



CHILD CARE INNOVATION COMMUNITIES

Funding Opportunity

This initiative will support **up to 12** Child Care Capacity Accelerator grantees to participate in a **Child Care Innovation Community** cohort. Innovation Communities will work collaboratively with other communities across Kansas to pilot specific strategies to expand child care capacity that meet the unique needs of their families. Each Innovation Community selected will be awarded a maximum amount of \$250,000 to support implementation and evaluation of their innovation strategies. Participants will join the 12-month cohort program running from July 2023–June 2024 that involves co-creation and peer learning sessions, regular data reporting and evaluation efforts, and monthly coaching sessions.

Targeted Outcome

The primary goal of all projects should be to increase licensed child care capacity. Projects will be selected based on each community's need and approach to child care gaps.

Application Process

Child Care Innovation Communities is a competitive add-on to the Child Care Capacity Accelerator Community Grant. To be selected as an Innovation Community, applicants must meet the same requirements as outlined in the [Child Care Capacity Accelerator grant RFP](#), as well as implement one strategy from select innovation categories (listed below). Interested applicants will complete the Innovation Communities tab in the Kansas CommonApp. A separate budget will be required in addition to the Child Care Capacity Accelerator Community Grant budget.

Process Timeline

Informational Webinar	April 12 th
Applications Due	May 15 th
Award Announcements	Late June
Project Period	July 2023 - June 2024

Who is eligible to apply?

Child Care Capacity Accelerator applicants are eligible to apply. To determine eligibility, please review the [Child Care Capacity Accelerator RFP](#). Eligible entities will include a variety of community partners, both public and private, including, but not limited to:

- City & county governments
- Economic development organizations
- Community-based organizations
- Private entities such as corporations and business, health systems, community centers, foundations, and libraries
- USDs, early childhood local agencies, and higher education institutions

Questions?

Please submit any questions through the online [Technical Assistance Portal](#).



INNOVATION APPROACH CATEGORIES

Innovation Community participants must implement one strategy within up to two of the following bolded innovation approach categories (i.e. Infant/Toddler Incentives, Child Care Plus Models, etc.). Applicants may choose the example strategies listed or propose unique strategies specific to their community needs. It is expected that all strategies will increase licensed child care access. Strategy examples are not endorsed. They are provided for inspiration only as approaches that have been tried in other communities and represent the type of innovative thinking we are looking for.

Infant/Toddler Incentives

Increase licensed infant/toddler seats without increasing cost to families. This could be through a multi-payer model or other approach.

Strategy example: [Hillsborough County's Infant and Toddler Initiative](#)

Child Care Plus Models

Leverages child care within unique spaces or through community partnerships to serve multiple needs.

Examples include:

- Multi-generational care programs
- Shared resources (staffing, indirect services, real estate, training, professional development)
- Shared building space with other social services, such as Family Resource Centers

Strategy example: [ONEgeneration Child Care & Preschool](#)

Workforce Recruitment and Retention

Build or strengthen a sustainable child care workforce. It is strongly recommended that all communities provide a living wage for providers at minimum. These approaches should be in addition to a compensation plan. Examples include:

- Substitute provider pool
- Leverage care providers with other care settings, such as school districts, other care settings across the lifespan, etc.
- Augment workforce through volunteering, mentorship/apprenticeship, and return to workforce opportunities
- Transition local child care business ownership for providers planning to retire or leave field

Strategy example: [Will you be my sub? State-backed child care substitute pool](#)

Non-Traditional Service Hours or Targeted Populations

Increase access for high needs populations.

Examples include:

- Increase hours of care provided outside of 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
- Increase number of child care seats designated for populations with unique needs for kids and families (children with special health care needs, non-English speaking, military, etc.)
- Provide drop in or emergency child care

Strategy example: [New daycare meets 3rd shift workers' needs](#)

Rural Child Care

Increase licensed child care access in rural communities. Examples include:

- Shared transportation approach to reduce family/provider travel burden
- Rotate child care services between communities - e.g., communities pool together to offer care at different locations in regions
- Share resources, services, and/or staffing among regional child care providers

Strategy example: [Colorado Rolling Preschools](#)

Public/Private Funding Partnerships

Engage additional funders of licensed child care services beyond family payments, child care subsidy, and short-term grant funding. Examples include:

- Employer sponsored child care seats
- Community fund for child care in partnership with local philanthropy, businesses, Chambers of Commerce, etc.

Strategy example: [MI Tri-Share Child Care](#)