Colorado Evaluation & Action Lab
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

Call for Letters of Interest for Early Childhood Economic Analysis

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 accepting Letters of Interest from research teams interested in receiving funding to design and conduct an analysis of child care licensing and quality costs in Colorado and explore the economic benefits of an early child care slot.

This work will support advocacy and decision-making efforts to increase licensed child care slots in the state. The research team will do an exploration into estimating the cost and economic benefit of a child care slot by developing:

   a. An estimate of the cost for an early child care provider (including various size child care centers, family child care homes (FCCH), and family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) care) to get licensed for the first time in Colorado.

   b. An estimate of the cost for an early child care provider (including various size child care centers, family child care homes (FCCH), and family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) care) to advance from one level to the next for each Colorado Shines quality rating.

   c. A review and synthesis of existing state and national literature identifying the economic benefits for children, families, and communities related to having reliable child care.

   d. A landscape analysis, including interviews with key sector stakeholders in other states, of existing methodologies (or attempts to create a methodology) to calculate the economic benefits of an early child care slot in other states.

   e. A feasibility analysis to replicate or translate existing methodologies to Colorado's context, including considerations for calculating the economic benefits of an early child care slot by each Colorado Shines quality rating.

   f. If determined feasible, a scope of work for estimating the economic benefits of an early child care slot in Colorado (may be combined with feasibility analysis).

   g. Contribute to communication material that can be used by the CDEC to describe the economic benefit of a child care slot based on the work described in this LOI.

The selected research team will ideally be comprised of individuals with the following perspectives:
   ● A researcher with academic training and experience conducting rigorous cost analyses
   ● Expertise in the early childhood sector, with a national or multi-state lens
   ● Local insight on Colorado early childhood programming and context

Teams do not need to be fully identified or assembled at the time of submitting a letter of interest. The Colorado Lab can help facilitate connections and build the team upon selection.

This project will be supported by stimulus funds. Work will begin in March 2023 and must be completed by September 2024 with a budget of $150,000.

Letters of interest should be no longer than two pages and submitted to Ellen@coloradolab.org no later than end of day **Tuesday, March 7 2023**. Letters should include:

1. **Approach:** Describe your team's high-level approach to calculating the costs and performing the analyses stated above, highlighting your 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. Also identify any anticipated support that will be needed from the Colorado Lab to complete this work.
3. **Timeline & Cost:** Briefly comment on the feasibility of completing this analysis 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.