



Request for Qualifications: Early Learning Provider

Issue Date: Nov 2, 2024

Deadline for Submission: January 30, 2025

Purpose: African Community Housing & Development (ACHD) requests licensed preschool/early learning providers to submit their qualifications to operate a preschool/early learning center within a new project in the City of SeaTac.

Background: Led by visionary women of color, ACHD provides holistic, complete, and culturally responsive support for the African Diaspora Immigrant and refugee community in King County. Our staff and board represent the community we serve, with 85% of staff identifying as BIPOC and a 100% African-descent Board of Directors. Our program participants (10,000+ in 2023) are youth, families, and elders of the African Diaspora immigrant and refugee community living across 75 Washington ZIP codes. Our program participants speak over 28 different languages and dialects. ACHD prides itself on offering a variety of holistic programs utilizing the whole-person approach that supports the whole family.

Our Mission: To empower the community of African Diaspora immigrants, refugees, and their descendants in the Greater Seattle Area by building culturally rooted health and housing stability through economic development, legal support, resource navigation, holistic education, and access to cultural arts and traditions.

Our Vision: An informed and unified African Diaspora community committed to the holistic development of their families, creating a vibrant environment that fosters generational prosperity, celebrates culture, strengthens community connections, and supports thriving tourism.

Application Process: Submissions will be reviewed and the most qualified will be shortlisted and invited for an interview, from which a selection will be made.

Responses are due no later than January 30th, 2025 at 5 PM to David Lieberman, david@achdo.org Please direct questions to David at david@achdo.org or 206-257-1166.



Purpose: Studies have shown that early education has a significant impact on brain development. Participation in high-quality preschool dramatically increases the chances of academic success later in life. Yet most three- and four-year-olds have no access to high-quality preschool. In addition, existing early learning programs are often financial and geographically out-of-reach for the African Diaspora immigrant and refugee community in South King County; culturally-relevant, holistic early learning programs are rare.

This project, the African Diaspora Cultural Anchor Village, will provide high-quality, culturally-relevant early learning for African Diaspora immigrant and refugee children. The project is currently under development, with an anticipated opening in Q3 2028.

This request for qualifications process will identify a preschool provider to partner with African Community Housing & Development to operate and staff 6 preschool classrooms to serve the families of South King County. Besides staffing and administering the new preschool, the provider will be expected to participate in the design process of the preschool spaces and be available for consultation during construction.

Project Background: The African Diaspora Cultural Anchor Village project has been a community dream for decades: a much-needed multiuse facility designed specifically to meet the needs of South King County's African Diaspora immigrant and refugee families. The project's key components include 125 affordable rental housing units (including family-sized units), permanent space for ACHD's wraparound social services, STEAM and early learning classrooms, outdoor gardening and recreation space, retail space for community businesses, and a flexible community gathering/performing arts space which will host exercise classes, cultural dance, workshops, and community events.

The vision for this project came together during a series of community meetings from 2018-2021, highlighting the need for a central community anchor for South King County's African community.

After several years of fundraising and feasibility work, ACHD purchased the 2+ acre site for the project in December 2023. ACHD has performed all the due diligence required to confidently progress with full design services and is currently working with architects and designers on the overall design process.

Partner Selection Schedule:

Jan 15: Proposals due



Feb 7: Applicants selected for interviews
 March 12: Final partner selected
 June 1: Building permit submittal
 Q1 2026: Construction begins
 Q3 2026: Project opens

Minimum Qualifications: Organizations responding to this request must possess the following qualifications:

- Licensed by the Washington Department of Early Learning.
- Must have at least 5 years of experience in managing preschool programs in the King County area.
- Three years of audited financial statements.
- Ability to create and teach curriculum that is culturally-relevant for the African Diaspora immigrant and refugee community.

Evaluation Criteria & Selection Process

1. **Initial screening:** ACHD will review RFQ responses to ensure respondents meet minimum qualifications.
2. **Proposal evaluation:** ACHD will evaluate applications using the criteria below. Responses will be evaluated, scored and ranked.

Evaluation Item	Criteria for full points	Scoring
<i>DEL license</i>	<i>Must be licensed in WA</i>	<i>Not scored</i>
Financial stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three years of audited financial statements show stable financing and a positive future outlook. 	20
Familiarity with target populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization has 5+ years of experience working with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Immigrant/refugee children ○ English-language-learning families ○ Communities of color • Organization has experience participating in public programs like ECAP or Head Start. • Organization can provide tangible examples of their ability to provide culturally-relevant curriculum for African Diaspora communities 	30
Educational philosophy and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization has a track record of success. 	25



performance outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs are a good fit for SeaTac populations. 	
Partner team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one member of the preschool provider staff is designated to be ACHD's contact throughout design and construction • Staff proposed to lead preschool operations are experienced preschool providers and managers. 	5

- 3. Interviews:** ACHD will interview the highest-ranking providers. Providers should bring at least one member of the partner team to the interview.
- 4. References:** ACHD will request one or more professional reference for the organization, and might reach out to references not named by the applicant. Applicants are welcome to include letters of support from the parents or guardians of existing preschool students if they wish.
- 5. Selection:** ACHD will select the preschool partner based on the application, interview and references.
- 6. Partnership negotiations:** ACHD will negotiate a partnership with the selected provider.

Application Process and Procedures: Please use the following format in your response and provide all attachments as a single pdf document. Failure to provide all information below may disqualify an applicant from the selection process. Please note that ACHD will not reimburse applicants for any costs they incur in developing their proposals.

1. Credentials: provide a copy of license/credentials.
2. Financial information: provide three years of audits.
3. Narrative responses: respondents should answer the list of questions below.
4. Staff resumes: provide a copy of the resume of the organization's Executive Director and main contact for this project, as well as any other key staff
5. Professional references (and parent/guardian references, if desired)

Questions for Applicants: Please answer the following questions. A few paragraphs are enough for each question – the entire set of answers should not exceed six pages (attachments like data, audits, and resumes do not count toward the page total).

1. Describe your organization's experience in providing preschool. How many years have you been a provider?
2. Describe your educational philosophy, performance outcomes, and staff qualifications.



3. How does this project fit with the mission of your organization?
4. Tell us about the demographics of the children in your current programs. Be sure to outline your organization's experience working with the following:
 - a. Low-income families
 - b. Immigrant and refugee families and children
 - c. English-language-learning families
 - d. Communities of color
5. What is your organization's experience participating in programs using public funds (such as ECAP or Head Start)?
6. Provide a brief narrative about your organization's expansion plans.
7. Who will be ACHD's main contact for this project? Provide a brief bio.
8. Please provide a list of all current preschools/early learning centers your organization operates, and include the following information for each:
 - a. Preschool/Center name
 - b. Address
 - c. Year started
 - d. Capacity # of children
 - e. Current enrollment #
 - f. Age ranges of children served
 - g. Programs offered
 - h. Any relevant details about the program (demographics, public program participation, specialty curriculum offered, etc)