

Family Support Connecticut

A joint initiative between the Connecticut Department of Children and Families and
The Connecticut Commission on Children

Parent Trust Request for Proposals Grant Guideline 2005

Goal

- To increase the involvement of parents in the civic life of the state.

Objectives

- To encourage parents to purposefully participate in the civic life of communities throughout the state.
- To facilitate diversity in family leadership for the next generation in communities throughout Connecticut.
- To provide parents with substantive civic tools to be effective advocates for their children and other children.
- To increase the visibility and voice of parents regarding issues that matter to them regarding children and family life.

Requests will be considered for training that

- Increase the sustained motivation, ability and opportunity for parents to engage in the civic life of their communities and state.
- Increase the visibility and voice of parents raising their concerns about issues pertaining to the quality of life and education for children and families.
- Demonstrate diversity among parent participants, quality training of civic skills and plans for increased, sustained parent engagement in the community.
- Demonstrate a local match of 50% with at least one fourth in cash and (one fourth may be an in-kind resource contribution).

Overview

The Parent Trust Fund is the first of its kind in the nation. Focused on the strength of parent leadership, the trust is an intentional play on the word, creating a trust of dollars for quality parent skills training and a request to policy makers and providers to trust parents as their children's first teachers. The Parent Trust Act passed in the 2001 legislative session in Public Act # 01-2, An Act Concerning the Expenditures of the Department of Social Services. The Parent Trust Act creates a Parent Trust Fund for quality parent engagement and leadership to improve the health, safety and learning of children.

Parents have not often been encouraged to participate in policy decisions affecting their children and communities. This trust creates a fund to train parents to become skilled as partners and a constituent voice in improving the health, safety and learning of children at the local, state or federal policy level. The training curricula must include civics, be financially sustainable and teach appreciation of diversity.

Communities may apply for these dollars, estimated at \$1000 - \$8,000 per application. There is a 50% local match - 25% in cash, and 25% in-kind. (For example, if you request \$ 8,000.00, you will need to demonstrate a \$4000.00 match. You must have at least \$2,000.00 in the organization's account at the time of the grant request and demonstrate that your program is getting at least \$2,000.00 as in-kind contributions (such as volunteers, space, meals, child care, pro bono professional assistance, etc.).

The Parent Trust is the first broad strategic action plan of Family Support Connecticut (FSC). A public-private partnership that includes parents has facilitated this innovative policy and trust. A Robert Wood Johnson family support Grant supported the first two years of grants for the Parent Trust. The William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund and contributions from State departments are providing matching funds to continue the Trust in its third year.

The Connecticut Commission on Children and the United Way of Connecticut are providing support through in-kind personnel, resource materials, communications linkages, and technical assistance.

Parents will be involved in all stages of this work; they will comprise at least 50% of the grant selection committee.

Application Process for Parent Trust Fund

For any non-profit organization, collaboration or network offering a parent leadership curricula interested in applying for a grant from the Parent Trust Fund:

1. Obtain an application from the Commission on Children
2. Organizations will have four weeks to complete the application. Only emailed applications will be accepted. **By January 17, 2005, 5:00 p.m.**, e-mail applications to: edie.luciano@po.state.ct.us. An email confirmation will be sent to the applicant. Technical assistance will be provided, as necessary.
3. The Parent Trust Selection Committee will review all applications for completeness and responsiveness.
4. The Parent Trust Selection Committee will forward its recommendations to Elaine Zimmerman, executive director of the Commission on Children, for final approval.
5. Applicants will be notified of decisions by **January 24, 2005**.
6. Funding will be provided for a 12-month period from the date the award letter was issued.

Grants awarded range from \$1,000 to \$ 8,000. The application form is short and easy to complete.

Funding Restrictions

In general, this Parent Trust Fund grant does **not** include funding for:

- For-profit organizations
- Individuals
- Religious organizations for sectarian purposes
- Capital campaigns
- Single-issue political causes and activities
- Parent Education Classes (e.g. how to be a better parent, how to communicate with your children)
- Development of a brand new curriculum
- Scholarships.

Time Line

- **December 10, 2004** - The grant application will be made available on the Commission on Children's Website
- **January 17, 2005, 5:00 pm** – All Applications must be received by email at the Commission on Children.
- **January 24, 2005** – Grant Awards will be announced and award recipients will be notified.
- **January 31, 2005** – Funds will be disbursed to awardees.

Commonly asked Questions

1. **Who is eligible for a grant?** The Trust makes grants only to organizations classified as tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Parent Organizations can partner with a 501(c)(3). The Trust does not make grants to individuals or to for-profit organizations. (See Funding restrictions)
2. **I'm representing a local parent group that doesn't have it's own 501(C)(3). Can I still apply?** Yes. As long as you meet the curricula standards to promote civic participation and have a fiduciary (non profit partner) you can apply.
3. **What activities are not eligible for support from the Parent Trust Fund?** The Parent Trust will **not** fund parent education classes (e.g. how to be a better parent, how to talk to you children, "I am Your Child", etc.), one-time events, or proposals to develop a brand new curriculum. In addition to not making grants to individuals, the Trust does not fund capital campaigns, unsolicited construction requests, endowments, debt reduction or scholarships, or fellowships that are not part of a Trusts-initiated program.
4. **What are the chances of being funded?** This is the third year that grants are being offered. We will track the requests for parent leadership support and publish relevant data on the process. Given the number of inquiries, we expect it to be a competitive grant application process. The Trust's approach to grant-making is focused and strategic; it identifies and pursues a specific set of goals and objectives. Study the guidelines carefully to determine whether your project clearly fits within the range of leadership training being supported. If there is not a clear fit, it is unlikely that your project will be granted funding.
5. **What is the size of the grant to be awarded?** Although grant size varies from program to program, the range is \$1,000 to \$8,000.
6. **How often does the Parent Trust Proposal Review Committee meet to review proposals?** The Committee meets quarterly.
7. **How long does it take to get funding from the Trust?** We estimate that checks will be mailed about a week after award letters are sent.
8. **May different organizations offering the same curriculum submit for more than one site at a time?** You are encouraged to submit for as many sites as you wish. Each site will be reviewed independently and evaluated on its own merits. However, each organization will only be able to receive up to \$8,000.00.

9. **When may an organization submit a new proposal?** An organization whose full proposal is turned down by the Trust must wait a minimum of 12 months before submitting a new proposal. An organization currently receiving funding from the Trust is generally expected to fulfill all of the terms and reporting requirements of its current grant before it can submit a proposal for a new grant. On rare occasions, staff may permit an organization to submit a new proposal before the current grant has expired to ensure continuity of funding.
10. **What are the Trust's criteria for funding television and other media projects?** The Trust will consider support for media-based training projects only if the content and use of media address or, in some way, advance a specific objective of one or more of the Trust's parent training areas. Proposals involving media will be evaluated using the same criteria and standards applied to all other proposals.
11. **Does the Trust give discretionary grants?** The Trust does not have discretionary funds to distribute.
12. **I've reviewed your guidelines and find that my project doesn't fit with the Trusts' current strategy. Do you have suggestions of where else I might look for funding?** The Foundation Center (www.fdncenter.org) and the Council on Foundations (www.cof.org) both maintain comprehensive listings of U.S. foundations and the areas they fund.

We look forward to reading your proposal. Please feel free to call us with any questions.
Good luck and happy proposal writing..