

Paul Ramsay Foundation (PRF) aims to break the multiple and complex cycles of disadvantage in Australia. Through one of our focus areas – education – we seek to promote the life-changing influence of education, skills, and training throughout people's lives.

The Strengthening Early Years Program by the Paul Ramsay Foundation aims to support families and children to ensure that every child has the opportunity to thrive upon school entry. In particular, we recognise the critical importance of the developmental period between conception and age two. Equally, we need to also ensure that parents are well supported to flourish during the early years of their child's life.

To do this, PRF seeks to source, seed, and support 'promising programs' that are working with families with children aged prenatal-two years old. One mechanism for achieving this is through the National Open Grant Round described in these guidelines. One of the primary objectives of this nation-wide open grant round is to extend PRF's reach into communities with which the Foundation does not have a long history of partnering.

This grant round is run in partnership with Australian Communities Foundation.

ELIGIBILITY Recipient organisations must:

- Be Australian charities registered with the ACNC
- Be focused on children and families, with a particular emphasis on families with children aged prenatal to 2 years old
- Operate in Australia

FOCUS AREAS

This program aims to support families and caregivers with children (aged prenatal – 2 years old) who are at risk of entering school demonstrating developmental vulnerability. Developmental vulnerability is defined as children who may be more likely to identify as developmentally vulnerable as two or more domains on the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC).

This nation-wide open grant round seeks to support innovative practices which lead toward two key program outcomes:

1. **Caregivers and parents** in target cohorts have the capability, resources and support they need to feel confident in their caregiving ability; and
2. Children in target cohorts and communities have **strong, positive relationships** that support positive physical health and wellbeing, social competence, emotional maturity, language, cognitive and communication skills.

PRIORITIES When assessing applications, we will look favorably upon those that:

Impact

- Support best practice that directly addresses one or more of the above-listed outcomes
- Are informed by evidence
- Operate in geographic locations that are commonly under-resourced
- Aims to support children who are more likely to identify as developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains of the AEDC

Org capability

- Have adequate governance frameworks and infrastructure to support the work

Innovation and collaboration

- Have a demonstrated commitment to meaningful participation of lived experience in program design and/or delivery
- Demonstrate strong partnerships in their community
- Demonstrates ability and willingness to learn

Ability to scale

- Are potentially scalable and/or replicable to others

These are priorities only and applicants do not need to possess all of the above attributes to be eligible to apply.

TARGET POPULATIONS

This program will support organisations that engage with families with children aged prenatal-2 years old who are at greater risk of demonstrating developmental vulnerability upon school entry. This may include, for example, children from:

- Very remote areas
- Low SES areas
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Language backgrounds other than English

GEOGRAPHY

The Foundation will support projects of any geographic scale in the Australian context - local, state/territory or national, that seek to have a positive impact on early years development for Australia's most vulnerable children.

USE OF FUNDS

Funding can be used for:

- Establishment and/or delivery of programs
- Building the evidence base of what works
- Targeted capacity building
- Design and delivery of innovative practice

Funding cannot be used for:

- General fundraising appeals
- Projects or organisations that are partisan in nature
- Retrospective activities
- Non-charitable activities

GRANT VALUES AND TIMEFRAMES

i. Large Grants

Grants of between \$250,000 and \$750,000 (total) for a period of up to five years are available and amounts will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

ii. Small/medium Grants

Grants of between \$50,000 and \$250,000 (total) for a period of up to five years are available and amounts will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Successful recipients will be required to attend an initial information session (with online options) and submit annual progress reports and one final acquittal report upon project completion.

APPLICATION PROCESS **APPLY ONLINE: www.communityfoundation.org.au/support/sev/**

Interested applicants must complete an Expression of Interest (EOI). Full applications are by invitation only, based on the outcome of the EOI process.

i. Large Grants

EOIs open: 16 August 2022
EOI close: 6 September 2022
Full Applications open: 13 September 2022
Full Applications close: 7 October 2022

ii. Small/medium Grants

Applications open: 16 August 2022
Applications close: 21 September 2022

Funding is provided by Paul Ramsay Foundation in partnership with Australian Communities Foundation.

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Definitions

Developmental vulnerability is defined as children who may be more likely to identify as developmentally vulnerable as two or more domains on the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC).

Building an evidence base is defined as any activity that contributes towards generating insights and practice improvements.

'Innovative practice' refers to programs and organisations that are testing new and / or existing ideas alongside children and families that seek to continually improve and iterate based on learning.

'Promising programs' are defined as programs that:

- Clearly contribute to the Strengthening Early Years desired outcomes as identified above
- Focus on children at risk of developmental vulnerability as noted above
- Have a clearly identified learning structure that supports iteration and improvement towards impact

