

# REVIEW CRITERIA

The Stranahan Foundation is committed to high-quality, transparent grantmaking. In service of that goal, we share the key characteristics we assess when reviewing proposals. Our review committee comprises our early childhood consultant, Stranahan Foundation staff, and family members committed to building the field of early childhood education. The following aspects of your proposal are those that will be assessed most closely:

**Track Record.** The organization has (a) experience working directly with early childhood professionals to improve their knowledge, skills, and practices and (b) an understanding of the field's or local community's current needs and landscape.

**Strategic Alignment.** There is clear evidence of how the proposed project advances the Foundation's *Proven Professional Development or Innovation* strategies.

**Priority Populations.** The project impacts children from low-income families and populations lacking access to high-quality early childhood education or career opportunities based on income level, geography, race/ethnicity, or other systemic factors.

**Community Informed.** The extent to which (a) the organization's board and staff leadership are reflective of the communities served, (b) the project was developed in partnership with the intended beneficiaries, and (c) the targeted individuals will be provided opportunities to provide feedback and input ongoing.

**Project Clarity.** The goals and activities of the proposed project are clearly defined and aligned. Furthermore, the methodology makes sense, given the current landscape.

**Opportunity for impact.** It is clear how time-limited funding can enable the organization to have a significant or more profound impact post the proposed grant period.

**Learning Opportunity.** The project will help the organization and Foundation preliminarily understand "what works, for whom, and under what conditions" for a clear need in the field by the end of the grant period.

Additionally, for those selected as finalists – reviewers will assess the full proposal against the following criteria:

**Organization's Vision and Strategy.** The organization articulates a vision for its overall work, the core strategies to reach its goals, and a continuous improvement/learning cycle that leads to greater impact.

**Organization Capacity & Financials.** The board and leadership demonstrate the capacity to navigate successes/challenges and manage the organization's financial health.

**Evaluation.** The project team knows what it intends to accomplish, has a thoughtful plan to evaluate if it is meeting its objectives, and can articulate how it will apply what it learns. Furthermore, the proposed metrics are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound).

**Project Feasibility.** The project plan allocates appropriate resources (i.e., staff, expertise, money, and time) to accomplish its goals. Furthermore, the staff and proposed partners have the skills and experience to deliver on the proposed activities.

**Sustainability.** The project has the potential to sustain itself beyond the proposed grant timeline.