



# Women's Business Development Council

## WBDC Child Care Business Opportunity Fund Expansion Grant Application Guide

Information about this grant program can be found on the Start-up Grant page of our [website](#). Please start there for eligibility requirements and to ensure this is the right grant program for you.

**Please note:** This is NOT the application document you will submit. There will be an online application portal, available in English and Spanish, starting on March 23, 2022. **The deadline to apply for this round is Tuesday, April 12, 2022 at 11:59PM ET.**

Once you have determined you are eligible to apply by reading the criteria on our website, below is the process you will take to submit a complete application package. WBDC Advisors are here to support you in preparing your application.

### **Step 1: Pre-Application (Complete a Profile in eCenter)**

Before you access the application, you will need to create a profile to provide general information about you and your business. These questions should be simple to answer, and include contact information, demographics, and basic business details. Rest assured, your data will be kept confidential and only some data will be shared in ways you authorize in the Terms and Conditions at the end of the profile.

**You can get started on this today!** Visit <https://ctwbdc.ecenterdirect.com> and follow the instructions in the center of the screen. If you have completed a profile in WBDC's eCenter client portal already, you will simply need to review and update your information once logged in by going to "My Information" on the left-hand menu of eCenter. eCenter is available in English and Spanish.

### **Step 2: Grant Application (Online Portal)**

Once you have completed your eCenter profile, you will be ready to begin your application. Visit our [website](#) to access the link to the grant application portal.

### **Grant Profile**

You will be asked to create an account in our grants management platform. Once you create an account, you will provide contact information and answer a handful of questions about your business. Some of these questions are the same as in eCenter but allow us to manage your grant application effectively in our grant platform. **The portal is available in English and Spanish.**



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## **Eligibility Questions**

**\*\*\* There will be questions around eligibility on the application that will need to be answered accurately. Doing so will save you time from applying for a grant you are not eligible for. \*\*\***

Please visit our [website](#) to see a complete list of eligibility criteria.

If you are not eligible, you will get a message on-screen stating so. If you believe you made a mistake in answering the eligibility questions, you can try to fix your answers. If you meet the eligibility criteria, and the system is saying Ineligible, contact us at for support at [childcarebusiness@ctwbdc.org](mailto:childcarebusiness@ctwbdc.org). Include your name, phone number, and an explanation of the issue.

If you are not eligible at this time, you may be eligible to apply for another one of the Child Care Business Grants currently open – visit our [website](#) to see which programs you may qualify for. If you are not eligible for any grant programs currently, you may qualify the next time we run our grants, anticipated to be by Fall 2022. WBDC can support your business through education and other resources as well.

## **Application**

**There are four sections to the application:**

**Section 1: Business Operations & Financial Summary**

**Section 2: How You Would Use the Grant**

**Section 3: Narrative of Your Business**

**Section 4: Supporting Documents for Uploading  
Compliance and Consent**

## **Section 1: Business Operations & Financial Summary**

**This section has a series of short dropdown questions about your business, including:**

- Any changes to license type or licensed capacity within the last 60 days
- Details on OEC open consent order or corrective action plan, if applicable
- If you collect parent fees
- If a family home, your time-space percentage if known
- If OEC, Department of Public Health, or the Fire Marshall has given you any recommended facilities upgrades (You can provide more detail in Section 2)
- Profit/loss figures for your business for 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022 (January-March) for the years the business was operating - these figures should match what is on your tax returns and/or financial statements you upload in Section 4
- Any savings or other funding your business has received in the last 6 months, that may be able to help support the project you are seeking WBDC funds for



## Section 2: How You Would Use the Grant

For each of the following questions, you will have an open text field to provide your response, not to exceed 400 words. We recommend 1-3 paragraphs per question. **Responses can be in English or Spanish.** Help text provided in italics under the question.

### 1. Grant Request: How much are you requesting from WBDC? (Dollar amount only)

*The maximum grant award is \$25,000. Amount awarded will be at the sole discretion of WBDC & review committee based on a variety of factors.*

### 2. Description of your Expansion Grant Project

Describe the project you would like to use the Expansion Grant for. Include how this project will help your program grow and benefit families, children, and your business. Explain how the investment will expand your capacity or increase your enrollment, and any market research you have done to support your expectation of growth. If the investment will impact your operating costs, please describe.

### 3. Use of Funds

Describe what you will spend the money from the grant on. Be specific on what goods or services you will purchase with the grant. Below you must upload back up evidence for how you will use the grant (e.g., proposal, estimate or other evidence to support the amount you are asking for).

*Itemize your expenses. For example, if you're requesting a grant for \$15,000, explain what each of the expenses are and how much each costs, that add up to \$15,000, or more if you have other funds to also support this project.*

### 4. Is this grant to assist with expenses at a location that's not yet open? (In the process of receiving an OEC license). Yes / No

### 5. Other Supporting Funds

*Required if you have received other funding or have savings that could be used to help support this project you are asking for a WBDC grant for.*

How much of the funds you already have can be allocated to this project? If you have used all your savings, or if you need more funding to complete this project, please explain. If you really do not want to use your savings for this project, please explain. What is your plan to cover this project if not awarded?

### 6. Impact of the Grant

Describe how the grant will help your business grow and reach your goals. Be specific. Explain what your business will look like once you have integrated the grant funds into your business. Explain if the OEC, Dept. of Public Health, and/or Fire Marshall made recommendations that this project will address. (What you explain here should be reflected in your financial projections you upload to the application.)

### 7. Why you?

Explain why you believe your business should be a WBDC Child Care Business Opportunity Fund grant recipient.



## Section 2: Narrative of Your Business

For each of the following questions, you will have an open text field to provide your response, not to exceed 400 words. We recommend 2-3 paragraphs per question. **Responses can be in English or Spanish.** Help text provided in italics under the question.

### 1. Business Description

Describe your business. Include an overview of the types of child care services that are offered, your curriculum, the ages you serve, number of classrooms, services that you deliver and what makes your program unique. If applying for an Expansion Grant, explain if your new location will operate similarly to your existing location, or what will differ.

*Think about how you would pitch your business to a prospective parent or funder. Consider the problem you solve for your parents, or unmet need you satisfy and the community you serve.*

### 2. Business Performance

Describe how your business is doing today. Explain the recent decline or growth of your business and if/how it has been impacted by COVID-19. Reference enrollment trends, revenue changes, profit/loss changes, and unexpected large costs if applicable. Your description should showcase why you have an unmet or urgent financial need for this funding, and provide context for the tax returns/financial statements you upload in Section 4.

*Think about the financial & operating trends of your business, if there are periods when it did well or suffered, and what driving factors were (e.g., pandemic affecting enrollment, school reopening/closing, late payments, unexpected income or expenses)*

### 3. Customers

Describe your current customers. Include who they are, how they find you, and why they parents choose your program. Explain who the customers are that you want to attract in the future to grow your business, and how they are different or the same from your current customers.

*What are the characteristics of the child care market in your community and how will that affect your decision to open/grow your business?*

### 4. Competitors

Describe your competitors/nearby programs. Name three. Describe how their program is different from yours. Describe how you think your program better meets parent/children's needs, or fills in a gap. Explain how their pricing is different to yours.

### 5. Marketing

Explain how you market your program to your customers (parents), and how you pitch it to them. Describe the channels you use to reach and communicate with prospective customers for your program (e.g., word of mouth, email, website, advertising, social media, physical advertising) and which you find most effective. Describe why parents/children choose your program

### 6. Pricing

Explain what your program fees and rates are, how you set them, and what your profit margins are for different services and age groups. Describe how your pricing compares to your competitors/nearby programs. Also explain if you have subsidies along with parent fees to generate income.



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## 7. Location

Describe your physical location(s) and how your space meets your current and future needs. Specify if the space is rented, leased, or owned by you, and if the space is shared with anyone other businesses. If you are starting in a new location, explain how you selected your location and if you have business insurance in place.

## 8. Growth Plans

Describe your plans for the business over the next 3-5 years and how are you going to make them happen.

## 9. Owner(s), Program Director, and Team

Describe your background, how you got into the business and your relevant experience. Describe the staff you have, their roles (title, responsibilities, part-time or full-time), relevant experience, and how long they have been with your business. Provide a brief description of your compensation plan, including if employees are salaried or hourly or both, and what benefits they receive. Describe any other supporting team members (including key consultants) and how their experience and expertise support your business and its growth.

## Section 4: Supporting Documents for Uploading

The following is a list of the documents you will need to prepare for submission. Only PDF files can be uploaded to the application portal, aside from the last 2 items on the checklist. **If you need help** converting your files to PDF or require assistance with identifying the information that is requested below, **contact us at [childcarebusiness@ctwbdc.org](mailto:childcarebusiness@ctwbdc.org) for no-cost support.**

- Back up documentation for Use of Funds (e.g., proposal, estimate or other evidence to support the amount you are asking for)
- Copy of the most recent bank statement for the business account showing the name of the business or owner of the business
- Attendance report for 2020 and 2021, by month

We recommend using a document or a software-generated report to show how many children you had each month, rather than providing weekly attendance sheets. Include a total of all full-time and part-time children served in the month, even if some started later in the month or left early. It is helpful to break monthly numbers by age group, but children's names are not required.

- Letter of Good Standing / Status Letter from the State of Connecticut

For businesses with a Tax ID #, obtain from myConnect at: <https://drs.ct.gov/eservices/#1>  
For those that are a Sole Proprietor or Single Member LLC and do NOT have a Tax ID #, obtain at: <https://drsindtax.ct.gov/AUT/welcomeindividual.aspx>. For help, call DRS at (877) 729-6691.

- Two years of historical profit and loss statements (typically 2020 and 2021)

You may utilize WBDC's Financial Statements Template, downloadable on our [website](#). If your program uses a financial management or accounting software, please upload reports from that management system instead. If you have financials on the first quarter of 2022, you may include.



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- 2019 & 2020 business tax returns, for years operating; 2021 business tax return, if filed

**At minimum, include forms showing the Profit & Loss from your business.**

Family Homes/Sole Proprietors: Include Schedule C: Profit or Loss from Business, and Form 8829: Expenses for Business Use of Your Home. Can upload all of Form 1040 if easier.

LLC's: Include Schedule K-1 (Form 1065): U.S. Return on Partnership Income

S-Corps: Include Form 1120-S: U.S. Income Tax Return for an S Corporation

- Pictures or video showing your project / repairs needed, or else your existing program/classroom(s).

If you have multiple photos, we recommend pasting them into one document to upload.

- Optional: If there is anything else you would like to include to help us better understand your business, please upload.

This could include a business plan, additional photos, collateral, for example. Several file types are allowed in this section. Label files with your "Business Name/Name - Type of Documentation" (e.g., ABC Center - Business Plan).

## Compliance and Consent

Before submitting your application, you will be asked to attest that the information you provided in the grant application is accurate. Given that this grant program is made possible through financial support from the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC), you will also be asked to acknowledge that WBDC will share limited data with them, including demographic data in aggregate, license number, and type of grant sought. You cannot opt out of this as a grant applicant.

If you belong to an OEC Resource Agency, such as a Staffed Family Child Care Network, or Accreditation Quality Improvement Support (AQIS) marked in my profile, you can opt-in to WBDC sharing general information with this partner including that you have applied, the status of your grant (awarded or declined), and if awarded, the grant amount.

Rest assured, your private business data, including financial statements (income, expenses, profit/loss) and household income, will not be shared with the OEC, or any third-party agency.



## **Additional Tips for a Successful Application**

We understand this grant application may be more detailed than others you may have experienced in the past. This information all goes into helping us evaluate each application effectively. It will also better prepare you for accessing funding from a bank or non-bank lender as your business grows.

## **What We're Looking for in an Application Package**

- Thoughtful, complete, and well-developed picture of your business that shows a path to growth
- Exceptionally clear use of funds, with a strong link to growth, along with strong supporting detail
- Historical financials that are thorough, detailed, and thoughtful
- Financial projections that are robust, reflect seasonality of business, and have numbers that make sense
- Display the business' long-term potential, with strong growth and strong potential for continued growth
- Slot creation potential, with the business being on track to expand its licensed capacity and enrollment
- Job creation potential, with the business being on track to adding more jobs
- Return on investment – that the funds will help unlock growth
- Grant will have a meaningful impact on the business and help the business grow
- Unmet financial need