

**Table 1. Domains and Key Questions**

Domain	Key Questions
<p><b>Definitions of Terms</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your definition of <b>quality early childhood care and education</b> for this grant?</li> <li>• What is your definition of <b>early childhood care and education availability</b> for this grant?</li> <li>• What is your definition of <b>vulnerable or underserved children</b> for this grant?</li> <li>• What is your definition of <b>children in rural areas</b> for this grant?</li> <li>• Do you have a definition or description of your early childhood care and education system as a whole? (If yes, what have you used that definition for? What about your broader early childhood system encompassing other services used by families with young children? Do you have a definition for that and, if so, what have you used it for?)</li> <li>• Do these definitions differ in key ways from how you have defined any of these in the past? If so, what do you think are the advantages of your definitions for this grant?</li> <li>• Are there any challenges you foresee in using these definitions? (e.g., are they consistent with how key programs that make up the broader early childhood system define these terms?)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Focal Populations for the Grant</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are the vulnerable or underserved children in your state? What are their characteristics in terms of race/ethnicity, recency of immigration, language spoken at home, poverty and low-income status, concentration in certain cities or town and/or neighborhoods? What are the strengths and the weaknesses of the data you have available on this population? Are there any initiatives under way to improve these data?</li> <li>• Who are the children who live in rural areas in your state/territory? What are their characteristics in terms of race/ethnicity, recency of immigration, language spoken at home, poverty and low-income status? Are they concentrated in certain regions of the state/territory? Are data available on how far they typically live from an urban area? What are the strengths and the weaknesses of the data you have available on this population? Are there any initiatives under way to improve these data?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Number of Children Being Served and Awaiting Service</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What data do you have describing the unduplicated number of children being served in existing programs? What are your biggest data gaps or challenges in this area?</li> <li>• What data do you have describing the unduplicated number of children awaiting service in existing programs? What are your biggest data gaps or challenges in this area?</li> <li>• What are the strengths and the weaknesses of the data you have available on children being served? Are there any initiatives under way to improve these data?</li> </ul>

Domain	Key Questions
<b>Quality and Availability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What would you describe as your ECCE current strengths in terms of quality of care across settings (e.g., accessing accurate data from rural areas, central points of data entry [+ or -], population mobility)?</li> <li>• What would you describe as key gaps in quality of care across settings?</li> <li>• What are the strengths and the weaknesses of the data you have available on quality? Are there any initiatives under way to improve these data?</li> <li>• What would you describe as your current strengths in making care available across populations and settings?</li> <li>• What would you describe as key gaps in availability?</li> <li>• What initiatives do you currently have underway to ensure that high-quality care is available to vulnerable or underserved children and children in rural areas in your state/territory? What works well? What could work better? Have you been particularly successful in developing quality environments for any particular populations or in any particular settings? What made these efforts successful and what needs to be done to replicate them?</li> <li>• What initiatives do you currently have in place to inform parents about what constitutes a high-quality child care center and how different centers match up in terms of quality? Is this information delivered in a culturally and linguistically sensitive manner? How effective are the initiatives and information? What could be improved in this area?</li> <li>• What initiatives do you have in place to promote and increase involvement by and engagement of parents and family members in the development and education of their children? What works well about these initiatives? What could be better? Include information about the degree of availability of these initiatives and the extent they are culturally and linguistically sensitive.</li> <li>• What specific initiatives are in place to address the needs of parents/families that meet their cultural and/or linguistic needs? Are there specific populations of parents/families with cultural/linguistic differences that do not have easily-accessible services available?</li> <li>• What do you see as your biggest need and opportunity in improving the quality and availability of care particularly for vulnerable or underserved children and those in rural areas? This should include a discussion of needs and opportunities related to strengthening the early care and education workforce in terms of training and the retention of high-quality staff and spaces across the early care and education system, including both center-based and family child care providers.</li> </ul>
<b>Gaps in Data or Research to Support Collaboration Between Programs/Services and Maximize Parental Choice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you know about the service use of families with children (both children and family members) in the ECCE system?</li> <li>• What are the most important gaps in data or research about the programs and supports available to families and children? What challenges do these gaps present? What existing initiatives are being undertaken in your state/territory to address these gaps?</li> <li>• What are the most important gaps in data or research regarding collaboration across programs and services? What initiatives are currently underway in your state/territory to address these gaps?</li> <li>• What are the most important gaps in data or research related to maximizing parental choice? What initiatives are currently underway in your state/territory to address these gaps?</li> </ul>

Domain	Key Questions
<p><b>Quality and Availability of Programs and Supports</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What programs or supports do you have available that help connect children to appropriate, high-quality care and education? What works well about these programs or supports? What could work better? What else do you need to know about these programs and the populations they serve? What specific initiatives are in place to address the needs of parents/families that meet their cultural and/or linguistic needs? Are there specific populations of parents/families with cultural/linguistic differences that are not being connected to appropriate high-quality care and education?</li> <li>• What programs or supports do you have in place to make sure that children of parents who are employed, looking for work, or in training are able to access child care that is compatible with their employment or training situation? What works well about these programs or supports? What could work better? What else do you need to know about these programs and the populations they serve?</li> <li>• What programs and supports do you have available to identify children who are developmentally delayed and connect them to services? How effective is the connection between these programs and supports and your early care and education system? Are these programs reaching children from vulnerable and underserved populations? Are they reaching rural children? What else do you need to know about these programs and the populations they serve? What specific initiatives are in place to address the needs of parents/families that meet their cultural and/or linguistic needs? Are there specific populations of parents/families with cultural/linguistic differences that are not being connected to these services?</li> <li>• What programs or supports do you have available that help ensure that early care and education settings are helping vulnerable or underserved children access needed support services such as health care, food assistance, housing support, and economic assistance? What works well about these programs or supports? What could work better? What else do you need to know about these programs and the populations they serve?</li> <li>• What programs and supports do you have available to support children who are non-English speaking or reflect different cultures that connect them to services? How effective is the connection between these programs and supports and your early care and education system? Are these programs reaching children from vulnerable and underserved populations? Are they reaching rural children? What else do you need to know about these programs and the populations they serve?</li> <li>• What programs or supports do you have available that help ensure that early care and education settings are able to connect families in crisis to needed programs or services (e.g., family violence programs, emergency economic assistance, mental health care, substance abuse treatment)? What works well about these programs or supports? What could work better? What else do you need to know about these programs and the populations they serve?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Measurable Indicators of Progress that Align with the State/Territory's Vision and Desired Outcomes for the Project</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What measurable indicators currently exist that can be used to track progress in achieving the goals of this grant and your strategic plan? What are the strengths and the weaknesses of these indicators? Include the extent to which they can be used to describe the current conditions experienced by vulnerable, underserved and rural populations?</li> <li>• What opportunities are currently under way involving developing additional measurable indicators to track progress in achieving the goals of this grant and your strategic plan?</li> </ul>

<p><b>Issues Involving ECCE Facilities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What issues have been identified involving ECCE facilities?</li> <li>• What innovative efforts have taken place to improve ECCE facilities? Have these efforts targeted vulnerable or underserved children and those who live in rural areas?</li> <li>• What current plans are in place to address ECCE facility issues?</li> <li>• What opportunities exist for different ECCE and/or other early childhood programs and systems to work together collaboratively on ECCE facility improvement (e.g., through co-location of key early childhood services)</li> <li>• What are the strengths and the weaknesses of the data you have available on ECCE facilities? Are there any initiatives under way to improve the data?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Barriers to the Funding and Provision of High-Quality Early Childhood Care and Education Services and Supports and Opportunities for More Efficient Use of Resources</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What barriers currently exist to the funding and provision of high-quality early childhood care and education supports? Are there characteristics of the current governance or financing of the system that present barriers to funding and provision of high-quality ECCE services and supports? Are there policies that operate as barriers? Are there regulatory barriers that could be eliminated without compromising quality? For this question, you should be sure to include a discussion of supports in the broader early childhood system not just the ECCE system.</li> <li>• Are there opportunities for a more efficient allocation of resources across the system? Have there been successful efforts in the state at implementing strategies that have improved the efficient use of resources? Why and how were they successful and what needs to be done to replicate them? Have there been efforts that were undertaken, but did not show positive results? What can be learned from these experiences?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Transition Supports and Gaps</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the strengths and weaknesses of the transition supports for children moving from the early care and education system to school entry?</li> <li>• Are there targeted supports for vulnerable or underserved children and children in rural areas? What is effective about these? What could be better?</li> <li>• Are there transition supports across the age spans or are they for specific age populations? Are there transition policies/practices that support children in all types of care and education settings?</li> <li>• What is effective about the supports for children with developmental delays or other special needs? What could be more effective about them? For this question you should look at both transition to kindergarten and transition between early intervention and preschool special education programs.</li> <li>• How are parents currently provided with information about transitions? Is the information provided in a culturally and linguistically sensitive manner? What is effective about the information provided? What could be improved?</li> <li>• Have there been any innovative efforts to improve transitions? How effective were they?</li> <li>• How do the supports differ based on the type of early care and education provider (e.g., Head Start, state/territory Pre-K, home care provider, private or religious-based provider)?</li> <li>• How effective is the communication between early care and education providers and school systems? What could be done to improve that communication?</li> </ul>
<p><b>System Integration and Interagency Collaboration</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What policies and practices are in place that either support or hinder interagency collaboration?</li> <li>• Are there specific funding policies and practices that support or hinder interagency collaboration?</li> <li>• What practices are in place that reflect effective and supportive interagency collaboration supporting young children and families? How were they developed? What would need to happen for them to spread to other areas, agencies, or sectors?</li> </ul>

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