

Call for applications for Learning System Grants 2019

Purpose of the learning system grants

The purpose of the learning system grants is to strengthen the capacity of children, young people and family services in Victoria to generate and apply evidence, including data, analytics, evaluation and research. Learning system grants are available to the sector to undertake projects in these areas, contributing to a stronger evidence base in Victoria, and better outcomes for children, young people and their families.

The learning system

The Roadmap for Reform is the Victorian Government's blueprint for transforming the child and family system from a crisis response to early intervention and prevention. A key part of the reform is a learning system that applies evidence about practice and models of care to inform service delivery and improve outcomes for children and families.

Becoming a learning system means the sector - including the Department of Health and Human Services (the department) - working together to deliver children and families services that are backed by rigorous evidence and are continually re-evaluated, refined and shared to improve the outcomes for children, young people and families.

Available funding

The total funding for the 2019 learning system grant round is \$250,000. **Individual grants are capped at \$60,000.**

Project expectations

Partnerships between service providers, researchers or other relevant experts such as evaluators or implementation experts are encouraged. Projects must be completed by June 2020.

Successful grant applicants will be required to submit a final report on their project outcomes, and present findings of their project via OPEN.

Eligibility

Learning system grants are open to service providers registered as a community service organisation under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*, or eligible for registration under the Act.

Application process

The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare will administer the learning system grants. **Applications will open on 16 May and close on 13 June.**

Grant themes for 2019

Consistent with the learning system focus on building and strengthening the evidence base for child, youth and family services to improve outcomes for children and families, the 2019 learning system grants will focus on the OPEN Journey to Better Outcomes as described on the OPEN portal:

1. **Identify: What is the issue and how have you identified it?** Start here if you're looking to understand the needs of your clients or community. Projects in this theme will gather and data

around practice and programs and identify desired outcomes. How do you know a program or practice will meet the needs of your clients? Applications might include:

- Conducting a formal needs analysis
2. **Design: How to plan to achieve your identified outcomes?** Start here if you know your client and community needs and desired outcomes, and have a program or practice in mind. This theme is for formally planning, designing and testing your program or practice to create an evidence-informed theory of change. Applications might include:
- Working with your stakeholders to develop a new theory of change or program logic
 - Reviewing and refining your existing theory of change or program logic
 - Engaging research and practice experts to review and enhance your theory of change
3. **Implement: What steps will you take to embed evidence-informed practice approaches?** Start here if you have an evidence-informed theory of change or program logic that you want to implement and put into practice. Applications might include:
- Developing an implementation plan and putting your theory of change into action
 - Building capability across your organisation to embed evidence-informed practice and programs, such as trialling the Common Elements Approach
 - Undertaking a developmental evaluation to test and refine your model
4. **Evaluate: How will you know if you are making a difference?** Start here if you have an existing program or practice that you want to evaluate. This theme is for using data for practice and program improvement and to communicate learning to a range of audiences. Applications might include:
- Setting the foundations for high-quality monitoring and evaluation by establishing systems and process for ongoing data collection
 - Building organisational evaluation capacity and capability
 - Undertaking program or practice impact evaluation.

Selection criteria

Applications must address each of the selection criteria below to be eligible:

Criterion 1: Addresses one or more of the grant themes.

Criterion 2: Has a well-articulated and detailed methodology with desired outcomes and timeline.

Criterion 3: Has experienced personnel (including qualifications, experience and time allocated to project)

Criterion 4: Outlines how the project findings will be incorporated into practice

Criterion 5: Describes how the project, once completed, will contribute to better services for children and families.

Applicants must complete the application form to be considered for a Grant.

For more information about the learning system grants and the application process, please contact either:

Dr Michele Lonsdale on 03 9094 3521, 0408 083 238 or michele.lonsdale@cfecfw.asn.au

Or Dr Brigid van Wanrooy on 03 9096 1061 or Brigid.vanwanrooy@dhhs.vic.gov.au