



Vermont Afterschool, Inc.
150 Kennedy Drive
South Burlington, VT, 05403

2024-25 Room for Me Grant

Maintaining Capacity and Quality for Afterschool,
School Vacation, and Summer Learning Programs

Request for Proposals

Published: October 31, 2024
Application Deadline: November 30, 2024
Award Notification: January 17, 2025

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I. INTRODUCTION

Vermont Afterschool is proud to continue its partnership with the Vermont Department for Children and Families' Child Development Division (CDD) through the Room for Me Grant program. This initiative aims to enhance and expand child care opportunities for school-aged children (ages 5-12) across the state, with a particular focus on underserved areas.

We are excited to announce the availability of \$250,000 in state funding through Act 76 for the 2024-25 grant cycle, dedicated to expanding or sustaining afterschool, school vacation, and summer program slots. Eligible projects may include maintenance work, repairs, quality improvements, or initiatives aligned with STARS assessment requirements.

Since the first round of grants was awarded in January 2023, Vermont has seen a remarkable increase in capacity, with over 1,200 new slots added for school-aged children. This increase provides essential opportunities for youth to be active, engaged, connected, and heard. These programs not only facilitate learning and personal growth but also play a crucial role in supporting working families by offering reliable care and supervision.

Our collective efforts focus on reducing barriers and expanding access to quality child care programs, recognizing their vital role in community well-being. These programs foster relationship building, skill development, and exploration of interests, creating enriching experiences that benefit children and families.

We encourage you and your partners to think creatively about how these essential opportunities can be tailored to meet the unique needs of children and youth in your community. With significant state funding and a commitment to addressing these local needs, we are excited to see how these grants will empower programs to innovate and expand.

We look forward to receiving your applications and collaborating to create a brighter future for our children and communities. Please continue reading for additional details on eligibility and application requirements.

GRANT PURPOSE

Increase or preserve the amount of school-age child care slots that are available or have newly opened across the state of Vermont through;

- Small maintenance, installation, and repair projects aimed at increasing or preserving program slots
 - Projects may include minor remodeling, equipment, materials, or increased levels of staffing (e.g., hiring, training, or increased or extended staffing hours)
- Quality improvement purchases (equipment, supplies)
- Improvement of STARS rating
- Single projects or multiple smaller projects
- Short- or long-term projects (Note: Expenses will *not* be reimbursed if they occur after the grant period is over)

II. FUNDING AVAILABLE AND GRANT AWARDS

At least \$250,000 in Child Care and Development Block Grant funding supported by Act 76's Quality Capacity Special Fund is available for 2024-25 awards.

Grant awards start at \$5,000 and requests may be up to \$20,000 regardless of program size.

In order to ensure a more diverse cohort of grantees, we are limiting organizations to one application regardless of their number of physical sites or licensees.

Vermont Afterschool is working closely with, and at the direction of, CDD. Vermont Afterschool holds the right to make award decisions based on added criteria. These can include and 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

Eligible programs shall, at a minimum:

- Be a new or existing regulated, center-based childcare or afterschool program or family childcare home in good regulatory standing with Vermont Child Care Licensing regulations specific to the type of program being operated;
- Enroll children/ families eligible for and participating in [CDD's Child Care Financial Assistance Program \(CCFAP\)](#);
- Provide child care for school age children (5-18);
- Propose a type of project that results in a higher number of school age slots available or builds on the program's capacity to preserve these slots. Projects may include capital

investments, equipment, materials, or increased levels of staffing (e.g., hiring, training, or increased or extended staffing hours);

- Outline intent to achieve any eligibility criteria within project proposal if program does not currently meet criteria.

IV. 2024-25 GRANT APPLICATION TIMELINE

Task	Dates and Information
RFP Published	October 31, 2024
Questions Open	October 31, 2024 – November 29, 2024 <i>Please submit questions about completing this application here:</i> https://bit.ly/RFM-Questions <i>Questions will be answered within 24 regular business hours, and replies can be found here:</i> https://bit.ly/RFM-Answers
Application Period	October 31, 2024 – November 30, 2024 <i>Complete and submit electronic applications here:</i> https://bit.ly/RFM-Application
Award Notification	January 17, 2025
Program/ Award Period	January 21, 2025 – July 4, 2025
Final Reports Due	July 18, 2025

V. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

FINANCIAL REPORTING

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 the grant.

The grantee will provide one financial reimbursement report on or before the fifth of each month for the duration of the grant period. Financial reports will be accompanied by supporting documentation (i.e., invoices and receipts). The final date for all Room for Me grantees to submit financial reports and supporting documentation is July 18, 2025.

Expenditures cannot be made after July 4, 2025, the final day of the grant period; these will not be reimbursed.

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 CDD. Once financial reports and supporting documentation are approved, grantees will be paid within 30-60 days.

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:

1. Reimbursable for up to eight consecutive weeks only:
 - Salaries and fringe benefits; to provide additional hours or days of service that otherwise go unprovided.
 - i.e., employer paid taxes, company paid benefits to employees, etc.
 - Once enrollment and Child Care Financial Assistance Program ([CCFAP](#)) 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.
2. Reimbursable for the full length of the grant period:
 - Costs linked with expansion and/ or maintenance of an existing program: number of days, hours, weeks, 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 and/ or maintaining 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 and/ or availability of program slots and opportunities
- Capital improvements and permanent renovations
 - Use this guidance on allowable construction as outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-45/subtitle-A/subchapter-A/part-98/subpart-F/section-98.56>
 - 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 or after the start or end of the grant period (January 21, 2025 – July 4, 2025)
- Scholarships or subsidies
- Incentives include plaques, trophies, stickers, certificates, t-shirts (unless approved and purchased for safety reasons for field trips), and giveaways
- 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://bit.ly/RFM-Questions>

Questions and answers will be made accessible here: <https://bit.ly/RFM-Answers>

VIII. MONITORING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Monitoring and technical assistance opportunities are essential. They can set your programs up for success and ensure that 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. The collective goal we aim to achieve is to provide exceptional programming for Vermont's youth.

MONITORING

Monitoring activities for grantees may include emails, phone calls, virtual meetings, and on-site 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 quarterly narrative performance reports throughout the grant period. This report will include data on the following: total number of youth served; total number of program slots; data on other measurable outcomes; lessons learned, challenges; and successes. Additional data may be required. Narrative reports will be due on the following dates: April 5, 2025 and July 5, 2025.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Grantees will be required to attend a virtual financial onboarding session with the grant coordinator after the award has been granted. This will be help before grant expenditures can occur. Check-ins will be held as needed to provide grantees with updates, best practices, technical support, and resources. Other technical assistance opportunities may be schedule by Vermont Afterschool throughout the grant period.

Contact information for your grant coordinator will be made available before the beginning of the grant period.

IX. GRANT APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION

Complete and submit the electronic application here:

<https://bit.ly/RFM-Application>

Submit questions about completing this application here:

<https://bit.ly/RFM-Questions>

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 multiple reviewers. 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, Orange, Orleans, or Windham County. Please be sure to answer this question on the cover page of the application to receive the additional points.

XI. ELIGIBILITY ASSURANCES

You must be able to check 'Yes' to each of the following eligibility assurances in order to be eligible for consideration of Room for Me Grant.

1. Be a new or existing regulated, center-based childcare or afterschool program or family childcare home in good regulatory standing with Vermont Child Care Licensing regulations specific to the type of program being operated.

Yes No

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

Yes No

3. Provide child care for school age children

Yes No

4. Propose a type of project that results in a higher number of school age slots available or builds the program's capacity to preserve those slots. Projects may include capital investments, equipment, materials, or increased levels of staffing (e.g., hiring, training, or increased or extended staffing hours).

Yes No

5. Outline intent to achieve any eligibility criteria within project proposal if program does not currently meet criteria.

Yes No

Signature of Designated Official

Date

Name

Title

XII. 2024-25 ROOM FOR ME GRANT APPLICATION

COVERSHEET

Name of Organization: _____

Project Director Name: _____

Mailing Address:

Street: _____

City/ Town: _____

State: _____

Zip Code: _____

County: _____

Is the physical program location the same as the mailing address above?

Yes

No

Program Location (if different from above)

Street: _____

City/ Town: _____

State: _____

Zip Code: _____

County: _____

Contact Name: _____

Contact Email: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

Program/ Project Service Area (priority points)

This project serves children and youth in Bennington, Essex, Grand Isle, Orange, Orleans, or Windham Counties (5 priority points)

State of Vermont Child Care Licensing Number: _____

Enter 'N/A' if this is in process or will be upon receipt of this grant award.

Unique Entity ID (SAM UEI): _____

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. To apply: <https://sam.gov/content/duns-uei>

Federal EIN: _____

VT Tax ID Number: _____

Website for Program or Organization: _____
Write 'N/A' if you don't have one.

Title of Project or Program: _____

Grant Purpose: _____

Write a two sentence explanation of your grant project.

Funding Request: _____

Room for Me Grant awards are between \$5,000 and \$20,000.

The amount requested here should match the requested amount in your budget for this project.

Program History:

- This is a NEW Program
- This is an EXPANSION of an EXISTING Program

Select Your Organization Type:

- Family Child Care (home-based) Provider
- Child Care Center, School, Business, Municipality, or Other Agency

PROGRAM ASSURANCES

Please check each box and sign below.

Recipients of grant funding shall:

- Not discriminate in admission, employment, or administration of its 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're 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 reasonable attorney's fees) arising out of or incurred in connection with Subrecipient's operation of its programs;

- Use grant funds exclusively to carry out the purpose(s) of the program; and
- Grant Vermont Afterschool, upon reasonable prior notice to Subrecipient, the right to audit the Subrecipient's books and records for purposes of confirming compliance with the requirement of the grant.

NOTE: Final contracts will also include Vermont Child Development Division Assurances.

Signature of Designated Official

Date

Name

Title

APPLICATION

INSTRUCTIONS: Answers to all questions must be complete in order for the application to be accepted. To see how proposals will be scored, see the “Scoring Rubric” in Appendix A.

REMINDER: Answers to all questions should tell us how the grant purpose and priorities will be met:

- Aid communities with high quality afterschool, school vacation, and summer (year-round) child care programs that support working families and meet youth’s well-being, connection, and mental health needs
- Maintain slots in afterschool, school vacation, and summer (year-round) 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, and inclusive these programs are across Vermont
- Increase the number of programs that accept the Child Care Financial Assistance Program ([CCFAP](#)) so that opportunities for Vermont children and youth expand

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 it unique in your community.
- *Who are you as an organization and where would you like to be in the future?*
 - *Diversity, equity, and inclusion goals.*
 - *How does your staff reflect the race, gender, culture, sexual orientation, language, and other qualities of the youth being served?*

PROGRAM CAPACITY AND OFFERINGS

- A. Program Slots
- *Current number of weekly program slots WITHOUT Room for Me Grant funding?*
 - *Anticipated number of weekly program slots WITH Room for Me Grant funding?*
- B. Weeks/ Days/ Hours

- *Current number of program weeks per year WITHOUT Room for Me Grant funding?*
- *Anticipated number of program weeks per year WITH Room for Me Grant funding?*
- *Current number of program days per week WITHOUT Room for Me Grant funding?*
- *Anticipated number of program days per week WITH Room for Me Grant funding?*
- *Current number of program hours per day WITHOUT Room for Me Grant funding?*
- *Anticipated number of program hours per day WITH Room for Me Grant funding?*

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND SUSTAINABILITY

- A. Please describe the project and resources needed for its success.
- *Include staff, professional development, or other key personnel as resources.*
 - *If you are adding staff, how will they be chosen for this project?*
- B. Describe your plan to continue to develop partnerships and address sustainability beyond this grant.

PROJECT BENEFITS AND SUCCESSES

- A. Please list at least two distinct and specific programmatic goals you hope to accomplish with the Room for Me Grant funding.
- *Program Goal #1*
 - *Program Goal #2*
 - *Additional Goals (optional)*
- B. Considering your strengths, opportunities, and aspirations for this project, what meaningful measures would indicate that you are on track to achieve your goal(s)?
- *Program Indicator #1*
 - *Program Indicator #2*
 - *Additional Indicators (optional)*

BUDGET AND TIMELINE

- A. Complete the budget table below. The category column is a drop-down menu with different cost categories (organized by object codes 100-900). Select those that apply to your budget.

For each category you select:

- *Provide a detailed explanation of costs for how the grant funds will be spent.*

- *Be as specific as possible. For example*
 - *List each staff position for this grant (NOTE: Refer to the Temporarily Allowable Use of Funds for this grant regarding staff)*
 - *List number of hours on the project*
 - *List staff hourly rates*
 - *Include a subtotal for each position*
 - *List equipment charged to this grant and the cost per item*
 - *List supplies charged to this grant and the cost per item*
- *Add categories and space as needed*

Category	Specific Details	Project Cost	Grant Funding Requested	Other Secured Funding
Staff Salaries <i>(Object Code 100)</i>				
Staff Benefits <i>(Object Code 200)</i>				
Staff Training/ Professional Development <i>(Object Code 300)</i>				
Contracted Services <i>(Object Code 300)</i>				
Facilities <i>(Object Code 400)</i>				
Transportation <i>(Object Code 500)</i>				
Supplies and Equipment <i>(Object Code 600)</i>				
Nutrition <i>(Object Code 600)</i>				
Indirect <i>(Object Code 900)</i>				
Other Expenses: <i>Please specify and add new lines as needed</i>				
Total				

- B. In your own words, describe how grant funds will be spent including details on when and who will be involved.
- *Include details such as: permits or tests that must be included 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 (if applicable).
- *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

This 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: 5/5 (applicants receive 5 points for completing the section)

Priority Points: 5 (coversheet)

Priority points are awarded to programs/ organizations that serve youth in the following Vermont counties: Bennington, Essex, Grand Isle, Franklin, Orange, Orleans, or Windham Counties.

Background:

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

Program Capacity and Offerings:

5/5 (applicants receive 5 points for completing the section)

Project Description and Sustainability:

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

Project Benefits and Successes:

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

Budget and Timeline:

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

Totals: *(not including priority points)*

	Highly Recommend	Recommend with Clarifications	Not Recommended
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			
Project Description and 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			
Project Benefits and 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			
Budget and 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.