



Call for Letters of Interest for Evaluation of Employer-based Child Care and Emerging and Expanding Grant Programs

Between 2021 and 2022, the Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) received over \$465 million in federal stimulus funding to strengthen and expand the early childhood sector in Colorado and support families and the workforce to ensure all children have access to high-quality child care. CDEC has partnered with the Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab (Colorado Lab) at the University of Denver to serve as the early childhood evaluation hub for this stimulus funding. As part of this effort, the Colorado Lab is contracting with evaluation partners and accepting Letters of Interest for research teams interested in receiving funding to design and conduct an evaluation of CDEC's grants for [employer-based child care and its Emerging and Expanding grant program](#). Both of these efforts are designed to increase the availability of licensed child care in Colorado. These grants were awarded in June 2022 and must be spent by the end of September 2023.

Contracted teams will design and execute a rigorous study that helps build evidence for the two grant programs and will involve:

- Development of a theory of change for each grant program in collaboration with CDEC partners to identify primary goals and preconditions.
- Systems-level analysis of the grant programs' goals, implementation design, and success in targeting applicants to achieve the goals.
- Grantee-level purposeful sampling to examine the implementation experience.

Ultimately, the evaluation should help answer the following questions:

- Understanding outreach for programs
 - What was the outreach approach for each program?
 - Were applications received from the intended/target audience?
 - What lessons learned can improve future outreach efforts?
- Understanding implementation of programs
 - Did grantees achieve the primary goal of increasing their licensed child care slots?
 - What challenges did grantees face that altered their goals or prevented success?
 - What unforeseen costs did grantees experience?
 - Has the grantee been able to open and serve children? If not, why not?
 - What other stimulus-funded programs did grantees participate in to support this work?

The evaluation work will begin in February 2023 and be completed by June 2024. There is an anticipated budget of approximately \$175,000 for the contracted research team to complete this work. Letters of Interest should be no longer than two pages and submitted to Ellen@coloradolab.org no later than end of day Wednesday, November 30, 2022. Letters should include:

1. **Approach:** Describe your team's methodological approach to answering the evaluation questions stated above, along with previous experiences implementing such approaches.
2. **Team:** Provide a brief description of relevant qualifications and experiences of the project team leads, and how the team is well-positioned to execute the proposed study within Colorado. Also identify any anticipated support that will be needed from the Colorado Lab to complete this work.
3. **IRB:** Indicate whether your team has an internal IRB that can be leveraged to submit requests for this evaluation work.
4. **Timeline & Cost:** Briefly comment on the feasibility of completing this evaluation work within the anticipated timeline and budget. A detailed scope of work with specific deliverables and budget will be requested should your team be selected for this opportunity.