

Appendix B: Summer Funding Collaborative Project Cycle

In 2017, Baltimore's Promise, a cradle-to-career collective impact nonprofit, began serving as the Collaborative's administrative backbone. Baltimore's Promise now coordinates grantmaking, communication with applicants and grantees, data collection and analysis, and applicant technical assistance. In addition, they implement grantee professional development, plan provider networking events, and lead a youth review process that informs grant decisions.

Baltimore's Promise coordinates an annual RFP process to identify high-quality summer programs serving children and young adults in Baltimore City. To be considered for funding, programs generally meet the following requirements shared by all SFC funders:

- Primarily serve children and youth from low-income families in Baltimore City.
- Plan to serve healthy meals to students attending summer programs that operate four or more hours each day.
- Have operated for at least two years or has experience running other youth programs such as after-school programs, in-school remediation, etc.
- Promote academic and social-emotional growth in children and youth.
- Where applicable, actively welcome and include students of all abilities – learning, physical, and otherwise.

In addition to the general eligibility requirements listed above, each funder has their own requirements and preferences outlined on the SFC website. The Summer 2021 RFP issued to solicit applications for summer funding is included in Appendix C.

This schedule below was adopted in 2019 after four years of adhering to an operating schedule that resulted in a later awards date. In 2020, this schedule was altered as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Process changes specific to the pandemic are italicized.

Fall: September-October

Prior to launching the RFP in the fall, the administrative backbone, Baltimore's Promise, hosts a provider networking mixer meant to foster collaboration and community-building amongst potential applicants. Then, while the RFP is open, Baltimore's Promise hosts a series of information sessions for potential applicants to explore whether the SFC is a fit for their summer programs. To make sure that all applicants have equal access to information about the RFP, all questions asked during info sessions or submitted via email before a predetermined deadline are answered in a public "Q&A Document" on the SFC website. Moreover, as providers begin their applications, they have the option to receive free feedback and technical assistance from a consultant familiar with the work and goals of the Collaborative.

As a result of the pandemic, there was no provider networking mixer in 2020 at the beginning of the 2021 grant cycle.

Winter: November-January

Once the application period closes, Baltimore's Promise sends a preliminary list of applications and materials to funders, checks all application materials for completeness, then sorts the comprehensive, older youth-serving programs for youth review: a process in which groups of youth ages 14-24 review and score applications for comprehensive, older youth-serving programs. Once the youth review period has ended, Baltimore's Promise compiles youth review scores and feedback to share with funders to guide their decision-making.

Concurrent with the youth review period, funders begin reviewing all applications, including those focused on younger comprehensive and specialized programs. Funders use internal review processes to make grant decisions according to their individual organizations' priorities, taking youth review scores, funder priorities, and past performance into account. Funders then meet collectively to align final funding decisions with the goal of funding as many whole program budgets as possible (some funders shift internal decisions during this process), then the SFC announces final decisions, which Baltimore's Promise coordinates centrally. After notification of funding, each funder issues an organizational contract, letter of agreements, etc. to its summer grantees – the SFC does not currently use one shared contract amongst all funding partners.

In lieu of a youth review for the 2021 grant cycle, Baltimore's Promise compiled a comprehensive Youth Feedback Tool, based on engagement sessions conducted over the past year, that captured the priorities of youth, young adults, and parents/caregivers in selecting OST programming. Based on their individual capacities and priorities, funders may use the tool, which includes a scoring rubric, to evaluate funding proposals.

As a result of the pandemic, the funding timeline for summer 2021 was slightly delayed. The RFP closed in December 2020 and funding decisions will be announced in early March 2021.

Spring/Summer: February to August

Once grant decisions have been announced, Baltimore's Promise begins the process of coordinating grantee orientation, summer data collection, and summer site visits for all grantees:

- Grantee Orientation – Orientation is designed to share information about grantee expectations with Executive Directors, organizational leads, and first-time grantees. Orientation is optional, but highly encouraged for all grantees.
- Data Collection
 - Attendance Tracker & Training – All Collaborative grantees are required to collect and submit summer attendance data. The SFC provides an Excel attendance tracker and multiple training sessions to show all grantees how to submit weekly attendance. The training is designed for frontline staff who will be responsible for doing the attendance entry.
 - Youth Survey – survey (differentiated by age and ability) that helps the SFC understand youth perspectives on their summer experience
- Site Visits – All grantees receive at least one site visit from an SFC funder during their program sessions Site visits. Baltimore's Promise coordinates these site visits centrally to minimize the number visits to programs that may have multiple funders. All grantees are required to fill out a site visit scheduling survey online that Baltimore's Promise sends via email in May.

As a result of the pandemic, site visits did not take place in summer 2020. In addition, the youth survey was not administered. Instead, grantees engaged in "Sharing Circles," conversations that took place at the end of the summer and provided an opportunity to reflect on and share best practices.

Fall: September-October

In September, grantees are required to submit a final report and budget. All SFC funders accept this online survey and final budget as the narrative report for their individual funding processes, so they only need to complete one report per program model.

After final reports have been submitted, the SFC hosts a free End-of-Summer Celebration during which grantees will have the opportunity to meet other summer program providers and SFC funding partners and share photos and stories from the summer to show off their success.

Once summer data has been collected and analyzed by Baltimore's Promise, the SFC distributes several Summer Program Reports to grantees outlining site- and program-level data for grantees, including an Enrollment and Attendance Report, Youth Survey Report, Site Visit Report, and raw attendance data collected during the summer. Then, later in the fall, Baltimore's Promise hosts a Grantee Feedback Meeting during which Baltimore's Promise staff members answer questions and support grantees in understanding the data in the reports and how it is helpful for designing and improving summer programs year after year.

As a result of the pandemic, there was no End-of-Summer Celebration to mark the end of the 2020 grant cycle. While a grantee feedback meeting did take place in October, it did not include a Youth Survey or Site Visit Report.