

# FY16 Shared Visions Parent Support Application

## *Frequently Asked Questions*

This document has been developed to guide interested applicants and existing grantees in the implementation of a Shared Visions Parent Support Program. All questions received during the FY16 competitive application process are addressed within this document.

The following categories were developed to assist in the use of this document:

- I. Application Requirements/Information
- II. Technical Requirements
- III. Application Completion
- IV. Funding/Budgets
- V. Program Requirements

\*Each of the main categories have subcategories listed in the left column to expedite the location of content areas.

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### Shared Visions Parent Support Application Questions/Answers

#### **I. Application Requirements/Information**

##### *Timelines/General*

**1. How many grants will be awarded?**

**A:** All grant awards are contingent upon the 2015 legislative appropriation. The number of grants to be awarded will be determined based on quality of grant application, established need, and available funding.

**2. Do you know what the total amount of funding will be or what amount has been proposed for these grants?**

**A:** The amount of funding is contingent on the state appropriation which is typically determined toward the end of the legislative session. Therefore, information about the amount of funding for this grant cannot be provided at this time. The amount of total funding for this grant during FY15 was \$815,261.

**3. What timeframe is covered by the grant?**

**A:** The funding period for FY16 is July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016. Grants will be awarded with projected intent to renew, for a maximum of five years, provided grantees meet program requirements. Funding will be allocated in one year increments based on annual legislated appropriations (funding may vary each year pending state budget allocation decisions).

**4. What is the deadline for submitting an application?**

**A:** Applications must be submitted through [IowaGrants.gov](http://IowaGrants.gov) by 4:30 pm, March 19, 2015. The timeline for the application process may be found on the [Shared Visions Parent Program webpage](#) in the *Application* section.

**5. What time is the webinar on February 17, 2015?**

**A:** The webinar will be recorded and posted on February 17, 2015. A link to the recorded webinar will be located in the *Application Timeline* chart on the [Shared Visions Parent Program webpage](#). Potential applicants are encouraged to review the webinar prior to completing an application. The webinar will be prerecorded and posted on the site before the end of the day on Tuesday, February 17, 2015.

**6. Will a letter of intent be required before submitting the application for Shared Visions funding?**

**A:** No, a letter of intent is not requested or required.

**7. I noticed that only nine grants were issued last year. Is that within the state of Iowa or nationwide?**

**A:** The grants issued last year, as well as those to be issued for FY16, are within the state of Iowa only.

**8. Does the grant address families with children age birth to three? Or is the age span birth to five years?**

**A:** The Shared Visions Parent Support grants support programs providing services to parents of children with risk factors aged birth through five years, with priority being given to programs serving parents of children with risk factors aged birth to three years. It is recommended that the applicant review the *Rubric of Scoring Criteria for the FY16 Shared Visions Parent Support Program Application* found on the [Shared Visions Parent Program webpage](#) in the *Application* section.

### *Applicant Eligibility*

**1. Who is eligible to apply?**

**A:** Any existing or current grantee, public school district, area education agency, or any other non-profit agency which administers quality educational support programs to parents of children with risk factors aged birth through five years may apply. It is required that applicants meet requirements as outlined in [Iowa Code section 256A](#) and [281-Iowa Administrative Code 67](#).

**2. I am interested in continuing to keep my full time job but also in teaching parenting classes through scheduled sessions throughout the year. Will this grant accept applications to allow me to create parenting classes that will be held at the community-level?**

**A:** Independent individuals are not considered eligible applicants. Eligible applicants include any existing or current grantee, public school district, area education agency, or any other non-profit agency which administers quality educational support programs to parents of children with risk factors aged birth through five years. It is recommended that the *Rubric of Scoring Criteria for*

the *FY16 Shared Visions Parent Support Program Application* be reviewed to determine if the intended services would align with those required as part of the application. The rubric may be found on the [Shared Visions Parent Program webpage](#) in the *Application* section.

#### *Current (FY15) Shared Visions Grantees*

**1. Do I have to apply if I am a current grantee?**

**A:** Yes, any program interested in operating a Shared Visions Parent Support Program in FY16, July 2015 – June 2016, will need to apply for funding. This includes programs that were previously awarded funding and who are currently providing a Shared Visions Parent Support Program. Funding for the program is limited; therefore, the application process is highly competitive and it is likely that not all applicants will receive funding.

**2. For clarification, if a program who currently has Shared Visions Parent Support funding does not apply for the FY16 grant, will they lose their funding for next year?**

**A:** Current Shared Visions Parent Support grantees awarded funds for grant year FY15 (July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015) will not lose current funding. However, they will not automatically receive a renewal grant for FY16 (July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016). If interested in continuing to operate a Shared Visions Parent Support Program in FY16, current grantees must submit a competitive application. Due to limited funding, it is highly likely that not all applications will be awarded.

**3. Do current grantees get preference for renewal status?**

**A:** No. There are no additional points awarded or preference given to current (FY15) Shared Visions Parent Support grantees in the FY16 application process. All applications received will be scored in the same manner using the *Rubric of Scoring Criteria for the FY16 Shared Visions Parent Support Program Application* located on the [Shared Visions Parent Program webpage](#) in the *Application* section.

**4. We are a current grantee and are wondering if we should write for the same dollar amount we currently receive or if there is a new amount. Can you clarify?**

**A:** Current grantees are not limited to write for the same amount as their FY15 grant award. An applicant should write for an amount that they anticipate will cover the costs of the proposed program while considering in-kind support.

## **II. Technical Requirements**

### *Online Application System*

**1. How do I complete an application?**

**A:** The FY16 Shared Visions Parent Support Application must be submitted to the Department of Education through the online grant application system, [IowaGrants.gov](#). Instructions for

registering in [IowaGrants.gov](http://IowaGrants.gov) and completing the application can be found on the [Shared Visions Parent Program webpage](#) in the *Application* section.

**2. How do I register in Iowa Grants?**

**A:** Directions can be found on the [Shared Visions Parent Program webpage](#) in the *Application* section within the document titled *Instructions for Registering in IowaGrants.gov*.

**3. Can I access a paper copy of the application somehow?**

**A:** A paper copy of the application is not available since it is being submitted through [IowaGrants.gov](http://IowaGrants.gov). Once you have logged into the Iowa Grants system and are looking at the list of Application Forms, you can open each form to view the content that is being requested. This is located in the *Instructions* section at the top of each application form. You can also select *Print* from this page as well which will provide all of the questions in the application. However, it will not include the *Instructions* section from each of the application forms. Please note, paper copies of this application will not be accepted.

**4. We need to have more than one person working on different parts of the application. Is this possible?**

**A:** More than one person can be associated with an application. Once the application has been created, additional individuals can be tied to the application upon request. It is important to designate **one person** to create the application, regardless of whether multiple people will assist with the content. All individuals tied to a given application have access to all portions of the application. If multiple people will be assisting with completing the various forms, it is important to clarify the role of each. Contact Amy Stegeman at [amy.stegeman@iowa.gov](mailto:amy.stegeman@iowa.gov) to request additional persons be linked to an application.

**5. How do I delete an application that was started but is no longer needed?**

**A:** To delete an application started in the Iowa Grants application system, contact Amy Stegeman at [amy.stegeman@iowa.gov](mailto:amy.stegeman@iowa.gov). You will need to provide the ID number associated with the application (located in the *ID* column on the left side of the page). The application will be withdrawn and will no longer be available for completion or submission. All applications an organization does not intend to submit should be withdrawn.

**6. I started an application and the General Information page of the application shows a list of people from our agency in the *Additional Contacts* section when in editing mode. I did not add these people to the application. Why would they appear and can they be removed?**

**A:** The additional contacts section will list all persons tied to the organization within the system. To attach someone to your grant application, you would need to select and highlight a name. If a name is not highlighted, that person is not connected to the application and will not be able to access it. Names that are highlighted can be selected to remove the highlighting and the connection to the application if desired.

**7. Can I still edit my application once I have selected *Mark As Complete* for a section?**

**A:** Yes, you can edit each section of the application until it has been submitted.

**8. Can you cut and paste into a section if you feel a graph might explain it better than words?**

**A:** Yes, you are able to paste information from another source, such as a Word document, into each narrative section of the application. There is also a tool bar at the top of each narrative section that allows you to create tables, insert images, and more. It is important to note that tables, graphs and images may take up a large number of characters available in each section.

### **III. Application Completion**

#### *Writing the Application*

**1. Is there any guidance available for writing the application?**

**A:** All guidance documents, as well as links to the corresponding Iowa Code and Iowa Administrative Code, may be found on the [Shared Visions Parent Program webpage](#). The guidance document titled *Rubric of Scoring Criteria for the FY16 Shared Visions Parent Support Program Application* should be reviewed. Quality applications will address all components of the scoring rubric.

**2. Could you provide more guidance related to the Documentation of Need section when a program serves a population that qualifies based on income and one specific secondary risk factor such as being a teen parent?**

**A:** It is recommended that the applicant review the *Rubric of Scoring Criteria for the FY16 Shared Visions Parent Support Program Application* found on the [Shared Visions Parent Program webpage](#). Following this guidance, an applicant would provide a description and analysis of the service area relative to their program and eligibility requirements.

**3. Is there a limited number of words for each section allowed when completing the online application? Are there any specifications regarding font, font size and formatting?**

**A:** Each narrative section within the online application has a maximum number of characters allowed. All application questions requesting a narrative answer, with the exception of those in the *Program Summary* form, have a maximum of 10,000 characters. This is approximately 2-3 pages of a Word document when done in Times New Roman font at size 12. The narrative questions in the *Program Summary* section of the application have a character limit of 5500. Please note that spaces and punctuation are included in the character count. There are no specifications on font, font size and formatting. Each narrative section has a tool bar at the top that allows you to choose these items.

**4. I have noted a reference to five years throughout the grant application. Is this a five-year grant? What time period should the budget reflect?**

**A:** Grants will be awarded for FY16 (July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016) with a projected intent to renew, for a maximum of five years, provided grantees meet program requirements. Funding will be allocated in one year increments based on annual legislated appropriations (funding may vary each year pending state budget allocation decisions). The application should reflect a

budget for FY16 only. Subsequent years will require a renewal application to include an annual budget.

**5. What do the red asterisks mean that are throughout the application?**

**A:** Red asterisks within the application forms mean the corresponding question requires a response within the application system. Required fields must be answered prior to saving the information entered into the form and moving on to another section. The Iowa Grants system will prompt the applicant if information marked with a red asterisk is not completed upon closing the form. An applicant may find it helpful to enter placeholders in these areas if they wish to close a form prior to having it completed. Note: Applicants are able to access each form and make any necessary edits until the application has been submitted.

**6. Are there any grant applications from prior years that are available for review?**

**A:** No, there are no applications available for review.

**7. Will there be availability to attach/upload supporting documents for each section?**

**A:** Documents may only be uploaded into specific areas as indicated in the application forms. Each section or form does not have this capability.

*Application Forms*

**1. For the *Service Description Plan*, it asks for “persons responsible” for providing the service. Does that mean an agency, a person’s name or the title of the person, such as a family support worker?**

**A:** Identifying the person responsible for various services may be done by providing the title of the person. If necessary for clarity of the proposed services, a description of that position may be included. It is important to provide enough detail that it is evident that the program has the capacity to provide the services described in the application.

**2. How many letters of support would be adequate? Do those letters need to be from businesses that have partnered with the program or can it be from any business in the community?**

**A:** It is recommended that applicants refer to the **Community Support, Interagency Coordination, and Letters of Support** section of the scoring rubric to make these determinations. The *Rubric of Scoring Criteria for the FY16 Shared Visions Parent Support Program Application* is located on the [Shared Visions Parent Program webpage](#) in the *Application* section.

**3. For the purposes of letters of support, would the AEA be considered a community agency?**

**A:** Yes, a letter of support from the AEA describing support or services to be provided is permissible.

4. **On the *Assurances* page, I do not see that you can upload a signature. Does the person just need to type a signature on that page?**

**A:** Yes, an electronic signature is requested on the assurances page of the application. This is completed by typing the name into the designated space of the online form.

5. **Is there a pre-determined amount we should enter into the budget or do we submit a budget based on our program's costs?**

**A:** There is not a pre-determined amount that should be entered into the budget. An applicant should write for an amount that they anticipate will cover the costs of the proposed program while considering in-kind support.

6. **Regarding the program advisory committee, who must it consist of and what percentage of it must be families?**

**A:** The creation and composition of a program advisory committee are local decisions. Applicants are encouraged to review the **Program Evaluation** section of the *Rubric of Scoring Criteria for the FY16 Shared Visions Parent Support Program Application* located on the [Shared Visions Parent Program webpage](#) in the *Application* section for further guidance.

7. **When it is asked to provide information addressing community resources, individuals and agencies involved in the "program planning," is that referring to the information contained in the Service Description Plan?**

**A:** This refers to the community resources, individuals, and agencies that worked with the applicant and were involved with developing the plan for services to be provided through this grant application.

### *Submission*

1. **Do you only need to complete the application or do you need to send it once it is done?**

**A:** Once an application is completed, it must be submitted (or sent) through the Iowa Grants system. These instructions can be found in the document titled *Instructions for Completing the FY16 Shared Visions Parent Support Application (specifically steps 18-22)* located on the [Shared Visions Parent Program webpage](#) in the *Application* section. No paper copies will be accepted.

## **IV. Funding/Budgets**

### *General Guidance*

1. **Is there a per person cap for the budget?**

**A:** Budgets must follow the guidance as outlined in the FY16 Budget Guidance document located on the [Shared Visions Parent Program webpage](#) in the *Application* section. The guidance is also an attachment to the Shared Visions Parent Support application located in [lowaGrants.gov](http://lowaGrants.gov) and

embedded in the instructions within the budget form. There is not a per person cap noted in the guidance.

**2. How much funding is typically received for a grant?**

**A:** The amount received for a grant will correlate to the number of participants to be served and the comprehensive services the grantee plans to provide. Therefore, awarded amounts will vary. All awards are contingent upon the annual state appropriation.

**3. What are the ranges for individual grant requests?**

**A:** There is not a range for grant budget requests. Budgets should be developed based on the scope of services to be provided and the number of families to be served. Grants will be awarded for FY16 (July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016) with a projected intent to renew, for a maximum of five years, provided grantees meet program requirements. Funding will be allocated in one year increments based on annual legislated appropriations (funding may vary each year pending state budget allocation decisions). The application should reflect a budget for FY16 only. Subsequent years will require a renewal application to include an annual budget.

**4. If we apply for a particular amount of funding, within reason, could partial funding be given over no funding at all?**

**A:** Yes, the Department has the authority to review and approve budgets submitted in an application in order to negotiate a final contract.

**5. What are some examples of in-kind support? Are we able to count grants that support other program components towards this requirement?**

**A:** In-kind funding may include donated services, time, and goods. For example, community members or local organizations may contribute services, program materials and/or volunteer in the program. A program may also receive free or discounted use of buildings/space, telephone or utilities, which may be considered in-kind support. It would also be appropriate to consider expenses not covered by the grant that are funded through other sources and which are necessary for the operation of the program as in-kind support. Other state/federal funding may also be considered in-kind support as long as there is no supplanting of funds, meaning two funding sources may not support the same child during the same portion of the day. **Note: In-kind support is not required for this grant, however points are awarded for documentation of in-kind support.** It is recommended that the applicant review the *Rubric of Scoring Criteria for the FY16 Shared Visions Parent Support Program Application* found on the [Shared Visions Parent Program webpage](#) in the *Application* section.

**6. We have utilized Shared Visions Parent Support funding to partially fund Early Head Start (EHS) home-based services for many years. Children in the case load are counted as both EHS and Shared Visions. We are considering an application that would request funding to support another home-based staff. This would be a new position which has not been funded previously by EHS. Can Shared Visions Parent Support funding be used to fund, or partially fund, the newly developed EHS home visiting caseload? Or is this considered supplanting?**

**A:** Requesting funding for a newly developed position would be an allowable request in the budget. Early Head Start funding may be reported as in-kind support if it is used to support

other portions of the budget. If an applicant plans to utilize other funding for the same program, it must ensure an eligible participant is not funded by both funding sources for the same portion of the day.

#### *Budget Categories/Allowable Expenditures*

**1. Can we use funding for salaries or operating expenses?**

**A:** Funding can be used for salaries and operating expenses as long as it follows the guidelines provided in the *FY16 Budget Guidance* located on the [Shared Visions Parent Program webpage](#) in the *Application* section. Funding requested for salaries shall be for personnel providing direct parent support services to the families involved with the program and for the percentage of time employed to provide services for the Shared Visions Parent Support Program. Applicants may include requests for funding of operating expenses in the *Other Expenses* section of the budget form. The total amount of this line item may not exceed 10% of the total grant award.

**2. Where does transportation fall in the budget guidance?**

**A:** Applicants should refer to the *FY16 Budget Guidance* located on the [Shared Visions Parent Program webpage](#) in the *Application* section. Transportation costs for enrolled families and their children during the time of parent support group meetings is listed as an example of an expense under Purchased Services.

## **V. Program Requirements**

### *Enrollment/Student Eligibility*

**1. What are the requirements for enrollment of families? How is “at-risk” defined?**

**A:** Grantees are required to enroll families based on primary and secondary eligibility guidelines. It is required that grantees maintain records of qualifying criteria for those parents receiving educational support services.

**Primary Eligibility: IAC 281-67.4** - The available funds shall be directed to serve parents of at-risk children aged birth through three years in the primary eligibility category as follows:

Parents having one or more children aged birth through three years who meet the current income eligibility guidelines for free and reduced price meals in a local school or whose total income is, or is projected to be, equal to or less than 125 percent of the federally established poverty guidelines.

**Secondary Eligibility: IAC 281-67.5** - The available funds shall be directed to serve parents of at-risk children aged birth through three years when children qualify in one or more of the secondary eligibility categories as follows:

1. Children who are abused.
2. Children functioning below chronological age in two or more developmental areas, one of which

- may be English proficiency, as determined by an appropriate professional.
3. Children born with an established biological risk factor, such as very low birth weight (under 1500 grams—approximately three pounds) or with conditions such as spina bifida, Down’s syndrome or other genetic disorders.
  4. Children born to a parent who was under the age of 18.
  5. Children residing in a household where one or more of the parents or guardian:
    - Has not completed high school;
    - Has been identified as a substance abuser;
    - Has been identified as chronically mentally ill;
    - Is incarcerated;
    - Is illiterate;
    - Is a child or spouse abuser; or
    - Has limited English proficiency.
  6. Children having other special circumstances, such as foster care or being homeless.

### *Reporting*

1. **If our program serves children prenatal to five-years-old, are prenatal babies included in the total child count for children “birth to five” as stated in the application?**

**A:** Yes, when considering the total child count, prenatal babies would be included in the number of children served by this grant. Please note the application requires applicants to provide an estimated number of families to be served.

2. **What kind of reporting is required if awarded?**

**A:** Annual data collection, year-end reports and renewal applications will be required. Programs must also maintain records per ***IAC 281-67.11***.

**281—67.11(279) Grantee responsibilities.** The grantee shall maintain records which include, but are not limited to:

1. Demographic information on parents and children served.
2. Qualifying criteria for those parents receiving educational support services.
3. Documentation of the number of contact hours in either individual or group sessions with parents.
4. Documentation of the type of educational support service provided to parents.
5. Indication of where the services were provided, i.e., home, school or community facility.
6. Evaluation of how each project goal and objective was met, on what timeline, and with what success rate.
7. Record of expenditures and an annual audit.
8. Other information specified by the department necessary to the overall evaluation.

Grantees shall complete a year-end report on forms provided by the department documenting the information outlined in this rule. The final project report is due 45 days after the completion of the project as defined in the contract with the department. The payment of the final quarter of the grant award will be made by the department to the grantee upon receipt and approval of the project final report. No new awards shall be made for continuation of programs where there are delinquent reports from prior grants.

### *In-kind Requirement*

**1. What qualifies for in-kind support? Specifically does it include other state pay or other expenses not covered by the grant?**

**A:** Other state/federal funding may be used to meet the 20% match of in-kind. Please note that supplanting of funds is not allowable. In-kind funding may include donated services, time, and goods. For example, a program may receive free or discounted use of buildings/space, telephone or utilities. It would also be appropriate to consider expenses not covered by the grant that are funded through other sources and which are necessary for the operation of the program as in-kind support.