Frequently Asked Questions

Open Call for Statements of Interest: Community-Led Practices for Strengthening Maternal and Child Health and Reducing Disparities in Fresno County, California

Background Questions

Why is the Packard Foundation pursuing an Open Call?
While we have worked in early childhood for many years, our expansion to focus on maternal and child health from pregnancy to age three is a new area for the Foundation. As such, we are pursuing an Open Call with the goal of learning, building relationships and expanding our work. We see the Open Call as a tool to further equity in our grantmaking practices and serve as a way for both grantees and the Foundation to learn about each other.

Why did the Packard Foundation select Fresno for this Open Call?
In comparison to other counties across the state of California, Fresno County reports higher rates of negative outcomes in maternal and child health, including maternal mortality, preterm birth, infant mortality, and low birthweight. The Packard Foundation has a long history of investing in child-serving systems in Fresno as part of our prior work focused on early childhood education and preschool. We know that leaders and organizations in Fresno are doing important work to address the needs of families with young children, and we look forward to partnering with new grantees to improve maternal and child health in Fresno County.

What does the Foundation mean by “systems” and “system of care”?
Systems refer to the web of connected elements (such as government, institutions, ecosystems, communities) influencing a complex problem or issue. A system of care is a service delivery approach that builds partnerships within and across systems to create a broad, integrated process to meet families’ multiple needs.

Project Questions

Questions pertaining to eligible projects and program evaluation

Can we apply for funding for an existing program?
Organizations can apply for funding for an existing program only if they are proposing to enhance or expand the project or program in some way (for example by increasing the number of people they will serve, expanding to a new community, enhancing or increasing the services provided). Grant funds cannot be used to support continuation of an existing program.

If our organization has a project related to maternal and child health that is not included as one of the example projects on the open call, can we still propose it?
Yes. The projects listed on the open call are meant to be examples. We encourage organizations to propose projects that they believe will improve maternal and child health and respond to the needs of their communities.
What if we’ve never had a program specifically for maternal and child health but are now seeing them as a priority audience we should be serving, do we qualify?
Organizations who do not currently serve these populations are still welcome to apply. Please explain in your statement of interest how you plan to engage with and establish trusting relationships with this new audience in your work.

Can our project be focused on state policy?
For the purposes of this open call, we are looking for on-the-ground practice-oriented work. However, we know that the State of California has implemented significant changes to address maternal and child health, through initiatives like the Birthing Care Pathway and new Medi-Cal benefits for doulas and community health workers. If your organization would like to pilot some of these new benefits, this grant funding could support local implementation efforts.

What does the evaluation entail for grantees?
We will ask grantee partners to participate in an evaluation funded by the Packard Foundation. The primary purpose of the evaluation is for learning. Participation in the evaluation involves quarterly calls with the evaluation consultant, which will include the creation of a logic model (if the project does not already have one) and a data collection plan, and other support or technical assistance the evaluation consultant can provide. The evaluation will also include two opportunities to connect with other grantees: a midpoint webinar for project learning and idea sharing between grantees, and a half-day convening at the end of the project.

Organization Questions
Questions pertaining to organization eligibility and partnerships

If an organization is already a grantee of the Packard Foundation, are they still eligible to apply?
Yes, organizations who are current grantees of the Packard Foundation are eligible to apply. We also encourage organizations who have not received funding from the Foundation in the past to apply, as well as smaller, grassroots organizations and those led by Black, Indigenous, Latino, and People of Color.

Can our organization apply for funding if we aren’t officially a 501(c)(3)?
All types of organizations (public, private, nonprofit, and fiscally-sponsored projects) are invited to submit a letter of intent. Grassroots organizations without 501(c)(3) status may submit a statement of interest, but you will need a fiscally-sponsored organization to accept the grant.

Can multiple organizations apply for funding together?
Yes, multiple organizations can apply for joint funding for a single project. In your statement of interest, please identify which organization will serve as the lead and describe the role of each additional organization or partner involved in the project.

Funding Questions
Questions pertaining to funding amount, timeline, co-funding and budget
What is the total amount available? How many grants will be offered?
Grant sizes will range from $50,000-$200,000 and approximately five grants will be funded.

Can we apply for more than $200,000 in funding if our project budget is larger?
We will consider proposals that exceed $200,000 however our decision to invite organizations to submit full proposals will be based on the overall pool of applications received and the amount of funding that we have available.

Is there a possibility of continued funding after the grant period ends?
This is an opportunity for one-time funding to develop a new program or enhance or expand an existing program. There is a possibility of additional funding becoming available after the end of the grant period, but we cannot guarantee any such opportunity. We encourage organizations to apply with the expectation that this will be one-time funding.

Can the grant be extended over longer than 12 months?
The grant amounts outlined in this Open Call are designed with a 12-month timeframe in mind, however we are willing to be flexible on the timing based on the needs of specific projects or organizations. We encourage organizations to let us know if the 12-month timeframe constrains the project or community goals.

Does the Packard Foundation want to be the exclusive funder for the project or is it ok if the project has other funders?
The Foundation is supportive of projects that are funded by other funders, either public or private. In the event that the project costs will exceed $200,000 it would be helpful to indicate if there are any other funders who may be able to support those additional costs.

What kinds of expenses can we include in our budget estimate?
These grants are intended to cover the full range of costs that organizations have, including personnel expenses, operating expenses like rent or utilities, supplies like gift cards, etc. For the statement of interest we simply ask for the total project budget estimate including the full range of costs. Organizations that move onto the proposal stage will submit a line item budget. The only limitation is that our funds cannot be used for lobbying purposes.

Next Steps Questions

Questions pertaining to the application process

Will you accept written submissions in Spanish?
Yes, we will accept Statements of Interest written in Spanish.

What happens after we submit our Statement of Interest and how will decisions be made?
The Packard Foundation team will review all of the Statements of Interest submitted and select up to 10 organizations to submit full proposals. Organizations invited to submit proposals will be asked to answer additional questions and submit additional documentation. The proposals will be reviewed and scored by a review committee made up of Packard Foundation staff and three external reviewers who have expertise in maternal and child health, community-based grantmaking, and knowledge of the
community in Fresno County. The review committee will identify five finalists whose proposals will be awarded grant funding, pending review as part of the Packard Foundation’s due diligence process.

I have a question that is not covered in this document, how can I get an answer?
We are hosting a Q&A session over Zoom on Thursday April 11, 2024 from 10-11:30am, which you can register to attend using the form linked here and submit your question. The Q&A session will be recorded and the recording will be shared with everyone who registers to attend the session. The session will also include closed caption translation in Spanish. If the Q&A session has already passed, you can submit your question via email by sending it to: ChildrenAndFamilies@packard.org.