. The proposal is aligned to the priorities and plans of local leaders in the community, particularly those who have not had representation and voice at decision-making tables in the past. The proposal might demonstrate an understanding of the ELN Collective's Building Blocks for an Early Learning Community and/or Power-Building Framework.
3. **COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP:** The proposal demonstrates an understanding of the local early landscape and clearly describes the coalition/team's current and prospective roles within that context. The proposal also shows a strong commitment to enhancing representation by actively engaging local leaders (parents and caregivers, program providers, community leaders, and/or elected

officials), thus ensuring leadership tables are more reflective of the communities they serve.

4. INNOVATION: The proposal demonstrates the ability to fulfill a need that would otherwise not be met and/or demonstrates potential to remove specific barriers to progress and participation. The proposal might lead to new insights and breakthroughs for other communities.
5. EQUITY/INCLUSION: The proposal demonstrates clear commitment to equity, inclusion, power shifting and/or power sharing.
6. BUDGET: The budget request is appropriate and justified.

Next Steps:

Interested parties should complete the online application available [here](#) by April 15, 2025. Questions about this RFP can be directed to Ron Fairchild at ron@smarterlearninggroup.com