

# 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 degree to which the organization has (a) experience in providing high-quality early care and education, particularly with low-income children, (b) commitment and experience to the professional development of its staff, and (c) understanding of its staff and local community's current needs and landscape.

**Strategic Alignment.** There is clear evidence of how the proposed project advances the Foundation's *Provider* strategies and goals as described in the *RFP Overview*.

**Priority Populations.** The degree to which the project impacts children from low-income families and populations lacking access to high-quality early childhood education.

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

**Project Clarity.** The extent to which the proposed project (a) goals and activities are clearly defined and aligned, (b) fit within the organization's existing or aspiring coordinated approach to professional development, (c) has clear evidence that it would enhance the organization's professional development, learning, and program quality goals, and (c) success is linked to classroom, teacher, or child outcomes.

**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).

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

**Learning Opportunity.** By the end of the grant period, the project will help the organization and Foundation preliminarily understand "what works, for whom, and under what conditions" as it relates to the program.

Additionally, for those selected as finalists – reviewers will assess the information gleaned through the supplemental documents and site visit 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.

**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.