

# Funder Collaborative for Reading Success 2018 Request for Proposal Guidance

**RFP Issued: Wednesday January 10, 2018**  
**Deadline: Friday February 9, 2018 5:00PM ET**

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## 1. SUMMARY

### The Funder Collaborative for Reading Success

The goal of the Funder Collaborative for Reading Success (FCRS) is to strengthen and advance early literacy skill development in children from birth to age 8 to ensure children in Springfield are reading at a proficient level by fourth grade. With this request for proposals, FCRS has two priorities:

1. **high-quality family education and engagement focused on building families' capacity to support their children 0-8 in developing language, emergent literacy, and reading skills.** Our use of the terms "family" and "parents" are meant to include parents, grandparents, guardians and other caretakers raising young children.
2. **enhancing the capacity of early education and care, out-of-school time, and summer learning programs to provide high-quality support for children's language, emergent literacy, and reading skills.**

FCRS is planning to award up to \$400K in this RFP process. Grant maximum is \$50,000 per year. Single year and two-year grant proposals will be considered. As a standard practice, we do not intend to issue multiple awards to one organization applying for both priorities, but we reserve the right to do so for compelling cases. Given the limited resources available, this will be a highly competitive grantmaking process. Funding will be given to organizations with experience in delivering high-quality programs that align with the RFP's priorities.

In making grant decisions, a heavy emphasis will be placed on the applicant's ability to measure the impact of its work.

## 2. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To receive a grant award, an organization must:

- demonstrate experience in successfully providing high-quality programs aligned with one or more of the RFP priority areas.
- be legally incorporated as a not-for-profit charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code; or operating under the fiscal sponsorship of a tax-exempt nonprofit organization. (see Section 8 for additional details regarding fiscal sponsorship).

*Please note:* Family child care networks operated by not-for-profit charitable organizations are eligible; family child care businesses that are not legally incorporated as not-for-profit charitable organizations are not eligible.

### 3. FCRS BACKGROUND

The [Reading Success by 4th Grade](#) initiative (RS4G) was launched in 2010 by the Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation. RS4G has catalyzed cross-sector efforts by schools, community-based providers, faith-based organizations, the private sector, families, media and policy/advocacy initiatives to boost the third grade reading proficiency of Springfield's children. The **Funder Collaborative for Reading Success (FCRS)** was created by Springfield grantmakers to support the goals of RS4G. In its first phase (2012-2015) FCRS awarded approximately \$1 million to Springfield initiatives focused on family engagement, increasing the capacity of early education and care, out-of-school time, and summer learning programs to provide high-quality support for children's language, emergent literacy, and reading skills; and increasing access for children to high-quality early education and care, out-of-school time, and summer learning programs that impact their language, emergent literacy, and reading skills.

FCRS members believe that ensuring Springfield's children are successful early readers is the responsibility of the entire community and requires a multi-sector, interdisciplinary, and resource-intensive effort that is outside the reach of any single organization to adequately address. FCRS partners with philanthropic, non-profit, private sector, educational, and community-based organizations to empower Springfield's families, schools and the community to create a culture of literacy from birth.

FCRS' second phase (2016-2019) has focused on family engagement and improving the capacity of early education programs to support children's emerging language and literacy skills. The priorities of this RFP are described below.

### 4. PRIORITIES

#### Priority 1: Family Engagement

FCRS supports efforts to build the capacity of families to support children's language, emergent literacy and reading skills, with a focus on children 0-8.

FCRS' vision is that all Springfield parents of children 0-8 have the knowledge and resources they need to successfully support the growth of their child(ren)'s language and literacy skills and developmental and academic success. Family engagement efforts reach all families with valuable knowledge in culturally competent ways. Family engagement efforts recognize and build on the value and expertise all parents/guardians bring to supporting their children's success, provide opportunities for parents/guardians to meet and learn from their peers, and help parents/guardians connect to relevant community resources.

FCRS is interested in funding family engagement efforts that:

- 1) Prioritize engagement of hard-to-reach, unserved and under-served families in Springfield.
- 2) Build parents' capacity to:
  - support language/literacy skills and children's overall positive development;
  - help their children make a successful transition to kindergarten and succeed in elementary school.
- 3) Build parents' understanding of:
  - the importance of reading;
  - the importance of enrolling children in high quality preschool, out-of-school time and summer programming.

- 4) Build the capacity of family engagement professionals to leverage the expertise and knowledge of parents to better design and deliver their programs.
- 5) Are designed with sufficient intensity, use effective implementation strategies to achieve impact and engage in outcome measurement.

*Activities eligible for funding under this priority include but **are not limited to:***

- Programs to assist parents to understand children’s developmental milestones 0-8 and nurture child(ren)’s language, emergent literacy and reading skills.
- Efforts by early education and care, out-of-school time and summer learning programs to engage families in building their children’s language, emergent literacy, and reading skills.
- Efforts to enlist trusted messengers, such as leaders of faith-based organizations and other community organizations, as conduits for helping families build children’s language, emergent literacy and reading skills.
- Professional development for program administrators and staff – including site leaders, teachers, family child care providers, community health professionals, and others -- to build their capacity to successfully engage families in supporting the development of their children’s language, emergent literacy and reading skills.

**Useful background reading includes:**

- **Dr. Nonie Lesaux** of the Harvard Graduate School of Education and colleagues authored the *Lead for Literacy* memo series with support from the W. Clement and Jessie V. Stone Foundation. Although we believe the entire series is important and useful, we recommend paying particular attention to Memo 10, Designing Family Partnerships that Make a Difference and Memo 11, Implementing Family Partnerships that Make a Difference. See all the memos [here](#).
- **Dr. Karen Mapp** of the Harvard Graduate School of Education authored [Partners in Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family–School Partnerships](#), which presents a framework for designing family engagement initiatives that build capacity among educators and families to partner for student success.

**Priority 2: Enhancing the capacity of early education and care, out-of-school time and summer learning programs to specifically support children’s emergent language and literacy skills**

The second key priority for this RFP is to support efforts of early education and care, out-of-school time and summer programs to support children’s emergent language and literacy skills.

For **early education and care programs**, FCRS is interested in supporting center and family-based programs’ efforts to integrate the key features of high quality preK literacy instruction identified by Dr. Nonie Lesaux in [PreK-3rd: Getting Literacy Instruction Right](#):

- responding to the developmental needs of children
- connecting preK and kindergarten
- using content-based, thematic units of study
- integrating skills-based and knowledge-based instruction
- fostering a combination of direct instruction and inquiry-based learning.

In addition, we are interested in efforts that are designed with sufficient intensity, use effective implementation strategies to achieve impact, and engage in outcome measurement.

For **out-of-school and summer** programs, FCRS is interested in supporting programs that:

- Increase students' engagement in reading and writing, develop their critical thinking skills, and help to foster a love and appreciation for reading and writing.
- Utilize the vast range of activities that develop literacy skills, using subjects such as music, arts, STEM, etc. to increase student engagement.
- Link literacy activities to real world situations that make learning relevant to students' lives.
- Embed student choice and voice within the program to give students ownership over their learning and make the literacy skill-building more meaningful.
- Are designed with sufficient intensity, use effective implementation strategies to achieve impact and engage in outcome measurement.

*Activities eligible for funding under this priority include but **are not limited to**:*

- Professional development for program administrators and staff – including site leaders, teachers, family child care providers, and others.
- Introducing or deepening the implementation of effective literacy, language and reading skill development curricula. Applicants requesting support for curricula implementation should detail their strategy for providing effective training and ongoing support for teachers and site leaders in implementing the chosen curricula with fidelity.
- Support for integrating effective literacy-based assessments into programming
- Support for building and strengthening partnerships among schools and early childhood programs and summer/OST programs.

**Useful background reading includes:**

#### **Early Childhood**

[Early Beginnings: Early Literacy Knowledge and Instruction: A guide for early childhood administrators and professional development providers](#): National Early Literacy Panel, 2009.

[PreK-3rd: Getting Literacy Instruction Right](#): PreK-3<sup>rd</sup> Policy to Action Brief, Foundation for Child Development, by Dr. Nonie Lesaux, May 2013.

[Lead for Literacy Memos](#) – Dr. Nonie Lesaux – described above, Fall 2012.

#### **Out-of-School Time/Summer**

[Supporting the Literacy Development of Low-Income Children in Afterschool Programs: Challenges and Exemplary Practices](#): Dr. Robert Halpern for Afterschool Matters, 2003.

[Building Literacy in Afterschool](#), Afterschool Alliance Brief, 2015.

## **5. TIMELINE**

Grants awarded through this RFP will cover the time period of July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019 (unless a multiple year grant is awarded).

<b>Deadlines &amp; Key Dates</b>	
<b>RFP Released</b>	<b>Wednesday, Jan 10, 2018</b>
<b>Proposals Due (Late Proposals Not Accepted)</b>	<b>5:00PM ET, Friday, Feb 9, 2018</b>
<b>Site Visits/Meetings by request of FCRS</b>	<b>April 2018</b>
<b>Awards Announced by</b>	<b>Friday, May 18, 2018</b>
<b>Signed Memorandum of Understanding Due</b>	<b>Friday, June 8, 2018</b>
<b>Program Year Begins</b>	<b>Monday, July 2, 2018</b>

*Proposals will not be accepted past the stated deadline. Please carefully adhere to all time and application requirements.*

## **6. MAXIMUM GRANT & ELIGIBLE USES**

FCRS is planning to award a total of up to \$400,000 in this RFP process. The maximum annual grant to be awarded under this RFP is \$50,000. Single-year and two-year grant proposals will be considered. Only one grant application per organization per funding priority will be accepted. As a standard practice, we do not intend to issue multiple awards to one organization applying for both priorities, but we reserve the right to do so for compelling cases.

Given the limited resources available, this will be a highly competitive grantmaking process. In making grant decisions, a heavy emphasis will be placed on the applicant's ability to measure the impact of its work.

### **Allowable Uses of Funding**

**Grants** may be used to support:

- Program operation and all reasonably related expenses
- Salary and benefits of program personnel
- Agency overhead not to exceed 15% of the overall program budget

### **Non-allowable Uses of Funding**

**Grants** may **not** be used for the following purposes:

- Capital projects and/or campaigns
- Debt reduction
- Endowments
- Fundraising events, the purchase of tickets for benefits, courtesy advertising
- Religious organizations except for programs that meet broad community needs

- Projects that seek to directly or indirectly influence legislation or election campaigns

## 7. REQUIREMENTS

Organizations that are awarded a grant will be required to:

- Implement the program in concert with the approved proposal and budget, or an agreed upon revised proposal and budget;
- Submit an annual programmatic and finance report, in addition to a final report; and
- Include appropriate recognition of FCRS funding in marketing and press materials.

## 8. SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Applicants are required to use [AGM's Common Proposal Form](#). Please apply electronically by emailing the following to [ReadingSuccessFunders@gmail.com](mailto:ReadingSuccessFunders@gmail.com). **Please make sure that the Full Proposal Narrative, Cover Sheet, and Budget Narrative are in Microsoft Word and not PDFs.** Please also ensure that all of your file names include the name of your organization and the content of the file. For example, Early\_Reading\_Inc\_Cover\_Sheet.docx.

1. AGM Cover Sheet (in Microsoft Word).
2. AGM Full Proposal Narrative (in Microsoft Word).

**In answer to Question 9**, please detail your proposed program outcomes, and your methods, measures and timeline for tracking outcomes.

**In answer to Question 10, please detail:**

- a) How your program design is aligned with research and/or practice-based strategies to achieve your goals.
  - b) How much time participants spend in your program and how your program is designed with sufficient intensity to achieve your desired outcomes.
  - c) How you implement rigorous standards, provide ongoing training and technical assistance (drawing on appropriate professionals as needed) and engage in continual quality assessment.
  - d) How you achieve two of the key markers of a quality program: supportive relationships and an environment that stimulates and enriches learning.
  - e) How your strategies respond specifically to the needs of your target population.
  - f) If you are responding to Priority 1, family engagement, please tell us how you have engaged families and built their capacity to support children's literacy development. How have you leveraged the expertise and knowledge of parents to better design and deliver family outreach and educational programs?
3. Resumes or bios of key project staff (Word or PDFs).
  4. AGM Diversity Data Sheet (Excel or PDF).
  5. AGM Budget (If you are requesting multi-year funding, please provide a multi-year budget). (Excel or PDF).

6. Budget Narrative (detail all budget line items). (Microsoft Word).
7. List of the **governing board for your 501(c)(3)** organization with names and affiliations (i.e. profession, community represented) (Word or PDFs).
8. Current, board-approved, **annual operating budget for the 501(c)(3)** organization for the current fiscal year reflecting projected income and expenses. (Excel or PDF).
9. Signed **letters of understanding and agreement** for all project collaborators necessary for the implementation of the project. (Word or PDFs).
10. **Fiscal sponsorship agreement and additional materials**, if applicable. Please contact Nancy Reiche at the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts by **January 19, 2018** for this form at [nreiche@communityfoundation.org](mailto:nreiche@communityfoundation.org)
11. **Current IRS 501(c)(3) Determination Letter(s) for nonprofits not previously funded by the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts. A copy of the most recent letter of affirmation from the IRS under Section 501(c)(3) and under Section 509(a) is needed.** Name and address must be current. (Word or PDFs).
12. **501(c)(3) Organization's most recent audit/review, including management letters.** The audit must reflect the organization's most recent fiscal year or be accompanied by a copy of the board-approved income and expense statement for the most recent fiscal year. If your organization is not required to complete an audit/review, a copy of the board approved income and expense statement for the most recent fiscal year is acceptable. Please do not include IRS 990s. (Word or PDFs).

This RFP is accessible on the following websites:

- Reading Success by 4<sup>th</sup> Grade: <https://www.readby4thgrade.com/RFP>
- Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation: <https://www.davisfdn.org/RFP>
- Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts: <http://communityfoundation.org/>
- United Way of Pioneer Valley: <http://uwpv.org/>

Access the AGM forms at: <http://www.agmconnect.org/resources-tools/resource-center-agm/agm-common-proposal-form>

Applications are due by **5:00PM ET on Friday, February 9, 2018**. Any proposals received after this deadline will not be reviewed. You will receive an email confirmation once your application is received.

Only one grant application per organization per funding priority will be accepted.

## 9. QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

If you have any questions about this application or the procedures, please contact Kathleen Traphagen, FCRS Project Coordinator, [ReadingSuccessFunders@gmail.com](mailto:ReadingSuccessFunders@gmail.com).

During the period when this RFP is open, we will periodically post Q&As on the websites listed above.

**10. FCRS MEMBERS**

Barings

Baystate Health

Berkshire Bank Foundation

The Beveridge Family Foundation

Charles H. Hall Foundation, Bank of America – Trustee

Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts

Farmington Bank Community Foundation

Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation

PeoplesBank

SIS Fund at the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts

TD Charitable Foundation

United Bank Foundation

United Way of the Pioneer Valley

**11. SUMMARY OF CONTACT EMAILS/WEBSITES:**

- Submission of proposals by 5:00 PM February 9, 2018: [readingsuccessfunders@gmail.com](mailto:readingsuccessfunders@gmail.com)
- If your organization has a fiscal sponsor, email Nancy Reiche for the appropriate forms by January 19, 2018: [nreiche@communityfoundation.org](mailto:nreiche@communityfoundation.org)
- To access the AGM templates to develop your proposal and budget:  
<http://www.agmconnect.org/resources-tools/resource-center-agm/agm-common-proposal-form>
- If you have questions about this RFP: [readingsuccessfunders@gmail.com](mailto:readingsuccessfunders@gmail.com)