

**City of Seattle Sweetened Beverage Tax (SBT)  
Prenatal-to-Three Community Grant Program  
Request for Investment Technical Overview**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL) is requesting applications to the Prenatal-to-Three Community Grant Program from groups interested in providing prenatal-to-three supports to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), immigrants, refugees, individuals with low income, and whose primary language is not English. Organizations with missions to serve children aged birth to three, expecting mothers, and/or guardians of children aged birth to three within the City of Seattle are encouraged to apply.

The guiding outcome of this investment is to support increased kindergarten readiness and reduce the disparities in outcomes for young children and families based on race, gender, or other socioeconomic factors. The program intends to accomplish this by supporting community informed proposals that address obstacles contributing to these disparities. These include providing families access to critical resources and services, supporting healthy and equitable births, increasing parental health and wellbeing, strengthening nurturing and responsive caregiver-child relationships, and supporting optimal child health and development.

The Prenatal-to-Three (PN-3) Community Grant program is funded by revenue generated from the City Sweetened Beverage Tax (SBT) and allocated through recommendations made by the SBT Community Advisory Board to reduce disparities in outcomes for children and families based on race, gender, or other socioeconomic factors. This grant has the following core goals:

1. Identify and fund projects that **advance racial equity** across core areas in support of the developmental continuum starting at expecting mothers and ending at young children three years of age, including but not limited to prenatal services, health, and caregiver supports.
2. Identify and fund proposals **designed in partnership with priority communities**; and
3. Provide a low-barrier opportunity for community-based organizations in the City of Seattle to apply for **a range of grant project types and funding amounts**.

Approximately \$1.45 million dollars is available during this grant cycle. Funding will be awarded through a competitive request for investment (RFI) process managed by the City of Seattle Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL). This RFI seeks proposals for two components: 1) Direct Services and 2) Community Alignment Initiatives. Organizations may only submit one proposal.

Total Funding Available	Eligible Applicants	Service/Programmatic Components
\$1,450,000	<p>Community-based organization that are incorporated as non-profit organizations</p> <p>Community organizations or collaborations that are not incorporated as a non-profit such as community collaboratives, coalitions and or other affinity groups</p> <p><i>*Any unincorporated entity must identify a fiscal sponsor that will share its 501(c)(3) status in their application.</i></p>	<p>1) Direct Services -proposals focused on supports for children and families, or expecting parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New programs and initiatives</li> <li>• Supports for expanding or improving existing programs or initiatives</li> </ul> <p>2) Community Alignment Initiatives – proposals centered on community collaborations, planning, and/or Engagement with a prenatal to three focus.</p>

To be considered for funding, eligible applicants are invited to submit RFI applications **by 11:59 pm Pacific Daylight Time (Seattle time) October 6, 2021**. DEEL will notify successful applicants by **November 3, 2021**. RFI materials and updates are available on DEEL’s [Funding Opportunities](#) webpage.

**SCHEDULE**

Event	Date/Date Range
Request for Investment (RFI) Application Issued	August 31
Technical Assistance Period	August 31 – October 5
Information Session #1 See <a href="#">DEEL Funding Opportunities</a> Page for meeting link	September 7, 2:30 pm – 4:00 pm
Information Session #2 See <a href="#">DEEL Funding Opportunities</a> Page for meeting link	September 15, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm
Q & A Document Updated on DEEL’s <a href="#">Funding Opportunities</a> Webpage	September 7 – October 1
<b>RFI Applications Due</b>	<b>October 6</b>
Technical Compliance Review	October 7-8
Review Panel Scoring	October 11, 14, & 15
Review Panel Deliberations	October 18-22
Interviews (as needed)	October 25 - 29
Notifications Issued to Applicants	November 3 - 10

*\*Dates and times are subject to change*

**ACCESSING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR PROPOSALS**

The City is providing the opportunity for providers to receive direct technical assistance (TA) in developing their proposals from three experience community-based consultants. We strongly encourage utilizing technical assistance to support the development of your proposal, alignment to the priorities of this RFI and reviewing the technical guidance. The three TA providers are listed below, along with their contact information. Providers can **reach out directly** to any of the three providers for assistance. Technical assistance is free to applicants.

TA Provider	Background
<p><b>Catherine Verrenti, Verrenti Consulting</b></p> <p>Contact at: catherine@verrenticonsulting.com</p>	<p>Catherine Verrenti is thrilled to have an opportunity to support CBOs that are deeply embedded in the community. She offers skills and insights gained from her twenty years of hands-on experience, including at Neighborhood House and YouthCare. This expertise includes grant development plus managing a wide range of culturally responsive youth development, family support, out-of-school time, case management and homeless programs. She approaches this work by first listening to what CBOs hope to accomplish for youth in their community. This might be articulating a strong needs statement, helping to develop partnerships, or forming a compelling grant narrative. She can be uniquely helpful in fine-tuning program designs, projecting achievable performance targets and developing budgets. She is particularly excited to help CBOs think through all parts of their program to ensure strong program launch and implementation.</p>

<p><b>Hassan Wardere, Bulle Consulting</b></p> <p>Contact at: hassan@bulleconsulting.com</p>	<p>Hassan Wardere specializes in project management, authentic community engagement, capacity building, change management, strategic planning and partnerships, technical assistance, etc. Hassan utilizes a unique strategy of valuing home cultures when supporting the development of strategic ideas, successful designs and integration of creative, customized, equity-driven programs, and services. Applying Results-Based Management (RBM) that honors internal strength is one of the strategies that Hassan uses for both small and large organizations. This tailored RBM approach gives an organization the leverage to hold onto its cultural values and contribute to the achievement of each program’s outcome. He also has an extensive experience working with CBOs that serve immigrant and refugee families.</p>
<p><b>Jing Fong, RHL Consulting</b></p> <p>Contact at: roxannelyons@gmail.com</p> <p><b>Roxanne Hood-Lyons, RHL Consulting</b></p> <p>Contact at: roxannelyons@gmail.com</p> <p><b>thy nguyễn, RHL Consulting</b></p> <p>Contact at: roxannelyons@gmail.com</p>	<p>Jing Fong has over 35 years experience in the public, private and nonprofit sectors as a strategic consultant, writer, and editor, specializing in education and public affairs. Jing most recently served as the education outreach manager for YES! Media. She is a member of her community’s Race Equity Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Roxanne Hood Lyons promotes community impact through executive coaching, capacity building and assisting organizations in accessing funds. With experience as a funder, consultant and executive director of a small community-based organization, she will help you build a proposal that leverages your staff and community strengths while increasing the capacity of your organization.</p> <p>Working in a conversational style, Roxanne will help you highlight your stories to create a compelling proposal that build on your unique ideas and community’s strengths. She is happy to support you in identifying how your program fits with this opportunity, editing, and increasing the power of your proposal, and developing a budget that supports your work.</p> <p>thy nguyễn (she/her/hers) is a queer, first generation Viet immigrant, and spoken word artist-singer. During the day, thy works as a grants/data/operations manager at the YWCA-Seattle and manages her independent business delivering capacity-building support and consultation to individuals/groups across Puget Sound. During the evening, she holds spaces for creative resistance, healing, and expression as a community organizer with the people’s assembly. And during the night, she writes songs and dreams of ways to build towards a free and just world.</p>

**INVESTMENT OVERVIEW**

On June 6, 2017, the Seattle City Council passed Ordinance 125324 (the Ordinance), a tax collected on the final distribution of sugar-sweetened beverages by a distributor. It was designed to improve the health of Seattle residents by reducing the sales and consumption of sugary drinks. The revenue generated by the tax is intended to fund programs that increase access to healthy food and support children’s health and development.

The Ordinance also established the Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Advisory Board (CAB), a group to advise and make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on initiatives supported by the beverage tax revenue. In June

2019, the CAB conducted a series of community engagement activities meant to capture the voices of residents. The focus of the engagement was programs and services relating to food access, food insecurity, child development, and early learning. At the beginning of 2020, the CAB heard from Human Services Department (HSD), Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL), and Office of Sustainability & Environment (OSE) about the investments currently supported by SBT funds. The CAB recommended a public funding opportunity intended for community organizations that specialize in high-quality prenatal-to-three and kindergarten readiness services that seek to reduce the disparities in outcomes for children and families based on race, gender, or other socioeconomic factors.

The City of Seattle currently funds, through revenue from the SBT and the City General Fund, programs in prenatal to three (PN-3) including home visiting, developmental supports, child care health consultation, child care subsidies and quality supports for child care. All of the current PN-3 investments seek to address racial equity gaps and support families and caregivers. This funding program is intended to strengthen the City’s work in prenatal to three, with the core premise that organizations that center community in their work are best positioned to understand the program and interventions that will close the persistent opportunity gaps in Seattle.

This funding opportunity is intended to be accessible and low barrier to apply. The City has contracted with three community-based technical assistance providers to support proposal development as well as providing language access supports as needed. Currently, this opportunity is only funded for 2021 grant cycle.

**PROPOSALS**

The program intends to support community informed proposals that strengthen kindergarten readiness and reduce the disparities in outcomes for young children and families based on race, gender, or other socioeconomic factors. Specifically, this funding opportunity is seeking proposals that advance racial equity in the Seattle community and are:

- Aimed at serving priority populations
- Community-directed
- Culturally and linguistically responsive
- Implemented by organizations whose staff and leadership reflect the populations they serve
- Demonstrate the ability to make positive impacts to their intended recipients

Two types of proposals are eligible in this funding opportunity 1. Direct Services; and 2. Community Alignment Initiatives. An overview and examples of each are outlined in the tables below. Proposal must primarily be focused within the City of Seattle. These examples are **intended to be illustrative**, and it is anticipated that the grants program will receive eligible proposals not specifically connected to these examples.

<b>Direct Services: Initiatives that directly engage with individuals and families from priority communities.</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	<b>Examples of Proposals</b>
Proposals that directly support families, caregivers and expecting mothers. These proposals are required to focused on either expecting parents or families with infants and toddlers. It is acceptable to both start new programs or outline areas of additional investments in existing programs that could enhance impact for the priority populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maternal health program</li> <li>• doula and/or pregnancy supports</li> <li>• home visiting and/or home-based services</li> <li>• parent education and/or parent mental health supports</li> <li>• quality supports for informal caregiving (such as FFN)</li> <li>• proposals related to the use of developmental screenings</li> <li>• enhancements to currently funded initiatives such as translation, training, family supports that promote social emotional well-being and access</li> <li>• informational messaging campaigns</li> </ul>

<b>Community Alignment Initiatives: <i>Initiatives focused on collaboration, mobilization, engagement, or learning.</i></b>	
<b>Overview</b>	<b>Examples of Proposals</b>
Proposals that do not provide direct services to expecting parents and families but are focused on strengthening impact in future direct services programs, building collaboration in the community, or deepening engagement with priority populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• community engagement initiatives</li> <li>• activities in support of cross-system and/or cross-sector collaboration</li> <li>• shared learning initiatives with partner organizations and/or community members</li> <li>• conducting a community needs assessment to deepen organization’s connection to and understanding of their community</li> </ul>

**Projects that are not eligible for this funding opportunity include proposals that:**

- Provide quality supports or subsidies for licensed child care
- Solely focus on supporting general operations of an organization
- Are without a central focus on prenatal-to-age-three
- Focused on political lobbying

**Prioritization of Projects for Funding**

The grant program will have two types of priority: **1.** Priority based on characteristics of the organizations or proposers themselves; and **2.** Priority based on the project proposals. The application’s questions are intended to gather information to support the City’s assessment of each priority.

**Applicant organizations** with the following characteristics will be prioritized for funding:

1. Representative of and primarily serving priority communities
2. Demonstrated organizational structures and strategies to engage with the community, particularly with young families
3. Smaller organizations with limited paid staff

**Projects** outlined in the grant applications that demonstrate the following will be prioritized for funding:

1. Provides evidence of a process for co-designing and co-creating proposal with community members that will be benefiting from the project
2. Demonstrates project characteristics that are culturally responsive and promote equitable access
3. Clearly outlines and supports how the project will positively impact priority communities and meet the grant program outcomes

**Grant Funding & Awards**

Grantees are eligible to receive funding up to \$150,000, the minimum grant request is \$10,000. Applicants are limited to submitting one project during this grant cycle.

Each eligible grant application will be **reviewed by a funding panel** that will include members of the community, members from the Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Advisory Board and City staff. Applications will be assessed through the **lens of the priority criteria outlined in the RFI**. The review panel will consider the proposals received and seek to fund a **diverse range of project concepts and communities of focus**. The grant program also seeks to fund a range of funding

request levels. A minimum of 25% of the total grant funding, subject to applications received, will be reserved for grant requests under \$75,000.

Once funded, awardees will have the following options and requirements:

- Awardees will negotiate a contract with DEEL. Awards under \$100,000 will have up to a year to utilize the funding. Larger awards, between \$100,000-\$150,000, may request up to two years.
- Awardees will have the option to include compensated planning time at the beginning of the contract.
- Awardees will be able to use up to 15% of their grant award for indirect, or operational, costs.
- Awardees will have the option to receive ongoing technical assistance during the grant period if requested by the grantee.
- Awardees will be required to submit grant reporting. DEEL recommends setting aside at least 5% of the proposal budget for data collection and reporting activities. DEEL will work with the awardee at the project outset to identify reporting activities that align with project goals, organizational capacity, and the funding amount. Examples of reporting activities include tracking the number of program participants, written description of project accomplishments, or tracking program outcomes using a survey. DEEL will strive to make data and reporting requirements both meaningful to the project and not overly burdensome to the grantee.

### Information Sessions, Q&A Updates, and Technical Assistance

DEEL will provide information sessions and technical assistance (TA) to support applying to the grant program. Language access supports will be provided upon request of interested applicants. Initial communications and overview of the grant program will be translated into commonly spoken languages in Seattle.

Support	Purpose	Timeline
<b>RFI Summary Companion</b>	Key elements of the RFI Technical Overview are summarized, along with more information on accessing technical assistance. Summary Companion will be translated in the top 6 languages in Seattle.	Available in conjunction with the opening of the RFI on Tuesday, August 31, 2021.
<b>Information Sessions</b>	Both information sessions will be convened live via Webex. Information sessions will outline the main components of the RFI and cover the important sections for completing the application proposal.	#1: <b>September 7 - Tuesday</b> 2:30 pm – 4:00 pm #2: <b>September 15 - Wednesday</b> 10:30 am – 12:00 pm {links posted on Funding Opportunities page}
<b>Q &amp; A Updates Available on DEEL Website</b>	This is an opportunity for prospective applicants to ask questions outside the two live virtual information sessions.  Questions need to be submitted in writing to <a href="mailto:DEELFunding@seattle.gov">DEELFunding@seattle.gov</a> .	The updated Q & A document will be posted to DEEL’s funding opportunities page 3-5 business days after the question has been submitted, Monday through Friday, except for 09/06/2021 in observance of Labor Day.
<b>Individualized Technical Assistance</b>	DEEL has contracted with three technical assistance (TA) providers with expertise in providing support to community-based organization in navigating public funding processes.	<b>August 31 - October 5</b>  Applicants are encouraged to reach out to one of the three TA providers early in the process. Please refer to the RFI Companion and Information Session recordings for more information on accessing TA.

	<p>TA providers will work directly with potential applicants on conceptualizing their proposal requests. Applicants operating without the support of dedicated development staff are encouraged to utilize the Technical Assistance support provided by the City.</p>	<p><b>Catherine Verrenti</b> catherine@verrenticonsulting.com</p> <p><b>Hassan Wardere</b> hassan@bulleconsulting.com</p> <p><b>Roxanne Hood-Lyons</b> roxannelyons@gmail.com</p>
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**PROCESS AND CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION**

Prenatal-to-Three Community Grant Program RFI applications will be evaluated according to a three-part process:

**Part I: Technical Compliance Review** - Applications will be reviewed for technical compliance to verify that the application was submitted complete and on time. DEEL reserves the right to reject any application that is late or incomplete. To be considered technically compliant, submitted applications must contain the items below. The application may be deemed not technically compliant or not to be evaluated further if the checklist items are absent or incomplete.

DEEL reserves the right to waive immaterial defects or irregularities and may conduct follow-up interviews to obtain additional information from completed applications. DEEL reserves the right to screen applicants without further discussion of the application submitted.

**TABLE A: Technical Compliance**

Complete	Item
<p>Yes    No</p>	<p>Submitted on time, on or before 11:59 pm Pacific Daylight Time (Seattle time) <b>October 6, 2021</b>, to <a href="mailto:DEELFunding@seattle.gov">DEELFunding@seattle.gov</a>.</p>
<p>Yes    No</p>	<p>Application complete inclusive of all required narrative sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> RFI Application in PDF or Word document</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Section 1: APPLICANT INFORMATION</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Section 2: SUMMARY OF PROGRAM/SERVICE PROPOSAL</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Section 3: ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Section 4: COMMUNITY PROCESS &amp; NEED</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Section 5: IMPACT AND CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Section 6: BUDGET</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Section 7: AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE</li> </ul>
<p>ATTACHMENTS</p>	<p>Additional Attachments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Budget Template (<b>required</b>)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Documents that provide an overview of organization, such as missions statements, board, leadership, and staff profiles. (<b>optional</b>)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Documents that provide an overview of community engagement and need, such as summary from community engagement survey, or minutes from community meetings. (<b>optional</b>)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Documents that provide an overview of organization’s practices as they pertain to cultural responsiveness. (<b>optional</b>)</li> </ul>

**Part II: Scoring Proposals** - A review panel will evaluate applications using the RFI Scoring Criteria. Application scores and review panel discussions will inform review panel recommendations for funding awards.

**TABLE B: Proposal Scoring Criteria**

Section	Criteria	Score
Organizational Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization has as small number of staff members</li> <li>• Organization has a mission statement and/or other foundational documents that centers its mission on priority population</li> <li>• Organization demonstrates experience with the type of direct service proposed in application or effectively describes how they plan to acquire the capacity to add this to your body of services</li> <li>• Organization’s senior leadership and/or board of directors are representative of the priority communities and populations they serve</li> </ul>	30
Community Process & Need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly identifies the community need the proposal intends to address</li> <li>• Demonstrated process for co-designing and co-creating proposal with community members that will be benefiting from the project</li> <li>• Proposal meets a need in the community not currently addressed by other organizations</li> </ul>	30
Impact & Cultural Responsiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project outlines and supports how the project will deliver a positive impact to the community and guiding outcomes of this RFI</li> <li>• Project describes an approach to supporting and engaging families and community that is responsive to cultural and linguistic needs</li> <li>• Project contains characteristics of culturally responsive service delivery in ways that are accessible and comfortable for the priority community and/or population</li> <li>• Proposal clearly outlines how the program will advance racial equity in the community for young families</li> </ul>	30
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of the budget template provided</li> <li>• Inclusion of all proposed spending</li> <li>• Evidence that expenses are informed by informed assumptions</li> <li>• Alignment of projected expenses with program or service activities</li> <li>• Adequate allocation of requested funding dedicated to evaluation and reporting</li> </ul>	10
<b>Total Points</b>		<b>100</b>

**Part III: Interviews (as requested by City):** After the scoring sessions, the Funding Panel will decide if it is necessary to schedule follow up interviews with any of the organizations submitting proposals. These interviews will be conducted, as needed, to further clarify any aspects of the proposal. The organizations should be available for these follow up interviews during the dates of October 25-29, 2021.

**Part IV: Evaluation Process and Contract Negotiations** - DEEL will consider review panel recommendations, SBT CAB investment alignment, and other priorities named below. Final funding decisions will be made by the DEEL Director based on scoring and other relevant factors. DEEL will notify each applicant of the decision and will authorize award of agreements. The review panel will rank applications from highest to lowest and make initial funding recommendations. The highest-ranked application may not correspond to the highest funding allocation.



If an applicant is selected for funding, the applying organization should be prepared to collaborate with DEEL to finalize a workplan based on their RFI proposal that will be incorporated into a contract. Awarded applicants should be prepared to discuss and negotiate aspects of their RFI proposal prior to completing the contract. These aspects may include, but are not limited to, the amount of funding, proposed programming and/or services, priority community participation, and performance measures. Grantees should expect reporting deliverables commensurate with the level of funding awarded, ranging in frequency from monthly updates for higher awards to annual reports for the smallest amounts.

DEEL reserves all rights not expressly stated in the RFI, including awarding partial funding, and negotiating with any applicant regarding the amount of funding and other terms of any contract resulting from this RFI. If DEEL and any applicant selected under this RFI are unable to come to agreement on a final contract, DEEL may, in its discretion, choose not to provide funding.

### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Successful applicants will enter a contract for services with the City of Seattle and will need to adhere to the following additional contractual conditions. Conditions may be amended, or additional requirements may be included during the contract negotiation process.

### **TERM OF CONTRACT**

- Contracts may begin anytime between December 1, 2021, and January 31, 2022. Start and end dates will be determined during contract negotiation with successful applicants. Once funded, awardees will have the following options and requirements:

### **PAYMENT, RECORDS, AND AUDIT**

- The Agency shall timely furnish such other reports and information as may be requested by DEEL related to this Agreement or the Work, including statements and data specifying services provided, and data demonstrating achievement of the minimum outcome and indicator targets. The City shall have the right to withhold payment to the extent that missing or inadequate documentation does not demonstrate entitlement to payment.

### **APPEALS PROCESS**

The Seattle Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL) will notify applicants in writing of the outcome of the submission. Written notification will be sent via email to the email address submitted on the Cover Sheet. Any applicant wishing to appeal the decision must do so in writing within four (4) business days of the email notification of DEEL's decision. An appeal must clearly state a rationale based on one (or more) of the following criteria only:

- Violation of policies or guidelines established in the RFI process
- Failure to adhere to published criteria and/or procedures in carrying out the RFI process

*Note: Disagreeing with the outcome is not a valid reason to appeal the decision and will not be considered.*

Appeals must be sent by email to the following:

[DEELFunding@seattle.gov](mailto:DEELFunding@seattle.gov)

Subject line: PN-3 Community Grant

The DEEL Director (or designee) will review the written appeal and may request additional information from the applicant. A written decision from the DEEL Director (or designee) will be sent within five (5) business days of the receipt of the appeal. This decision is final.