FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

We are a for-profit entity or membership organization. Can we apply for funding?

No. The Stranahan Foundation only funds IRS-designated 501c3 charitable organizations.

Are religiously affiliated programs or organizations eligible for funding?

The Stranahan Foundation will consider supporting religiously affiliated early childhood organizations under the following conditions:

1. It does not proselytize or require staff or students to engage in religious activities.
2. It does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation), national origin, age (40 or older), or disability.

Does the foundation support professional development for family/home-based childcare providers?

The Foundation supports programs and projects targeted at family childcare, Early Head Start/Early Head Start, center-based childcare, pre-K, and kindergarten and does not have a particular preference for a particular setting.

I work for a public school district, college, or university and can't get my EIN number to work in the portal. Am I ineligible?

Please get in touch with grants@stranahanfoundation.org to help you start the process.

Are home-visiting staff considered eligible early childhood professionals?

While we understand the importance of home-visiting programs for young children and their families, the Foundation's funding targets existing and aspiring early childhood education leaders, coaches, classroom teachers, assistant teachers, and teacher aides.

My organization is in the process of opening its first early childhood center and is looking to build out our professional development offerings for new staff. Would this project be eligible?

No, your organization must have operated its early childhood center for at least two years to qualify for this funding opportunity.

NEW My organization operates an early childhood program in alignment with state-level UPK requirements, which doesn't equate to 180 days and six hours per day. Am I still eligible?

We intend to support programs offering full-year early care and education, whether based on the academic or calendar year. However, the breakdown of days and hours doesn't have to match these exact parameters. If you offer an equivalent breakdown, you are welcome to apply, but please indicate these details within the application narrative.

How does the Stranahan Foundation define "low-income"?

The Foundation defines "low-income" as families whose income does not exceed 200% of the federal poverty level in your area or 50% of the area's median income. Click here for the official Department of Health & Human Services 2024 Poverty guidelines.

How rigorous does my evaluation plan need to be? Do I need to hire an external evaluator?

All proposals must have a plan for tracking key outputs, outcomes, and learning throughout a project and use at least one standardized classroom, teacher, or child assessment tool.

The strongest proposals would include at least some form of the following three types of evaluation:

- *Process/Implementation Evaluation*: To help determine whether the program activities have been implemented as intended, the project team should conduct evaluation activities to codify the content of the intervention or project components and strengthen their understanding of who, what, when, and where; identify barriers that impede the program's implementation activities; and determine whether the program is accessible to the target population.
- *Formative Evaluation:* To help understand the strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement to drive continuous improvement activities, project teams should plan to formally collect and analyze participant feedback during the development or implementation of a program or project. Generally, acceptable activities include participant satisfaction surveys, engagement metrics, in-activity quizzes, or pre-and-post tests.
- *Outcomes/Impact Evaluation*: To preliminarily understand what works, for whom, and under what conditions – we ask project teams to conduct outcome evaluation activities. Outcome evaluations measure the program's effect on the target population by assessing the changes in behavior, knowledge, skills, or practices of program participants. Generally, acceptable activities include the application of a recognized classroom, teacher, or, ideally, a child assessment tool. Staff or participant retention post-intervention may also make sense in some cases. Applicants may also request funding for a rigorous experimental or quasi-experimental impact evaluation.

Ultimately, the specific evaluation tools and methods proposed should be appropriate to the project context and stage of project development, with consideration given to any prior evaluative evidence that informs the approach. An external evaluator is not a requirement but may be part of the proposal.

I am using a fiscal sponsor or am part of a university system. Whose information should I reference in the application?

Generally, we see a combination of both entities as part of the *Organization Background* section.

Here is some general guidance we have historically provided to applicants:

- Most use the brief overview of your program, services, and experience to cover the scope of your entity/institute/department/program.
- For board-related numbers, please use the fiscal sponsor or the university's board of directors.
- If you have a program-specific advisory board, you are welcome to speak to their makeup in the question referencing to what extent the organization's leadership (board & CEO) reflects the children, families, and professionals the program intends to serve of impact.
- The financial information should reflect the fiscal sponsor or a more extensive university system. If you would like to help us better understand your individual program's budget, please share it in the *Additional Information* section.

What is most important is to be clear as to whose information you are referencing in your response.

Can organizations apply for more than one grant?

We only allow one application per organization.

Can we include funding for existing staff positions?

Yes. Historically, we have supported staff salaries and benefits for staff who participate in project implementation.

Do we need to attach a project budget as part of the initial application stage?

No, a project budget is not required at the first stage. However, if you have already secured a portion of the funding for the project, we'd encourage you to share it in the *Additional Information* section.

Are there word or character limits in the portal?

We provide recommended word limits for questions where applicants generally give too much information. However, there are no system-imposed limitations.

I need help submitting my application; who do I contact?

For applicants needing help accessing or submitting their application, please email grants@stranahanfoundation.org**.**

I haven't heard back from the Foundation; the deadline is tomorrow. What should I do?

The Foundation will not accept late submissions or applications outside the designated systems. Therefore, you should review the timeline carefully and plan to submit your application materials well before each deadline.