

# Request For Proposal

ECC EXPANSION PLAN

YWCA OF ASHEVILLE AND WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

LOI DUE BY: MARCH 1, 2022

PROPOSALS DUE BY: MARCH 30, 2022

## Company Background

The mission of the YWCA is eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. In 1907 the YWCA of Asheville formed as a boarding home for women coming to the city to work. For the past 115 years, the YWCA has continued to offer programming and advocacy that advances racial justice, empowers women, promotes health, and nurtures children.

The YWCA of Asheville has long understood that the lack of available, affordable childcare is the biggest barrier to women's economic success. That's why in the 1940's we started offering child care for women that needed to work to support their families. Our program has evolved over the years, from co-op models to drop-in care, providing support groups for working moms, job skills training, and resume building but the core issues remain the same, moms that need to work, attend a school, or access social services, need childcare.

**If you would like to learn more, please visit our website at [ywcaofasheville.org](http://ywcaofasheville.org)**

## Project Overview

Child care is in crisis. There are too few slots available to meet the demand for care but too few teachers to expand programs. Many parents find the cost of care prohibitive, while child care centers struggle to make ends meet.

To address the need for flexible, low-cost child care, the YWCA offers Empowerment Childcare (ECC). The only program of its kind in WNC, ECC provides up to 12 hours of free childcare per week to families that are in school, attending job training, applying and interviewing for jobs or benefits, like housing and food assistance. ECC also provides low-cost care for families that are on waitlists for full-time care or that need more than 12 hours of care. Case management is available for parents to help them achieve economic advancement goals. However, the pandemic has increased the need for this type of care while staffing issues have forced the YWCA to reduce evening hours.

A grant from Dogwood Health Trust was awarded to the YWCA of Asheville to fund the development of a plan that will reimagine child care in Western North Carolina. **This plan will provide a roadmap to expand our current model, add weekend and 2nd, and 3rd shift care, and address the massive need to recruit, train, and retain an early childhood educator workforce.**

## Project Goals

The goals of this project include assessing the following:

- Market Demand and feasibility of providing weekend, 2nd, and 3rd shift childcare
- Program Sustainability of high quality, affordable childcare, with competitive wages for staff
- Mechanisms to develop a robust implementation of mixed use Child Care and Teacher Pipeline Models

### **I. Market Demand and feasibility of providing weekend, 2nd, and 3rd shift childcare**

A primary goal for ECC's expansion is to meet the unaddressed need for child care outside the traditional 9 to 5 hours. As we look to expand the availability of child care while also ensuring its affordability, a main priority of this project is to assess the market demand for weekend and 2nd- and 3rd-shift child care in Western North Carolina. We must determine the need for this kind of care as well as the availability of the workforce by answering the following questions: What industries would we be targeting by offering this kind of care? What would it require in terms of staffing, and does the pool of early childhood educators align with the demand? The end result is a demonstrated community need and assessment of market demand proving or disproving feasibility.

### **II. Program Sustainability of high quality, affordable childcare, with competitive wages for staff**

It is the YWCA's goal to offer a high-quality, affordable child care center to the community that also pays its teachers a sustainable wage that allows them to support their own families. This project will show us what investments, partnerships, and resources it will take to get there. As such, we need to know the costs associated with operating an equitable, extended-hour childcare center and how those costs can be covered without burdening families with high rates or creating a budget deficit. In partnership with the YWCA finance team, the consultant will create a comprehensive financial analysis of the costs and revenue streams. The consultant would also examine alternative revenue streams and opportunities for strategic partnerships that would provide long-term funding (outside of grants and fundraising). The end result will be a business plan for a sustainable child care program.

### **III. Program Models for mixed use Child Care and Teacher Pipeline**

An important goal of this planning project is the creation of new models for both an expanded child care program and a teacher pipeline. The child care model will take into account research into other mixed child care models in the country with both licensed and unlicensed care, and determine how many classrooms we would need to offer (licensed/unlicensed) to sustainably meet market demand.

The Early Childhood Education workforce in Asheville and Buncombe county cannot keep up with the current market demand for childcare. Systemic underfunding of childcare centers coupled with the historic undervaluing of early childhood educators has contributed to low wages that have not attracted promising educators to the field of early childhood education. **In order to best educate and serve the children in our community, there must be an inter-organizational plan for better attracting individuals to early childhood education and supporting them through their careers to help build a more robust system of teachers.**

Currently, the YWCA partners with local and state systems and programs like T.E.A.C.H./WAGE\$ to encourage our current staff to further their educational attainment. We are pursuing local apprenticeship opportunities for youth to begin working towards their careers in Early Childhood Education in high school. Through the work of this consultant, the YWCA would like to develop a more robust process for supporting a successful teacher pipeline model. The teacher pipeline model will develop a structure within the YW that allows for teachers to matriculate through their careers and includes training, professional development, and on-site education. This comprehensive model would collaborate with Buncombe Partnership for Children, to create a career trajectory for individuals that begins at the community college level, and extends to licensure.

**The successful bidder will provide a timeline and strategy for delivering a demand and feasibility study, business plan, and program plan for mixed use childcare, and teacher pipeline development**

## Scope of Work

**The result of the contract is a comprehensive business strategy for program feasibility. It includes a robust accounting of the costs and probable revenues, examines market demand for 2nd, 3rd shift, and weekend care, evaluates workforce availability for an expanded model of child care, and proves or disproves the feasibility of the model.**

- The consultant will compile and analyze a large amount of information gathered as part of the process to develop a demand and feasibility study, business plan, and program model for mixed use childcare and program model for teacher pipeline that considers space, revenue, and expenses.
- Develop a plan for robust community and stakeholder engagement, to include: holding a minimum of 9 stakeholder engagement meetings that include parents, providers, educators, the community college system, funders, and policymakers.
  - The consultant will schedule and plan stakeholder meetings
- The consultant will partner with YWCA of Asheville's Director of Marketing and Communications to share the goals and progress of the project.

## Budget Constraints

This is a grant-funded consulting project. Budgets are fixed.

Budget: \$32,000- \$40,000

## What We're Looking For

We are looking for a consultant with strong alignment to the YWCA's mission of eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. This person will be equity-driven and socially conscious with experience in community engagement and working in or with Asheville communities. If not from the Asheville area, the consultant should have strong connections in the city.

The ideal consultant will have a background in education, business analysis, workforce development, or econometrics/economics. Project management experience is strongly preferred. Additionally, we are looking for someone with experience examining market demand for child care services, specifically. Please share resources and strategies for how you have accessed market demand, and if you do not have this experience, please evidence your strategy for accessing market demand. Further, we are seeking a consultant with a background or experience with child care, possessing knowledge of, or practical experience with various child care structures and models.

The ideal candidate will possess soft communication skills, especially for listening sessions. Such skills will be key to establishing trust and soliciting honest feedback.

## Completed RFPs Include:

### **A timeline, process, and plan for developing:**

- Market Demand and feasibility study of providing weekend, 2nd, and 3rd shift childcare
- Business Plan focused on program sustainability of high quality, affordable childcare, with competitive wages for staff
- Program Model for mixed use Child Care (licensed/unlicensed)
- Program Model for Teacher Pipeline (supporting teachers as they matriculate through school)

### **A timeline, process, and plan for implementing:**

- A minimum of 9 stakeholder engagement meetings that include parents, providers, educators, the community college system, funders, and policymakers.

- Share the goals and progress of the project with stakeholders and community members

### **A target deliverable schedule**

This project begins May 1, 2022, with a one-year timeline. The consultant will set their own deliverable schedule for the aforementioned goals.

As a part of their proposal submission, the consultant will submit:

- A general timeline for accomplishing the work of the project
- A YWCA project team timeline that includes monthly check-ins and progress checks with YWCA Expansion Team

### **Final Project Due: May 2023**

The expected project completion date is May 2023. If this date needs to be adjusted, please include your readjusted proposed date, as well as your reasoning for the schedule shift. All proposed date changes will be considered.

### **Answers to the following questions**

- i. How are you aligned with the work of the YWCA and the scope and purpose of this project?
- ii. Give a brief history of your qualifications, citing past work experience relevant to this project.
- iii. What constraints or issues do you foresee in fulfilling the aforementioned proposal goals and how would you overcome them?

### **Certificate of Insurance**

Is required upon starting this project, please include COI or the plan to obtain one by project start date of May 1, 2022 .

## Evaluation Metrics

YWCA of Asheville will evaluate bidders and proposals based on the following criteria:

- Mission Alignment
- Past performance history
- Samples and/or case studies from previous projects
- Experience and technical expertise
- Quality of response to questions above
- Quality of RFP submission
- Projected costs

## Submission Requirements

Bidders must adhere to the following guidelines to be considered:

- Bidders who are interested in submitting a proposal should inform Dr. Amieris Lavender via email (amieris.lavender@ywcaofasheville.org) **no later than MARCH 1, 2022**. Please also Cc Sarah Marcin (sarah.marcin@ywcaofasheville.org).
- Only bidders who meet all 7 metrics in the evaluation section should submit a proposal.
- Proposals must be sent in by **11:59 PM, MARCH 30, 2022** via email. Any submission received after the deadline will not be considered.
- Include samples and references with your proposal.
- Proposals should **not be more than 12 pages**. Failure to comply with this guideline will result in an automatic rejection. This does not include work samples.
- **A proposed schedule must also be included and clearly expressed.**
- The confidentiality of the YWCA of Asheville must be maintained and upheld.

Top candidates will be interviewed by YWCA of Asheville Project Team

## Contact Information

For questions or concerns connected to this RFP, we can be reached at:

YWCA of Asheville and WNC  
Dr. Amieris Lavender  
amieris.lavender@ywcaofasheville.org  
828-820-7069

On all communication, please also Cc Sarah Marcin (sarah.marcin@ywcaofasheville.org).