



Request for Proposals:

Colorado Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems: Health Integration Prenatal-to-Three Program
Equity Consultant

Submission Deadline: Friday, September 23rd 2022 at 5:00pm MT

Purpose: The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to identify a skilled and collaborative partner that will support [illuminate Colorado](#) with the Colorado Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (CO-ECCS): Health Integration Prenatal-to-Three (P-3) project with equitable processes in the project activities and expert guidance in the development of a P-3 Early Childhood Health Equity Action Plan. This procurement allows for up to three additional renewal years.

Budget: The initial award will be \$20,000, but may be up to a total of \$40,000 to support grant year two (August 2022 - July 2023), depending on federal approval. Additional funding may be made available for grant years three, four and five. Applicants will be asked to develop a budget for Grant Year two not to exceed \$20,000 and propose a budget for additional years, dependent on the proposal.

Term of Contract: Upon execution (expected October 29th, 2022) - July 31st, 2023 (Grant Year Two), with the possibility of extension for subsequent grant years. This request is intended to result in a contract that will begin one initial year and three additional years, at the discretion of illuminate Colorado for the CO-ECCS project.

RFP Submission: Proposals should be digitally submitted to Dawn Newby at dnewby@illuminatecolorado.org by 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time on Friday, September 23rd, 2022. Proposals should not exceed 4 pages, excluding budget and other attachments.

Proposal Selection & Virtual Interviews: Written proposals will be reviewed by a panel of CO-ECCS project team members, stakeholders, and illuminate Colorado staff. Final candidates may be invited for an interview on the week of Oct 3rd, 2022.

Background and Objectives:

Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Program

The Colorado Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (CO-ECCS): Health Integration Prenatal-to-Three project is the initiative resulting from a five-year grant awarded to the Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) in August 2021 by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for their Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Program. Funds were awarded to Colorado to advance cross-sector collaborations and partnerships, health system improvements, state-level policy and fiscal innovation, equity, and family leadership to promote early developmental health and family well-being among prenatal to three-year-old (P-3) populations. Colorado is among the 20 grantees awarded funds through the ECCS Program to build state capacity and infrastructure to integrate and strengthen maternal and early childhood systems.

The program's particular focus on the prenatal-to-age three period maximizes the opportunity to reach and support families during the earliest stages of parenting. The federal grant provides \$255,600 annually for five years (2021-2026) to implement projects that will advance Colorado's maternal and early childhood systems of care and help Colorado achieve the vision that "All children are valued, healthy and thriving and have equal access to services, supports and resources."

Illuminate Colorado was selected by the CDEC to ensure the successful implementation of the goals and activities over the funded project period. Illuminate Colorado has also partnered with the Colorado Health Institute (CHI) to complete activities of the project. CDEC also has an interdepartmental agreement with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) to support data collection and evaluation.

Three Priority Goals:

The goals of CO-ECCS are:

Goal One: Increase the engagement of new stakeholders, such as families and health providers, in the system of wrap-around support for families during pregnancy through the first three years of a child's life.

Goal Two: Align early childhood and maternal child health systems to advance the sustainability of multigenerational preventive services and systems.

Goal Three: Advance health equity by engaging the Colorado Partnership for Thriving Families, Maternal and Child Health Program, Office of Health Equity, Department of Early Childhood, and Early Childhood Leadership Commission to produce a P-3 Early Childhood Health Equity Action Plan.

The CO-ECCS project goals, objectives, and activities will integrate and align Colorado's health system with the broader maternal and early childhood system to increase access to services, promote best practices and health innovations, and to embed equity and further integrate family leadership in state decision-making and planning.

With a collective vision and shared goals, the CO-ECCS project will result in system transformation that synthesizes P-3 services across the maternal and early childhood landscape with hopes of seeing measurable improvements in health for all Coloradans and populations that experience disparities in maternal and early childhood outcomes.

ECCS Working Group

To guide the implementation of the CO-ECCS project, the Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC), Colorado's federally- authorized state advisory council for early childhood, approved the formation of the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Working Group on December 16, 2021 which is subject to annual review and reauthorization.

The ECCS Working Group is charged as a cross-sector advisory group engaging stakeholders in the system of wrap-around supports for families during pregnancy through the first three years of a child's life to ensure alignment of Colorado's early childhood and maternal child health systems. In order to advance health equity of P-3 services, the Working Group will also collect information and examine data from diverse partners to inform a P-3 Early Childhood Health Equity Action Plan.

In order for the ECCS Working Group to be successful they will:

- Expand health care providers' use of a single point of entry and coordinated intake and referral system.
- Identify and assess policy barriers across early childhood systems and build on health innovations to improve systems.
- Align family engagement strategies across early childhood and maternal child health initiatives and create a structure for incorporating feedback into planning.
- Support local communities in collaborative planning and blending funds for program implementation.

- Merge health into the early childhood system by examining existing needs assessments that impact the P-3 and implement health equity strategies.
- Examine racial disparities identified in data sets and needs assessments and use data to inform the P-3 Early Childhood Health Equity Action Plan.
- Collect information from diverse partners through existing advisory councils to inform the P-3 Early Childhood Health Equity Action Plan.
- Participate in the development and endorse a P-3 Early Childhood Health Equity Action Plan.

Partner Scope of Work:

Illuminate is seeking an equity consultant that can strategically guide and support the CO-ECCS project by contributing expert knowledge in practices, values, and mission rooted in equity, diversity and inclusivity (EDI). The equity consultant will assist in the integration and enhancement of EDI through all CO-ECCS activities by providing subject matter expertise and technical assistance. They will also conduct research and analysis on equity and racial disparities in the early childhood and health field; coordination of listening sessions with partners and families; and coordination across state agencies supporting equity in an effort towards the development of the P-3 Early Childhood Health Equity Action Plan.

Overall Project Activities & Tasks: August 2022 - July 2023:

An equity consultant will bring their demonstrated expertise and experience in equity, diversity, and inclusion to:

- Assist Illuminate Colorado in supporting the work towards the three goals of the CO-ECCS project in a way that is equitable to all possible stakeholders, especially those who have been systematically and historically oppressed and discriminated against by the maternal health and early childhood systems by (but not limited to):
 - Participating in monthly ECCS Working Group meetings
 - Advising and supporting efforts toward data equity on data collected through CO-ECCS
 - Advising on authentic inclusion and power sharing with families from diverse backgrounds and geographical locations.

Illuminate Colorado assumes responsibilities to ensure language justice for the CO-ECCS Project.

Early Childhood Health Equity Activities & Tasks: August 2022 - August 2023: The equity consultant will work with Illuminate staff to support CO-ECCS Goal Three efforts to advance health equity by engaging key partners from Colorado

Partnership for Thriving Families, Maternal and Child Health Program, Office of Health Equity, Department of Early Childhood, and Early Childhood Leadership Commission and facilitate the ECCS Working Group's contributions. This development work will support the project team in producing the P-3 Early Childhood Health Equity Action Plan. The consultant will utilize the initial work plan for Goal Three as a guide to the project activities to be tracked, monitored and updated with Illuminate Colorado. Initial work plan activities include and are not limited to:

- Develop and build an equity audit framework that includes service trends, climate, culture and engagement. An [ECCS Health Equity Framework](#), provided by the Early Childhood Systems Technical Assistance & Coordination Center (ECS-TACC), is available for use or adaptation
- Review existing reports cataloging disparities, causes and associated solutions across P-3 agencies and task forces.
- Choosing a racial equity framework that articulates racial equity; implicit and explicit bias; and individual, institutional, and structural racism.
- Review the Strategic Asset and Gaps Analysis (SAGA) for the project, existing equity plans and statements (ex. strategic plans, program materials, communication).
- Compile data, synthesize results, and report findings from discussions with stakeholders, feedback, and primary source documents.
- Identify practices across P-3 serving state departments that contribute to inequities.
- Identify programmatic and policy changes to promote equity.

RFP Requirements:

Each proposal should include the elements below:

1. Capacity & Experience

- a. Overview of Experience
- b. What makes you uniquely positioned to serve as the strategic partner for this work? For example:
 - Experience with statewide maternal health systems, early childhood systems and multi system integration at a state level
 - Experience in engaging lived experience experts and constituents of an initiative and including them, especially those that come from underrepresented communities
 - Experience with engaging professionals in discussion around health equity (i.e. social determinants of health, disparities in data, structural racism)

- Experience with early childhood systems and approaches with communication of how systemic oppression impacts early childhood development
 - Experience with advancing equitable practices in data collection, analysis, and disaggregation
- c. References to experience and expertise OR work products that demonstrate experience and expertise (no page limit)
2. **CO-ECCS Activities Approach:** Approach should include the activities listed in *Partner Scope of Work* but does not need to be limited to those activities.
- a. **Overall Project Collaborative Approach:** Description of how you anticipate collaborating with Illuminate Colorado to support the ongoing activities of the CO-ECCS Project in partnership with CHI, CDEC, CDPHE, and the ECCS Working Group.
 - b. **Early Childhood Health Equity Approach:** Description and a high-level plan of how you will approach the activities to partner and build a P-3 Early Childhood Health Equity Action Plan.
3. **Budget (No page limit)**
- a. Initial Budget not to exceed \$20,000 to complete the activities identified under item 2. CO-ECCS Activities Approach for the period of October 2022 - July 2023