The CalGrows Innovation Fund

Questions Submitted to the CalGrows Innovation Fund

The document will be used to post answers to the questions submitted to the CalGrows Innovation Fund via email, the website, or in the webinars on Nov 15 and 18.

Please note:
Questions are in italics / Answers are in standard text

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Eligibility

You stated that this program is only for organizations that provide services in the in-home setting...is that correct? What if a submitter is a technology company that provides in-home health and education services...would that suffice?
The funding is for organizations that train direct care workers, who are assisting older adults and people with disabilities in the home or community-based settings. If the applicant is providing training that meets this criteria and otherwise meets the eligibility criteria, they can apply.

Can Community Based Organizations, who provide AAA services apply directly to receive this grant or does the AAA apply on their behalf?
Community-based organizations can apply directly and do not need the AAA to apply on their behalf.

Will licensed Adult Day Programs (by Dept of Social Services) be eligible to apply for this grant?
Any organization that offers direct care services in the home and community and meets the listed requirements would be eligible to apply.

What does "presence" mean? Is it having an office in CA or having worked in CA?
Organizations that have worked in California in the past three years are considered to have a presence in California.

So, can this include for-profit, state-registered Home Care Organizations?
If your organization meets the eligibility requirements spelled out in the [RFA document](#) in terms of experience and California-presence, and is verified to conduct business in California, then your organization is eligible.
I work for an online education provider. We do not have a physical presence in CA, but do educate healthcare workforce throughout the state. Would we be qualified (have presence) to submit a proposal?

Yes, as long as activities funded by the grant are specific and limited to California residents, and as long as the organization meets the other eligibility requirements, then the organization would be eligible to submit a proposal. The application should include information about the previous work the organization has done in California.

Can Home Health and Hospice agency apply for this grant? / What if the organization provides services both in the home and institutions (assisted living), can they still apply?
As long as the agency meets the eligibility criteria, it may apply. However, please note that the funds provided to train direct care workers must be for DCWs working in the home or in a community-based setting. Although assisted living facilities are eligible, institutions that provide care beyond assistance with activities of daily living are not eligible, such as nursing homes or hospitals. Please refer to the list of Target Programs/Settings in the RFA document.

Would a new non-profit (incorporated in 2022, opening for services in 2023) be eligible to apply?
An organization must have the experience outlined in the RFA document, and be in good standing with the state of California. It does not appear that an organization that has not yet provided services would be eligible for an application alone, but could join a consortium.

Would an organization that serves as a practicum site for hands-on training for another school-based program be eligible to apply?
Eligibility is determined by the kind of organization and presence in the state of California. Separately, if the funds requested in the application are for the activities outlined in the RFA (training of the current direct care workforce), and in the settings outlined in the RFA, the application would fit within the parameters of this funding opportunity.

Does the entity have to be a non-profit to qualify or can it be a government agency, such as a special district? / Does the entity have to be a non-profit to qualify or can it be a government agency, such as a special district? / Apologies if this may have been asked but are AAA's allowed to apply? / Can a home health organization apply? / I am the owner/operator of a for profit home care organization with over 10 years of experience working with paid caregivers and older adults. Does my organization qualify to apply directly? Can a community-based day program apply? / Is a PACE program eligible to apply?   Eligibility is outlined in the RFA and includes for-profit and nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, government entities, and training and education providers. Organizations under these categories are eligible and may apply directly.

Are local community colleges giving out certificates eligible?
If local community colleges fit the eligibility criteria listed in the RFA document, and they are using the funds to train and incentivize direct care workers who are assisting older adults and people with disabilities in the home or community-based settings, then yes, they are eligible.

Would a community health center be eligible to apply for a CHW training program (for CHWs offering care coordination and social supports for older adults living in the community)?

The funding is for organizations that train direct care workers, who are assisting older adults and people with disabilities in the home or community-based settings. Community Health Workers are listed in the Targeted Workforce section of the RFA Document, so if the applicant is providing training that meets the criteria and the organization meets the eligibility criteria, they can apply.

Does the entity have to be a nonprofit to qualify or can it be a government agency, such as a special district?
The entity does not have to be a nonprofit. Please review eligibility criteria in the RFA document.

Can the "presence" in California include training clients in communication skills? Our clients are in California but our organization is based in Boston.
Yes, as long as the organization does work with direct care workers providing care in California, and meets the other eligibility criteria, it is eligible to apply for funding to work with those specific clients. Additionally, the training provided needs to fall under one of the core competencies.

Does this application require a Board of Resolutions?
No. All required information for the application is detailed in the RFA document.

Can you explain in more detail? Is there a process we have to complete with SOS? - Applicants must be in good standing and qualified to conduct business in California as verified by the Secretary of State's website: http://www.sos.ca.gov/.
Applicants must have an established legal business entity (Corporation, Limited Liability Company, Limited Partnership, General Partnership, or Limited Liability Partnership) for their organization and must have all filings in good standing with the Secretary of State, including annual/biannual Statement of Information, taxes, and any licenses or permits as applicable. Detailed information can be found on the FAQ in the Business Entities section of the Secretary of State's website and all filings are handled through https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/. To ensure that an organization is currently in good standing, visit https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/search/business to search. Answers to more detailed questions may be found in the help documents on these websites or should be directed to the office of the Secretary of State, (916) 653-6814.

Are caregiving tasks viewed as only RN type tasks or would advocacy, empowerment and even advance care planning fit within the focus of this work?
The Innovation Fund is not targeted to licensed clinical healthcare professionals such as RNs. It is targeted to direct care workers who provide support for older adults and people with disabilities in home- and community-based settings. Direct care consists of various types of support for daily living that enable individuals to continue living in the setting of their choice, according to their needs and preferences. If your program seeks to focus on a target workforce that provides this type of care, and seeks to provide training and incentives, then it fits within the scope. Please review the Target Workforce Population section of the RFA document for more details about job types that fit the scope.

Is having a presence in California within the last 3 years a firm requirement?

Yes.

Can for-profit companies apply for this funding?
Yes, for-profit companies can apply for this funding, provided they meet other eligibility and experience criteria.

I acquired the In-home care agency recently but the agency has been servicing for the last 10 years. Am I eligible to apply?
Yes, per the eligibility requirements, so long as an organization has had a presence in California within the last three years it would qualify.

Are tribes and tribal organizations eligible to apply?
Yes, per the eligibility requirements, as long as the tribe/tribal organization have worked with older adults and have managed training the workforce for care work they would qualify for this grant.

Consortium & Subcontractor Eligibility/Multiple Applications

Can we apply for multiple grants and/or in multiple categories? / Can we be a lead organization on one grant application and a partner on another? / Can training partners apply for multiple grants?
A single organization may not apply as a lead entity for more than one application. However, it is allowable for an organization to submit as a lead applicant, either on their own, or as the lead of a consortium, AND to be included as a secondary partner on one or multiple other applications as a member of a consortium. Any partner can act as a secondary partner on multiple applications, including training providers and any other eligible organization.

Is it possible to be a subcontract on one application and the lead agency on another?
To be clear, subcontractor and partner agency are two distinct categories. A secondary partner agency applies alongside the lead applicant, helps develop the proposal, and submits their own detailed budget. For information about applying as a secondary partner agency, see the question directly above. A subcontractor is an entity that typically is not involved in the application process and will be contracted with later and a detailed budget is not required for this line item. Please note that contracted services are not to exceed 50% of the overall project budget. With this definition, yes, it is possible for an organization to be a subcontractor on one application and separately submit an application as a lead entity, either alone or with other partners in a consortium.

As our team is considering partners for the application, a question came up for us regarding eligibility: would an FQHC or provider at a major health system qualify as a co-applicant?
As long as the target workforce works in the home or community, and not an institutional setting, then the co-applicant could represent a range of organizations, including health systems.

We think that forming a consortium of three organizations, which we shall set up specifically to deliver on the program, will work best. In this case, can any of us be the applicant? Or must we formalize our partnership and apply as one entity?

The funder will have a contractual relationship with one entity in the consortium - the lead organization. The lead organization will be responsible for distributing the funds and managing the relationship between the lead organization and the partner organization(s). You do not need to formalize your partnership and apply as one entity.

Could we partner with Cal State Universities?

Yes.

We may have several programs we want to submit together on one application. All are part of the same agency. Does that work?

Although programs can be comprised of a variety of activities, populations, etc., assuming the applicant has reviewed the RFA document for fit and eligibility, it is acceptable and appropriate to include different kinds of training in different locations, and different modalities, as well as targeted to different groups of direct care workers, and falling under different management within an organization together within one application.

Can you develop a consortium with orgs outside of California if the lead agency is based in California?

As long as the proposed project targets direct care workers residing in California and the lead applicant is an organization with a California presence, partner applicants are not required to meet every eligibility criteria. So yes, in this example, partner organizations from outside California could be included in a consortium.

Are there minimum requirements that each subcontractor must meet in order to partner with the administrative entity?

No, there are no minimum qualifications each subcontractor must meet in order to contract with the administrative entity. Further, there are no minimum requirements for the organizations in a consortium. If the lead organization does not meet all of the experience requirements alone, then a partner organization can meet the other experience requirements, so that together all requirements are met. However, the lead organization must meet the initial eligibility requirements listed in the RFA document. To underscore, subcontractors and consortium partners are different types of entities, and neither has minimum qualifications.

Can we partner with existing workforce centers?

As long as the lead organization fits the initial eligibility criteria and the consortium as a whole fits the experience criteria, yes, partnering with existing workforce centers is allowable.

In terms of the 50% limit on contractors...if a consortium is applying together but submitting under one applicant, does this mean that only 50% is available to be shared by other members of the consortia? Within the budget template provided in the online application portal, each partner

organization in a consortium is asked to fill out their own detailed budget, the totals of which are summed and added to the lead applicants budget to comprise the total requested funding. Each partner organization, including the lead applicant, is allowed 50% of their individual proposed budget to bring in subcontractors that fit the needs of their individual organization.

How many agencies will be allowed for the program?
There is no predetermined number of grants or agencies that will be allowed to participate in the overall CalGrows Innovation Fund. In terms of consortium partners, no more than four organizations should be included, with one lead applicant and no greater than three additional partner organizations.

Can we use and collaborate with the local LA county senior centers that is a govt program funded by the dept of aging and disabilities? This would be a part of the outreach and marketing strategy since they service the communities we are targeting?
Yes, coordination and collaboration with local government programs can be considered on applications. Local government programs are welcome to apply both on an individual or as a partner in a group or consortium. However, within a group or consortium, one party must offer training as part of your proposal. Outreach and marketing alone would not qualify.

Can we submit 2 applications if we are one large company with two LLCs? / We operate several facilities. Each is operated under its own legal entity and unique tax ID, but there is common ownership across entities. Can we apply under one grant application for all entities, or does each entity have to submit its own application? / We have multiple entities under one 501c3, should we apply separately or together?
Different entities with common ownership and/or owned by one large company should submit one application.

Research and Reports

During the planning phase for the CalGrows Innovation Fund, formative research was conducted with direct care workers, stakeholders and around promising practices. The results of that research are included in the links below.

[CC CDA CalGrows Promising Practice Research with Appdx](#)

[CC CDA CalGrows](#) [Stakeholder Synthesis](#)

[CDA CalGrows DCW Survey and Focus Group Report](#)

Which types of trainings were requested during the survey? Nursing, OT, PT, social work?
All of the research conducted with the direct care workers can be found at the above links, including the types and modalities of trainings requested. The survey conducted with direct care workers can be found [here](#).

Training Content and Methods

Will you consider applications from agencies to train their own staff and community members, including unpaid family caregivers (including from smaller organizations)?
Yes, any program that incorporates incentives and training as outlined in the RFA document and meets the eligibility requirements as outlined qualifies to apply for the fund. So yes, smaller organizations are encouraged to apply for programs that support their staff, as long as their staff are direct care workers in a home- or community-based setting, and as long as incentives are attached to the training.

Are trainings preferred or required to issue any certificate, certification, licensing review? Are applicants required to partner with a certifying body like a university or college? Are more informal certificates like online badges for course completion acceptable? Should any certificates issued include CalGrows on the certificate?
Trainings are not required to issue any formal certification, but may issue formal or informal certification if they choose. If they would like to partner with a certifying body, they may, but it is not a requirement. Details of how certificates should be branded and presented can be discussed with successful awardees during the process of implementation.

Are there required qualifications for course instructors, such as licensed or registered nurse, certified nursing assistant, certified home health aide, etc.?
Course instructors are required to have applicable experience and qualifications for the course they are facilitating and those qualifications should be spelled out in the course template. While specific requirements per course or subject are not outlined, applicants should demonstrate that the instructor has sufficient and relevant experience.

Must training be a validated or evidence-based training program?
It is not required for training to be a validated or evidence-based training program, but if an organization or consortium is using such a program, they can highlight this within the application. Please note, applicants should ensure that all training instructors are qualified and have relevant expertise.

Can these dollars be used to teach current staff a different language?
Funding must be used to support direct care workers in their work with older adults and/or people with disabilities. If the language training supports this, it is applicable. Please note that any training offered through the CalGrows program must also meet one or more of the core competencies outlined in the RFA document.

Are there any guidelines or expectations in regards to how many hours of training should be provided to the caregivers?
There are no guidelines or expectations around the number of hours proposed for training. It is expected that the number of hours proposed are adequate to meet the training objectives proposed.

Can funds be used to cover the costs of outside training? Who will be providing the caregiver training?
Applicants must propose specific training goals and approaches as a component of their application. If an applicant does not provide training, they should partner with a training provider to assemble a consortium, and the training provider should be listed as a partner organization on the application.

Can grant funds be used to support staff training around personal protection when providing home care alone to seniors?
Funding must support direct care workers who work with older adults and/or people with disabilities. Yes, grant funds could support training in personal protection, as long as it was targeted to that workforce. Please note that any training provided must address one or more of the core competencies outlined in the RFA document.

Can grant funds be used to support staff training in culturally competent care?
Funding must support direct care workers who work with older adults and/or people with disabilities. Yes, grant funds could support training in culturally competent, appropriate, and responsive care, as long as it is targeted to that workforce. Please note that any training provided must address one or more of the core competencies outlined in the RFA document.

Can we include/use partner organizations' curriculum? We use the American Foundation of Alzheimer's curriculum to train our staff and would like to broaden its use.
Organizations can apply using a partner's curriculum, as long as they have the proper permissions for usage.

Can grant funds be used to support staff training in how to build trust with seniors who have become socially isolated?
Grant funds must be used to train persons working with older adults and people with disabilities, and could include training to build trust with socially isolated seniors. Please note that any training provided must address one or more of the core competencies outlined in the RFA document.

So BOTH training AND Incentives are required for every participant assuming their eligibility. Correct?
Assuming all eligibility criteria have been met, yes, both incentives and training are required for all direct care workers. However, unpaid family and friends can also be provided with training and that population does not qualify for incentives.

I think I heard you say that job coaching (on how to enter the industry) alone wouldn't be acceptable as training. Could you talk a little about what would be considered training versus coaching for people who want to become direct care workers? I have been working in senior care since 2009 and have seen a gap in helping family caregivers understand what they need to do and

how to become a professional caregiver and present themselves professional to get their first senior care job.

These funds can only be used to train current, paid direct care workers and unpaid family/friend caregivers currently providing direct care. If the target population is one of these two groups then the proposal would be eligible for funding. Please note that the proposed training must meet one of the core competencies listed in the RFA document. If the training offered falls into one of the core competencies then it would be eligible.

Could you clarify the relationship between this program and the IHSS Career Pathways Program, incl the recently awarded grants? Are Calgrows participants also going to have access to that content too? Is it unlimited? If so, how does it all work? Or would a Calgrows applicant need to include funding for that access (or incentives to use it) in the application? It's not clear.

Yes. Non-IHSS direct care workers will have access to the trainings offered to IHSS workers through the IHSS career pathways program. These programs are separate and distinct from the trainings that will be funded through the Innovation Fund. Training curriculum included in applications for the CalGrows Innovation Fund should not include the same curriculum being used as part of the IHSS Career Pathways program.

Can the training program be part of a caregiver intervention that includes caregiver training and advocacy for the care recipient?

As long as the training program targets direct care workers and/or unpaid family and friend caregivers, and provides them with training to support career advancement, retention, and/or skillbuilding in the field of direct care, it would be eligible. Note that all training programs must address one or more of the core competencies listed in the RFA document.

If the courses/trainings are to be offered for free, can they be incorporated into an existing for-credit program and offered as credit-free bonus course?

If the applicant is partnering with another organization, such as an educational institution, to offer training as part of their program for credit then both partners would need to be included in the application. The training would still need to meet all other requirements, and importantly must be provided for free to the target workforce.

Do the Core Competencies selected all have to fall under one category?

No, you are not restricted to just one category. You are welcome to pick and choose between the four categories.

When addressing core competencies, does one have to cover all bulleted areas under that core competency?

No. So long as applicants select one point of focus, applications will be considered. Bullet selections do not have to be in the same category.

Can you give an example of doing an online training program?

Please use outside resources to learn more about online training programs that have been offered to direct care workers.

Would I put an application and proposal together based on one particularly designed program, and what I estimate the numbers might be over an entire year?
The training projects will run through the 9-month period between March 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023. Therefore, it is best to plan your program design according to that timeline. Because projects will reach various target workforce populations of varying sizes, with varying needs, we cannot speak to program design other than to say that it must target the eligible workforce, utilize training around the core competencies, and, for paid direct care workers, attach incentives to those trainings.

Are there advantages or preferences or desires for shorter "modules" of training, ie 10 hours or 20 hours? What sort of frequency throughout the year?
There are no advantages or preferences for any length or timing of training. Trainings should meet the needs of the target workforce and center around the core competencies listed, and rationale for training design can be described in the narrative of the application.

What might be the realistic expectations about the number of students, amount of incentives, etc.?
Number of students and number of incentives is entirely dependent on the workforce each applicant targets. Applications should seek to be realistic in anticipating how many workers will be served by their programming.

Target Population

Could you talk a little more about who comprises direct care workers. RNs? MFTs?
For this program direct care worker is broadly defined as an individual providing non-clinical direct care services to Medi-Cal recipients in the home or community. This program does not include CNAs unless they provide services in the home or community, nor does it include licensed clinical health care professionals such as RNs. MFTs could be eligible if they provide direct care to Medi-Cal recipients in the home or community.

Can training be also provided to unpaid caregivers, ie. family caregivers?
Yes. Although incentives cannot be distributed for unpaid family and friend caregivers, applicants are encouraged to include family and friend caregivers in training opportunities where appropriate.

Can direct care workers be social workers providing support to unpaid caregivers?
Yes. Unlicensed social workers providing support to non-paid caregivers are eligible to participate in the CalGrows program.

How would private caregivers prove that they were in the workforce? Would we have to get verification of employment?
Yes. Applicants would need to ask private caregivers for verification of employment.

Direct Care Workforce means the worker is employed? Not for interested people who are training for a career in health care? Because these trainings would be valuable for recruitment.
This program focuses on direct care workers who are employed in the field, or unpaid family caregivers who can benefit from training opportunities. It is not intended for those interested in or currently training for a career in health care, but rather individuals who are employed as a direct care worker presently.

Can an organization propose to serve more than one workforce group in a single proposal?
Yes, an organization can propose to serve more than one workforce group in a single proposal.

What additional populations are considered under the "other" category? Additionally, what settings are considered under the "other" category? Would a CBO be considered as "Other?"
A CBO could apply for this program, as long as it meets the other eligibility requirements listed in the RFA document. Please use your judgment with the knowledge you have of your organization to review the categories and select. In terms of other questions about eligibility, please email innovationfund@calgrows.org about organizations and settings and we will do our best to provide an answer.

Do applications have to include both people with disabilities and seniors? Or the project must focus on just one population?
The applicant can choose to focus on just one of those populations if the direct care workers you are targeting work with just one of those populations.

Can we only focus on unpaid caregivers?
Yes. Applicants can focus solely on unpaid family/friend caregivers, but note that unpaid caregivers are not eligible for incentives and/or stipends. If an applicant focuses solely on unpaid family/friend caregivers the requirement to include incentives/stipends is lifted.

Can any of the funding be used in training for IHSS?
No, the funding cannot be used directly to train IHSS providers. However, for IHSS providers that also work in formal direct care roles, participation is allowed. Please see the answer in the below question.

Many IHSS workers also work in formal roles at RCFEs and/or agencies. Do we need to vet these trainees to ensure the cross pollination does not happen?
IHSS workers that also work in formal roles at RCFEs and/or other agencies can be targeted with these funds. However, applicants must ensure that the training opportunities offered through their program are separate and distinct from training offered through the California Department of Social Services IHSS Career Pathways program. More information on the IHSS Career Pathways program can be found here.

Given the federal funding, is there any risk in the reporting requirements for caregivers or their patients who may be undocumented?

No. CDA will not require the collection of any identifying information for care recipients or caregivers.

Can you elaborate on the exclusion of In-Home Supportive Services?
The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has implemented a training program for IHSS workers, the IHSS Career Pathways program. CDSS has focused on training for IHSS workers, and the Department of Aging is focusing on training for non-IHSS direct care workers. More information on the IHSS Career Pathways program can be found here.

Will DSP workers qualify for licensed facilities?
This program does not include Direct Support Professionals, as the Department of Developmental Services is offering targeted programs for this workforce that serves the developmentally disabled population. Additionally, settings such as hospitals or skilled nursing facilities are not eligible.

Could we use this to target RCFE administrator training?
Since RCFE administrators do not provide direct care to older adults and/or people with disabilities directly, no, training for that population would not be eligible for these funds.

Can you provide training to care managers in health care settings or is this population excluded because they are in health care settings?
If the services care managers provide are within the health care setting, then no, training for this population would not be eligible. Care managers are an eligible target population only when they provide services in home- and community-based settings.

Is the area of coverage specific? Meaning if my organization is based in NorCal, can we train caregivers in other parts of the state?
No, the area of coverage is not specific in California. The only location requirement is that the program be targeted to direct care workers providing care in California. In the online application portal, the applicant will be asked to indicate the counties in which their work will take place. Please indicate all counties in that section.

Can this program benefit not just our caregivers but also internal staff that have been moving along in their career journey (i.e. A caregiver who is promoted to a Care Manager or a caregiver who is promoted to a recruiter and trainer role?)
These staff who have moved on to other positions are only eligible if they are primarily providing direct care to older adults and/or people with disabilities, and meet all other eligibility criteria listed in the RFA document.

Are ECM and / or Community Supports populations included anywhere in the application?
Yes. Direct care workers that provide Enhanced Care Management and Community Supports for Medi-Cal beneficiaries are eligible to be trained with this funding.

Is it required that care recipients be on Medi-Cal?

The target paid direct care workforce should be providing services to Medi-Cal recipients, but it is not necessary that *all* of their clients are Medi-Cal recipients. However, for family caregivers, care recipients must be Medi-Cal eligible or likely to become Medi-Cal eligible in the future.

I work at a nonprofit hospital (part of a health system) and have an in-house Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP), with paid staff (which would not qualify), although we also have a licensed social worker program that is off-site in our local senior community. Would this social worker program be eligible to apply? The social workers are paid, but we are looking to grow, expand, and train additional staff that go out in our senior community and provide care.
For this funding, the social workers receiving training would have to be unlicensed. Training licensed social workers would not be an eligible use of funds. Any additional staff providing care in home- or community-based settings would be eligible if they fit the criteria listed in the [RFA document](#). The Target Workforce section may provide additional clarification.

Within the RFA – do the Target Programs/Settings allow for Home Care Aides and Personal Care Assistants? If yes, how so?
Yes, these two types of workers would be eligible to participate in these trainings, as long as they are providing direct care to older adults and people with disabilities in the state of California. We have a broad definition of a direct care worker for this fund, because the goal is to reach as many workers as possible that have direct interaction with and provide direct care for older adults.

Could this be used to create something such as an Activity Coordinator course so that workers can advance, given that DHCS approves those providers normally?
Yes, activity coordinators would be considered target workers and therefore eligible to participate in the program.

Are direct care workers at assisted living centers eligible to receive training through CalGrows?
Yes. Direct care workers at assisted living centers (that are licensed as residential care facilities for the elderly) are eligible, as long as they are providing services to one or more Medi-Cal recipients.

Funding and Budget Usage

What is a typical amount to apply for? Is the award based on number of participants or cost of program?
Because this is an Innovation Fund and a one-time opportunity, we encourage applicants to thoughtfully consider what will be most relevant and effective for their organization, target population, and proposed project in terms of funding requested. There is no minimum or maximum amount of funding allowable and total funding requested will vary widely (however, please note that Proof-of-Concept Awards are capped at $1 Million). The award is based on the scoring rubric as outlined in the [RFA document](#).

Is there a minimum funding threshold?
No, there is no minimum funding threshold.

Do financials have to be audited ?
It is not required that financial statements are audited, but it is preferred that audited statements are provided when available.

If we have a presence in California but also in other states, can the reward money be used only in California or in other states, as well?
The CalGrows Innovation Fund targets direct care workers and unpaid friend and family caregivers providing care in the state of CA and working in home and community based settings, and the funding should be used only for programming provided to individuals who fit that eligibility.

Are the hiring of new staffing such as course instructors, specialists, or training directors/managers allowed to help build internal capacity?
Hiring of new staff is allowable, with the understanding that grant funds must be expended by the program end date of December 31, 2023 and funds to sustain any staffing increases will need to be secured from other sources to maintain those positions after that date.

I would like some additional information related to "prior year financial statement & current year operating budget." What is your expectation for a Proof-of-Concept funding category?
Where the budget specifies "prior-year financial statement and current operating budget," it refers to the organization as a whole and not the proposed program specifically. Since Proof-of-Concept projects may not have been funded at the organization in the past, it is not required to demonstrate prior year financial information specifically relating to the proposed program.

Is there a predetermined number of projects that will be funded?/ How many grant awards will be made? Is there a maximum amount for each proposal?
There is not a predetermined number of projects that will be funded. Once applications are received, and the grant review team assesses how much funding is being requested, we will work to determine how many projects can be funded based on funds requested and funds available. The only proposal maximums are for Proof-of-Concept funding that is capped at $1 Million per proposal.

Is the maximum amount of funding allowed per application $1 Million? Can an organization apply for both Proof-of-Concept and Ready-to-Scale at the same time for a total of $2 Million max? Or would two separate applications be needed?
The $1 Million maximum is only for Proof-of-Concept proposals. There is no maximum amount for projects that aim to scale up, however the entire fund is currently capped at $55.6 million. Please note that organizations cannot apply for both grants (Proof-of-Concept and Ready-to-Scale) for the same project, or as the lead organization. Organizations can be a partner in, but not the lead on, more than one application, if this fits within the eligibility criteria noted under general eligibility in the RFA document and under Consortium Eligibility in this document.

Can we get funding to build educational training to offer to direct care workers?
Funding eligibility would depend on what is meant by building training. The Innovation Fund cannot pay for planning alone - training of the target workforce must occur in the course of the project and with the funding provided. Projects proposed should be beyond planning and ready to be tested.

Should we specify amount of funding requested?
Yes, the amount of funding requested must be specified. There are specific budget instructions included in the RFA document, as well as a template to include detailed budget information in the online application portal.

Can the funding be used to build system capacity to provide trainings so that these activities can be continued beyond the grant period? Or is it focused only on offering trainings during the grant period? The funding must be focused on providing training and incentives to direct care workers and unpaid family and friend caregivers in home- and community-based settings. If there are activities that are required to support the organization as they provide the training and incentives, and which also build the organization's system capacity, they are allowable.

Are you awarding more awards to one category over the other?
There is no predetermined number of awards in either category.

On average how much do you think you will allocate for each winner?
There is no average amount that we can predict, since funding disbursed will depend entirely on applications received, funds requested, and successful grants awarded, with projects of varying sizes potentially being funded.

"No more than 50% of the budget should be for outside contractors or consultants." Does this include all other outside services like: hosting, online services fees, advertising, etc? For instance, paying to promote a training program online via PPC ads and social media might cost 10s of thousands of dollars. Contracting with a company to manage the ad campaigns will cost even more. Similarly, offering on-demand learning requires paying for a learning management system that will cost quite a bit of $$. Please review standard definitions of subcontractors vs. goods and services vs. partners to identify where each line item in your budget should be captured. Some of the activities you describe may fit under other lines in the budget, i.e. supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs, or entire partnerships, rather than under the subcontractor specification.

In the budget template provided, one of the line items asks for Fringe costs, what does that mean?
Fringe benefits are benefits additional to compensation that an organization provides to an employee, that can include but are not limited to health insurance, the costs of leave (vacation, family-related, sick or military), employee insurance, pensions, and unemployment benefit plans. For the CalGrows Innovation Fund, these costs are calculated as a percentage of wages listed (10%), and the budget template linked in the RFA document contains a formula that will calculate

the total fringe benefits that should be included based on the wages the applicant includes in the Personnel section.

Concerning the budget, if 50% of the budget can be used for contractors or consultants, can that include vendors we work with to carry out incentive programs?
Yes, any outside vendors brought in to assist with your program would be considered a sub/outside contractor or consultant within the budget.

If training has been delivered to one or more health system but just began (under 100 workers have completed) so there is not robust data available on retention just yet, is this considered proof of concept or ready to scale?
If your project has already delivered (piloted) an initial training program, then your application would be placed in the Ready-to-Scale category since your next phase would be expanding on the original training program.

Incentives

The following example is the structure for the DCWs who take the IHSS courses under the CalGrows program and may help applicants consider how to approach structuring their incentives and stipends.

Incentive Type	Dollar Amount	Payments that Can be Received
Tier 1 Completing 15 hours of Training	$500	Providers are eligible to receive an incentive payment for completing 15 hours of training. *Providers are eligible to receive up to 2 incentive payments at this Tier.*
Tier 2 Tier 1 AND working for a minimum of 40 hours in one month in a direct care role	$500	Providers are eligible to receive up to 1 incentive payment
Tier 3 Tier 2 AND working for a minimum of 40 hours a month in a direct care role for 5 additional months (6 months total)	$2,000	Providers are eligible to receive up to 1 incentive payment

Can we provide respite for unpaid family and friend caregivers or would that be considered an incentive? Can we provide childcare support/stipends for family and friend caregivers?

Respite and childcare support would be considered incentives, thus unpaid family and friend caregivers would not be eligible.

Can the incentives be used to retain existing staff members?
Yes, the incentives can be used to retain existing staff members as long as their use is tied to training activities within the proposed project.

Can we implement an internship program as an incentive?
Incentives and stipends should be monetary and tied to training activities. Other accessibility supports and approaches that fall within the scope of the RFA and will encourage direct care worker training participation are also acceptable. If internship fits into the applicants' proposed project, it is allowable as a support, as long as training and monetary incentives tied to training are the central focus of the application. Please note that all applications must target current paid direct care workers and/or unpaid family/friend caregivers. Individuals that are interested in a career in direct care but are not currently working in the field would not be eligible.

With a pilot project, can we also budget for incentives?
Yes, all projects in both Proof-of-Concept and Ready-to-Scale should propose incentives and/or stipends as a component of their project. However, please note that unpaid family/friend caregivers are not eligible to receive incentives and/or stipends.

Can an incentive be providing a meal at training?
Yes, a meal could be an example of an incentive. Please reference the RFA document for additional examples of activities that can be considered incentives.

Is this only for trainings? Or can recruitment and retention stipends be done separate from a training?
Applicants must have both training and incentives/stipends as part of their application, and incentives/stipends are intended to encourage training participation, so should be directly related to training.

Can you give examples of incentives again please?
Incentives could be, for example, offering vouchers or support for transportation, or offering childcare support during trainings. Please review the RFA document for additional details about incentives and stipends. See the above table about the structure for the DCWs who take the IHSS courses under the CalGrows program. This may help applicants consider how to approach structuring their incentives and stipends.

While incentives cannot be offered for unpaid family caregivers, could they be offered through another source of funding that is not CalGrows?
Funding provided via the CalGrows program cannot be used for incentives for unpaid family caregivers. However, if applicants choose to provide incentives through a different funding source they can.

Can we offer multiple incentives?
Yes, multiple incentives, stipends, and supports are allowable. There is no limit on how many or which type of incentives an organization offers to their target workforce, only that they provide a plan and a rationale for the plan based on the needs of their target workforce. See the above table about the structure for the DCWs who take the IHSS courses under the CalGrows program. This may help applicants consider how to approach structuring their incentives and stipends.

Is there a cost per person relative to the money spent for training and/or incentives?
No, there is no specific prescribed cost or minimum or maximum amount that is allowable for spending on training and incentives. We ask that you consider the needs of your target workforce and design a proposal that is responsive to those needs.

If paid training is being offered to paid care partners do additional incentives have to be offered?
If the organization is already paying workers for training then those payments could count as incentives and must be detailed in the application.

Are unpaid caregivers eligible for accessibility supports such as transportation assistance?
No. As transportation assistance would be considered as a type of incentive, unpaid caregivers would not be eligible for transportation assistance.

Are there any funds being made available to augment cost of travel for paid caregivers?
Cost of travel would be considered an incentive. While we are not requiring specific incentive types, it would be at the discretion of the individual organization to determine if that would want to utilize their funds for travel reimbursement.

Understanding you don't want to define incentives, can you speak to types of incentives that are NOT allowable?
At this time, there are no defined incentives that would not be permitted. Examples of the kind of incentives that would be acceptable are gift cards for training participants, transportation vouchers or wage replacement.

Is there a limit as to how much $ can be spent on incentives per person?
No, there is no limit on per person incentives. Once an application is approved, incentive guidelines will be addressed during the contracting and negotiating process. Please note, there are IRS requirements to follow and information to gather regarding how incentives are used (above a certain dollar amount) that will need to be collected.

Will the incentives be taxable for the workers?
Yes, incentives that fall under IRS regulations for taxation will be taxable for workers. According to the IRS, gifts provided to non-employees are subject to tax reporting. If the combined total of incentives received and/or any compensation for services rendered exceeds $600 in any calendar year for a non-employee, a Form-1099-MISC will be issued. Additionally, the Accounts Payable

Non-Employee Gift Form must be completed for: non-cash gifts greater than $75, as well as cash gifts, including gift certificates/cards, regardless of dollar amount. Please discuss the details of your proposed incentives with your tax accountant. Additional guidance and discussion may be available for successful grantees.

Can a promotora/CHW/grassroots community leader who is a volunteer in her community (unpaid) and also caring for a family member (unpaid family member) still receive a stipend/incentive for participation in training due to her role as a trusted resource in her community?
No, unpaid family or friend caregivers are not eligible for incentives or stipends.

Applications

Can an organization propose to serve more than one workforce group in a single proposal?
Yes, an organization can serve more than one workforce in a single proposal.

Can you explain the difference between the Applicant Budget excel sheet and the Partner 1 Detailed Budget excel sheet?
The Applicant Budget is the sheet that must be filled out with the applicant's budget information. If the applicant is a single organization applying without partners, leave Partner 1 Detailed Budget blank. If the applicant is a consortium, Partner 1 Detailed Budget should be filled out with budget information from the first partner, Partner 2 Detailed Budget should be filled out with budget information from the second partner, and so on.

I started the application, and was asked to provide: project info, budget, financial statement, related awards, resume for key positions, certifications. Will there be more to the application than project info, budget, financial statement, related awards, resumes for key positions, and certifications, or is that all that is requested?
After a profile has been created in the [online application portal](#), applicants will be invited to create an application. In the application, all required information and documentation is visible if the applicant scrolls all the way down. Nothing more will be requested after all required fields have been filled in that form, unless more information is requested from the applicant at a later point in the review process. All information the applicant will need to provide is also detailed in the [RFA document](#).

Is there an online template we should use to write up the RFA? Or do we use a word doc and upload that?
Applicants are required to submit their applications through the [online application portal](#), which has embedded fields for all answers and can be found at https://webportalapp.com/sp/login/cell_ed. All requested uploads for budget, course information, and additional information are described within the application in the portal. If an applicant for some reason cannot submit via the portal, they should submit their application via email, as outlined in the [RFA document](#).

So if we have 50 caregivers, we have to list each person's name? Or can we note "50 caregivers?"
Individual caregiver names are not required or requested. The budget should include information about expected personnel costs (staff costs) by name, job title, expected hours, and rate per hour. Resumes can be included for key positions only.

Could we just list out the other awards instead of submitting all contracts? We have many different contracts, it's going to be huge files.
In the online application portal, there is space to list awards and award status, as well as space to upload documentation. Applicants are not specifically required to submit contracts for award documentation; documentation could also consist of an award letter, press release, or any other document demonstrating that the award was granted. File size should not pose a problem, but any technical issues or questions applicants encounter during the application process can be directed to innovationfund@calgrows.org.

In the budget, are personnel all grouped, or do we need an entry for each person? This is not clear from the template.
Yes, per the provided budget template, there has to be a separate entry for each individual personnel member. Please note, this is not for every DCW receiving training, but the personnel working on the project.

You mentioned that we also need to submit all other contracts that we have, does this pertain only to contracts related to our proposal? Could we submit this if we get awarded or do we have to do so during application?
We are requesting that applicants share documentation showing additional awards and/or grants they have received from other state departments/agencies and/or other funding they have received for activities related to their proposed project, although additional funding is not required to apply. Any funding documentation to be included should be submitted at the time of application.

My question refers to the chart on p. 7 of the RFA. Are we meant to treat the list in each box as a menu and to cover each of those topics? Or can we pick and choose from the lists in the four boxes?
This question refers to the core competency area of the training course template. Please check boxes for any applicable competencies for each course included in your proposal. Courses can cover any number of topics in any number of categories, and are not required to cover all of the topics listed under a given category. Yes, you can pick and choose from the lists in the four boxes.

Are there any formatting requirements for the application content (e.g., double space text, font preference)? Are we allowed to embed links to websites in the text?
The fields provided in the online application portal do not allow for any special formatting, just plain single-spaced text. It is not possible to embed links in the text. You can opt to include a full website, if desired, but we cannot guarantee that reviewers will review links provided as a component of their scoring, since additional materials were not requested in the application. Please

format your training course information and your budget using the spreadsheet templates provided.

Within the application process, are we able to provide any flyers and processes to back up what we are putting forward in our application? There is a limited word count. Do embedded links work or can we add attachments?
It is not possible to embed links in the text. You can opt to include a full website address, if desired, but we cannot guarantee that reviewers will review links provided as a component of their scoring, since additional materials were not requested in the application. If there are specific additional materials an applicant would like to include, you can reach out to innovationfund@calgrows.org. However, we cannot guarantee that those materials will be included in the review process. The application online should be treated as standalone.

For this application question, we just wanted to confirm that it is not a requirement. If there are related awards to this RFP, an award letter or grant agreement would be sufficient, correct? "Related Awards - Provide documentation and status of other related awards received, if applicable. (Not a requirement.)"
Correct, having additional funding is not a requirement when applying for this program. However, if you have other awards related to your project we would like to be aware of them. Award letters, grant documents, press releases, and another type of document that confirms award of the funding will suffice as documentation.

Can you further explain what is meant by 'training template' as noted on one of the slides? Are we to provide a full curriculum and training program as part of the application?
In the online application, there is an excel spreadsheet that is part of that process of submitting the online application. Within the training template you will be asked to list and describe information about each course. The RFA also has links to both the training template and the budget template.

Purpose of Innovation Fund

Is this grant to provide education only? Or is it to actually provide care to seniors in their home?
This funding is specifically for training and incentives for the workers who provide direct care to older adults and/or people with disabilities in home- or community-based settings. Direct care services will not be funded directly by this grant.

Are there any job creation/retention associated with this grant?
If an organization needs to hire new staff to directly conduct the activities of the grant, it is allowable. Likewise if an organization would like to tie incentives to retention, as well as training, that is also an allowable approach.

Please expand on "a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion."
When we say we have a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, we mean we are taking into account the need for culturally appropriate care. As the older adult population is becoming more

racially and ethnically diverse, there is a need for workers to be trained to consider lifestyle aspects and how to meet the needs of those individuals. For example, families are reluctant to put their loved ones into a care facility that does not offer foods they are used to eating. We need workers to be prepared to provide care to people from all cultural backgrounds.

Application Review Criteria

Can you discuss criteria for scoring applications?
Please see the scoring rubric, beginning on page 14 in the RFA document, to review what will be taken into account when applications are under consideration.

Would we have a better chance of receiving a grant if we put forward our projects (ready-to-scale + pilots ready to be field-tested) that involve collaboration with other organizations or that are solely internal?
We cannot provide feedback on what will make an application more or less competitive, beyond the information outlined in the RFA. The type of organization (single vs. consortium) is not considered in the scoring of applications. Please see the scoring rubric in the RFA document, to review what will be taken into account when applications are under consideration.

Would we have a better chance of receiving a grant if we put forward our projects (Ready-to-Scale + Proof-of-Concept) that involve collaboration with other organizations or that are solely internal?
We cannot provide feedback on what will make an application more or less competitive, beyond the information outlined in the RFA. The type of organization (single vs. consortium) is not considered in the scoring of applications. Please see the scoring rubric in the RFA document, to review what will be taken into account when applications are under consideration.

Webinar

Could you please repeat your comments at the beginning regarding specific challenges that you'd like applicants to address?
Some of the common themes and challenges that emerged from work with direct care workers included that many workers didn't have time for trainings, because they couldn't take the training during their work hours. There were workers who said that the past training opportunities didn't meet their expectations for quality or effectiveness. There was also a desire for additional trainings on specialized topics, for example, working with individuals with dementia. We'd like Innovation Fund applicants to address some of these common themes and challenges in their application. Webinar recordings will be posted on the CalGrows website if you would like to do any further review of information shared there. More information on the research conducted with direct care workers can be found here.

Project Timeline and Reporting

How will outcomes of successful awardees be evaluated or is that for the applicant to provide in the proposal?
Some standardized open-ended reporting questions and output data around training will be requested of successful awardees, and additionally awardees will be asked to identify and report on their own metrics of success in areas such as outreach, accessibility, and so on. The California Department of Aging will be working with UC San Francisco to conduct a formal evaluation of each funded project.

What is the duration of the grant period?
Projects need to begin no later than March 1, 2023 and must conclude by December 31, 2023. Depending on contracts, however, some could begin sooner than March 1.

I'm looking for more clarification around the timeline and funding amounts. It sounds like $1M to be spent between the start date in March 1, 2023, and all funds need to be spent/ programs implemented and wrapped up by December 2023?
Yes, that is correct. Projects, whatever their funding level, need to be ready to start on March 1, 2023 and have completed all activities and spent all funds by December 31, 2023. Please note that the $1 Million limit only relates to Proof-of-Concept proposals.

Please describe the interim reporting requirements during the 9 month grant performance period? Is it just the final report due in January 2024? Or are there specific interim reporting requirements?
Reporting, including open-ended questions and output data, will be requested in a standard format from all grantees twice, once at the mid-point and once for the final report. Other evaluation activities may take place during the course of the project, and other reporting requirements may be outlined upon successful award, including but not limited to - periodic program officer calls, a site visit, other metric collection as determined by the evaluators from UCSF, and so on.

Are you saying that some projects may only have 9 months to take place? Why is the time frame for training so short?
Yes, many projects will run from March 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023.

Is the reason there is such a quick application deadline because you already have organizations or programs in mind?
All applications will be considered equally. We do not have any programs pre-selected. The California Department of Aging has no control over the program end date of December 2023.

Proof of Concept / Ready to Scale. We received a number of questions on this topic which have been summarized below.

What do you mean by Proof-of-Concept or Ready-to-Scale? Can you provide specific details?

By Proof-of-Concept, we mean an idea that your organization has not tried before, but you believe could improve the way you do your work. This is an opportunity to try something new you believe would improve training of direct care workers. By Ready-to-Scale, we mean something you are already doing in your work, it shows signs of improving how DCWs are trained, but you are looking for the funding to reach more people. For example, let's say your organization wants to include mobile learning in your current training package to DCWs, but you haven't done it yet. Including mobile learning in your work for the first time would be a Proof-of-Concept application. However, if you have already been using mobile learning and want to scale it to more locations or more direct care workers, your idea is in a Ready-to-Scale phase.

Other Examples of Proof-of-Concept/Ready-to-Scale
Example of Proof-of-Concept Application: An organization has an idea for a new type of training curriculum they would like to develop. The organization wants to apply for funding through the Innovation Fund to develop and test the curriculum. Since this is a brand new curriculum that has never been used before it would be a proof-of concept.

Example of Ready-to-Scale Application: An organization currently has a local program providing training to home health aides in a specific county that has shown initial success. The organization would like to apply for funding through the Innovation Fund to expand the training to additional counties.

Our program is having a difficult time hiring, so does that count as ready to scale?
A program is Ready-to-Scale when it has been implemented and shown success. Struggling to hire does not - alone - constitute Ready-to-Scale.

For the Proof-of-Concept grants, can they be used as planning grants to get ourselves into the position of being able to pilot test? We have a possible project, but need more time to work out the details before pilot testing.
Proof-of-Concept, means to prove - or try - something new in training. Unfortunately, we can't pay for planning alone - it's important that training of the target workforce occurs in the course of the project and with the funding provided. We need to fund projects that are beyond planning and are ready to be tested.

Can you please elaborate on the differences between Proof-of-Concept and Ready-to-Scale? For example, would a proposal focused on transitioning an in-person program to an online on-demand program be a Proof-of-Concept project or a Ready-to-Scale project?
See explanations above. This example would likely be a Proof-of-Concept as your organization has not yet tried the online, on-demand learning, yet.

Can we apply for a grant under $1 million and be "Ready-to-Scale"?
As long as the project has been tested, if applicants want to apply to Ready to Scale, they can do so and request less than $1 million.

Would we be able to use ready-to-scale if we will be implementing an already existing training platform with its own statistical data and wide-range use? Or proof-of-concept because this will be the first time using it for our program?

From the description provided here, it seems likely that a project to implement a curriculum that is already widely used would fit into the Ready-to-Scale category. However, please see the examples provided above and the information in the RFA document to make your best judgment based on the information provided.

For Proof-of-Concept, is a research component required proving the concept?

Evaluation activities are not permitted to be conducted with the funding provided. Evaluators from UCSF will work with grantees to evaluate the impacts of programming. No prior research is specifically required. However, any lessons learned, impacts observed, etc. during past work leading up to or informing the Proof-of-Concept can be detailed in the narrative section of the application.

If I am proposing to (primarily) pilot a new program and (secondarily) scale existing, proven programming, which category would I be applying under? I believe Proof of Concept is most appropriate as the primary focus of the proposal is to pilot new programming.

Please see the examples provided above in this section and make your best judgment to select one of the categories based on the information provided. All applicants must select only one category.

Which funding type is most appropriate, if we are primarily piloting a new career track but also expanding two existing career tracks?

When applying, you will have to pick between Proof-of-Concept or Ready-to-Scale in your application. A pilot program would fall into the Proof-of-Concept category while expanding on existing programs would fall into the Ready-to-Scale category. Applicants should use their best judgment and the examples provided above to select a category.

What is an ideal timeline for "Proof-of-Concept?"

There is no ideal timeline for either category, other than what will work based on the project proposed.

Is the ready-to-scale funding category strictly for expansion projects? Or can it go toward an existing CNA training program whose current funding is sunsetting?

First, please note that only direct care workers providing care in home or community-based settings are eligible for this program. Typically, Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) provide care in hospitals or nursing homes, which are not part of this program. Second, the funding could go towards an existing training program whose current funding is sunsetting if the funds are also used to provide incentives and if the training fits into one of the funding categories described in the RFA. Please note that this is a one-time funding opportunity and funds must be expended by December 31, 2023.

Size of Organization

We are proposing a small increase to a small program that has lots of capacity to be a big help to caregivers; will we be competitive?
Unfortunately, we cannot provide feedback on whether a specific idea will be competitive or not. However, there is no plan to only fund larger projects. We welcome small, local projects and will consider proposals of any size as long as they meet the criteria outlined in the RFA document.

Are you expecting to give only very large grants? The award max of $1 million for "Proof-of-Concept" suggests that you are planning to fund large projects, not smaller local projects.
There is no minimum amount for funding requested and there is no plan to only fund larger projects. We welcome small, local projects and will consider proposals of any size as long as they meet the criteria outlined in the RFA document.

References

For the letters of references required, what qualifications are you looking for from the endorsers, or prefer? Also, for the organizational references, what qualifications are you looking for, or prefer?
- One Letter of Support is required, and applicants can include up to two. The Letter of Support must include the qualifications of the endorser. The endorser should have experience with your organization, can speak to the quality of your organization's work, and ideally, to the work being proposed in the application.
- One Reference is required, and applicants can include up to three. The References are people from groups or organizations your organization has worked with, and who can speak to the quality of your work.

For letter of support, does it need to be from an organization or can it be from family receiving services?
Letters of support must be from organizations, not individuals or families.

Any chance we could submit letters of recommendation after the due date to allow our partners a little bit more time to complete them?
In order to maintain equity and short timelines, we must receive at least one letter of support and one reference contact during submission by the due date. A maximum of two letters is allowable.

Are letters of recommendation required or optional?
Letters of recommendation are required. There will be a space on the portal for applicants to upload these as part of their applications.

Can references and letters of recommendations be from the same entities, or should we diversify?

Applicants can use their own judgment to determine whether to use the same or different entities for references and letters.

Sustainability

As a nonprofit providing home care in the Bay Area I am wondering if there is any sustainable funding available for providing either money for augmenting a caregivers salary or helping with their transportation costs?
Applicants are required to include stipends and/or incentives for direct care workers. This may include transportation costs. Applicants will be asked to outline strategies for those stipends/incentives in their narrative. However, the fund is a one-time opportunity without any planned future funding cycles, and so all support for incentives/stipends will also expire at the end of the funding cycle. We encourage applicants to consider sustainability as they look to how they will maintain or scale their project in the future.

Is the fund going to be awarded on an annual basis or is it a one-time process? If we apply for 2023, will there be a possibility of applying for funding again in the "next years"
The fund is a one-time opportunity. We encourage applicants to consider sustainability as they look to how they will maintain or scale their project in the future.

Will there be a competition next year as well? / If it is a one-time grant, does that mean that there will be no succeeding grants in the future?
This Innovation Fund is a one-time opportunity. After Dec 31, 2023, projects will conclude and funding will stop. As of now, this is a one-time only grant. There are no current plans for future grants or funding and participants should consider sustainability in their plans.

Is the program/training supposed to be able to fly on its own right away? Who is funding it moving forward after this grant cycle?
Please see the Proof-of-Concept/Ready-to-Scale section for a conversation about what status the project should be in for each category of funding. This fund is a one-time opportunity and any future funding must be determined and secured separately by the applicant.

What is the relationship, if any, between the Innovation Fund and the $100 Million fund? Is one required to apply for the other? What is the timeline for the 2nd RFA?
There is no subsequent RFA directly related to the Innovation Fund grant. The American Rescue Plan Act provided CDA with $150 million for the CalGrows Program through California's Home and Community-Based Services Spending Plan. The $55 million Innovation Fund is a part of the larger CalGrows program. The remaining funding received for the CalGrows program is being used for other pieces of the program. However, there will not be another RFA.

Will proposals that create sustainable programs be recognized?

Each applicant is asked to describe their sustainability plan and although applications will not be scored specifically for sustainability, an effective sustainability plan may factor positively into other scoring categories, such as capacity.