

Richard  
King  
Mellon  
Foundation

# Educational Attainment and Children and Young Adults' Mental Health

## Request for Proposals

### **Application Deadlines**

Friday, September 9, 2022. Noon (12:00 PM). Eastern Standard Time.

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# Introduction to the Richard King Mellon Foundation

The Richard King Mellon Foundation's (Foundation) mission is to improve the competitive position of the region; strengthen the vitality of southwestern Pennsylvania, particularly the City of Pittsburgh and its neighborhoods; and protect important habitats and amenities in western Pennsylvania and other key landscapes. Founded in 1947, the Foundation is the largest foundation in southwestern Pennsylvania, and one of the 50 largest in the world. The Foundation's 2020 year-end endowment was \$3.1 billion, and its Trustees in 2020 disbursed \$130 million in grants and program-related investments. The Foundation focuses its funding on six mutually reinforcing funding programs, delineated in [its 2021-2030 Strategic Plan](#). These funding programs are: Conservation; Economic Development; Economic Mobility; Health and Well-Being; Organizational Effectiveness; and Social-Impact Investments. All six programs invest in bold, evidence-informed solutions that align with the Foundation's mission and contribute to positive change.

## Economic Mobility Funding Program

[Economic Mobility](#) is one of the six programs defined in the Foundation's 2021-2030 strategic plan. The Economic Mobility program serves children and youth ages 0-24 years old who reside in low-income households in Allegheny or Westmoreland counties in southwestern Pennsylvania. Through the Economic Mobility program, the Foundation invests in pathways to opportunity for vulnerable children and youth so that they can overcome obstacles to achieving prosperity in adulthood. The Foundation recognizes that investing in children and youth is imperative to achieve the Economic Mobility program's vision: that all children and youth living in Allegheny and Westmoreland counties will be able to access their most promising future.

The Foundation organizes its Economic Mobility program into four investment areas: Educational Attainment; Future of Work; Supportive Living Environments; and Places of Opportunity. Collectively, these four investment areas describe the Foundation's approach to addressing the problem of limited economic mobility for children who reside in low-income households. Each investment area contains priorities and outcomes that further describe the Foundation's funding interests and the changes that the Foundation hopes to create.

## Background: Educational Attainment and Children and Young Adults' Mental Health

Mental health problems are common in the United States, with nearly 1 in 5 children and adolescents diagnosed with a mental illness. Yet only 20% of those with a mental illness receive care from a specialized care provider for mental health. This risk of untreated mental disorders is even greater for children residing in lower-income households. If left unaddressed, mental health concerns can have broad impacts on children's educational attainment. Untreated mental health concerns can make it difficult to stay on task in the classroom, complete problem-solving tasks, and otherwise interfere with the learning process. Over time, as the mental health needs of children and adolescents go unrecognized or untreated, mental health concerns may reduce or impair the social, emotional, and cognitive skills necessary to attend school, graduate from high school, succeed in the workforce, and achieve upward economic mobility.

Prevention, detection, and early intervention of mental health concerns are critical to slow or stop their progression and ensure that all children living in Allegheny and Westmoreland counties will be able to access their most promising future. Yet, there are a number of barriers that make accessing quality mental health care challenging, including a lack of specialized care providers, stigma related to mental illness, and insufficient coordination among the systems supporting children's and young adults' mental health, particularly for minority, low-income, or rural families.

# Request for Proposals

The Richard King Mellon Foundation is issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to address the barriers that make it difficult for children and youth who reside in low-income households in Allegheny and Westmoreland counties to access prevention, detection, and early intervention mental health services.

The Foundation will consider all submitted proposals that address prevention, detection, or early intervention efforts to support the mental well-being of children and young adults ages 0 to 24 years who reside in low-income households in Allegheny and Westmoreland counties.

The Foundation also strongly encourages collaborative proposals that engage multiple partners in the proposed activities, including sharing missions and goals, co-creating and sharing programs and services, and partnering in systems change.

## Examples

Examples of ideas that may be considered include, but are not limited to, the items noted in Table 1. These are solely illustrative and not proscriptive. Applications may include a variety of services, products, or technologies. The Foundation welcomes a range of ideas and encourages thoughtful experimentation.

**Table 1**

Economic Mobility Program Priority	Sample Ideas
Kindergarten Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• infant mental health consultation models</li> <li>• developmental screening, assessment, and mental health treatment models in early childhood settings</li> </ul>
K-12 Academic Performance  or  Post-Secondary Education Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• programs, services, or frameworks that prevent and detect mental health concerns and deliver early intervention services in settings that are responsive to students' contexts</li> <li>• initiatives that reduce stigma associated with mental illness and promote mental wellness</li> <li>• expansion of the workforce prepared to provide community-based and culturally relevant prevention, detection, and early intervention services</li> <li>• diversion programs that divert children and young adults with mental health disorders or co-occurring mental health/substance abuse disorders from the juvenile justice system into treatment and mental health services</li> </ul>

## Eligibility Criteria

The Foundation's general eligibility criteria apply to the RFP. Please review the Funding Policies on the [Apply](#) page of the Foundation's website and the [General FAQs](#) found on the Foundation's Nonprofit and Public Sector Partners webpage.

For the purposes of this RFP, the Foundation offers additional guidance about proposals from public sector and nonprofit organizations.

### Public sector organizations:

- may serve as the lead agency submitting a proposal for Planning and Innovation grants. Public sector organizations may also participate as collaborating partners on both Planning and Innovation and Scalability proposals submitted by nonprofit organizations
- include entities such as school districts, courts, or departments of health or human services

### Nonprofit organizations:

- may serve as the lead agency submitting a proposal for Planning and Innovation grants or for Scalability grants. Nonprofit organizations may also participate as collaborating partners on both Planning and Innovation or Scalability grants

## Funding Guidelines

The Foundation expects to provide two types of support through this RFP.

### Planning and Innovation grants:

- focus on experimentation and the development of new ideas. Recipients might describe activities such as piloting services or completing a feasibility study. Any evaluation activities should focus on understanding successes, challenges, and future possibilities resulting from the grant.
- will provide up to \$250,000 and funded activities should be completed within 12 to 18 months after the grant award

### Scalability grants:

- sustain and expand promising, evidence-informed initiatives. Recipients might describe activities, projects, and ideas that have been tested within one population group or in one geographic area with promising success and require an infusion of funds to expand the reach of the program to other population groups or geographic areas
- will provide up to \$400,000 and funded activities should be completed within 18 to 24 months after the grant award

Grant funds awarded through this RFP may be used for a variety of expenses such as program and service delivery, consultant fees, evaluation, or "overhead" or administrative expenses. A limited amount of capital expenditures that are essential to accomplish the outcomes of the proposal may be included.

If an application is truly exceptional, the Foundation may consider providing more than \$250,000 for Planning and Innovation grants or \$400,000 for Scalability grants. Successful grants may be invited to apply for follow-on funding or additional capacity-building funding opportunities at the conclusion of the grant.

## What the Foundation Will Not Fund

The Foundation will not fund the following items through this RFP:

- Endowments
- Advocacy, political causes or events
- Existing deficits or retroactive funding
- Event sponsorships

## Application Timeline

Friday, September 9, 2022 Noon (12:00 PM) EST.	Applications submitted. <a href="https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_5499?SA=SNA&amp;FID=35046">https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_5499?SA=SNA&amp;FID=35046</a>
Wednesday, December 21, 2022	Funding Status Notification
Friday, December 23, 2022	Funds Issued for Awarded Grants

## Inquiries

Please contact Lynne Ventress ([lventress@rkmf.org](mailto:lventress@rkmf.org)) at the Foundation to discuss questions regarding this RFP. However, a discussion is discretionary and not a requirement.