



Fall 2023 Frequently Asked Questions Updated 9.13.2023

What is the objective of the Vermont Early Childhood Fund?

The Vermont Early Childhood Fund (VECF) aims to support creative solutions that will improve the well-being of children (prenatal-age 8), families, as well as the Vermont communities in which they live.

What kind of projects should apply?

- This grant is open to all sorts of projects and activities as long as they are helping children (prenatal-age 8) and their families
- Eligible projects support the vision stated in [Vermont's Early Childhood Action Plan \(VECAP\)](#)
- While not required, preference will be given to projects that address equitable access, improved quality, workforce development, family engagement and leadership as well as connecting families to services, and [BBF Regional Council Priorities](#)

Who is eligible to apply?

Grants are open to nonprofits, businesses, municipalities, and schools

What can the grant money be used for?

The money can be used for the following (*not a complete list*):

- Pay people (stipends, salaries and benefits, presenter fees, consultant fees)
- Travel related to the project (training, events)
- Cost of training, education, or professional development
- Get the word out (advertising or marketing)
- Pay for food or meals for meetings or trainings
- Renting space for special events or programs
- Building and facility improvements such as lead remediation, playgrounds, water and sewer connections
- Up to 10% may be used toward overhead/operating expenses (ie: rent, utilities, equipment maintenance, etc.)

What can the grant money *NOT* be used for?

The money cannot be used for the following (*not a complete list*):

- Pay off debt or pay for things that have already been purchased
- Buy alcohol
- Go to just one person (without fiscal sponsorship)
- Be contributed to fundraisers such as capital campaigns, or pay for fundraising expenses
- Go towards the purchase of real property (land and anything attached to it)
- Go towards construction costs for erecting a new building or major renovations (such as building expansions, foundation changes, replacing a roof)
- Pay for anything that happens outside of the grant agreement dates (before January 1, 2024 or after Dec. 30, 2024)

How much funding is available?

A total of \$1,100,000 is available to both programs. We expect to award approximately 20 Opportunity Grants and 2 Innovation Grants

Is this grant available for organizations who are not focused on child care or education?

Yes

Are current VECF grantees eligible to apply?

Yes

Can a project propose to do work in more than one region?

Yes, a project can serve more than one region however you must indicate a primary location in the application

Can Statewide organizations submit multiple applications for different regions in the same grant round?

No, BBF will accept one grant application per organization per round

Do I need to have experience with grants to apply?

No

What if I don't have reliable internet access to apply through the online grant portal

Contact Michelle Kersey, VECF Grant Manager, for assistance -
mkersey@buildingbrightfutures.org

How will decisions be made about what projects are selected?

The review committee will be scoring each application using a scoring rubric. You can view both the Opportunity Grant scoring rubric and the Innovation Grant scoring rubric on BBF's [VECF webpage](#).

How do I receive the funds if awarded?

Due to federal funding restrictions, grantees will be reimbursed monthly for expenses. Grantees will submit an invoice (using a template provided by BBF) through the grant portal.

What happens if I receive a grant award?

- You will be asked to sign a formal grant agreement within 2 weeks of notification
- Grantees will work with a BBF staff member to:
 - Develop a tentative timeline for spending needs by January 15, 2024
 - Develop a plan to measure the impact of funding by February 29, 2024
 - You will be asked to attend the BBF Regional Early Childhood Council meeting in your area (as you're able) and maintain contact with the BBF Regional Manager regularly throughout the project.
 - Grantees will report on their project and the impact of funding twice - in July, 2024 and January 2025. Grantees can choose between submitting a written report in the VECF grant portal, or a virtual meeting with a BBF staff member.

Who should I contact if I have another question?

Please contact Michelle Kersey, VECF Grant Manager, mkersey@buildingbrightfutures.org