FY16 Shared Visions Preschool Application

Frequently Asked Questions

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

Shared Visions Preschool Application Questions/Answers

1. **What timeframe is covered by the grant?**
   A: The funding period for FY16 is July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016. Grants will be awarded for one year with a renewal option for up to five years provided grantees meet program requirements.

2. **How do I complete an application?**
   A: The FY16 Shared Visions Preschool Application must be submitted to the Department of Education through the online grant application system, IowaGrants.gov. Instructions for registering in IowaGrants.gov and completing the application can be found on the Shared Visions Preschool Program webpage in the Awarded Locations and Application section.

3. **How do I register in Iowa Grants?**
   A: Directions can be found on the Shared Visions Preschool Program webpage in the Awarded Locations and Application section within the document titled Instructions for Registering in IowaGrants.gov.

4. **What is the deadline for submitting an application?**
   A: Applications must be submitted through IowaGrants.gov by 4:30 pm, January 20, 2015. The timeline for the application process may be found on the Shared Visions Preschool Program webpage in the Awarded Locations and Application section.

5. **What time is the webinar on December 5, 2014?**
   A: The webinar will be recorded and posted on December 5, 2014. A link to the recorded webinar will be located in the Timeline chart on the Shared Visions Preschool Program web page. Potential applicants are encouraged to review the webinar prior to completing an application.

6. **Do I have to apply if I am a current grantee?**
   A: Yes, any program interested in operating a Shared Visions Preschool 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 Preschool 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.

7. Who is eligible to apply?
   A: Any public school, non-profit licensed child care center, Head Start agency, community action agency, or other public, non-profit agency may apply. It is required that applicants meet requirements as outlined in Iowa Code section 256A and 281-Iowa Administrative Code 64.

8. We are currently under the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program as a private partner preschool and wonder if we are able to apply for Shared Visions Preschool funding.
   A: Eligible applicants include any public school, non-profit licensed child care center, Head Start agency, community action agency, or other public, non-profit agency. If an applicant plans to utilize SWVPP funding and Shared Visions Preschool Program funding for the same classroom, it must ensure an eligible child is not funded by both funding sources for the same portion of the day.

9. 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 Preschool Program webpage. The guidance document titled Rubric of Scoring Criteria – FY16 Shared Visions Preschool Application should be reviewed. Quality applications will address all components of the scoring rubric.

10. 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. 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.

11. 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 to request additional persons be linked to an application.

12. What is the free and reduced lunch percentage to qualify for a grant?
    A: Applicants are asked to provide an analysis of the service area related to poverty levels, including an estimate of the numbers of families whose income is 130% or less of the Federal Income Guidelines. Applicants should refer to the Federal Poverty Guidelines 2014 posted on the Shared Visions Preschool Program webpage in the Awarded Locations and Application
section. Points will be awarded based on the quality of evidence provided regarding the level of need in the service area and the number of families meeting income eligibility.

13. Is there a limited number of words for each section allowed when completing the online application?
   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.

14. 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 teacher?
   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.

15. Can we write one grant for two locations?
   A: Applications must be site specific. Applicants who wish to provide services in multiple locations or sites must submit an application for each site. While information from one application may be used for the basis of another site application, proposals and narratives would be tailored to meet the specific needs of the selected community and service area.

16. 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. You will need to provide the 5-digit application ID number associated with the application. 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.

17. Is there a per pupil cap for the budget?
   A: Budgets must follow the guidance as outlined in the Shared Visions Preschool 2015-2016 Budget Guidance document located on the Shared Visions Preschool Program webpage in the Awarded Locations and Application section. The guidance is also an attachment to the Shared Visions Preschool application located in IowaGrants.gov and embedded into the instructions within the budget form. There is not a per pupil cap noted in the guidance.

18. 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.

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19. 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 Shared Visions Preschool 2015-2016 Budget Guidance located on the Shared Visions Preschool Program webpage in the Awarded Locations and Application section. Funding requested for salaries shall be for personnel providing direct preschool services to the children involved with the program and for the percentage of time employed to provide services for the Shared Visions Preschool 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.

20. Are there required program standards?
A: Accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is required. New programs not currently accredited shall participate in the accreditation process of NAEYC during the programs’ first year of funding and will be granted a waiver of accreditation during that year. Programs must attain accreditation during their second year of funding. Programs that do not attain accreditation during year two or do not receive a waiver will not be funded for renewal. Programs currently accredited shall participate in the renewal process and maintain accreditation with NAEYC. Programs unable to maintain accreditation or that do not receive a waiver will not be funded. Refer to 281-64.15(2) and 281-64.15(3) for more detailed information.

21. Do applicants have to be currently following NAEYC Program Standards?
A: Applicants are asked to submit a plan for obtaining NAEYC Accreditation if they are not currently accredited.

22. Is NAEYC Accreditation required for ALL programs in the district?
A: NAEYC Accreditation is only required for those classrooms that are serving children funded by the Shared Visions Preschool Program grant.

23. Do the teachers have to have a teaching license?
A: Programs must be accredited through the NAEYC. Therefore, NAEYC staff qualifications are the minimum requirement.

24. What is the required ratio?
A: Any classroom serving children funded by Shared Visions Preschool Grants must maintain a child-teacher ratio of not less than one staff member per eight children.

25. Are we allowed to serve 20 children by placing 16 Shared Visions children and 4 Head Start children in the same classroom?
A: A teacher-child ratio of 1 staff member per 8 children is required. If a classroom serves 20 children, three staff members would be needed to maintain the required ratio. Classrooms must also follow NAEYC requirements regarding class size maximum while considering the ages of the children served.
26. Is it allowable for children funded by other sources to participate in the Shared Visions Preschool classroom? 
   A: A grantee may braid funding sources as long as two funding sources do not support the same child during the same time.

27. What are the requirements for enrollment of children? How is “at-risk” defined? 
   A: Grantees are required to enroll children based on primary and secondary eligibility guidelines. It is required that grantees document the number of children enrolled under primary and secondary eligibility and the criteria used for enrollment.

   **Primary Eligibility:** No fewer than 80% of age-eligible children who are from families at or below 130% of the federal poverty guideline may be enrolled per [IAC 281-64.7](#). Tuition or fees may not be charged to children and families enrolled based on primary eligibility.

   **Secondary Eligibility:** No more than 20% of age-eligible children may be enrolled based on other at-risk factors as defined in [IAC 281-64.8](#). Children enrolled based on secondary eligibility and above the income eligibility guidelines may be served on a sliding fee schedule determined at the local level.

28. Can children who don’t meet the enrollment requirements attend the Shared Visions classroom? 
   A: The program may include children not at risk, provided they are at full pay and meet age requirements. These children must be considered when determining the requirements for class size maximum and child-teacher ratio.

29. What kind of reporting is required if awarded? 
   A: Annual year-end reports and renewal applications, as well as information necessary to allow the Department to create unique student ID numbers will be required. It is also required that three checkpoints be completed with all enrolled children in *Teaching Strategies GOLD* online.