Aspen Community Foundation (ACF) is dedicated to supporting children and families living in the Aspen to Parachute region. In 2025, ACF is offering two competitive grant programs for nonprofit organizations in the Aspen to Parachute region: Early Childhood and Youth Empowerment. Applicants are invited to apply to ONE of these programs in 2025. Funding is made possible by annual contributions from donors wishing to support pooled grantmaking funds.

A total of $250,000 will be awarded through ACF's 2025 Early Childhood grant cycle. Applications will be reviewed in accordance with the following priorities, criteria, and limitations as well as available funds. Past funding from ACF does not guarantee funding in future years. Typical requests range from $10,000 to $35,000.

ACF EARLY CHILDHOOD GRANTMAKING PRIORITIES
This competitive grant program prioritizes nonprofits working in the areas of early care and education.

The following are the areas of impact ACF seeks to have with this funding:
1. Strengthening the skills of caregivers – parents, childcare staff, FFN providers – so they can support the healthy development of children in their care. This includes:
   a. Services that improve the health, safety, and quality of childcare
   b. Parent support and education with active participation over a longer time period

2. Providing tuition assistance to increase families' access to quality care, especially for those who are low income. Specifically:
   a. Childcare centers providing tuition assistance to at least 20% of enrolled families.
   b. At least 20% of enrolled children are low-income/economically disadvantaged.
      i. ACF defines economically disadvantaged thresholds by county based on multipliers of the Federal Poverty Level (300%) informed by the self-sufficiency standard for each county. Use the chart below to determine how many low-income families you serve.

	Family of 2 FPL = $22,888	Family of 3 FPL = $28,788	Family of 4 FPL = $34,688	Family of 5 FPL = $40,588
300% of FPL	$68,664	$86,364	$104,064	$121,764

ACF EARLY CHILDHOOD GRANTMAKING CRITERIA
- Alignment with one of ACF's **Early Childhood priorities**
- Commitment to serving **under-resourced people and geographies**.
- Meaningful **depth and duration of contact** with those served.
- Clearly articulated metrics and **demonstrated impact** and positive outcomes for children and families.

ACF also analyzes the operational and financial health of each applicant including looking at their efficiency, solvency and sustainability as well as leadership strength and capacity.

ELIGIBILITY
Organizations are eligible to apply if:
- They are classified as tax exempt under the provision of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or are using a fiscal sponsor with a 501(c)(3). Or they are a government entity such as a school district.
- They serve children aged from birth to five years old and their families living in the Aspen to Parachute, Colorado region.

ACF COMMUNITY GRANTMAKING LIMITATIONS

1. Support is limited to nonprofit organizations located in, and whose work primarily serves, the residents of Pitkin and Garfield counties and the Roaring Fork Valley portion of Eagle County.
2. Grants are not considered for:
   - Organizations outside of ACF's service area
   - Organizations, pilot projects, or programs in operation for less than one year or are less than one year from receipt of 501(c)(3) approval
   - Projects which have been completed prior to allocation decisions
   - Deficits, retirement of debt, or endowments
   - Religious purposes
   - Political campaigns
   - Medical research or hospital equipment
   - Program design, product development, or marketing and promotion
   - Conduit organizations (organizations or events that pass funds to other organizations)
   - Individual schools/classrooms, departments/programs of universities or colleges, or education foundations/organizations that have not coordinated the request with their central school district/university administration or fundraising arm
   - Organizations primarily supported by tax-derived funding unless funding supports a new program that is outside of the organization's operating budget
3. Aspen Community Foundation does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, physical circumstances, or national origin. Applicants must hold and demonstrate similar standards.

EARLY CHILDHOOD GRANTS PROCESS

Early Childhood grant requests and all supporting documents must be submitted via ACF's online grant management platform. Specific deadlines are on ACF's [website](#).

Each organization seeking funding should first review these guidelines and determine whether its proposal meets the criteria and priorities of ACF. If the organization meets the guidelines, begin the application process by navigating to the [grant application platform](#).

Returning applicants will log-in using their username and password created last year. Click "Forgot your Password?" if you need to reset your password access. Contact the ACF Grants Manager for assistance.

If you are a **new applicant**, you will need to create an account in ACF's grant management system.

NEW ACCOUNT CREATION/FOUNDANT GRANT PORTAL

- Click this [link](#) and "Create New Account" to complete the registration form for your organization, yourself, and your Executive Director, if you are not that person. You will need your organization's EIN / Tax ID number.
- The next step asks you to verify that you received a registration email. This helps ensure that your organization receives system communication. All emails from the ACF grants portal will be sent by administrator@grantinterface.com.
- This account will be your organization's online access to ACF grants. To add additional users, please contact ACF Grants Manager.
- Apply for the "ACF Early Childhood Grants 2025". You can save your work at any time. An asterisk denotes a required response. Click "Submit" when you are ready to submit your application form.
- Email ACF Grants Manager Scott@AspenCommunityFoundation.org or call 970-925-9300 with any questions.

- Review the [Foundant Applicant Tutorial](#) article for a step-by-step guide to account and application processes.

ACF 2025 EARLY CHILDHOOD GRANT ELEMENTS

Eligibility Quiz
Organizations will be asked to affirm that they:
- Serve children ages birth to 5
- Are a 501(c)(3) organization, have a fiscal sponsor that is, or are a qualified government entity
- Serve people living in the Aspen to Parachute region

Application
In the application, you will be asked to provide the following information:
1. **Early Childhood Grant Request**
   a. Select one funding priority area
      i. Strengthen the skills of adult caregivers
      ii. Provide tuition assistance
      iii. Expand childcare capacity
   b. Requested amount
   c. Purpose of request – a brief description of this request
   d. Upload document:
      i. IRS Letter of Determination
2. **Board of Directors Overview**
   a. Name of current board chairperson
   b. Email of current board chairperson – *In the event your organization is awarded a grant, we will require an electronic signature on the grant agreement from the board chair. This will be requested via DocuSign.*
   c. Number of current board members
   d. If you are a childcare provider, do you have any non-parents on your board?
   e. How many board members made a charitable contribution to your organization last year?
   f. Board governance and effectiveness – *Summarize key issues related to board effectiveness that are being addressed this year.*
   g. Upload document:
      i. List of current board members
3. **Organization & Staff Overview**
   a. Mission statement
   b. Organization summary - *Executive summary of your organization's work. This should include a brief history of the organization and key programs and services offered.*
   c. Describe your organization's operating schedule – *For example, if you are a childcare provider, you can indicate the hours, days and months you provide care. i.e. 9am to 3 pm, Monday-Friday, September-May*
   d. Number of full-time employees
   e. Number of part-time employees
   f. Number of employees who are bilingual and/or bicultural
   g. Describe how volunteers support your programs or operations
   h. Executive director's annual salary – *This information will be kept confidential and used only for the purpose of regional analysis.*
   i. Number of years executive director has been in the position
   j. Number of years executive director has been with the organization
4. **Financial Overview**

      a. Fiscal year date range
      b. Current operating budget
      c. Total revenue and expenses for last fiscal year
      d. Total projected revenue and expenses for current fiscal year
      e. Anticipated budget for next fiscal year
      f. Explain any significant budget differences
      g. Current cash reserves
      h. If your organization has an endowment, please share the balance
      i. Upload documents:
          i. Current FY Budget vs. Actual
          ii. Current YTD Balance Sheet
          iii. Last FY Income and Expenses
          iv. Last FY Balance
          v. Most recent 990 (not required)

5. Demographics & Impact Overview
      a. Tell us about the children and families you serve, including demographics.
      b. Numbers served by age group – *If you are a childcare provider, provide the number of children served by age; if you serve caregivers, provide the number of adults, families, etc. served.*
      c. Number of families served who are low income – *ACF defines low income based on multiples of the Federal Poverty Level informed by self-sufficiency standards for each county in the Aspen to Parachute region.*
      d. Numbers served by community
      e. Describe how you are measuring your organization's impact. What are your results?
      f. Describe how your organization/program is culturally responsive.
      g. Describe how you collaborate to fulfill your mission or to enhance your programs.
      h. What challenges are most likely to prevent you from accomplishing your goals this year?

Depending on the Priority Area you selected, you'll be asked to respond to the following area-specific questions:

1. Strengthening the skills of caregivers
      a. Describe your specific request and how it supports/increases the skills of adult caregivers.
      b. Describe the depth and duration of the contact you have with adult caregivers.
      c. Describe the intended outcomes. How are you measuring your success? What are your results?
      d. How many people will be served by this request?

2. Providing tuition assistance
      a. Describe your specific request and how it supports families and your organization.
      b. The number of total children receiving tuition assistance to attend your program.
      c. Number of individual children who will benefit from this tuition assistance request.
      d. Total budget for your organization's tuition assistance program.
      e. Other funding sources that support your tuition assistance program.

Review your application and submit. You will receive an email confirmation once your grant has been submitted.

ACF EARLY CHILDHOOD GRANTMAKING TIMELINE

April 30 & May 6	April 28	May 29	June - August	September	September-October	October
Office Hours Virtual Office Hours from 1-2pm MT	Application Opens	Application Closes	Staff Review	ACF Board Approves Grant Awards	Award Notification & Grant Agreements Sent	Awards Distributed

Please [email the ACF Grants Manager](#) **to RSVP for the office hours and request the zoom link**

ACF COMPETITIVE GRANTMAKING REVIEW AND ADMINISTRATION
- This is a competitive process, and not all requests will be funded.
- Each application is assessed on its own merit against the scoring criteria.
  - A total score of 100 is possible.
  - A typical cutoff score for funding is 75. However, all applications undergo further discussion prior to recommendation finalization.
  - Higher scoring applications may only receive a percentage of the total request, typically between 60% and 75% of the amount requested. This will vary depending on funds available for this grant program.
- ACF staff may elect at any time to schedule a meeting with the organization's executive director and/or board chair to discuss the proposal or to request additional or clarifying information.
- If the contact person becomes unavailable after application submission, please notify ACF of a new contact. Applications will not be considered if ACF staff cannot reach the contact person.
- Grant recommendations are considered by ACF's Board of Directors. Final approval of grants is the sole responsibility of ACF's Board of Directors. The Board requests that individual members not be lobbied.
- Organizations receiving funding will be required to sign an agreement setting forth the grant's terms and conditions. The agreement will include marketing and reporting requirements, limitations on the grant funds, disposition of unused funds and other conditions.

CRITERIA	EXCELLENT	ABOVE AVERAGE	AVERAGE	BELOW AVERAGE	POOR
Priority Area Alignment	Demonstrates exceptional alignment with one or more impact areas	Demonstrates strong alignment with one or more impact areas	Demonstrates moderate alignment with one or more impact areas	Demonstrates some alignment with one or more impact areas	No explicit alignment with impact areas
Economically Disadvantaged	Demonstrates exceptional service to economically disadvantaged people	Demonstrates strong service to economically disadvantaged people	Demonstrates moderate service to economically disadvantaged people	Demonstrates some service to economically disadvantaged people	Does not demonstrate service to economically disadvantaged people
Geographic Reach	Serves the entire Aspen to Parachute region	Serves most of the Aspen to Parachute region	Serves at least half of the Aspen to Parachute region	Serves a portion of the Aspen to Parachute region	Limited to a specific town or school district
Depth and Duration	Demonstrates exceptional depth and duration in its contact with clients	Demonstrates meaningful depth and duration in its contact with clients	Demonstrates moderate depth and duration in its contact with clients	Demonstrates some depth and duration in its contact with clients	Does not demonstrate depth and duration in its contact with clients
Cultural Responsiveness	Demonstrates exceptional cultural responsiveness in its program design and contact with clients	Demonstrates meaningful cultural responsiveness in its program design and contact with clients	Demonstrates moderate cultural responsiveness in its program design and contact with clients	Demonstrates some cultural responsiveness in its program design and contact with clients	Does not demonstrate cultural responsiveness in its program design or contact with clients
Metrics and Impact	Applies outstanding metrics and demonstrates exceptional impact on clients	Applies strong metrics and demonstrates effective impact on clients	Applies average metrics and demonstrates moderate impact on clients	Applies some metrics and demonstrates some impact on clients	Does not apply or describe metrics. Lacks impact on clients or how it would impact clients is unclear

Criteria	Higher Scoring Organizations Will:
Priority Area Alignment	• Clearly articulate the request's alignment with one or more impact areas
Economically Disadvantaged	• Demonstrate that at least 20% served are economically disadvantaged
Geographic Reach	• Demonstrate that the entire Aspen to Parachute region is being served
Depth and Duration	• Demonstrate regular, consistent interactions with clients -or- • Demonstrate that services are delivered with fidelity to whatever model is being used
Cultural Responsiveness	• Demonstrate culturally responsive program design -or- • Demonstrate culturally responsive interactions with clients
Metrics and Impact	• Clearly define the metrics used to determine impact • Articulate impact using metrics data