

New Orleans Early Childhood Education Facilities Fund Grant Program

FAQ

General

Q: What is the New Orleans Early Childhood Education Facilities Grant program?

A: The New Orleans Early Childhood Education Facilities Fund Grant program was created through a partnership between the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority and Agenda for Children as direct result of a new property tax millage approved by New Orleans voters in 2022, that leverages state matching funding for the provision of child and family support services, coaching and professional development for teachers, and expansion of the supply of available seats in quality early learning centers. In support of these efforts, Agenda for Children selected the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority to administer a program to repair, improve, and expand existing facilities as well as catalyze the development of new facilities in order to expand the number of seats available for children of Low to Moderate Income households citywide.

Q: How can I apply?

A: Applications can be completed in two ways:

- Online via JotForm (will put hyperlink) OR
- PDF application (by request) with required supporting attachments uploaded via OneDrive. OneDrive link should be requested from NORA in order to submit application using this option.

Q: When can I apply?

A: The Initial Application Period begins on **September 4, 2024**, and closes on **October 4, 2024**. After the Initial Application Period ends, applications will be accepted and evaluated on a rolling basis with future deadlines to be determined.

Q: Can I choose my own contractor to complete my construction work?

A: Any contractor that meets program eligibility criteria and agrees to NORA program terms is welcome to participate.

Q: If awarded a grant through the program what would the compliance requirements be?

A: Grantees shall agree to operate, or continue to operate, an Early Childhood Education facility meeting program terms outlined in the grant agreement for a minimum of 2 years for Seed Grants, 5 years for Support Grants, and 10 years for Grow Grants, from the completion of fund disbursement.

Q: Who do I contact if I have a question about the program?

A: Whitney Williams, Economic Development Program Manager at whitney.williams@nola.gov or 504-658-4451

Program Eligibility

Q: Who is eligible for the grant?




A: Current Type III Early Learning Centers licensed by the Louisiana Department of Education to operate in Orleans Parish or those with the intent to apply for a license to operate a Type III commercial early childhood education facility located in Orleans Parish with demonstrated experience in early childhood education.

-OR-

Current Family Child Care providers with academic approval in Orleans Parish (grantees must opt in to academic approval for the duration of the grant compliance and recapture period)

-OR-

Developers or property owners with an existing or planned Type III Early Learning Center may apply if they identify an eligible co-applicant, who is a current or new Type III Early Learning provider.

GRANT TIER	CENTER TYPE	
	TYPE III EARLY LEARNING CENTERS	FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDERS
SEED 	✓	✓
SUPPORT 	✓	
GROW 	✓	

Q: What does the grant pay for?

A: The Grant Program covers four major eligible activities:

- Design and architectural and engineering technical assistance (provided by a NORA contractor)
- Business development technical assistance (provided by a NORA contractor)
- Minor renovations and improvements
- Major renovations and new construction

Each grant tier SEED, SUPPORT and GROW qualifies for different eligible activities as explained in the chart below:

GRANT TIER	ELIGIBLE ACTIVITY			
	A&E DESIGN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	MINOR RENOVATION/ IMPROVEMENTS	MAJOR RENOVATION/ NEW CONSTRUCTION
SEED	✓	✓	✓	
SUPPORT	✓	✓	✓	
GROW		✓		✓

Application Process and Requirements

Q: Can I apply for more than one grant?

A: Applicants can apply for funding for multiple sites, but must submit individual applications for each site and each applicant will only be allocated grant funds for one project at a time.

Q: Which application documents are required?

A: Required Documents for Part A Application:

- Completed Part A Application Form
- Owner's Resume/Professional Biography
- Current photos of facility (interior and exterior)
- Evidence of Site Control (Lease/Act of Cash Sale/Letter of Intent/Other applicable documents) or Available Sites Under Consideration (real estate listing, draft lease document, etc.)

Required Documents for Part B Application:

- Completed Part B Application Form
- Proposed Project Plan
- Business Summary
- Business Plan (Required for GROW Grant Tier only)
- Project Sources and Uses of Funds
- Scope of Work
- Site Evaluation (if necessary)
- Construction Documents (if necessary)
- Construction Bids / Cost Estimate
- Construction Timeline
- Continuous Operations Plan (if necessary)

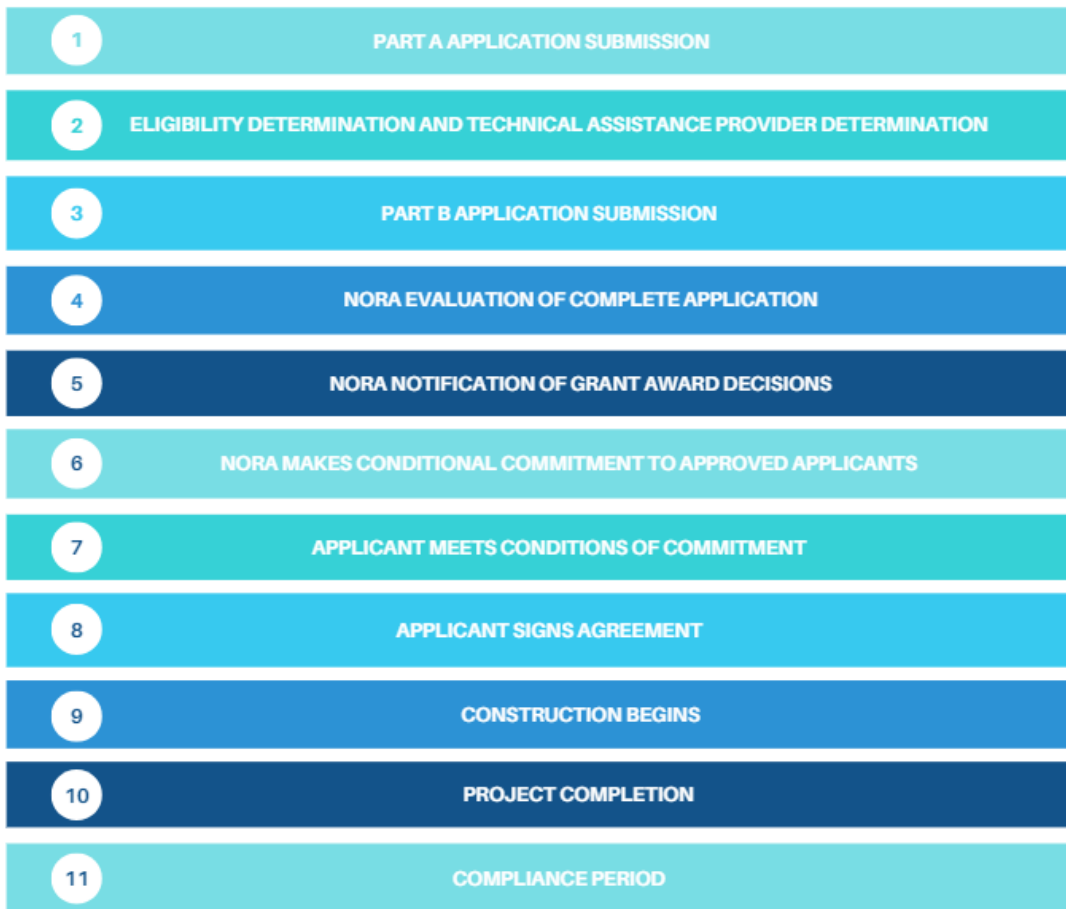
Q: Is there technical assistance available for the application process?

A: Yes, technical assistance will be provided to assist applicants with completion of the application. For the Part A application, NORA and Agenda For Children staff will host a virtual information session and hold in person application assistance office hours throughout the city on various dates. For the Part B application, eligible Part A applicants may receive technical assistance from NORA contractors. Questions regarding the application can be directed to NORA Program Manager Whitney Williams at whitney.williams@nola.gov or 504-658-4451.

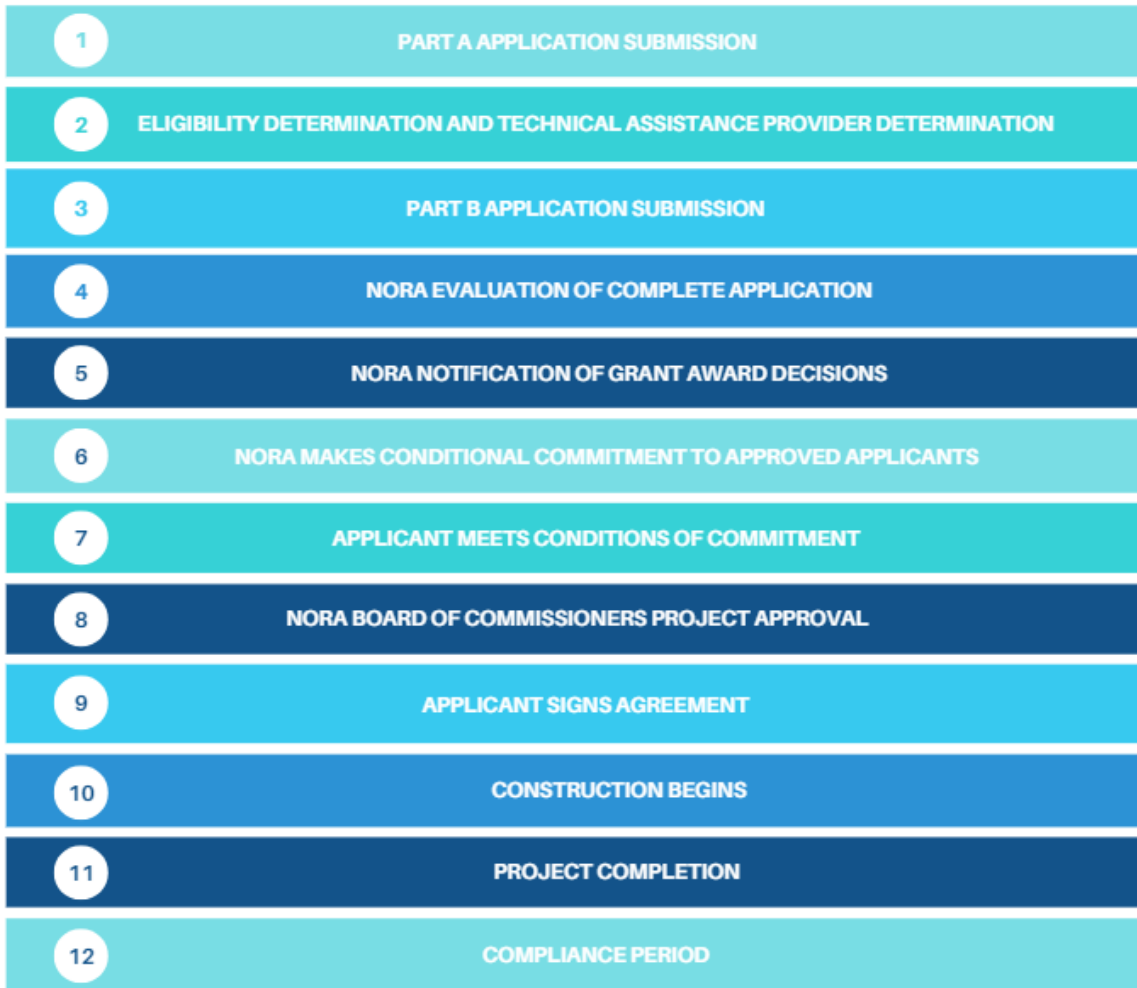
Q: What is the application review timeline?

A:

Seed & Support Program Timeline



GROW Program Timeline



Q: What should I expect during a site visit?

A: During the site visit, program administrators will conduct a brief tour of the site as well as ask any follow up questions that result from the initial evaluation of the application. The site visit is expected to take up to 30 minutes.

Q: How will I be notified about the status of my application?

A: Applicants will be notified about the status of their application by email within 30 days of the application deadline or submittal of all application materials, whichever is later.

Funding

Q: Are the ECE funds available through this program a grant or a loan that must be repaid?

A: The New Orleans Early Childhood Education Facilities funding is a recoverable grant. This means that if for any reason the grantee fails to comply with the terms and provisions of the Grant Agreement, NORA will recapture the grant funds according to terms outlined in the grant agreement.

Q: Do I have to contribute any of my own money to the project?

A: Grantees who are awarded projects that include construction costs are expected to invest or attract additional capital.

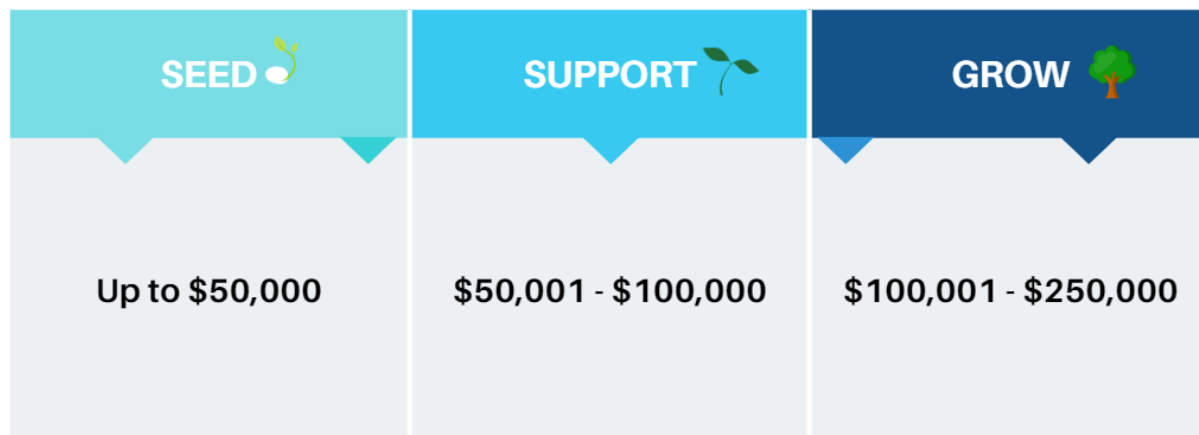
Required match levels is:

- SEED- 5% of Construction Costs (up to \$2,500 on a max grant of \$50,000)
- SUPPORT- 10% of Construction Costs (up to \$10,000 on a max grant of \$100,000)
- GROW- 15% of Construction Costs (up to \$37,500 on a max grant of \$250,000)

Grant match is not required for design or business technical assistance provided through the grant program.

Q: How much funding is available per project?

A: Grants will be awarded via award allocations between \$5,000 and \$250,000 per application, in line with the Seed, Support, and Grow grant levels. If the total project costs exceed \$250,000, applicants can apply for an amount up to \$250,000 to offset these costs but must provide a budget and cost estimates that document the total cost of the project, as well as identify other committed sources to fund the amount exceeding \$250,000. For all projects, the least amount of funding necessary to ensure project feasibility will be recommended. Organizations that receive first grants at the Seed or Support grant level are eligible to apply for a second grant up to the combined maximum of \$300,000 per site.



Total grant funds awarded for construction will be capped based on a per seat investment maximum:

Type III Child Care Centers

- \$2,000 max grant award per existing seat (based upon existing licensed capacity)
- \$5,000 max grant award per new seat created (based on net increase in licensed capacity)

Example Max Grant Calculation Scenarios:

- An existing center currently has a licensed capacity of 50 seats and is renovating without expanding its licensed capacity
 - The center will be eligible for a maximum grant of \$100,000 (50 existing seats multiplied by \$2,000 max grant per existing seat)
- A new center being constructed will have a licensed capacity of 50 new seats based upon the architectural and site plans
 - The center will be eligible for a maximum grant of \$250,000 (50 new seats multiplied by \$5,000 max grant per new seat)
- An existing center that has a current licensed capacity of 50 seats and is renovating its existing space and expanding its licensed capacity to 75 seats
 - The center will be eligible for a maximum grant of \$225,000, including \$100,000 for the original licensed capacity (50 existing seats multiplied by \$2,000 max grant per existing seat) and \$125,000 for the new seats created (25 new seats multiplied by \$5,000 max grant per new seat)

Q: Will funds be paid directly to the grantee?

A: No, grantees will not receive any funds through this program. Grants will only be paid directly to approved contractors for eligible expenditures, consistent with contract terms.