Eliada Child Development

FY2021 Early Childhood Grants

Eliada Homes, Inc

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Application Form

INSTRUCTIONS
Buncombe County requests proposals for community based projects to enhance outcomes for young children and their families in our community. Grants made through the Early Childhood Education and Development Fund will be focused on access to quality early childhood care and education.

Please refer to the Grant Guidelines published on the Early Childhood Grants website at buncombecounty.org/grants for complete information about the grant program, including: Purpose; Funding; Eligibility; Timeline; Grant writing workshop; Review process; Awards; and more.

Applications are due by 5:00 pm on February 14, 2020.

BASIC INFORMATION

Project Name*
Eliada Child Development

Strategy*
Recognizing that some projects will use more than one strategy, select the strategy that most closely applies to this project:

Supporting capacity and/or quality for existing programs

Funding Request*
How much funding is this project requesting for FY2021?
$262,902.00

Grant Guidelines*
Have you read and understand the information presented in the FY2021 Grant Guidelines for Early Childhood Grants (Grant Guidelines)?

If no, please contact County staff to request assistance: Rachael Nygaard, (828) 250-6536 or rachael.nygaard@buncombecounty.org.

Yes
APPLICATION

APPLICATION QUESTIONS – Responses to these questions will be scored by the grant committee. Each question is worth 10% of the final score.

Organization*
Give a brief history, including date of founding, focus, services, and record of success.

Eliada’s mission is Helping Children Succeed. Eliada has been in this community for 117 years, and has adapted to meet the shifting needs of children over time. Originally founded in 1903 as a home for unwed mothers, Eliada was incorporated in 1906 as an orphanage after finding women would come to Eliada to give birth, and then return to their home communities, leaving their children. Eliada transformed into a modern children’s home when there was a nation-wide shift away from an orphanage model towards foster care. Today, we provide a cradle to career continuum of services for nearly 600 youth annually who are between 0 and 25 years old. Eliada is a campus-based agency with prevention and intervention services. In partnership with families, we meet basic needs and provide positive child and youth development programming. We also have high-level intervention and prevention services for children and adolescents that focus on social and emotional well-being, life skills development, career readiness, and trauma informed treatment. Eliada’s programs include Residential Treatment, Day Treatment, Foster Care, Child Development (child care, pre-k, and after school), and Workforce Development.

Eliada has a record of success adapting to the needs of children in the community. Recently Eliada added workforce development programming for youth aging out of systems of care after watching youth we had served in foster families struggle upon becoming independent adults. Eliada recently expanded child development services in response to the 1% vacancy rate for services in the community. In the last two years Eliada became a licensed adoption agency, and has adjusted our residential mental health services to increase parental engagement, and divert youth from out-of-home placements.

Need for the Project*
What is the main issue this project is established to address? What data or qualitative factors/stories are available to show that need?

This project addresses a few issues.

1. Over the last few years, Eliada’s Child Development teachers have experienced an increase in students with aggressive behaviors, and other negative behaviors resulting from trauma and chronic stress. The result of trauma and stress includes challenging behaviors such as regression in developmental gains, hyper-arousal, hyper-vigilance, increased need for control, reduced capacity to manage emotional states, and more. Eliada also receives a significant number of referrals from community partners for children with challenging behaviors who aren’t successful in other child care environments. Not all of Eliada’s teachers aren’t trained in trauma-informed practices and need support so they can implement asset based approaches to working with children and their families.

2. As there is an affordability problem in childcare, Eliada has attempted to keep our fees both competitive and affordable for families. Over time, this has meant limited increases in the fees-for-service that we charge families. Eliada also tries to serve above 70% low-income families and the revenue earned from childcare vouchers is less than we receive for private pay families. This combination of factors has meant that we do not have the revenue to support raising the wages of teachers in our programs, and the vast
majority of teachers make below the living wage. This leads to higher turnover rates among staff, and increased stressors on the staff who remain at Eliada.

3. Children with a physical disability are challenged on Eliada's playgrounds, without handicap accessible equipment. The playground is where gross motor skills and social-emotional skills are practiced. Without having equipment to engage with, children with a physical disability are unable to interact with their peers and hone these skills, leading to a disparity in developmental outcomes.

**Project**

Explain the project and how it will work. Include the overall purpose and any models or evidence-based practices that will be included. What specific activities and milestones are included in the project plan?

Eliada's Child Development Center includes 3 buildings with eight 0-3 year old classrooms and 7 NC Pre-K classrooms.

This is a project with 3 parts.

1. Last year, through support from the Early Childhood Fund, Eliada was able to hire a Behavior Specialist (BS). The BS has assisted teachers in the classroom and parents. The BS currently keeps a caseload of 17 children. In this project, Eliada would like to 1) continue supporting the salary of the current BS, and 2) hire an additional BS to double the number of children we can serve with challenging behaviors, as well as increase the amount of time teachers receive support and coaching in the classroom setting. The Behavior Specialists will:
   a. Perform Brigance assessment and make referrals
   b. Create asset-based individualized plans for children
   c. Train teachers to use asset-based approaches in the classroom
   d. Observe classrooms, and support teachers in making behavior plans for individual students
   e. Collaborate with teachers in communicating with parents and creating behavior plans for the home
   f. Provide formal training to teachers

2. To retain staff, Eliada is proposing to provide performance based bonuses to staff who make below the living wage in Buncombe County. Over the 2018 and 2019 school years, Eliada raised tuition for care while keeping our Center affordable. Even with these increases, we were unable to give raises to our staff. While NC Pre-K teachers are paid above the living wage in Buncombe County, performance based bonuses will impact our lead teachers in 0-3 classrooms and floaters who support multiple classrooms.

3. Eliada has been working with other funders on improving our outdoor playground spaces. We are still needing playground equipment that is well-suited for children with a physical handicap. Eliada has Development Day classrooms in two of our three buildings. We are requesting a piece of equipment for each building.

**People Served**

Who will be served by this project? Include demographics for children and families served, workforce, and/or any other relevant groups.

This project impacts both the children in our care as well as our Child Development workforce.

Child Demographics: Eliada Child Development currently has 209 children in our care.
- 40% are children of color
- 71% qualify for free/reduced lunch
58% are living in either a single parent, grandparent, or foster care home
8% have developmental delays and are in Developmental Day classrooms
13% have an Individual Education Plan, or IEP

Many of Eliada’s children experience trauma and chronic stress with 10% of children in 0-3-year-old classrooms coming from foster homes.

Workforce Demographics:
- 72% of staff in Child Development make below the living wage ($13.65/hr)
- 28% of staff are single parents, one of whom is a foster parent
- 92% of the staff who are single parents also make below the living wage

Eliada lost two staff in the last year during the voucher freeze. These staff were unable to obtain a child care voucher and could not afford childcare. They thus had to leave the workforce. Due to low wages many of our staff face similar challenges as to the families we serve. Eliada also believes our retention rate is impacted by low wages. In 2019 the retention rate was 67%.

**Results**

What results do you hope to achieve with this project? Be specific about how much impact the project will have in line with the goals of the fund, and how many people will be served.

For projects requesting funding for slots, also please include:
- Total new slots created
- Total slots maintained
- # of Subsidy slots created
- # of Subsidy slots maintained
- # of teachers/staff positions created
- # of teachers/staff positions maintained

Results for the current Behavior Specialist and new Behavior Specialist (BS): In order to support children and families experiencing adverse experiences and chronic stress, Eliada has identified that maintaining our current Behavior Specialist and adding a second one will have the greatest impact.

1. Currently the BS has a caseload of 17. With the addition of a 2nd person, we anticipate the caseload to double to 34 children per year.
2. Currently the BS spends 5 hours per day in classrooms supporting and coaching teachers. With the addition of a 2nd person, we anticipate this to double to 10 hours of support daily for teachers.
3. Currently the BS spends 6 hours a year providing direct training to our teachers. With the addition of a 2nd person, we anticipate this increasing to 10 hours of annual training.

Results for performance based bonuses: The addition of the Behavior Specialist goes a long way in better supporting staff. In order to further improve our retention rate we will provide performance based bonuses for staff making below the living wage.
- The retention in 2019 was 67% and we anticipate increasing our retention rate to 85%.
- This will direct impact 34 staff.

Results for playground equipment: Children with a physical handicap are challenged to interact with other kids on the playground due to the limitations of the current equipment. This impacts their ability to practice social-emotional skills with their peers during free play, and develop their gross motor skills.
- Children with a physical handicap improve their gross motor skills by 50% as measured by Teaching Strategies Gold and the Brigance Assessment.
- Children with a physical handicap improve their social-emotional growth by 50% as measured by Teaching Strategies Gold and the Brigance Assessment.
- This will impact 18 children.

**Evaluation***

How will you know you have succeeded? Explain the project evaluation process, including specific measures that will be tracked.

As a result of maintaining a Behavior Specialist and hiring a second one to support Child Development programs, we project:

- Improved behaviors reported in the classroom
- Improved developmental outcomes from fall to spring
- Improved Brigance scores from fall to spring
- Increased staff retention and daily support for staff
- Increased parent engagement
- Increased training for staff

Eliada will evaluate the effectiveness of this strategy by looking at:

- Teacher retention and longevity
- Teacher evaluation surveys
- Professional development/training opportunities.
- Child outcomes will be measured by the Teaching Strategies Gold and Brigance Assessments conducted at the beginning and end of the school year.

Eliada will evaluate the effectiveness of providing performance-based bonuses through:

- Increased staff retention rate
- Staff satisfaction surveys

Eliada will evaluate the effectiveness adding playground equipment designed for children with a physical disability through:

- Increased gross motor skills
- Increase social-emotional skills

These measurements will be taken for children with a physical disability using the Teaching Strategies Gold assessment at the beginning and end of the school year.

**Equity***

Describe your approach to racial and socio-economic equity, both inside and outside the organization. What are some specific examples of practices that are in place or to be put in place with this project?

With a $1,000 award from United Way in 2019, Eliada is joining the WNC Diversity Engagement Coalition so that we can learn about the steps we need to take to develop an equity plan that includes: assessments, objectives, action steps, and deliverables.

We would like to create a:
- Professional Development Plan
- Organization wide equity assessment
- Remove barriers, and increase opportunities to advance people of color into leadership positions
Program Development Plan

- Implement assessment of achievement gaps in all services. We are curious to look at race, gender, sexual orientation (for teens), parental education level, single parent household status, and income level to see if these identifiers correlate to an achievement gap.
- Develop SMART goals for reducing achievement gap in each program and report results through our Performance Quality and Improvement team
- Work with our community partners to reduce achievement gap through thoughtful planning and implementation

Equity at Eliada also means lifting up the cultures and traditions of all the families we serve. In Child Development programs, parents are invited to do lessons with children about cultural traditions that hold meaning in their family. Each classroom represents diverse cultures through the books and toys made available for children.

Through this project, Eliada wants to encourage economic equity by increasing payments to our lowest paid teachers in Child Development classrooms so that no one in these programs makes below the living wage.

Collaboration*

List any formal and/or supportive partners. Describe their roles in the project. How will they make it stronger?

Eliada’s Child Development Center has key supportive partners in our daily work:
1. The Buncombe County Partnership for Children (BCPC)
2. The Sunshine Project of the First Resource Center – consults Eliada on children with developmental delays and challenging social/emotional behaviors
3. Buncombe County – Provides therapists for children with IEPs
4. Family Preservation Services – Eliada makes referrals for Outpatient Therapy and other in-home services for families
5. Children’s Developmental Services Agencies– Helps diagnose children under 3 with an IEP and provide services to those children
6. Land of Sky Foster Grandparents program – provides retirees who volunteer in the classroom and support teachers
7. Carolina Pediatrics – Provides therapists for children not meeting developmental milestones
8. Book Mobile – Provides age appropriate books to children
9. Local library – Brings free programming to Eliada
10. Bounty and Soul – Provides food and wellness programming

With two Behavior Specialists, Eliada and BCPC can together create best-practice for use of Brigance when creating behavior support plans, supporting teachers in the classroom, and increasing parent engagement. Eliada will also continue to partner with First Resource Center, Family Preservation Services, Carolina Pediatrics, and Children’s Developmental Services Agencies who refer children to us with behavior challenges, and who also provide Eliada with therapists who can work with children in the classroom.

Budget*

Download a copy of the budget form [HERE](#). Complete the form, and upload it using the button below.
Explain how grant funds will be used, specifically what type of expenses will be covered by County funds. Describe other sources of revenue, including type of funding, source, restrictions and status.

FY21_ECE_Grant_Budget_Form_Eliada to submit.xlsx
1. The first way the grant will be used is to support two full-time Behavior Specialists:
   - One FT Behavior Specialist at $15/hr
   - One FT Behavior Specialist at $14/hr
   - Plus benefits, payroll taxes, and worker’s compensation.
   - Total of $72,384

2. The second way the grant will be used is to support performance-based bonuses for staff making below the living wage.
   - 7 staff making between $10-$10.99/hr
   - 11 staff making between $11-$11.99/hr
   - 16 staff making between $12-$13.64/hr
   - Total number of staff impacted = 34
   - We calculated the difference between the current rate of pay and $13.65/hr (living wage in Buncombe County) and annualized this to come up with $172,518 need for performance-based bonuses.

3. The third way the grant will be used is to purchase two pieces of equipment, 1 for each building where there are developmental day classrooms. Eliada’s teachers have selected the Sensory Wave Corner Arch because both children in wheelchairs can play alongside typically developing children. https://www.gametime.com/products/sensory-wave-corner-arch
   - These are $6,000 each plus the cost of a sensory package and installation. Eliada is anticipating total cost being $9,000 each, $18,000 total.

Other sources of revenue come from NC-Pre-K payments, childcare vouchers, private pay from families, developmental day payments, and wrap-around payments.

Sustainability*
How will the project continue to succeed after the funding of the grant? Explain your plan for making this an ongoing effort.

   Eliada’s leadership team is dedicated to providing behavioral health support to our Child Development staff even if grant support does not continue. The sustainability of maintaining two Behavior Specialist positions is tied to other agency-wide sustainability efforts. For example, Eliada has the only residential treatment facility in the whole state with an animal therapy program. Medicaid transformation will provide us new opportunities to negotiate a reimbursement rate for our animal therapy program. Insurance companies have already expressed interest in this idea. Eliada will soon begin offering equine therapy to the general public. We will accept insurances or private pay for this program, which will provide us a new revenue source.

   Financial sustainability is also predicted by our Resource Development Department, which has already increased capacity for major and planned giving. Beyond our Resource Development Department, Eliada is looking to other ways to diversify revenue. Eliada's leadership launched Eliada Farms, LLC, a for-profit company that grows hemp and sells CBD products to the community, with 100% of net revenue returning to Eliada Homes to cover the gap in funding.

   Instead of requesting raises, Eliada is requesting performance based bonuses in case funding either 1) is not repeated in subsequent years, or 2) the fundraising team is unable to provide another source of funding to support raises outside of this grant. Eliada would never want to give a staff member a raise, and then make
continuation of that raise continent on grant renewal. Performance-based bonuses allows us to better support our teachers without over reliance on a single grant source. Over time as Eliada diversifies revenue through some of the means listed above, the agency will be able to transform the bonuses into permanent raises for staff.

The playground equipment is a 1-time purchase, but will have years of impact.

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**OPTIONAL INFORMATION**

**OPTIONAL INFORMATION – This information will not impact grant scoring but will be helpful to the committee.**

**Partial Funding**

If the project were to be offered a grant for partial funding, what factors would need to be considered?

If Eliada’s proposal for two Behavior Specialists was partially funded, Eliada would still try to maintain the current Behavior Specialist since we see the positive effects this has already had. Partial funding, though, would have agency-wide impact at Eliada. While Eliada’s Child Development services have a balanced budget, revenue from these services often helps support our treatment services which are underfunded depending on the number of youth being served at any given time. Dedicating agency dollars to the Behavior Specialists if we are partially funded, would financially strain Eliada’s other safety-net services until we could make that position financially self-sustaining.

Without funding for performance-based bonuses, Eliada will be unable to better support our teaching staff making below the living wage in the next fiscal year. Partial funding might allow us to give some bonuses, but would not allow us to meet the bench mark of a living wage.

Overall, if Eliada were only partially funded, we would prioritize the staffing of the Behavior Specialists and supporting our staff through bonuses. While we want to improve our playground spaces, especially for those students in our Developmental Day classrooms, this project can be delayed while we seek other funding sources to help us achieve this goal.

**Multi-Year Funding**

If you would like this project to be considered for multi-year funding (up to 3 years), what amounts would you request for years 2 and 3? What milestones would this funding allow you to accomplish? Explain why more years are needed to accomplish goals.

For years 2 and 3 we would request funding to continue underwriting the cost of our Behavior Specialists and keep our staff at a rate of pay above the living wage. This would allow us to maintain positive outcomes and prevent slipping back to high turnover rates.

Our current Behavior Specialist has her Master’s degree and is working on the clinical hours needed in order to bill for Medicaid and insurance, and provide clinical supervision to others. Once she achieves this, she would be able to bill for therapy services and underwrite the cost of her position. She would also be able to be the clinical supervisor for the 2nd Behavior Specialist. Continued funding allows us to work towards the ability to bill for our Behavior Specialist positions, making them sustaining.
We would request $67,230 in year 2, for the two Behavior Specialists and half this, $33,615 in year 3 as we transition towards billing insurance.

Eliada would eventually like to transition towards raises and away from performance-based bonuses. We believe that with modest increased rates for service, coupled with increased fundraising efforts, we can achieve this over time. In year two, we would increase the rate of pay for the 16 staff making $12-$13 per hour and build this cost into our operating budget. We request $137,518 for performance based bonus. In year 3, we would increase the rate of pay for the 11 staff making $11-$11.99 per hour. We would then request $72,518 for performance based bonus for the remaining staff making between $10-$10.99 per hour. And in subsequent years we would work to increase the wages of these staff. The reason we would work to increase the wages of staff making a higher hourly wage first is because those staff opted to receive post-secondary education and we want to honor the investment that they made in their own professional advancement.

Resource Support
How can Buncombe County support your organization with this project and in strengthening your work (related to equity, scale, or impact)?

Buncombe County can support Eliada by providing free resources and training around equity and diversity initiatives for our staff. This is important work for us, and could use structure and support around meeting our goals.

Buncombe County could help support Eliada by providing county-wide training in behavioral health and trauma-informed care that our staff could participate in.

The freeze on vouchers was an incredible challenge for Eliada and the families we serve. Eliada lost two staff who could not access vouchers, and thus could not afford childcare and had to give up their jobs with us. If the Early Childhood Fund could come up with a plan for future voucher freezes to help support families either through a scholarship fund or other type of support, this would greatly benefit our families and staff.

Scale-up
What is your vision for how the strategies from this project could contribute to a significant scale-up the overall system to collectively address the child care crisis?

Other
Is there anything else that you want the committee to know?

An unintended consequence of expanding our Child Development Center to include a 3rd building and serving 60 additional children, was it decreased our retention rate. New staff have a higher turnover rate versus staff with longevity, so while we hired a lot of new staff at that time for the new building, they had a higher turnover rate than the staff who had been with us prior to expansion. Our leadership was also spread out between more buildings which made it harder for them to individually support staff. Staff in the new building are also further away, creating challenges with building a unified culture. Eliada is still working towards solving some of the challenges that occurred as a result of this expansion.
File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- FY21_ECE_Grant_Budget_Form_Eliada to submit.xlsx
### Early Childhood Education and Development Fund

**Proposed FY2021 Project Budget (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021)**

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<td>Project Name:</td>
<td>Eliada Child Development Center</td>
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<td>Grant Amount Requested:</td>
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### FY2021 Proposed Project Revenue

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### FY2021 Proposed Project Expenses

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### Overall Organization Budget

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<td>FY2019 Actual Year-End Expenses</td>
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