



2023–2024 Room for Me Grant

Expanding capacity for afterschool, school vacation,
and summer programs

Request for Proposals

Published: June 01, 2023

Application Deadline: August 08, 2023, 4 PM EST

Award Notification: September 08, 2023

Vermont Afterschool
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I. INTRODUCTION

Vermont Afterschool is proud to continue working with the Vermont Department for Children and Families' Child Development Division (CDD). Together, we are extending and expanding the Room For Me Grant.

We anticipate \$1,000,000 in federal funding to be made available with this competitive grant process through June 2024. The goal is to expand the number of school-age (ages 5–12) child care slots in afterschool, school vacation, and summer programs statewide. We especially aim to grant funds to underserved areas of Vermont.

Vermont Afterschool continues to address needs created or worsened by the pandemic. Afterschool, school vacation, and summer child care programs offer important opportunities for Vermont's children and youth to engage, connect, and heal. They provide safe and inclusive environments with more time for learning and growth. They are a place where children and youth build relationships, explore interests, develop skills, and have valuable experiences. Importantly, these programs play a critical role in our communities. They help support working families by providing quality care and supervision during the workday.

Our collective work in expanding access to quality afterschool, school vacation, and summer child care programs will amplify efforts to provide universal afterschool in the future. We encourage you and your partners to consider your strengths in your community and think innovatively as you plan what these important opportunities can look like for the children and youth in your community!

Projects must include the start-up of new programs or the expansion of existing programs.

Current 2022–2023 Room For Me Grant Grantees and those awarded an extension through the end of November 2023 are eligible to apply for this grant opportunity. Their application must meet eligibility requirements on page 5 and be a *new* project for capacity expansion.

A. Grant Purpose

This grant is designed to:

- Expand the amount of child care capacity across the state of Vermont.
- Aid communities with high-quality afterschool, school vacation, and summer (year-round) child care programs that support working families and meet youths' well-being, connection, and mental health needs.
- Expand afterschool, school vacation, and summer child care programs for children and youth (ages 5–12) in areas where few or no services currently exist and in ways that increase how affordable, accessible, available, and inclusive these programs are across Vermont.
- Increase the number of programs that accept Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP) funds so that opportunities for Vermont children and youth expand.

B. Program Funding Priorities

This grant is designed to expand capacity and access to afterschool and summer child care programs by:

- Increasing year-round (operating at least 42 weeks) licensed program slots for children and youth.
- Creating new licensed or regulated programs in parts of the state where few or no options are currently available. This can include extending hours/days of operation to serve more children and youth, or adding new locations/sites.
- Addressing affordability for children and youth (ages 5–12) and their families by enrolling in CCFAP.

II. FUNDING AVAILABLE AND GRANT AWARDS

At least \$1,000,000 in Child Care and Development Block Grant funding supported by American Rescue Plan (ARPA) investments is available for 2023–2024 awards. Maximum grant requests may be up to \$50,000, determined by program type:

Program Type:	Maximum Grant Award:
Family child care (home-based) programs	\$20,000
Child care centers, schools, businesses, municipalities, and other agencies	\$50,000

Vermont Afterschool is working closely with and at the direction of the Child Development Division (CDD). Vermont Afterschool holds the right to make award decisions based on added criteria. These can include but are not limited to: geographic location, fiscal risk analysis, non-compliance with past awards, and/or failure to respond with information requests.

III. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

To be eligible, a program must:

- Be a new or existing regulated, center-based child care/afterschool program, or a family child care home.
- Be in good regulatory standing with the Vermont Child Care Licensing regulations specific to the type of program being operated.
- Enroll children/families eligible for and participating in Child Development Division’s (CDD) Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP).
- Provide child care for school-age children (ages 5–12) for at least 42 weeks of the year.
- Propose a type of project that results in a higher number of licensed school-age slots available. Projects may include minor remodeling, equipment, materials, or increased levels of staffing (e.g., hiring, training, or increased/extended staffing hours/days).
- Outline in the application a plan to achieve any eligibility criteria if a program does not currently meet them.

NOTE: Before you complete this grant application, we strongly suggest you reach out to a [CDD Child Care Business Technician](#) to ensure your project will meet licensing requirements.

IV. 2023–2024 GRANT APPLICATION TIMELINE

Task	Date
RFP Published	June 01, 2023
Questions Due	Monday, August 07, 2023, 12 PM EST Please submit questions about completing this application here: https://tinyurl.com/RoomForMeGrantQuestions Questions will be answered within 24 hours during regular business hours here: https://tinyurl.com/roomformefaq
Applications Due	Tuesday, August 08, 2023, 4PM EST Complete and submit electronic application here: https://tinyurl.com/roomformegrantapplication
Award Notification	September 08, 2023
Program Periods	September 11, 2023 – June 28, 2024
Award Periods	September 11, 2023 – July 12, 2024

V. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

A. Financial Reporting and Reimbursement Process

Grantees will receive funds through a reimbursement process. Vermont Afterschool agrees to reimburse the grantee for services they perform up to the maximum amount stated in their grant agreement. Services provided must be within the purpose of the grant and are authorized under the terms and conditions of this grant.

The grantee will provide a financial report along with supporting documents (i.e., invoices and receipts) on or before the fifth day of each month for the duration of the grant period. Financial reports will contain eligible reimbursable costs incurred in carrying out the purpose(s) of the program. Upon receipt of the report, Vermont Afterschool staff will review reimbursement requests for completion and accuracy. The report will be returned for correction if there are any errors, inconsistencies, or questions on expenses. The need for correction and further communication may result in a delay in your reimbursement.

Reimbursements to grantees will be disbursed when Vermont Afterschool receives funds from the Vermont Department for Children and Families Child Development Division (CDD). Once financial reports and supporting documents are approved, grantees will be paid within 30–60 days.

B. General Payment Information

The maximum dollar amount awarded to each grantee under this grant is not intended to guarantee the amount of payment. The grantee will be paid for services performed up to the maximum allowed amount. Unless amended, this is a one-time grant award for the amount indicated. There are no assurances of continued funding beyond this grant term. The grantee should monitor their expenses and invoices. No payment beyond the maximum total grant amount will be made.

VI. ALLOWABLE USE OF FUNDS

There are two types of expenses and activities that are allowable under this grant:

- Temporarily reimbursable for up to 6–8 weeks
- Continuously reimbursable for the duration of the grant term

Temporarily reimbursable for up to 6–8 weeks only:

- Salaries and fringe benefits (i.e., employer paid taxes, company paid benefits to employees, etc.). Once enrollment and Child Care Financial Assistance Program reimbursements support this cost, it is no longer reimbursable.
- Healthy snacks and meals that comply with the [USDA Afterschool Program](#) and [Summer Food Service Program nutrition meal pattern](#). Once enrollment funds support this cost, it is no longer reimbursable.

Continuously reimbursable:

- Costs linked with expansion of an existing program: number of weeks and hours, number of children served, staff, activities, adding a site, etc.
- Costs linked with creating a new program in a community where few or no options currently exist
- 1099 contractors
- Accounting or consulting services directly related to the financial operations of the grant
- Consultants, subcontractors, and evaluators

- Program materials and supplies ([eCFR :: 2 CFR 200.1 -- Definitions](#)) related to expanding the number of school-age child care slots
- Equipment related to expanding the number of school-age child care slots [eCFR :: 2 CFR 200.1 -- Definitions](#)
- Costs linked with developing and/or creating new partnerships with community-based organizations, municipalities, higher education, businesses and/or schools
- Advertisements, promotional, and marketing items for community outreach tied with the expansion of available slots or program opportunities
- Capital improvements and permanent renovations
 - Use [this guidance on allowable construction as outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations](#)
 - Allowable funding can include minor renovations and projects to non-structural walls, new flooring, plumbing etc., and outdoor structures, sitework, survey fees, permitting, design, and initiative funding

VII. UNALLOWABLE USE OF FUNDS

The following activities and expenses are not allowed and are not reimbursable:

- Costs incurred or paid before the start or after the end of the grant period
- Scholarships or subsidies
- Incentives including plaques, trophies, stickers, certificates, t-shirts (unless approved and purchased for safety reasons for field trips), and give-a-ways
- Gift cards
- Field trips purely for entertainment purposes
- Unapproved out-of-state or overnight field trips, including retreats, lock-ins, etc.
- End-of-year celebrations or food for parties or socials
- Decorative items
- Purchase of facilities and vehicles (e.g., buses, vans, cars) or land acquisition
- Dues to organizations, federations, or societies for personal benefits
- Interest expenses
- Direct labor and subcontract costs for remodeling or construction
- Major renovations, new buildings or major additions to buildings, foundation changes, roof replacements, etc.

IMPORTANT NOTE: This is not an all-inclusive list of allowable and unallowable expenses. 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.420-475 lists general allowability for selected items of costs. If you have questions about whether an expense is allowable or unallowable, please submit them here: <https://tinyurl.com/RoomForMeGrantQuestions>.

Questions and answers will be made accessible here: <https://tinyurl.com/roomformefaq>.

VIII. MONITORING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Monitoring and technical assistance opportunities are essential. They can set your programs up for success and ensure your grant goals are being met on time. Vermont Afterschool will be accessible throughout the grant period for support and guidance.

The goals of monitoring and technical assistance are to recognize areas of strength and areas for continued growth. Our collective goal we aim to achieve is to provide exceptional programming for Vermont's youth.

A. Monitoring

Monitoring activities for grantees may include emails, phone calls, virtual meetings, and onsite visits. Grantees may be monitored on topics such as, but not limited to, staffing, effectively maintaining the health and safety of youth and staff, training and development, transportation, general strengths, challenges, and compliance with the grant agreement.

Grantees will submit four narrative performance reports throughout the time of this grant. These reports will include data on the following: total number of children served; total number of increased slots; total number of days the program expanded, data on their other measurable outcomes; lessons learned; and challenges and successes. Additional data may be required. Reports will be due on the following dates: October 05, 2023, January 05, 2024, April 05, 2024, and July 05, 2024.

B. Technical Assistance

Grantees will be required to attend a virtual Financial Management session. This will be held before the start of the grant period. Community check-ins will be held monthly to provide grantees with updates, best practices, community support, and resources. Other technical assistance opportunities may be scheduled by Vermont Afterschool throughout the grant period.

Vermont Afterschool will also be available for individual technical assistance as needed. Contact information for your program specialist will be made available before the beginning of your grant period.

IX. GRANT APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION

Complete and submit the electronic application here:

<https://tinyurl.com/roomformegrantapplication>

Submit questions about completing this application here:

<https://tinyurl.com/RoomForMeGrantQuestions>

X. REVIEW PROCESS AND CRITERIA

Grant applications will be scored using the Scoring Rubric found in Appendix A. Vermont Afterschool will collaborate with a team of reviewers who have expertise in a variety of backgrounds. These include afterschool and summer learning; youth development; diversity, equity, and inclusion; health; child care; grants and grant making; higher education; K–12 education; community schools; and profit and nonprofit organizations.

Each proposal will be reviewed and scored by a team of reviewers. Reviewers will participate in an Inclusivity and Bias workshop before they begin reading applications. Vermont Afterschool will ensure there are no reviewers scoring proposals from programs/organizations where they serve as staff, board, volunteer, or consultant or have any other conflict of interest. We will guide the review process and provide the teams a platform to meet and make their recommendations.

Priority points will be awarded to programs/organizations that serve youth in the following Vermont counties: Bennington, Essex, Franklin, Grand Isle, Franklin, Orange, Orleans, or Windham County. Please be sure to answer this question in the cover page of the application to receive the points.

XI. ELIGIBILITY ASSURANCES

You must be able to check ‘Yes’ or ‘Plan to comply’ and include a statement on how you plan to comply with each item by the end of the grant term in the space provided.

You may apply if you do not currently meet each requirement, but you will need to meet them all by the end of the grant term. If you do not currently meet them, select ‘Plan to comply:’ and let us know your plan to do so.

Should you be unable to select 'Yes' or 'Plan to Comply' and let us know your plan to comply with each item by the end of the grant term, you are not eligible to apply for this grant at this time.

1. Be (or will be) a new or existing regulated, center-based child care, afterschool program, or family child care home in good regulatory standing.

Yes No Plan to

comply:_____

2. Enroll children/families eligible for and participating in the Child Development Division's [Child Care Financial Assistance Program \(CCFAP\)](#).

Please follow the link to read more about CCFAP if you are not familiar with it

Yes No Plan to

comply:_____

3. Provide child care for school-age children (ages 5–12) for at least 42 weeks of the year.

Yes No Plan to

comply:_____

4. Be in good regulatory standing with the Vermont Child Care Licensing regulations specific to the type of program being operated.

Yes No Plan to

comply:_____

5. Propose a type of project that results in a higher number of school-age slots available in order to increase the licensed capacity, extend program hours, days, or weeks resulting in more slots.

Yes No Plan to

comply:_____

6. Outline within this application your intent to achieve any eligibility requirements a program does not currently meet.

Yes No Plan to

comply:_____

Please note: we strongly urge you to reach out to a [CDD Child Care Business Technician](#) to ensure your project will meet licensing requirements before you complete this application.

Signature of Designated Official

Title

Date

Name



XII. ROOM FOR ME 2023–2024 GRANT APPLICATION

Coversheet

Name of Organization/Program Name:

Year Agency Founded:

Number of Years of Service:

Mission Statement:

Previous Grant History:

Project Director:

Mailing Address:

City:

State:

ZIP:

County:

Program Location (*if different from above*):

Contact Name:

Contact Phone #:

Contact E-mail:

Current Annual Budget - total annual operating budget (whole numbers only) for current fiscal year:

This project serves children and youth in Bennington, Essex, Franklin, Grand Isle, Orange, Orleans, or Windham County (5 Priority Points)

State of Vermont Child Care License Number:

If this is something you will be working toward during the grant period, please state that here.

Unique Entity Id (UEI) (SAM): (A SAM UEI # replaces the previous DUNS system and is required. If you have applied for one but have not received your number at the time of application, please indicate that and submit to Vermont Afterschool when assigned.):

Federal EIN #:

VT Tax ID #:

Website for program or organization (put n/a if you don't have one):

Title of Project/Program:

Grant Purpose (a two-sentence explanation of the grant project):

Amount of Funding Requested:

Select Your Program Type (select one):

- This is a new program
- This is an expansion of an existing program

Are you a (select one):

- Family child care (home-based) provider
- Child care center, school, business, municipality, or other agency

Number of youth/families served (total): _____

- Not yet applicable

Current Capacity and Offerings:

Answer based on your existing operation, without grant funding, what your program's current offering and capacity is? Enter '0' for new programs.

Summer Vacations:

Current number of weekly summer program slots: ____

Current number of summer programming weeks/days/daily hours:

____ weeks | ____ days | ____ daily hours

Afterschool:

Current number of weekly afterschool program slots: ____

Current number of afterschool programming weeks/days/daily hours:

____ weeks | ____ days | ____ daily hours

School Vacations:

Current number of weekly school vacation program slots: ____

Current number of school vacation programming weeks/days/daily hours:

____ weeks | ____ days | ____ daily hours

On a typical DAY in your child care program how many ADDITIONAL youth do you anticipate serving with this grant funding? _____

For new programs, enter your estimated number of youth to be served.

Program Assurances

(Please check each one and sign in the space provided below):

Recipients of grant funding shall:

- not discriminate in admission, employment, or administration of its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap or disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, ancestry, belief, veteran status, or genetic information
- be a new or existing regulated, center-based child care or afterschool program or family child care home serving school-aged (5–12) children, youth, and families in Vermont;
- be in good regulatory standing with the Vermont Child Care Licensing regulations specific to the type of program being operated or if you are a new program, licensing will be pursued in the first year;
- offer low or no-cost options for eligible students;
- provide appropriately trained, certified, and/or licensed staff;
- participate in Vermont Afterschool's Room for Me grant monitoring and technical support;
- follow all applicable [health guidance](#);
- ensure that healthy snacks and meals are available, and that they comply with the [USDA Afterschool Program](#), [Summer Food Service Program](#) and [nutrition meal pattern](#);
- comply with the requirements set forth in [eCFR :: 2 CFR Part 200 -- Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards](#);
- certify that, if utilizing another federal funding stream for any expenses, this grant will not also be charged;
- submit performance reports as defined above;
- comply with all laws and regulations applicable to Subrecipient's operations;
- indemnify, defend and hold harmless Vermont Afterschool and its directors, employees and staff against any liabilities, losses, claims, lawsuits, costs or expenses (including

1. BACKGROUND

- A. Describe the overall strengths your program has in your community and what you are deeply passionate about.
- *How do you use your strengths to benefit the youth that this project will be serving?*
 - *How are solutions to challenges you face identified and solved?*
 - *How are community members, partners, parents, educators, and youth input included?*
- B. Describe your agency/organization and what makes you unique in your community:
- *Who are you as an organization and where would you like to be in the future?*
 - *Diversity, equity, and inclusion statement or goals.*
 - *How does your staff reflect the race, gender culture, sexual orientation, language, and other qualities of the youth being served.*
- C. Describe your structure, staff, anticipated number of youth served, and proposed fiscal management.
- *Who would you like to be as an organization and where would you like to be in the future?*

2. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

- A. Please tell us about your proposed licensed program capacity that will result from this project.
- For new programs, select 'This is a new program' and describe your proposed schedule in question B.*

Do you anticipate extending (select all that apply):

- This is a new program
- Afterschool program start/end dates?
- Afterschool program start/end times?
- Afterschool program additional weekly days?
- Afterschool program additional weeks?
- School Vacation program start/end dates?
- School Vacation start/end times?
- School Vacation additional weekly days?
- School Vacation additional weeks?
- Summer program start/end times?
- Summer program start/end dates?
- Summer program additional weekly days?

- Summer program additional weeks?

B. If you selected any of the above, tell us more about each of the extensions proposed and the increased capacity that will result from the extension.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND SUSTAINABILITY

A. Please describe the project and resources needed for its success. How will it expand the number of school-age slots in your child care program?

- *Example: What specifically will you do to increase program hours, days, or weeks; increase staffing; increase space; and/or create new program options in areas of the state where few or no programs currently exist?*

Note: These actions may require changes with licenses issued to regulated child care programs serving school-age children. Please include details of your conversation with a [CDD Child Care Business Technician](#).

B. Describe your staffing plan and staff qualifications for staff involved in developing and implementing the proposed project:

- *For the project leader.*
- *For any other key personnel.*
- *If you are adding staff, how will they be chosen for this project?*

C. Describe your plan to continue to develop partnerships and address sustainability beyond the funding period.

4. PROJECT BENEFITS/SUCCESSSES

A. Considering your strengths, opportunities, and aspirations in this project, what meaningful measures would indicate that you are on track to achieve your goal(s)?

- *Meaningful measures must relate to how program capacity, accessibility, availability, and affordability will increase.*

Program Indicators of Success:
1.
2.
Additional Indicators of Success (Optional):

5. PLANNED BUDGET AND TIMELINE

A. Complete the budget table below. The category column is a drop-down menu with different cost categories. Select only those that apply to your budget.

For each category:

- Provide a detailed explanation of costs for how the grant funds will be spent.
- Provide an estimated month the cost will be expended.
- Be as specific as possible. For example:
 - List each staff position for this grant
 - # of hours on the project
 - Hourly rate
 - Subtotal for each position
 (Note: refer to the Temporarily Allowable Use of Funds for this grant regarding staff)
 - List equipment charged to this grant and the cost per item
 - List supplies charged to this grant and cost per item
- Add categories and space as needed

Category	Specific Details	Project Cost	Grant Funding Requested	Other Secured Funding	Timeline (Month)
Staff Salaries (Object Code 100)					
Staff Benefits (Object Code 200)					
Staff Training/ Professional Development (Object Code 300)					
Supplies/Materials (Object Code 600) In accordance with 2 CFR 200.314					
Equipment (Object Code 600) In accordance with 2 CFR 200.313					
Contracted Services (Object Code 300) Follow the Federal compliance for					

organization/school procurement policies, 2 CFR 200.320, for each contract exceeding \$10,000					
Transportation (Object Code 500)					
Nutrition (Object Code 600)					
Other Expenses Please specify and add new lines as needed.					
Indirect (Object Code 900) To be determined with Vermont Afterschool					
TOTAL					

- B.** Provide a detailed budget narrative about how grants funds will be spent:
- *Include details such as: permits or tests that must be completed for your project to be successful.*
 - *i.e. child care licensing, water quality tests, and other zoning-related requirements*
- C.** Describe other sources of funding that will contribute to this project.
- *i.e. participant fees, other grants, in-kind services, pursuing licensing, and utilizing the Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP) for families who qualify, or fund-raising efforts.*



APPENDIX A: SCORING RUBRIC

The grant proposal scoring rubric will be used to evaluate the grant applications submitted for consideration. Applications will be reviewed by a Grant Review Committee coordinated by Vermont Afterschool. The committee will use this rubric to guide its deliberations.

SCORING DEFINITIONS

- Highly Recommend – well defined and meaningful proposal
- Recommend with Clarifications – some clarifications needed
- Not Recommended – unclear purpose and uncertain outcomes

SCORING POINTS

Coversheet: 10/10 *(all applicants receive 10 points for a fully completed coversheet)*

Priority Points: 5

Background:

Highly Recommend 5 | Recommend with Clarifications 3 | Not Recommended 1

Organizational Capacity:

Highly Recommend 5 | Recommend with Clarifications 3 | Not Recommended 1

Project Description + Sustainability:

Highly Recommend 5 | Recommend with Clarifications 3 | Not Recommended 1

Program Benefits/Outcomes:

Highly Recommend 5 | Recommend with Clarifications 3 | Not Recommended 1

Planned Budget + Timeline:

Highly Recommend 5 | Recommend with Clarifications 3 | Not Recommended 1

Totals: *(not including 5 Priority Points)*

Highly Recommend 35 | Recommend with Clarifications 25 | Not Recommended 15

	Highly Recommend	Recommend With Clarifications	Not Recommended
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1. Background	Fully envisioned their organization, their strengths, benefits, and who they are in their community.	Easily sense who they are as an organization, their strengths, and their benefits to the community.	Unclear and unsure of their strengths and who they are as an organization.
Reviewer Comments			
2. Organizational Capacity	Great increase in capacity (in ratio to project design and project cost).	Average increase in capacity (in ratio to project design and project cost).	Minimal increase in capacity (in ratio to project design and project cost).
Reviewer Comments			
3. Project Description + Sustainability	Sophisticated. The plan directly responds to and will improve the most important areas of their goals.	Competent. The plan directly responds to and will improve an aspect of their goals.	Not yet competent/developing. The plan does not directly respond to and is unlikely to meet grant goals.
Reviewer Comments			
4. Project Benefits/Successes	Indicators of success are very clear and can be met with their strengths to achieve their goal(s).	Indicators of success are clear though may not fully use their strengths or meet the goal(s).	Indicators of success are vague, unclear, or do not match their goal(s) /use their strengths.
Reviewer Comments			
5. Planned Budget + Timeline	Budget is clearly defined with a sustainable plan and expenditures logically support and are necessary for the planned action(s).	Budget is defined and expenditures roughly support the planned action(s) but require more detail.	Budget is not fully defined , or expenditures do not logically support/are not necessary for the planned action(s).
Reviewer Comments			

RECOMMENDATION:

- _____ I highly recommend awarding grant funding to this project.
- _____ I recommend awarding grant funding to this project with further clarification.
- _____ I am not recommending awarding grant funding to this project at this time.

GENERAL COMMENTS: Indicate support for scoring by including overall strengths and opportunities. These comments will be provided to applicants with their final scores.

