



# LETTER OF INTENT

## **Know and Grow: Building Resilient Children, Families & Communities**

*(Oklahoma's Recovery Plan for Infants & Toddlers: Protecting the Future of  
Oklahoma's Workforce and Economy funded by the American Rescue Plan Act  
through the Potts Family Foundation)*

### **Due Dates:**

Questions: Friday, August 11, 2023, 5 p.m.

LOIs Due Thursday, August 31, 2023, 5 p.m.

### **Contact Information :**

Linda Manaugh

[ARPA@pottsfamilyfoundation.org](mailto:ARPA@pottsfamilyfoundation.org)

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## WELCOME LETTER

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for all you do to Raise Resilient Oklahomans!

We know that work to prevent ACEs<sup>1</sup> and strengthen families is not easy. It requires us to look inward as individuals and as communities. And it demands that we build the capacity to do things differently. From developing community partnerships around addressing ACEs and building resilience to generating robust community engagement that grows within any coalition gathering, all kinds of people are starting to take note.

The state legislature has made federal ARPA money<sup>2</sup> available through the Potts Family Foundation to support a focus on the well-being and resilience of children born around the time of the pandemic and their families. Born around or after March 2019<sup>3</sup>, these young children may face barriers to their healthy development unknown to previous generations. Although this is a critical moment for them, it's not too late to act.

Oklahoma communities are invited to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) no later than **August 31, 2023**, to be considered for a funded contract that will support them in bringing their neighbors, families with young children, parents, caregivers, community residents, and colleagues together to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic and build the strongest possible foundation for the youngest generation. It is an opportunity to convene and learn about the new challenges and needs of these children, their families, and their caregivers. This can be done in a variety of ways, including holding community conversations, interviewing parents, grandparents, and other caregivers, conducting inquiry using data, or developing other strategies that foster a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities that families with young children are currently navigating.

Resilience typically grows within a community and within relationships. For this LOI, community means a locally defined geographic region large enough to co-create system improvements in partnership with major service providers such as human services, family support, SoonerStart (early intervention), and health (including health care, mental and behavioral health). This includes sovereign nations, including the geographic area each considers important in improving the health and wellbeing of people in the jurisdiction. Rural and urban areas are eligible.

LOIs will be reviewed by the LOI Review Team convened by the Potts Family Foundation. Accepted LOIs will result in a short-term contract for community work, running from September 2023 through January 2024. Contracts will be issued for \$10,000. A qualified organization, as identified by your community, will serve as the fiscal agent managing awarded funding. In addition to funding, technical assistance will be made available to communities.

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<sup>1</sup> ACEs refers to 10 childhood experiences strongly associated with lifelong physical, mental, behavioral, relational, and work-related outcomes in the Adverse Childhood Experiences study led by Robert Anda, MD, MS and Vincent Felitti, MD (e.g., Felitti et al. 1998 and Dong et al., 2004)

<sup>2</sup> The federal American Rescue Plan Act delivered to each state and county, and many local jurisdictions.

<sup>3</sup> Children born during the time of the pandemic, beginning about March, 2019, through the years that follow were born into a very stressful time for parents, grandparents, caregivers and the community. (See Appendix A for an explanation of how pandemic stressors may have affected the family, and by extension, the infants, toddlers, and pre-school age children born during this time.)

If you have questions about this LOI process or content, please submit them to: [ARPA@pottsfamilyfoundation.org](mailto:ARPA@pottsfamilyfoundation.org) by **5:00 pm, August 11, 2023**. Answers to all submitted questions will be posted **August 17, 2023**, on a dedicated page on the Potts Family Foundation website at <http://www.pottsfamilyfoundation.org/arpa>.

## CONTRACT OVERVIEW

### Know and Grow: Building Resilient Children, Families & Communities

For this project, you might hold community conversations, interview parents, grandparents, and other caregivers, conduct inquiry using data, or develop other strategies that foster a deep understanding as well as meaningful engagement of parents, grandparents, other caregivers along with the people who help and assist them.

**What:** An opportunity to receive funding via a short-term contract to learn about the challenges and opportunities that families with children born during the pandemic are currently navigating.

**Why:** Infants, toddlers and preschool age children born around or after March 2019 (during the pandemic) may face barriers to their healthy development unknown to previous generations. Although this is a critical moment for them, it's not too late to act.

**Funding:** Each selected community will receive a contract \$10,000

**Who Can Apply:** A non-profit, for-profit, public entity or a group with a non-profit or public fiscal agent can send a Letter of Intent and be considered for a contract. The group or entity needs to have credibility to engage people, listen to the community, and build a unique community story.

**Where:** This work will be done in community. For the purposes of this contract, community means a geographic area that is large enough for co-creating system improvements in partnership with major service providers such as human services, family support, SoonerStart (early intervention), and health (including health care, mental and behavioral health). This definition includes sovereign nations, including the geographic area each considers important in improving the health and wellbeing of people within the jurisdiction. Rural and urban areas are both eligible.

**How & When:** Please submit a Letter of Intent no later than **5:00 pm, August 31, 2023**, to:

Potts Family Foundation, Attn: Linda Manaugh  
909 E Britton Rd. Oklahoma City, OK 73114

Or, if delivering electronically, please send to:

[ARPA@pottsfamilyfoundation.org](mailto:ARPA@pottsfamilyfoundation.org)

*You do not need to hire or rely on a grant writer to complete your Letter of Intent.*

**Timeline for Contracts:** The contracts will run from early- to mid-September 2023 through January 2024.

**Final Deliverable:** The deliverable, **due January 19, 2024**, will be a narrative report summarizing what you learned during the learning and listening process and providing your community's ideas for helping and supporting parents, grandparents, and caregivers to optimize development of the young children in their care.

## WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR LETTER OF INTENT

This is an invitation to help build your community's capacity to solve the toughest problems children born during the pandemic and their parents, families, and caregivers face, including but not limited to lingering social isolation, economic pressures, or parental depression. The contracts for accepted LOIs are meant to support community capacity building strategies that align with the principles of [Self-Healing Communities](#) in Appendix B and Family Support in Appendix C. The [Principles of Family Support Practice](#) were developed by Family Support America in 1996 and they continue to guide the Family Support and Strengthening field today through the incorporation into the nationally adopted [Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support](#).

It is not a requirement that the locally defined geographic region be a member of the Self-Healing Community Network (although this network is always open to all communities) or a National Family Support Network member, however these are highly regarded family and community strengthening models. Becoming familiar with these principles and demonstrating in the LOI how some or all will be integrated into the work will be helpful during the LOI selection process.

The LOI should be no more than 8 pages (double spaced, 1-inch margins, 12-point font), and respond to the following questions:

### 1. *Who has come together to answer this call?*

- Who is convening or leading the process for this project?
- Is there a coalition or partnership working together on this effort? If so, who are the key participants?
- Is the coalition newly formed or is it an existing coalition?

*Consider the following information:*

- How did the partners come together? How is/will room be made to welcome new partners as the effort grows?
- If the coalition/partnership is already established, what are some notable accomplishments?
- Describe the organization that will manage the contract (fiscal agent). If it is different from the entity submitting this LOI, describe the relationship between the fiscal agent and the entity or organization submitting the LOI?

### 2. *How is community defined?*

*Consider including the following information:*

- What are the proposed boundaries for the locally defined geographic region – the community?
- What process(es) were used to define this community – the locally defined geographic region – for this purpose? Who participated in these process(es)?
- How do the proposed boundaries align with the definition of community in this document?
- If the boundaries are not fully established, how do you imagine reaching a final agreement?
- What are some examples of the community's strengths?
- What efforts has the community previously engaged in to build capacity to: 1) expand leadership of community change efforts to include parents, grandparents and other caregivers who have no financial interest in service systems, and 2) critically examine hypotheses about the origin and drivers of challenges that families face.

**3. How are you addressing or implementing the principles of Self-Healing Communities and Family Support?**

*Consider including the following information:*

- Describe the current thinking on outreach to families. How will parents, grandparents, and other caregivers be fully engaged?
- What level of experience in fully and effectively involving families in leadership exists in the community?
- How will the community incorporate the [Self-Healing Communities Principles](#) (Appendix B) and the [Principles of Family Support Practice](#) (Appendix C) into the project work?

**4. Where are the infants, toddlers and pre-school age children now?**

Given the focus of this funding on children born around and after March 2019, please include information on the following:

- Approximately how many babies were born in the community during this period? Feel free to offer a range (e.g., fewer than 100, 200-300, more than 500.) It is expected that the knowledge of how many babies born during the pandemic will evolve over time.
- Based on observations of community members and/or engagement with community members, what are some of the indicators of how young children, parents, families, and caregivers are doing? Consider this to be baseline thinking about the needs of these children and families.

**5. Is there anything else about the community's commitment to preventing ACES, building resilience, strengthening families, or building community capacity to solve tough problems the LOI Review Team should know?**

**6. Please affirm your understanding of the following:**

- Contracts will be \$10,000. Only one contract will be issued per community. The LOI Review Team may be in touch to address aspects of the definition of the community boundaries and population, for example, by proposing partnered efforts in overlapping areas.
- Funding will be disbursed in three payments. The first upon both parties signing the contract and the second after a mid-project report is delivered. The final payment will be disbursed upon receipt of the final narrative report. More information on when to expect disbursements will follow with the award of the contracts.
- Technical Assistance (TA) will be made available in support of fulfilling the deliverables of this contract and the community is expected to work in partnership with the TA Team to develop a custom plan in partnership with the community.
- The contract will result in the submission of a community narrative report, no later than **January 19, 2024**, or a mutually agreed upon date after that time. Guidance will be provided by the TA Team.
- Participation in this project will not result in preferential treatment for future ARPA contracts or grants managed by the Potts Family Foundation.

## QUESTIONS

The LOI Review Team understands that there may be questions from communities engaging in this opportunity. Please send any questions you may have by email to [ARPA@pottsfamilyfoundation.org](mailto:ARPA@pottsfamilyfoundation.org) by **5:00 pm Thursday, August 11, 2023**. The LOI Review Team will post answers to all questions received by the deadline at <http://www.pottsfamilyfoundation.org/arpa> pm, **Thursday, August 17, 2023**.

## TIMELINE

DATE	ACTION
Friday, August 4, 2023	LOI Released
Friday, August 11, 2023	Bidder Questions due to PFF
Thursday, August 17, 2023	Answers posted <a href="http://www.pottsfamilyfoundation.org/arpa">http://www.pottsfamilyfoundation.org/arpa</a>
Thursday, August 31, 2023	Bids due to PFF
Friday, September 15, 2023	Contracts Announced
September 2023 through early January 2024	Work Period
Friday, January 19, 2024	Final Narrative Report Due to PFF

## BIDDER CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Organization/Agency:

Primary Contact:

Primary Contact's phone number:

Primary Contact's email address:

Organization/Agency Mailing Address:

Organization/Agency Phone Number:

Organization/Agency Website Address:

Is the aforementioned organization/agency the fiscal agent for this contract? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If no, who is the fiscal agent for this contract:

Fiscal agent's name: (If different from above.)

Fiscal agent's email address: (If different from above.)

Fiscal agent's phone number: (If different from above.)

Fiscal agent's website: (If different from above.)

## TO SUBMIT YOUR LOI

If delivering hard copies, send to:

Potts Family Foundation

Attn: Linda Manaugh

909 E Britton Rd.

Oklahoma City, OK 73114

If delivering electronically, send to: [ARPA@pottsfamilyfoundation.org](mailto:ARPA@pottsfamilyfoundation.org)

**All materials must be received by the 5:00 pm Thursday, August 31, 2023.**



## CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

Upon receipt of a contract, qualifying communities will be expected to:

***Identify approximately how many babies were born in the community around March 2019 and the following years:***

- Figure out where young children and their families are and ways to reach them.

***Learn from parents of children born during the pandemic.***

- What has it been like to parent a young child during the pandemic? Have they experienced differences in social support and child development this time around? What challenges are the parents facing? Are they unemployed or underemployed? Finding it difficult to meet basic needs? Living with depression, anxiety, substance use disorders or other addictions?
- What are the pros and cons of parenting during this time?

***Identify what is helping and hurting families, parents and caregivers in the community?***

- What is going well? What is challenging at this time?

***Seek many perspectives.***

- Ensure that the perspectives of residents, parents, families and caregivers of children born during the pandemic, and service providers are gathered and considered.

***Observe the capacity of the community to solve complex family challenges.***

Areas of capacity may include:

- *Resident participation and voice in developing strategies to improve the quality of life in the community.* Do residents, neighbors and professionals come together to achieve goals and solve problems? Are there regular times or places for doing so? To what degree does the community gather to assess what's working and what's not for families?
- *Use of data in problem setting and problem solving.* What data, if any, is typically considered when designing innovation, or next steps for service system improvements in the community?
- *Patterns of activity.* For example, how families are utilizing services such as 9-1-1, 2-1-1, childcare resource and referral, home visiting, pediatric clinics, shelters, substance abuse and mental health treatment, libraries, community centers, SoonerStart? Does service use follow a pattern, such as concentration by neighborhood, ZIP code, hospital district or demographics?
- *State of the service system.* How are the child and family well-being programs, systems and other interventions/programs doing? Do these systems have the capacity to meet community needs? Do they have the flexibility to respond to community values? Do they give and get support within the community?
- *Application of the science of trauma, adversity, and resilience.* More service providers, faith community leaders and coalitions of community residents are learning to use a trauma-informed approach in their work. To what extent has your community acted

using NEAR Science<sup>4</sup>, ACE Science, or models that promote hope, resilience or Self-Healing Communities?

***Provide opportunities for people to process the experience of raising children during the years of the pandemic.***

- Create a space for voicing and acknowledging the extraordinary challenges of this time and place.
- Normalize talking about what happened and is still happening – including stressors and safety concerns for children – in a way that promotes truth-telling, seeking help, innovating, and supporting one another.

***Develop a local vision for helping and supporting families with young children.***

- Describe the community behind the vision, including the boundaries of the region, its proposed partnerships, and its intended course of action.

***Final narrative report.***

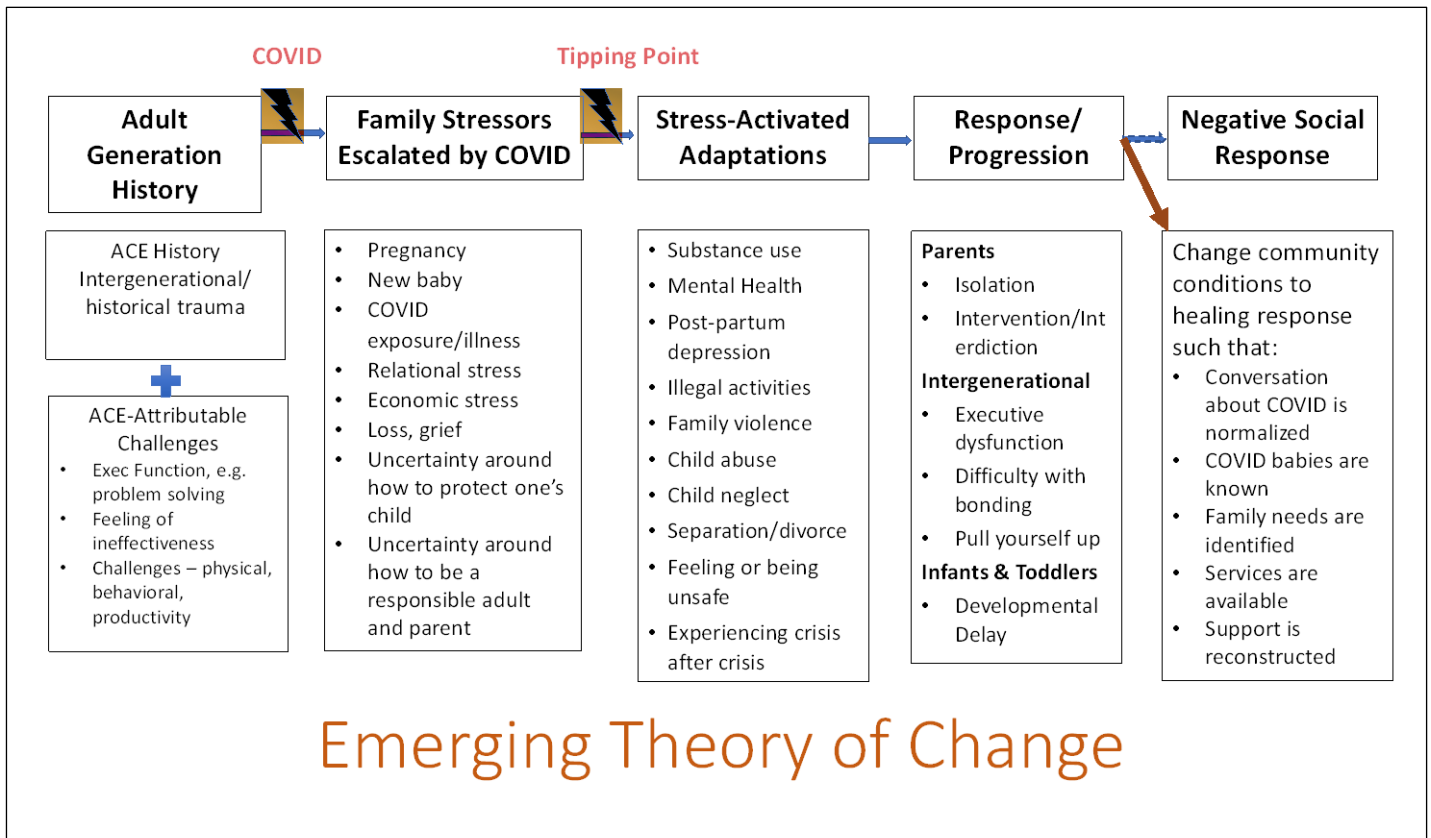
- Prepare a narrative that describes your activities and findings, with an emphasis on how families and residents of the community were engaged in information gathering, meaning making, and creating a vision for the future. When contracts are issued, the TA Team will provide an outline for the narrative, so you will have that as you are summarizing and writing.

**We look forward to working with you to Raise Resilient Oklahomans. We are excited to see the useful information and creative and meaningful ideas you bring forth through to this process and the partnerships and collaborations that are developed and/or strengthened!**

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<sup>4</sup> Adverse Childhood Experiences, together with other traumas and significant stressors are believed to gain their powerful relationship to life-long physical, mental, and behavioral health developmental processes, such as brain development and genetic expression. NEAR Science reflects this, standing for **N**eurobiology, **E**pigenetics, **A**dverse childhood experiences, and **R**esilience.

# APPENDIX A: THEORY & DATA RELATED TO CHALLENGES FOR CHILDREN BORN DURING THE PANDEMIC & THEIR FAMILIES



## APPENDIX B: Principles of Self-Healing Communities Work

Six principles create the integrity of the Self-Healing Communities Model (SHCM). The use of these principles requires a fundamental understanding of meta-leadership and a commitment to consider everyone who wants to help as a leader of culture change. In order to fully infuse these principles into community capacity-building work, community members participate in learning, skill-building, as well as design and implementation of new strategies for improving health. They participate in regular reflective dialogue about the degree to which all aspects of community strategy and activities are consistent with the principles.

1. ***Inclusive Leadership with Downward Accountability***: Leaders are accountable to the communities they support, and they engage and improve the lives of people most affected by adversity. When people who are directly affected by policy reforms become decision-makers about the ways to innovate, adapt and coordinate efforts, those reforms are better able to address the problems for which they were created. The ability of leaders to build trust, listen, and acknowledge their own roles in the dynamics that produce status-quo outcomes are central to the SHCM.
2. ***Learning Communities***: Self-Healing Communities create and participate in iterative cycles of change that move from learning to innovative action, to evaluating, examining, and frequently changing previous assumptions based on new information. This creates a new level of learning that initiates the cycle again. Recognizing that cultural assumptions must be changed and developing the ability to drill down into cultural autopilots to make those changes are some of the great accomplishments of communities using the SHCM.
3. ***Emergent Capabilities***: New lines of communication, peer support systems, self-organizing networks, and communities of practice augment the formal service-delivery system and generate an infrastructure for change.
4. ***NEAR-Informed Engagement***: Self-Healing Communities practice inclusion, compassion, and appreciation for the core gifts of every person while recognizing that offering those gifts can be more difficult for people most affected by ACEs or other adversities. Choice, safety, and collaboration are intentionally designed as primary features of engagement.
5. ***Right-Fit Solutions Given Available Resources***: Communities using the SHCM address complex, severe, and multigenerational problems by building ingenious solutions around available resources. They employ a multipronged, layered and aligned set of strategies to produce significant impact.
6. ***Hope and Efficacy***: Self-Healing Communities nurture hope and efficacy by noticing, supporting and celebrating hope-filled action that transforms community identity, inspires peer helping systems, and builds the capacity of a community to generate well-being.

## **APPENDIX C: Principles of Family Support Practice**

- 1) Staff<sup>i</sup> and families work together in relationships based on equality and respect.
- 2) Staff enhances families' capacity to support the growth and development of all family members – adults, youth, and children.
- 3) Families are resources to their own members, to other families, to programs, and to communities.
- 4) Programs affirm and strengthen families' cultural, racial, and linguistic identities and enhance their ability to function in a multicultural society.
- 5) Programs are embedded in their communities and contribute to the community-building process.
- 6) Programs advocate with families for services and systems that are fair, responsive, and accountable to the families served.
- 7) Practitioners work with families to mobilize formal and informal resources to support family development.
- 8) Programs are flexible and continually responsive to emerging family and community issues.
- 9) Principles of family support are modeled in all program activities, including planning, governance, and administration.

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<sup>i</sup> For the purposes of the Know & Grow: Building Resilient Children, Families & Communities contract, the terms “staff, programs and practitioners” can be assumed to refer to individuals who fulfill those roles across the community, rather than referring to an association with any one entity or organization.