



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

Childcare Program Operator

United Way of Southwest Virginia

I. Background

United Way of Southwest Virginia is developing a new state-of-the-art regional childcare and workforce development center to serve as the region's anchor institution supporting a regional comprehensive economic development strategy to attract and retain talent. The project site includes the redevelopment of the former Kmart property, an 85,000+ square foot facility centrally located at 300 Towne Center Dr, Abingdon, VA 24210. The facility is easily accessible and at the conjunction of one of the busiest interchanges in the region.

The Regional Child Care and Workforce Development Center facility usages includes the following:

- 20,000(+/-) square feet for early childhood services providing care to approximately 300 children ages birth to five including classroom space, indoor activity/recreation space, cafeteria space, and administrative offices
- 30,000(+/-) square feet for youth and adult workforce development programming
- 25,000(+/-) square feet for professional offices and meeting/training rooms
- 7,500(+/-) square feet for warehousing and distribution
- 2,500(+/-) square feet for kitchen and food preparation

The new center will provide a solution to the gap in the regional economic ecosystem in rural Southwest Virginia by making employment in the labor force a feasible choice for families and providing talent development solutions for the emerging and adult workforce. The facility will serve as a tangible demonstration of the regional investment in talent development, which is important to businesses and industries evaluating the region for location.

The opening date for the Regional Child Care and Workforce Development Center is projected for January 2024.

II. Project Outcome

UWSWVA seeks to identify a qualified operator for the new child development center. This proposal is open to all types of applicants—non-profit, government, and for-profit organizations. The amount of the overall award will be \$3.5 million, with the expectation that these funds will be expended during the planning, development, and early implementation stages (first 12 months of operations) of the project.

III. Timeline

United Way of Southwest Virginia intends for the center to be operational by January 1, 2024.

IV. Funding requirements and match

This RFP makes available up to \$3.5 million in pass-through ARPA funds towards the staffing, training, materials, supplies, and establishment of a publicly accessible childcare center. Successful respondents must match at least 1:1 with funds towards the facility renovation process and furnishings, fixtures, and equipment. The amount of match provided will be considered as a criterion in the award of the RFP.

Additional requirements:

V. Description of proposed activities

United Way of Southwest Virginia will be the owner of the facility, with the successful respondent serving as the childcare program operator. Operator must propose a thorough plan for serving approximately 300 children each year, with a focus on early childhood. **No more than 10% of students may be over the age of 6.** Operator must also commit to organizational and staff participation in United Way early childhood development initiatives (including professional development around early childhood development, though there is no charge) and maintain a certain level of quality as defined by the VQB5 system or a national accreditation body (like NAEYC).

VI. Proposal Contents

Successful respondents must include all sections as detailed below. Proposals should be labeled using sections below.

Statement of Qualifications

- A. Briefly describe your organization and team.
- B. Describe your organization's and team's experience in operating childcare centers.
- C. Describe the expertise and experience of the professionals who would be assigned to work with UWSWVA, particularly the individual(s) who would be UWSWVA's primary day-to-day contact(s).
- D. Describe your organization's financial strength. Include evidence of financial stability including but not limited to audited financial statements for the most recent three calendar or fiscal years for all development team entities that are proposed to be involved.
- E. Provide clear and concise rationale as to why UWSWVA should select your organization over other qualified organizations.
- F. Provide at least three references regarding your work on similar projects.
- G. Provide verification of childcare licensing currently held.

Operations Plan

- H. Describe your organization's plan for operating the childcare center in cooperation with United Way of Southwest Virginia's onsite needs and uses.
 - a. Describe your model for the childcare center and associated services - i.e., subsidized? private pay? Include details of how the center will operate including service times, curriculum, and any wrap-around services. Include the revenue model for student tuition (subsidy, private pay, employer pay operator directly?). Include projection on number of children in each age group.
 - b. Describe your model for staff recruitment and retention. Include thoughtful estimates of how many staff will be required and sample qualifications and backgrounds of those staff.
- I. Please include a description of how you plan to recruit and retain students in a manner that incorporates existing childcare centers and providers to not disrupt the market but to complement (expand access versus moving children from one center to another).
- J. Provide a proposed timeline for five years with specific benchmarks to determine if the project is on track.
- K. Describe how your organization will ensure that the facility complies with all licensing requirements of the type of program you plan to operate.
- L. Describe any litigation or other like proceedings against your organization or any of its childcare professionals, whether current or pending, during the past five (5) years.

High Quality Programming

- M. Describe your plans to ensure that the early childcare education programming will be high quality (beyond just health and safety requirements as per licensing).
- N. Describe the training and professional development of childcare center staff, including how they might participate in United Way of Southwest Virginia provided professional development training.

Financials

- O. Please describe the amount of financial match being provided. **A minimum of 1:1 match is required.** The grant award may be used for planning, developing, and 12 months of implementation of the operations model. Match may be used for renovation, furnishings, fixtures, and equipment.
- P. Please indicate a financial model for sustainability of this childcare center. Applicants may include a pro forma, concept budget, or other methods that can provide the United Way of Southwest Virginia with understanding of the future sustainability of the program.

- Q. Describe the type and level of insurance (including the deductible amount) carried by your organization/team that would be relevant for the project to cover errors and omissions, improper judgments, or negligence. Provide evidence of such insurance.

VII. Selection Process

United Way of Southwest Virginia will appoint a Selection Committee to review and evaluate all proposals responding to the RFP. The proposals will be evaluated and ranked based on the Selection Criteria outlined in Section VI.

The United Way of Southwest Virginia may ask the top-ranked firms to attend a presentation/interview as part of the evaluation process. At the conclusion of the evaluation process, the firms will be ranked in priority order with the highest-ranking firm being selected to negotiate a contract with the United Way of Southwest Virginia. If a contract satisfactory to both parties cannot be negotiated, the United Way of Southwest Virginia will then enter into negotiations with the next highest-ranking firm and so on until an agreement is reached.

VIII. Application Process

Letter of Intent (LOI)

It is recommended that applicants submit letters of intent at least 10 days before the application deadline.

The letter of intent should include the following:

- Name of applicant, contact person and contact information
- Organizational Capacity Summary:
 - Investment and match capacity
 - Operational capacity
 - Capacity in staffing and managing large projects

Submittal Respondents should submit (five) of copies to:

United Way of Southwest Virginia 1096 Ole Berry Drive, Abingdon, VA 24210 no later than 4:00 PM Friday, December 2, 2022. All questions regarding proposal submissions must be submitted in via email to Mary Anne Holbrook, Vice President of Community Impact, at mholbrook@unitedwayswva.org. The proposal question and answer period closes on Tuesday, November 29, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.

It is anticipated that applicants will be notified if they are a top ranked applicant by January 31, 2023. It is the intent of UWSWVA to complete contract negotiations no later than April 28, 2023.