

# Addressing Early Childhood Educator Workforce Challenges

## Investing in Early Childhood Education

Dogwood Health Trust is requesting proposals from nonprofit organizations, government agencies, education institutions, and others who serve the Qualla Boundary and our 18-county service region in Western North Carolina that are looking to stabilize and grow our local Early Childhood Education (ECE) workforce in order to better support students in reaching success.

Grants will range from \$250,000 to \$1,000,000 to support organizations in their ability to sustain and improve the conditions surrounding the ECE workforce in our region.

We are particularly interested in projects that take a multi-year approach, include more than one of the ECE workforce populations (public, private, home and family care providers), and approach workforce solutions with an eye towards equitable outcomes.

## At-a-Glance

**Purpose:** Sustain and improve the conditions surrounding the Early Childhood Education workforce of the Qualla Boundary and 18 counties of the Dogwood region.

### **Funding available:**

Size of grants will depend on the organization's capacity, geographic scope, and strength of proposal; however, they will generally range from \$250,000 - \$1,000,000.

We will consider requests that use one or more of the following approaches:

- Increase access to existing early childhood education credentials
- Attract new or career-changing adults into the early childhood education profession
- Improve working conditions for the existing early childhood education workforce

We will not consider requests for capital projects.

**Priority** will be given to proposals that equitably attend to at least one of the following:

- Approach, curriculum, training, and evaluation
- Career ladder attainment (growth of existing ECE workforce and/or growth of new recruits)
- Leadership opportunities among members of the ECE workforce who are BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color), from rural communities, first-generation credential holders, and/or have faced a lack of access to resources and opportunities.

**Strong proposals** will

- Include more than one of the ECE workforce populations (public, private, home and family care providers)
- Align with one or more of the [14 Priorities to Dismantle Systemic Racism in Early Care and Education](#)
- Align outcomes to recommendations in [Unifying Framework for Early Childhood Education Profession](#)
- Address one or more findings from the Dogwood [Early Childhood Landscape Report](#)
- Include a partnership with one or more institutions of higher education (community colleges and/or 4-year institutions)

All grant recipients will engage in the Start with Equity Academy, a 4-part, 2-hour learning academy/community of practice to support grantees' equity-centered approaches. The Start with Equity Academy will be led by Dr. Iheoma Iruka of the Equity Research Action Coalition at UNC Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute.

**How to apply:** Complete our online application at <https://dogwoodhealthtrust.org/strategic-priority/education/>

**Timeline:** Applications are due by 11:59 pm on September 16, 2022. Award notifications will be made in November 2022 and funds will be distributed in December 2022.

**Learn more:** Contact Emily Quinlan, Impact Officer for Education at (828) 771-6721 or [equinlan@dht.org](mailto:equinlan@dht.org).