Department of Commerce

2019-2021
Early Learning Facilities (ELF) Eligible Organizations Program Grant Guidelines

Up to $17,293,440 in grant funding to address the severe shortage of early learning facilities across the state and to increase early learning opportunities for children from low-income households.

Funding will be allocated as follows

- *Facilities Pre-Design Grant: $100,000*
- *Minor Renovation or Repair of Existing Early Learning Facilities Grant: $1,910,877*
- *Major Construction/Renovation/Building Purchase Grant:$15,282,563*

As much as 75 percent state match of eligible project costs

Application deadline Monday, December 2, 2019 at 5 p.m.

- **For program questions about the ELF Grant please email Earlylearningfacilities@commerce.wa.gov**

- **For technical assistance with the ZoomGrants application please contact Questions@ZoomGrants.com or call 866-323-5404 x2**

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ONLINE APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications for the 2019-2021 round will be submitted electronically through ZoomGrants. Hard-copies are not accepted. Applications must be submitted to Commerce no later than **5:00 p.m. on Monday, December 2, 2019.**

The online application may be accessed on **October 1** on our Early Learning Facilities webpage where a direct link to the ZoomGrants website will be provided. If you have a ZoomGrants account, log in and follow the instructions. If you are a new user, complete the required information for a new ZoomGrants account to create a profile. Please do not use "The" as the first word in the agency name. Once the agency profile has been created, select the ELF Grant, click the "Apply" button and start your proposal. Answers are automatically saved after each response. For any technical issues, you can contact ZoomGrants at: 866-323-5404 x2 or by email at Questions@ZoomGrants.com.

TAB 1: APPLICATION SUMMARY TAB

This section includes basic information concerning your organization and project, including primary and secondary contact information and other pertinent data. This section must be completed in its entirety.

TAB 2: APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Please answer thoroughly and to the best of your ability. Provide cross streets if there is no project address, the parcel number(s) of the project site and if land will be reparcelled.

TAB 3: BUDGET

When listing your project budget, *please use eligible costs only.* This will be different from your *total* project budget, and includes **only** capital costs that this grant can reimburse. For more information about what costs are eligible, please refer to page 7.

TAB 4: DOCUMENTS

The Documents section of the application is where you will upload the documents required or requested for the application. Please save forms or documents on your computer, complete and then upload to ZoomGrants using the "Upload" button provided. All documents required for your project must be completed and submitted with the application. Failure to provide the requested documentation or providing inaccurate information may result in the proposal receiving less points or being disqualified. **Please note**: *If a required document is not applicable to your project, please submit a single page indicating "N/A."*

2019-2021 Policy Highlights

Acquisition Projects

All acquisition projects must provide a current (six to nine months) appraisal or county assessment of the site to be purchased.

Security/Collateral Requirements

All projects performed by nonprofit organizations and for profit businesses, awarded funding under this program, must provide a promissory note and be secured with a deed of trust or lease-hold deed of trust as well as provide title insurance. The deed of trust or leasehold deed of trust must list the Department of Commerce and must be recorded before reimbursement of project costs.

All public entities awarded funding under this program are exempt from security/collateral requirements.

DAHP Compliance under Governor's Executive Order 05-05

All capital projects must be reviewed by the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) and area Tribes.

Reimbursement/Billing Procedures

All capital project reimbursements shall be evidenced by documentation showing the cost has already been incurred by the grantee. The Grantee shall provide copies of the cancelled check or electronic funds transfer (as applicable) confirming payment of each expenditure for the amount of each invoice claimed.

LEED Requirements

Most projects are required to apply for LEED silver certification. However, renovation projects that involve a new addition to an existing building may not be eligible for LEED certification. Also, new construction projects under 5,000 square feet are exempt from this requirement.

Multiple Applications

Applicants may only apply for ***one grant per early learning facility project***. If your project received a direct appropriation in the 2019-2021 capital budget, you may still apply for a competitive grant, but **not** for the same project that received direct appropriation in the budget.

Department of Commerce

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Fax: (360)586-5880

E-mail:
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Web:
https://www.commerce.wa.gov/building-infrastructure/capital-facilities/early-learning-program/

PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION:

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COMMERCE LEADERSHIP:

Lisa Brown
Director

Mark K. Barkley
Assistant Director

FIVE STEPS TO GETTING A GRANT

STEP 1: *Decide whether you are eligible — and ready to apply*

This is a highly competitive grant program, so before submitting your grant application we strongly encourage you do your homework, by carefully reading the program guidelines.

STEP 2: *Complete your application online*

When the ELF application becomes available on **October 1,** please visit our [webpage](#) where a direct link to ZoomGrants can be found.

STEP 3: *Application Review*

All Commerce early learning facilities grants are awarded through a competitive process which will be reviewed and scored by the ELF Scoring Committee.

STEP 4: *Negotiate a contract*

If you are awarded a grant, Commerce will draft a contract with your organization before disbursing the funds. See pages 10-13 for contracting requirements, some of which you should start thinking about now.

STEP 5: *Submit reimbursement materials*

This is a reimbursement-style grant. That means ***no advance payments,*** but we've worked hard to make the paperwork straightforward. Funds will likely become available once all required information is provided to Commerce.

PART 1: PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1.1 Program Purpose

The ELF program supports Washington's commitment of developing additional high quality early learning opportunities for children from low-income households. This program helps Early Childhood Education Assistance Program (ECEAP) contractors and Working Connection Child Care (WCCC) subsidy providers to expand, remodel, purchase, or construct early learning facilities and classrooms.

1.2 Who may apply

This year's ELF grant program is **only open to eligible organizations.** K-12 school districts **are not eligible** for this year's competitive round of funding. Applications for the K-12 school districts track will be available around the spring of 2020.

Eligible organizations include the following listed below per RCW 43.31.575.
- Family Child Care Home
- Child Care Center
- Developers of housing and community facilities
- Community and technical colleges
- Educational Service Districts
- Local governments
- Federally recognized tribes in the state
- Religiously affiliated entities

Applicants must currently provide or intend to provide one or more of the following activities below:
- ECEAP provider
- WCCC provider who is eligible to receive state subsidies

In addition, applicants applying for Commerce grants **must be or intend to be** an active participant in good standing with the Early Achievers program. Also they must have a Washington State business license to provide early learning services.

The program's legislation describes in more detail eligible organizations and criteria for receiving Commerce's capital funds. Please review RCW 43.31.565 through RCW 43.31.583.

1.3 Grant Categories

The Commerce 2019-2021 ELF program has four competitive grants available for eligible organizations:

- **Facilities Pre-Design Grant (maximum grant amount is $10,000):** These grants allow applicants to secure professional services to assess the feasibility of developing an early learning project; receive technical assistance to design and develop projects for construction funding.

Eligible Pre-Design Activities include the following:
1. Planning for the feasibility of an early learning project
2. Studies and analyses that address environmental impacts and/or site planning
3. Land use and/or permitting
4. Design activities
5. Hiring an architect and/or engineer to design/evaluate the proposed project site (s), determine total project costs including new construction and/or remodel costs
6. Hiring a consultant to develop a business plan/model of an early learning project

- **Minor Renovation or Repair of Existing Early Learning Facilities Grant (maximum grant amount is $100,000):** These grants allow applicants to do minor renovations or repairs

to existing early learning facilities. Examples of minor renovations or repairs include rehabbing an unused space for classroom purposes, creating an additional bathroom, new windows, new HVAC equipment, painting, new kitchen, or playground.

■ **Purchasing Facilities Grant (maximum grant amount is $800,000):** These grants allow applicants to purchase a building, but **not** land only. **Note:** The cost of land can be used towards match and total project costs but these grants cannot be used to pay for the cost of land only.

■ **New Construction or Major Renovation Grant (maximum grant amount is $800,000):** These grants allow applicants to do either new construction or major renovation of existing facilities. Examples of major renovation include new electrical, plumbing or earthquake work or constructing new classrooms or play areas.

Applicants may only apply for one grant per early learning facility project. If your project received a direct appropriation in the 2019-2021 state capital budget you may still apply for a competitive grant, but not for the same project that received direct appropriation in the budget.

Note: Commerce reserves the right to modify grant request amounts based on application demand levels. Additionally, final awards may take into account fair and equitable geographical distribution and the applicants access to other sources of funds necessary to complete the project.

1.4 Eligible Project Costs

Commerce's capital budget funds may generally be used to pay for construction related expenses listed below. Commerce can only reimburse for these expenses **only** if they were incurred after May 21, 2019.

Any expenses incurred before May 21, 2019 **cannot be reimbursed.**

■ Real property (buildings only), and costs directly associated with such purchase, when purchased or acquired solely for the purposes of the project;

■ Planning for the feasibility of an early learning project;

■ Technical assistance to design and develop projects for construction funding;

■ Design, engineering, architectural, and planning;

■ Construction management and observation (from external sources only): This is onsite management and/or supervision of the work site and workers. This does not include work performed by off-site consultants or consultant organizations, grant writers, or employees of the grantee, unless the employee is hired solely and specifically to perform on-site construction management as defined above;

■ Construction costs including, but not limited to, the following:
   -Site preparation and improvements;
   -Permits and fees;
   -Labor and materials;
   -Taxes on project good and services;
   -Capitalized equipment (such as kitchen and playground);
   -Information technology infrastructure (cables and wiring); and
   -Landscaping

1.5 Ineligible Project Costs

All our grants are intended to fund bricks and mortar. This is why the following costs listed below are not eligible for reimbursement and cannot be used to match state funds:

■ Internal administrative costs, in-house labor, or activities

■ Computers or office equipment

■ Rolling stock (such as vehicles)

■ Lease payments for rental of equipment or facilities

■ Any maintenance or operating costs or

the moving of equipment, furniture, etc., between facilities

- Land only

Note: The cost of **land** can be used towards match and total project costs, but these grant funds cannot be used to pay for the cost of land only.

1.6 Matching Funds

It is the intent of the ELF legislation that state funds be matched by private or local government funding and that an effort be made to maximize the amount of non-state resources leveraged.

Important: If you are awarded a grant, you have up to 180 days to obtain and secure additional funding. This deadline begins based on the date of your award letter.

Commerce has the following **GOAL for all eligible organizations:**

- Commerce ELF grants are to constitute 75 percent or less of the total project cost (leverage ratio of 1:3 - for every $1 the applicant provides, Commerce will provide $3)
- **Note:** Applicants applying for a facility pre-design grant ($10,000 maximum grant amount) are not required to provide matching funds.

We encourage applicants to maximize the amount of non-state funds in their project. Applicants providing more than 25 percent of the total project costs will receive additional scoring points.

State funds for construction, purchase or renovation of early learning facilities may be given only after private or public match funds are committed. Non-state matching funds may consist of the following:

- Cash on hand
- Bank Loans
- Documented pledge commitments
- The value of land acquired for

the project. **Note:** The value of land used, must be supported by a current appraisal performed by a certified professional appraiser or a county assessment.

- Buildings **Note:** The value of a building acquired must be supported by a current appraisal performed by a certified professional appraiser or a county assessment.
- In-kind donations can be used towards an applicant's match requirement as long as their value can be properly assessed and documented. These include the following:

-Labor (except when donated by an applicant's paid staff)

-Materials

-Equipment

-In-kind Donations

You may apply in-kind donations towards your match requirement. Eligible donations include property, labor (except when donated by an applicant's paid staff), materials, or equipment as long as their value can be properly assessed and documented

For example, the value of donated real estate must be documented by an appraisal performed by a certified professional appraiser or county assessment.

Professional labor is calculated at the rate a volunteer would normally charge for his or her services (this must be documented with invoices). Nonprofessional labor is calculated at $15 per hour. This can be documented with a memo itemizing the type of work done and the number of hours worked by your volunteers. Commerce reserves the right to make the final determination regarding the acceptability of in-kind contributions and their estimated value.

The following sources of funds

cannot be used as match:

■ Any funds that originated as an appropriation from the Legislature are considered state funds. State funds cannot match other state funds.

1.7 Funding Availability and Timing

Commerce uses a competitive process to distribute grants. There is $17,293,440 available.

All applications must be submitted through ZoomGrants, an online system.

■ Applications will be open on **Tuesday, October 1, 2019.**

■ The application deadline is **Monday, December 2, 2019.**

1.8 Scoring Criteria

All Commerce ELF grants are awarded through a competitive application process.

Applicants will be scored on the following criteria below. In your application responses please be as thorough as possible. Do not assume the person reading and scoring the application knows anything about your project (s).

■ Projects that add ECEAP or WCCC spaces for children from low-income households and underserved communities

■ Projects that benefit children from low-income households and at-risk children

■ Projects that provide more access to ECEAP and WCCC as a ratio of the children to be served as a result of this project

■ Projects that provide more access to ECEAP and WCCC spaces for children served

■ Projects that leverage non-state resources from other public and private organizations

■ Project readiness

■ Projects that add ECEAP and WCCC spaces for children in rural locations

■ Projects that support cultural responsiveness

■ Projects that partner with affordable housing

■ Projects that include new or renovated kitchen facilities equipped to support the use of cooking methods that enhance overall student nutrition

Your application will also be evaluated (but not scored) on the following criteria:

■ Geographic disbursement of projects relative to statewide need

■ Projects that add or intend to add additional ECEAP or WCCC spaces for children in areas with the highest unmet need

PART 2: CONTRACTING SPECIFICS

2.1 Contract Overview

All Grantees are required to have a signed executed contract with Commerce for their project. Generally, contracts can take up to three weeks to execute once all required information is provided to Commerce. It can take longer if a Grantee wishes to request any change to state approved contract language. Any contract language change must be reviewed and agreed upon by assistance by the Assistant Attorney General of Commerce.

Grantees receiving funds from the 2019-2021 state capital budget have until June 30, 2021 to expend these funds. Washington operates under a biennial (two-year) budget and each appropriation in the 2019-2021 Capital Budget, must, by law, lapse at the close of the biennium (June 30, 2021). Since projects may take more than two years to complete, Commerce will request a reappropriation of any unspent funds as of that date. However, we cannot guarantee that the Legislature will agree to extend funding, nor can we legally obligate funds from one biennium to the next.

2.2 Cost reimbursement

Once a contract is executed, funds are available on a reimbursement basis *only*, and cannot be advanced under *any* circumstances. Reimbursement costs are those the grantee has already incurred and paid. If the funds are used to purchase real property, please contact us.

We may reimburse grant recipients for costs (included in the applicant's scope of work) incurred and paid prior to the date a contract is executed, and as far back as May 21, 2019. Project costs incurred after May 21, 2019 can be reimbursed with appropriate backup once a fully executed contract is in place.

2.3 Accessing Funds

Grantees may draw down funds as frequently as once per month. Requests for reimbursement must be submitted on an A-19 form supplied by Commerce. An individual authorized by the grantees organization must sign each A-19 submitted. Copies of invoices and proof of payments that clearly document the expenses claimed must accompany all requests for payment.

You may submit your A-19 form and the backup information electronically. Only one contracted project can be submitted on an A-19.

Funds are electronically transferred using a Statewide Vendor Account (SWV) number you provide to us. If you need to set up a SWV account number, please review the Office of Financial Services State Vendor Registration Instructions to learn how to create an account. This process may take a couple of weeks, so please make sure you have this information available for us in time for the application.

2.4 Photos

We want to see photographic evidence of your project at 0%, 50%, and 100% completion as you submit your reimbursement request (s).

2.5 Rescinding funds

The grant you receive may be rescinded under the following conditions:

■ If the project's scope of work changes significantly and does not match the information stated in the application

■ If the grantee does not have funding to complete the project

■ If the grantee cannot demonstrate sufficient operating funding for the project

2.6 Archeological Review

Some projects may need to be reviewed for archaeological and cultural resources. This is required of projects not undergoing a federal [Section 106 review under the National Historic Preservation Act if the project](#):

- acquires property;
- disturbs ground, and/or involves structures more than 50 years

If your project falls into any of these categories, please contact the [Washington Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation.](#) Even if your project has already begun or is finished and falls under the 05-05 criteria, your project will still be required to the follow Executive Order 05-05 requirements as part of the application process.

2.7 Deed of Trust and Title Insurance

Projects performed by for profit businesses and nonprofit organizations for construction, acquisition and renovation must provide:

- Property title insurance
- Deed of trust or leasehold deed of trust
- Promissory note

All Grantees must provide certification of liability and fidelity insurance for the project. The deed of trust or leasehold deed of trust must be recorded before reimbursement begins. Commerce will provide you with more detailed information on these requirements.

2.8 Site Control and Use of Facility Requirements

Grantees receiving grants of **less than $200,000** for construction, purchase or renovation of facilities must provide written evidence of site control for a **minimum of 10**

years after final grant payment, either through outright ownership of the subject property or a long-term lease. Grant recipients must commit to using the facility for the purposes of providing ECEAP and/or WCCC for a minimum of 10 years.

Grantees receiving grants of **$200,000 or more** for construction, purchase or renovation of facilities must provide written evidence for a **minimum of 20 years** after final grant payment, either through outright ownership of the subject property or a long-term lease. Grant recipients must commit to using the facility for the purposes of providing ECEAP and/or WCCC of a minimum of 20 years.

2.9 Contract Amendments

If the project's scope of work changes (due to unforeseen circumstances) an amendment to the grantee's contract with Commerce is required.

2.10 Binding Agreements with Contractors

All grant awards are contingent on grantees reaching binding agreements with their contractors.

2.11 Prevailing Wages

As a result of a court ruling, construction projects (including landscaping) that receive any of our grants are required to pay state prevailing wages beginning on the date of their award letter. Acquisition only projects are exempt from state prevailing wage law ([RCW 39.12](#)). **Note** that these projects must result in a usable facility.

If your project receives any federal

funds then you are required to pay whichever wage class rate is higher, either the Davis-Bacon Act federal wage scale or state prevailing wage requirements.

If you need technical information about prevailing wages, you can contact customer service at (360) 902-5335 or PW1@lni.wa.gov. All grant awards are contingent on grantees reaching binding agreements with their contractors.

2.12 Public Works Statutes

All projects awarded to public entities (i.e. cities, counties, public hospitals, special purpose districts, etc.) must comply with public works statues. (RCW 39.80 and 39.04 cover ordinary public works contracting). Apprenticeships are required on all construction costs over $1 million.

2.13 Minority/Women Business Enterprises (M/WBE)

Commerce does not require that a percentage of the project work be given to small businesses or M/WBE companies. However, if your local jurisdiction has such laws they must be followed.

Commerce does require you to submit a "Diverse Spend" form that enumerates subcontractors and sub-subcontractors and if they are M/WBE. Commerce will provide you with this form when you receive your contract. Here is a link to a training video with more information on "Diverse Spend."

2.14 Lead Based Paint Requirements

If a project includes remodeling, repairing, or painting a residential property, or child occupied facility built before 1978, the project must employ a Certified Lead Renovation Firm, who must assign an Individual Certified Lead Renovator to lead the activities.

■ **Option 1:** The grantee needs to ensure that they hire someone fully certified with Firm and Individual Certifications (ask to see the contractor's certifications).

■ **Option 2:** The grantee can have their own Certified Lead Renovation Firm and Individual Certified Lead Renovator assigned to lead their project. (Reasonable cost of approx. $275 to complete).

Questions? Contact the Lead-Based Paint Program at Commerce, lbinfo@commerce.wa.gov or call (360) 586-5323.

2.15 Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design– LEED

The 2005 Washington State Legislature passed a law that may require our grant recipients to comply with what has been termed "high performance" or "green" building standards (RCW 39.35D).

The legislation's goal is for major capital facilities projects receiving state dollars to be built to the LEED silver standard where "practicable." LEED (which stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is a certification program run by the U.S. Green Building Council.

These building principles offer the most savings when incorporated early in the design process. That is why we strong encourage you to talk with your architect as soon as possible.

The first issue you may wish to explore is whether your project is required to meet the LEED silver standard. The law offers two types of exemptions.

Exemption 1: Facility Types

The following types of facilities are exempt:

■ Acquisition only, does not include construction or renovation

■ New construction less than 5,000 gross square feet of occupied or conditioned space as defined by the State Energy Code

PART 3: Program Glossary

■ Renovation projects whose costs are less than 50 percent of the facility's assessed value and are less than 5,000 gross square feet of occupied or conditioned space

■ Facilities such as hospitals, research facilities primarily used for laboratory experimentation, research, or training in research methods; or similar building types.

Exemption 2: "Not practicable"

Renovation projects that involve a new addition to an existing building may not be required for LEED Certification. We are not permitted to offer this exemption because of cost or timing-related issues.

Pre-application exemption requests

You don't need to wait until you turn in a grant application to find out if your project will be exempted. Please contact us and we quickly assess our project.

3.1 Glossary

Amount Requested: Under the application summary tab of the ELF application in ZoomGrants, the field "Amount Requested," must be completed. This field is where applicants indicate the Commerce grant amount being requested. This amount also must be included when filling out the "Sources of Funds," table under the budget tab. Below are the different grant categories and the maximum grant amounts available under each bucket.

- Facilities Pre-Design Grant (Maximum grant amount is $10,000)
- Minor Renovation or Repair of Existing Early Learning Facilities Grant (Maximum grant amount is $100,000)
- Major Construction/Renovation/Building Purchase Grants (Maximum grant amount is $800,000)

Cultural Responsiveness: The ability to learn from and relate respectfully with people of your own culture as well as those from other cultures. For more information about cultural responsiveness please follow this link.

Early Achievers: It is a rating system for child care and early learning programs to help families find high-quality child care. You can learn more about Early Achievers here.

Early Childhood and Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP): ECEAP is our state's pre-kindergarten program that prepares 3 and 4-year-old children from low-income families for success and school in life. For more information about ECEAP visit this link.

Project Readiness: Looks at the steps and progress taken to initiate project development. Examples of project readiness include, but are not limited to, the following listed below:

- Hiring an architect and/or engineer
- Obtaining and/or submitting city/county permit reviews
- Obtaining bids
- Zoning reviews
- Construction and/or acquisition cost estimates
- DCYF licensing reviews
- Securing non-state funding sources like a bank loan, cash on hand, or documented pledge commitments

Research-Based Risk Factors: Please click on this link to learn more about what is considered research-based risk factors. **Important:** The point system listed in the linked document **does not count towards your ELF application.** The points are **only** used for DCYF-ECEAP eligibility, enrollment and recruitment purposes.

Scope of Work: Defines what work is to be completed by the project. It details milestones, reports, deliverables, and outlines the end goal expected to be provided by performing the project.

Site Preparation and Improvements: Include activities that prepare a site for the construction of an early learning facility. Such as demolition, earthwork, environmental remediation, or adding utility connections.

Sources of Funds Table: The sources of funds table found under the budget tab of the ELF online application, is a breakdown of where the funds of your project are coming from. This includes the Commerce grant amount you are requesting along with other non-state funding sources. **Note:** The total of the sources of funds **must be equal** to the total of the use of funds table. **Exception**: If you are applying for a Facilities Pre-Design grant, you only need to list the Commerce grant amount you are requesting, since match is not a requirement.

Statements of Commitment: A statement of commitment letter documents how much money a funder is providing to an applicant. The letters provide support for funds listed in the sources of funds table under the budget tab, that have been secured or are in the process of being secured. Below are examples of who commitment letters can come from:

- Banks

- Private Investors
- Philanthropic Organizations
- Public Entities

Total Project Costs: Under the application summary tab of the ELF application in ZoomGrants, the field "Total Project Costs," must be completed. This field is where applicants indicate the total cost of their project. This can include purchasing property (land) or a building or remodeling either an existing facility or new facility. The total project cost amount should match the total in the sources of funds and use of funds tables under the budget tab.

Use of Funds Table: The use of funds table under the budget table of the ELF online application, is a breakdown of what you plan to spend the funds on. **Note:** The total of the use of funds **must be equal** to the total of the sources of funds table.

Working Connections Child Care (WCCC): WCCC assists low income families in paying for child care while they work or meet WorkFirst requirements. Visit this link to learn more about WCCC.

ZoomGrants– ZoomGrants is the electronic application package Commerce uses for its ELF program online application process.