BALTIMORE CHILDREN & YOUTH FUND

FY27 Investment Policy

BCYF Investment Policy....11
1. Purpose and Scope.... 11
Purpose....11
Scope....11
Investment Approach....11
Grantmaking Investments....12
Capacity-Building Investments....12
Relationship to Grant Administration Resources....12
Administration of the Policy....13
Interpretation....13
Relationship to Other Authorities....13
Administrative Procedures....14
Periodic Review....14
Amendments and Revisions....14
Severability....15
Effective Date....15
Version Control....15
About BCYF....15
Our History....15
Our Dual Approach to Grantmaking: Funding and Support....17
Proven Impact....17
Mission, Vision, & Values....18
Our Core Value: Ubuntu....19
Sub-Values That Bring Ubuntu to Life....19
Racial Justice....19
Intergenerational Leadership....19
Community Ownership....19
Theory of Change....20
Our Grantmaking Principles....21
Investment Types....22
About BCYF Grantees....22
Overview of Grantmaking....24
Fund Descriptions....24
Summer of Possibility Fund....24
Grassroots Fund....24
Community Accountable Fund....25

Aligned Grantmaking Fund..... 25
President's Fund..... 26
Charm City Youth Athletics (CCYA)..... 26
Youth Empowerment Pop-Up Partnerships (YEPP)..... 27
Selection: Applications are reviewed through an internal BCYF review process. Funding decisions are based on alignment with program goals, partnership strength, youth engagement, community impact, and available funding..... 27
Roles and Responsibilities..... 27
Purpose..... 27
Board of Directors..... 28
President & CEO..... 28
Executive Leadership Team..... 29
Grant Seeker Team..... 29
Program Officers..... 30
Compliance Team..... 30
Financial Compliance Team..... 31
Finance and Grants Administration..... 31
Community Grant Reviewers..... 32
Consultants, Contractors, and Subject Matter Experts..... 32
Grantees..... 32
Shared Responsibility..... 33
Grant Cycle Phases..... 34
By structuring the grant cycle intentionally, BCYF ensures that every phase—from outreach to closeout—reflects mission alignment and strategic priorities, while fostering trust and partnership with grantees..... 34
Phase I: Strategy..... 34
Grant Strategy Guides..... 34
Grantmaking Priorities..... 35
Phase II: Application and Outreach..... 36
Purpose..... 36
Outreach, Marketing, and Communications..... 37
Outreach Strategies..... 37
Accessibility Commitments..... 38
Applicant Resources and Information..... 38
Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs)..... 39
BCYF Grants Manual..... 39
Standard Application Materials..... 40
Applicant Support Resources..... 40
Rocket Resource Hub..... 41
Publication and Accessibility..... 41
Pre-Application Technical Assistance (PATA)..... 41
Grant Program Review & Application Walkthroughs..... 42

Types of Pre-Application Technical Assistance....42
Low-Touch Technical Assistance....42
High-Touch Technical Assistance....43
Application Coaching, In-Person and Virtual....43
Organizational Eligibility....44
Purpose....44
Minimum Eligibility Requirements....44
Additional Eligibility Considerations....44
Eligibility Determination....45
Eligibility and Funding Decisions....45
Application Requirements....45
Purpose....45
General Application Standards....46
Organizational Information....46
Programmatic Information....47
Financial Information....47
Fiscal Sponsorship Documentation....47
Budget Information....48
Additional Documentation and Certifications....48
Application Design and User Experience....48
Purpose....48
Application Design Principles....49
Application Platforms and Technology....49
Applicant Feedback and Continuous Improvement....49
Accessibility and Accommodations....49
Application Submission and Review Preparation....50
Purpose....50
Application Submission....50
Applicant Responsibilities....51
Preliminary Review....51
Advancement to Review....51
3.Grant Review and Selection....52
Review Process Overview....53
Preliminary Application Review, Due Diligence....53
Application Evaluation....53
Review Panel Deliberation....53
Funding Recommendation Development....54
Slate Review and Approval....54
Award Determination and Notification....54
Preliminary Application Review, Due Diligence....54
Purpose....54

Eligibility and Application Screening..... 55
Organizational Capacity Review..... 55
Programmatic Review..... 55
Financial Review..... 56
Compliance and Risk Review..... 56
Clarifications and Additional Information..... 57
Advancement to Formal Review..... 57
Grant Review Models..... 57
Purpose..... 57
Internal Grant Review..... 58
Community Grant Review Panel..... 58
Hybrid Review Model..... 59
Selection of Review Model..... 59
Application Evaluation and Scoring..... 59
Evaluation Framework..... 60
Application Evaluation Areas..... 60
Justification and Community Impact..... 60
Success Measures and Outcomes..... 61
Program Feasibility..... 61
Organizational Alignment..... 61
Budget and Resource Alignment..... 61
Scoring Methodology..... 61
Reviewer Comments and Recommendations..... 62
Use of Evaluation Results..... 62
Community Grant Review Panels..... 62
Purpose..... 62
Use of Community Grant Review Panels..... 62
Responsibilities of Community Grant Review Panels..... 63
Community-Based Evaluation Considerations..... 63
Advisory Nature of Community Review..... 64
Community Reviewer Eligibility and Selection..... 64
Purpose..... 64
Community Reviewer Eligibility..... 64
Panel Composition..... 65
Recruitment and Outreach..... 65
Reviewer Selection and Appointment..... 66
Reviewer Service and Removal..... 66
Reviewer Orientation, Training, and Calibration..... 67
Purpose..... 67
Reviewer Orientation..... 67
Reviewer Training..... 68

Reviewer Calibration....68
Training Completion Requirements....69
Training Documentation....69
Reviewer Confidentiality, Ethics, and Conflict of Interest....69
Purpose....69
Reviewer Ethics and Conduct....70
Confidentiality Requirements....70
Conflict of Interest....70
Conflict Disclosure and Recusal....71
Reviewer Agreements and Acknowledgements....71
Violations and Corrective Action....71
Reviewer Records....72
Internal Grant Review....72
Purpose....72
Use of Internal Grant Review....72
Review Team Composition....73
Areas of Review....73
Review Responsibilities....73
Funding Recommendations....74
Hybrid Review Model....74
Purpose....74
Use of the Hybrid Review Model....74
Roles and Responsibilities....75
Evaluation and Recommendation Process....75
Funding Recommendations....76
Flexibility of Review Structure....76
Funding Slate Development and Recommendations....76
Purpose....76
Development of Funding Recommendations....77
Funding Slate Development....77
Supplemental Staff Analysis....78
Recommendation Review....78
Transmission for Approval....78
Final Recommendation Authority and Award Approval....79
Purpose....79
Advisory Nature of Funding Recommendations....79
Approval Authority....80
Review and Modification of Recommendations....80
Award Determinations....81
Finality of Funding Decisions....81
Documentation and Records....81

Phase IV: Decision Communications....82
Notification of Funding Decisions....82
Award Notifications....82
Non-Selection Notifications....83
Public Announcement of Awards....83
Transition to Grant Implementation....83
Phase V: Grant Implementation....83
Grant Agreements....84
Orientation through #bcreds....84
Financial Compliance and Fiscal Oversight....85
Compliance Review and Risk Management....86
Grants Administration and Financial Operations....86
Portfolio Management, Technical Assistance, and Grantee Support....87
Suspension, Termination, and Recovery of Funds....87
Purpose....87
Corrective Action....88
Level 6 Intervention....88
Suspension of Disbursements....89
Early Termination....89
Recovery of Funds....90
Relationship to Grant Closeout....90
6. Grant Closeout....91
Standard Grant Closeout....91
Transfer to New Entity....92
Early Termination and No-Cost Extensions....92
Part IV. Governance and Administrative Policies....93
Conflict of Interest....93
Definition of Conflict of Interest....94
Actual Conflict....94
Potential Conflict....94
Perceived Conflict....94
Examples of Conflicts....94
Organizational Relationships....94
Family Relationships....94
Financial Interests....95
Close Personal Relationships....95
Disclosure Requirements....95
Review of Disclosed Conflicts....95
Conflict Management and Recusal....96
Documentation....96
Failure to Disclose....97

Grant Amendments and Modifications....97
Types of Grant Amendments and Modifications....97
Budget Modifications....97
Scope of Work Modifications....97
Grant Period Modifications....97
Organizational Changes....98
Funding Adjustments....98
Other Administrative Modifications....98
Amendment Request Process....98
Review and Approval....98
No-Cost Extensions....99
Transfer to a New Entity....99
Documentation of Amendments....100
Effective Date of Modifications....100
Suspension, Termination, and Recovery of Funds....100
Purpose....100
Corrective Action....100
Level 6 Intervention....101
Suspension of Disbursements....101
Early Termination....102
Recovery of Funds....103
Relationship to Grant Closeout....103
Appeals and Reconsideration....103
Purpose....103
Non-Appealable Grantmaking Decisions....104
Appealable Administrative and Compliance Decisions....104
Filing an Appeal....105
Administrative Review....105
Board Review....105
Effect of Appeal During Review....106
Appeal Determinations....106
Finality of Decision....107
Records and Documentation....107
Confidentiality and Data Protection....107
Confidential Information....107
Collection and Use of Information....108
Access and Information Sharing....108
Data Security and Protection....109
Maryland Public Information Act (MPIA)....109
Disclosure of Information....110
Reviewer, Board, and Staff Confidentiality....111

Data Breaches and Unauthorized Disclosure..... 111
Records Management and Retention.....111
Violations.....112
Fraud, Waste, and Abuse..... 112
Definitions..... 112
Fraud.....112
Waste..... 112
Abuse..... 113
Duty to Report.....113
Review and Investigation..... 113
Corrective Actions.....114
Recovery of Funds.....114
Relationship to Other Policies.....115
Documentation and Record Retention.....115
Record Retention..... 115
Records Subject to Retention..... 115
Grantmaking Records..... 115
Grant Administration Records..... 116
Financial Records.....116
Governance and Administrative Records.....116
Retention Period..... 117
Grantee Record Retention Requirements.....117
Access to Records..... 117
Storage and Protection of Records.....118
Litigation Holds and Special Circumstances.....118
Disposal of Records.....118
Audit and Financial Review.....119
Financial Oversight Framework..... 119
Financial Reviews.....120
Desk Reviews.....120
Audit Requirements..... 120
Access to Records.....121
Findings and Corrective Actions..... 121
Questioned and Disallowed Costs.....122
Cooperation Requirements.....122
Relationship to Other Policies.....122
Site Visits and Monitoring Activities..... 123
Monitoring Framework..... 123
Types of Monitoring Activities..... 124
Desk Monitoring.....124
Site Visits..... 124

Compliance Reviews..... 124
Financial Monitoring..... 124
Follow-Up Monitoring..... 124
Site Visits..... 124
Access to Records and Facilities..... 125
Participant Records and Confidential Information..... 125
Monitoring Findings..... 125
Corrective Actions and Follow-Up..... 126
Relationship to Capacity Building..... 126
Risk Assessment Framework..... 127
Guiding Approach..... 127
Risk Assessment Factors..... 127
Organizational Capacity..... 128
Financial Management..... 128
Compliance History..... 128
Programmatic Performance..... 128
Grant Characteristics..... 129
Risk Assessment Process..... 129
Risk Levels..... 129
Low Risk..... 129
Moderate Risk..... 130
Elevated Risk..... 130
Use of Risk Assessment Results..... 130
Technical Assistance and Capacity Building..... 130
Documentation and Confidentiality..... 131
Learning, Evaluation, and Impact Assessment..... 131
Purpose..... 131
Learning and Evaluation Approach..... 131
Scope of Evaluation Activities..... 132
Grant-Level Evaluation..... 132
Portfolio-Level Evaluation..... 132
Organizational Learning..... 132
Community and Systems-Level Learning..... 132
Data Collection and Reporting..... 132
Community Voice and Participatory Learning..... 133
Grantee Participation..... 133
Learning Products and Knowledge Sharing..... 134
Continuous Improvement..... 134
V. Appendices..... 135
Appendix A: BCYF Investment Documentation Framework..... 135
Document Hierarchy..... 137

BCYF Investment Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

Purpose

The Baltimore Children & Youth Fund (BCYF) Investment Policy establishes the governance framework, principles, requirements, and processes that guide how BCYF invests resources to advance positive outcomes for Baltimore's children, youth, young adults, families, and communities.

BCYF's investments extend beyond grant funding and include a comprehensive approach to strengthening Baltimore's youth development ecosystem through grantmaking, capacity building, technical assistance, professional learning, community engagement, and strategic partnerships. Together, these investments are intended to increase organizational effectiveness, strengthen community leadership, improve youth outcomes, and advance long-term systems change.

This Policy establishes the standards, authorities, and administrative requirements governing the full investment lifecycle, including strategy development, funding opportunity design, application and review processes, award administration, compliance oversight, capacity-building investments, evaluation, and continuous learning.

Scope

This Policy applies to all BCYF investments, including but not limited to:

- Grantmaking programs and funding opportunities;
- Capacity-building investments;
- Professional learning and workforce development initiatives;

- Technical assistance and organizational development supports;
- Community engagement and participatory decision-making activities;
- Research, evaluation, and learning initiatives;
- Strategic partnerships and ecosystem-building investments; and
- Other funding or resource allocation activities authorized by BCYF.

This Policy applies to BCYF staff, Board members, reviewers, consultants, contractors, grantees, learning partners, and other individuals or entities participating in BCYF-funded activities.

Investment Approach

BCYF utilizes a holistic investment strategy that combines direct funding with capacity-building and ecosystem-strengthening supports. BCYF recognizes that sustainable community impact requires both financial resources and opportunities for learning, collaboration, leadership development, and organizational growth.

As a result, BCYF's investment framework includes two primary investment pathways:

Grantmaking Investments

Grantmaking investments provide direct financial resources to organizations, programs, initiatives, and collaborations that advance BCYF's mission and strategic priorities. These investments support youth-serving organizations, community-based initiatives, systems-change efforts, and other activities designed to improve outcomes for Baltimore's children, youth, and young adults.

Capacity-Building Investments

Capacity-building investments strengthen the knowledge, skills, infrastructure, leadership, and long-term sustainability of organizations and the broader youth development ecosystem. These investments may include:

- Professional learning opportunities through #bcreds;
- Technical assistance and coaching;
- Organizational development supports;
- Financial management and fundraising training;
- Peer learning and communities of practice;
- Leadership development opportunities;
- Convenings, workshops, and learning events;
- Research, evaluation, and knowledge-sharing activities; and
- Other initiatives designed to strengthen organizational and community capacity.

BCYF views capacity building as a strategic investment that complements grantmaking by helping organizations increase effectiveness, strengthen sustainability, and expand their ability to serve children, youth, and families.

Relationship to Grant Administration Resources

BCYF maintains a series of policies, guidance documents, funding materials, and operational resources that collectively support effective investment administration. These resources work together to provide policy direction, strategic guidance, applicant resources, and operational procedures throughout the investment lifecycle.

Administration of the Policy

The President, or their designee, shall be responsible for the administration of this Manual and for ensuring that grantmaking activities are conducted in accordance with its provisions.

Responsibility for implementing specific policies and procedures may be delegated to appropriate staff, departments, consultants, or other authorized representatives of BCYF.

Nothing in this Manual shall limit the authority of the Board of Directors to establish, modify, suspend, or rescind grantmaking policies or governance requirements.

Interpretation

Questions regarding the interpretation or application of this Manual shall be reviewed by BCYF leadership.

In situations where a policy provision is unclear, BCYF may issue administrative guidance, procedural clarifications, or implementation instructions to support consistent application of the Manual.

Interpretations made pursuant to this section shall be consistent with BCYF's mission, governing documents, Board policies, grant agreements, and applicable law.

Relationship to Other Authorities

This Manual shall be administered in conjunction with:

a. BCYF's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws;

b. Board-approved policies and resolutions;

c. Grant agreements and funding documents;

d. Applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations;

e. City Ordinance, City Funding Rules & Regulations, and Memo of Understanding; and

f. Other organizational policies and procedures.

In the event of a conflict between this Manual and applicable law, the law shall control.

In the event of a conflict between this Manual and a Board-approved policy, resolution, or governing document, the Board-approved authority shall control.

Administrative Procedures

BCYF may develop administrative procedures, forms, guidance documents, workflows, templates, standard operating procedures, and other implementation resources necessary to administer the policies contained within this Manual.

Administrative procedures may be updated as needed to support operational effectiveness and do not require formal amendment of this Manual unless otherwise determined by BCYF.

Periodic Review

BCYF shall periodically review this Manual to ensure continued effectiveness, legal compliance, operational alignment, and responsiveness to evolving community, organizational, and funding needs.

Reviews may consider:

a. Changes in applicable laws or regulations;

b. Audit findings and compliance requirements;

c. Operational experience and lessons learned;

d. Stakeholder feedback;

e. Organizational strategic priorities; and

f. Emerging grantmaking practices and sector standards.

BCYF may conduct comprehensive reviews at intervals determined appropriate by leadership or the Board of Directors.

Amendments and Revisions

This Manual may be amended, revised, supplemented, or repealed by the Board of Directors or other authority designated by the Board.

Amendments may be adopted to:

a. Address legal or regulatory changes;

b. Improve grant administration practices;

c. Clarify existing requirements;

d. Respond to organizational needs;

e. Strengthen accountability and transparency; or

f. Support implementation of strategic priorities.

Unless otherwise specified, revisions become effective upon approval.

Severability

If any provision of this Manual is determined to be invalid, unlawful, or unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

Effective Date

This Manual shall become effective upon approval by the Board of Directors and shall remain in effect until amended, superseded, or repealed.

The current version of the Manual shall be maintained by BCYF and made available to staff and other authorized users as appropriate.

Version Control

BCYF shall maintain records of material revisions to this Manual, including:

a. Effective dates;

b. Approval dates;

c. Description of significant changes; and

d. Applicable approving authority.

Version control records shall be maintained in accordance with BCYF's record retention requirements.

About BCYF

Our History

Baltimore Children & Youth Fund, Inc. (BCYF) is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization created to support programs for Baltimore's young people. The Fund was conceived in 2015 under the leadership of then-City Council President Bernard "Jack" C. Young following the unrest sparked by the death of Freddie Gray, an event that revealed deep, systemic inequities in Black communities.

In 2016, Baltimore voters overwhelmingly approved a charter amendment establishing a dedicated funding stream for youth programs, guaranteeing an annual appropriation tied to the assessed value of city property. This voter mandate represents a historic, community-driven commitment to equity and opportunity for Baltimore's children and youth.

From 2017 to 2019, the Fund operated through an interim structure to ensure community input in shaping governance and grantmaking priorities. In 2021, BCYF, Inc. became the permanent steward of these public funds, guided by a community-led governance model with a majority of members representing residents and youth-serving leaders. That same year, the Transition Board adopted an innovative funding model:

- **75%** of grant dollars **go to direct program grants**.
- **25%** is invested in **capacity building (helping organizations run better and serve more youth) and technical assistance (personalized help for finances, leadership, and program quality)**.

This dual approach ensures organizations have both the resources to deliver programs and the infrastructure to sustain long-term growth.

Our Dual Approach to Grantmaking: Funding and Support

BCYF does more than provide grants. We pair funding with training, one-on-one support, and practical tools to help organizations strengthen their leadership, improve systems, and build sustainability. Our support ranges from financial compliance coaching to organizational leadership development, helping community-based groups thrive.

BCYF also serves as a convener for Baltimore's youth development ecosystem, bringing together youth, community leaders, and organizations to co-create the city's first Youth Master Plan, a community-driven roadmap that sets priorities and goals for youth programs citywide. Every investment strengthens a connected, coordinated youth development network that reflects community priorities and advances equity across Baltimore.

Proven Impact

- **Grantee Compliance:** Grantee compliance improved from under 30% in 2023 to 92% in 2024, driven by BCYF's targeted training and support.
- **Support for Grantseekers:** Through Pre-Application Technical Assistance, BCYF provided 43+ hours of help to 201 organizations applying for BCYF funding. Participants were five times more likely to secure funding, and 97% reported greater confidence.
- **Effective Trainings:** The BCYF signature professional learning series, the learning lab delivered 60+ hours of programming and created 1,000 seats for youth and leaders. 91% of participants were extremely satisfied, 95% reported skill gains, and 91% credited it for fostering collaboration (University of Maryland, Baltimore evaluation).

Through authentic community engagement, power-shifting philanthropy, and measurable capacity-building, BCYF advances a shared vision of justice, creativity, and abundance for Baltimore's young people.

Mission, Vision, & Values

Vision

We envision a more just, creative, and abundant Baltimore where all young people live, thrive, and lead.

We envision an ecosystem of sustainable youth programs with full agency, liberated from the harm of structural racism and inequity, and able to thrive in abundance.

Mission

The Baltimore Children & Youth Fund builds partnerships that support the ecosystemfocused on opportunities for Baltimore youth by providing support to leaders and organizations.

What is the Ecosystem?

Using the term ecosystem reminds us that we find truth and knowledge in the patterns in the natural world that we can apply in social justice movements and liberatory practices.

The ecosystem we envision is an extraordinary interconnected web of physical, psychological, and energetic networks that envelop the vibrant lives of Baltimore's youth, positively shaping their very existence – producing compassionate, resourceful, innovative, and productive humans.

Who is in the Ecosystem?

- Youth-serving organizations and programs,
- Schools,
- Government agencies,
- Teaching artists & Staff of youth programs
- Youth and adult leaders
- Children and youth
- Families and caregivers
- Community spaces (libraries, houses of worship, community centers)
- Funders
- Arts and cultural institutions
- Advocacy organizations
- And more…

The work of BCYF is to invest in the people who support the creation and/or sustainment of that ecosystem.

Values

Our Core Value: Ubuntu

Ubuntu (n.): *I am because we are.* This South African philosophy reflects the deep interconnectedness of all people, affirming that individual well-being is inseparable from the well-being of the community. Ubuntu calls us to practice humanity, service, sharing, healing, and reconciliation in all that we do.

The Maasai people of East Africa greet each other by asking, *"How are the children?"* This greeting recognizes that the health and future of a community are defined by the well-being of its children. At BCYF, we embrace this worldview and believe that Baltimore's strength and future depend on how we care for our children collectively. Ensuring their well-being is a responsibility we all share.

Sub-Values That Bring Ubuntu to Life

Racial Justice

BCYF celebrates and honors the cultural strengths and assets within Baltimore's Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities. We acknowledge their history, resilience, and power. We are committed to addressing philanthropy's role in dismantling structural racism by engaging in intentional internal and external practices that center Black and Brown wisdom in every aspect of our work.

Intergenerational Leadership

We believe that lasting change comes when youth and adults lead together. Intergenerational collaboration reflects the collective effort required to transform Baltimore and improve quality of life for all. BCYF ensures that youth have meaningful, equal participation in every part of our work—from decision-making to strategy design.

Community Ownership

At BCYF, community is a decision-maker. Residents have authentic, equal power in determining how BCYF resources are allocated. Our governance and grantmaking structures reflect accountability to the communities we serve and ensure that those most impacted shape the solutions.

Theory of Change

At BCYF we believe…

If we identify and cultivate Black and Brown-led nonprofits in Baltimore and provide them with capacity building, resources, and funding, then we can empower these organizations to address systemic challenges and improve outcomes for children and youth.

If we facilitate bi-lateral learning among these nonprofits, experts, and community stakeholders, then we can foster collective problem-solving and create a supportive community for learning and growth.

If we support these nonprofits in advocating for policy changes and reforms and amplify their voices in engaging with policymakers, then we can work towards systemic change that positively impacts marginalized communities

If we regularly evaluate the outcomes and impact of our efforts and adapt our strategies accordingly, then we can ensure maximum effectiveness and sustainability in our mission to empower Black and Brown-led nonprofits and enhance the lives of children and youth in Baltimore.

Our Grantmaking Principles

1. Broaden What Counts

BCYF redefines what success and expertise look like in philanthropy. Traditional standards for outcomes and expertise have been shaped by systemic inequities that often exclude community voices. We intentionally challenge these norms by elevating the lived experience, insight, and brilliance of Baltimore's Black and Brown communities. For BCYF, community knowledge is foundational to creating effective, sustainable solutions.

2. Be a Community Resource

BCYF is more than a grantmaker; we are a partner in building a thriving youth development ecosystem. While we cannot meet every financial need, our role is to serve as a catalyst for systemic change. We work to shift decision-making power into community hands, promote collaboration among organizations, and strengthen the long-term sustainability of grassroots leadership.

3. Invest with Our Values

Our work is guided by BCYF's core values, including **Ubuntu**, which affirms our interconnectedness and shared responsibility. We lead with trust, center equity, and create spaces for power sharing, healing, and authentic relationship-building. Every funding decision reflects principles of fairness, community ownership, and accountability as we advance a more just and abundant Baltimore.

4. Commit to Transparency

BCYF is committed to openness and accountability in all aspects of our work. Unlike traditional philanthropy, our strategies and funding decisions are shaped through authentic engagement with Baltimore residents and youth leaders, not behind closed doors. BCYF complies with audits, adheres to public reporting requirements, and regularly communicates updates to government partners and the community, ensuring integrity and trust at every step.

Investment Types

BCYF is one of the most unique grantmaking organizations in the United States. Instead of being sustained by private endowments, corporations, and individuals, we are funded by Baltimore City residents. An annual appropriation of 3 cents on every $100 of assessed value of all Baltimore City properties is dedicated to BCYF.

BCYF awards grants to organizations that provide programming to thousands of Baltimore's young people, ranging from academic support and science exploration to dance, photography, and more. Unlike traditional philanthropic efforts in Baltimore, BCYF is committed to authentic community engagement. Our strategy, grantmaking priorities, and grant decisions are shaped and led by Baltimore community members and youth leaders.

Through our strategic investments, we strive to resource a future where children and youth throughout the city enjoy access to high-caliber enrichment and learning opportunities, and children and youth programs have the resources they need to serve all our young people.

BCYF provides:

- Direct grant investments in:
    - organizations,
    - infrastructure to allow grassroots organizations to receive funds and thrive, and
    - aligned funding, in collaboration with local funders, to create larger grant opportunities.
- Direct knowledge investments with technical assistance and capacity building.

About BCYF Grantees

A successful BCYF grantee understands:

How to communicate effectively. Communication skills are essential to navigating opportunities and challenges. It is an integral skill in developing advocates and the cornerstone of establishing impactful relationships.

The value of community. They recognize strong community supports—what they feel like and how they can contribute to creating and maintaining strong community networks.

How to collaborate. Collaboration exposes you to different viewpoints and approaches to problem-solving. It helps to foster critical thinking skills needed to solve complex issues, consider multiple perspectives, and find creative solutions through brainstorming and collective decision-making.

The necessity of strong internal system efficiencies. It isn't enough to want the best for today's youth, organizations must have a plan and a system to support that plan. In the spirit of entrepreneurship, it is crucial that our youth are exposed to excellence in all aspects of our work, including the modeling of effective business practices.

Overview of Grantmaking

Fund Descriptions

Summer of Possibility Fund

The Summer of Possibility Fund invests in safe, joyful, and enriching summer opportunities for Baltimore's children and youth. Through direct grants and tailored capacity-building support, the fund resources community-rooted organizations to deliver high-quality summer programming that promotes learning, leadership, wellness, creativity, workforce development, and youth engagement.

Grant Size & Term: Grants range from $25,000 to $100,000 to support summer planning, staffing, implementation, and youth programming activities.

Eligibility: Priority is given to organizations with annual operating budgets under $750,000 and those led by Black and Brown leaders.

Support: Grant seekers have access to Pre-Application Technical Assistance (PATA), including workshops, Help Desks, and one-on-one coaching. Funded organizations receive health and safety certifications, learning opportunities, and implementation support designed to strengthen program quality and organizational sustainability.

Selection: Applications are reviewed and scored by a trained community-led review panel composed of community members, youth leaders, and individuals with lived experience. Reviewers participate in orientation, training, and calibration activities to promote consistency, fairness, and accountability throughout the grantmaking process.

Grassroots Fund

The Grassroots Fund closes systemic gaps in Baltimore's funding landscape by investing in small, community-rooted organizations that are often overlooked by traditional philanthropy. Through multi-year funding and tailored organizational support, the fund strengthens the leadership, sustainability, and long-term impact of grassroots organizations serving Baltimore's children, youth, and families.

BCYF invests through both direct grants and capacity-building supports, ensuring organizations have access to the resources, tools, and technical assistance needed to grow their programs, strengthen operations, and deepen community impact.

Grant Size & Term: $50,000 annually for five years ($250,000 total).

Eligibility: Organizations with an annual operating budget of $350,000 or less.

Support: Grant seekers have access to Pre-Application Technical Assistance (PATA). Funded organizations receive ongoing technical assistance, peer learning opportunities, and capacity-building support tailored to strengthen organizational sustainability, leadership, infrastructure, and community impact.

Selection: Applications are reviewed and scored by a trained community-led review panel. Reviewers participate in orientation, training, and calibration activities to promote consistency, fairness, and accountability throughout the grantmaking process.

Community Accountable Fund

The Community Accountable Fund invests in organizations that demonstrate deep accountability to youth, families, and communities. The fund supports organizations that are responsive to community priorities and committed to creating meaningful opportunities and outcomes for Baltimore's young people.

BCYF invests through both direct grants and capacity-building supports, helping organizations strengthen their programs, leadership, and organizational infrastructure while advancing equitable outcomes for youth and communities.

Grant Size & Term: $75,000 annually for three years ($225,000 total).

Eligibility: Organizations with an annual operating budget between $350,000 and $500,000.

Support: Grant seekers have access to Pre-Application Technical Assistance (PATA). Funded organizations receive ongoing technical assistance, peer learning opportunities, and capacity-building support tailored to strengthen organizational sustainability, leadership, infrastructure, and community impact.

Selection: Applications are reviewed and scored by a trained community-led review panel. Reviewers participate in orientation, training, and calibration activities to promote consistency, fairness, and accountability throughout the grantmaking process.

Aligned Grantmaking Fund

The Aligned Grantmaking Fund leverages collaborative partnerships and co-investments to expand resources for youth-focused initiatives, strengthen Baltimore's social sector, and support the leadership

development of Black and Brown leaders. Through strategic partnerships, the fund increases investment in community priorities while aligning resources around shared goals and outcomes.

BCYF invests through both direct grants and partnership-based capacity-building supports that strengthen collaboration, learning, and collective impact across organizations and sectors.

Grant Size & Term: Award amounts and funding periods vary by funding opportunity.

Eligibility: Eligibility requirements are defined within each funding opportunity and request for proposals (RFP).

Selection: Awards are reviewed through an internal BCYF review process and approved in accordance with BCYF grantmaking policies. Funding decisions may be made in collaboration with strategic funding partners.

President's Fund

The President's Fund provides flexible and responsive funding for opportunities, innovations, and emerging community needs that align with BCYF's mission, vision, and values. The fund enables BCYF to support high-impact initiatives, pilot new approaches, and respond to evolving opportunities that advance outcomes for Baltimore's children and youth.

BCYF invests through both direct grants and strategic support designed to help organizations maximize impact, strengthen implementation, and respond effectively to community needs.

Grant Size & Term: Award amounts and funding periods vary by funding opportunity.

Eligibility: Eligibility requirements are defined within each funding opportunity and request for proposals (RFP).

Selection: Awards are reviewed through an internal BCYF review process and approved based on strategic alignment with BCYF's mission, vision, values, and community priorities.

Charm City Youth Athletics (CCYA)

Charm City Youth Athletics seeks to expand access to middle school sports and increase youth participation in athletics across Baltimore City. The initiative advances youth health, wellness, leadership, and belonging by creating equitable opportunities for young people to participate in organized sports.

BCYF invests through both direct grants and capacity-building supports, providing resources, technical assistance, impact measurement, and storytelling support to strengthen athletic programming and build long-term infrastructure for youth sports.

Grant Size & Term: Award amounts and funding periods vary by funding opportunity.

Eligibility: Youth-serving athletic and sports organizations that can partner with Baltimore City Public Schools and meet program requirements.

Selection: Eligible athletic providers respond to an open call and, if approved, are placed on a roster of qualified providers. School leaders identify preferred partners and jointly apply for funding. Final funding decisions are made through an internal review process.

Youth Empowerment Pop-Up Partnerships (YEPP)

The Youth Empowerment Pop-Up Partnerships (YEPP) initiative supports short-term, collaborative youth engagement experiences that activate public spaces, strengthen community partnerships, and elevate youth voice throughout Baltimore City. Through creative, youth-centered programming, YEPP increases visibility, access, and opportunities for young people while fostering collaboration among community organizations.

BCYF invests through both direct grants and implementation support to help organizations design and deliver impactful pop-up experiences that promote youth leadership, community connection, and neighborhood activation.

Grant Size & Term: Funding supports one- to three-day collaborative youth programming experiences.

Eligibility: Open to BCYF grantees partnering with community organizations, schools, and other local stakeholders.

Support: Grant seekers have access to technical assistance throughout the application

Selection: Applications are reviewed through an internal BCYF review process. Funding decisions are based on alignment with program goals, partnership strength, youth engagement, community impact, and available funding.

Roles and Responsibilities

Purpose

The successful administration of BCYF's grantmaking programs requires clear accountability, coordinated decision-making, and defined responsibilities across staff, leadership, reviewers, and grantees. This section establishes the primary roles and responsibilities of individuals and groups involved in the grant lifecycle and serves as the framework for implementing the policies and procedures contained within this Manual.

While specific responsibilities may vary by funding opportunity, organizational structure, or delegation of authority, the following roles provide the foundation for BCYF's grantmaking and grant administration activities.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is responsible for providing governance, fiduciary oversight, and strategic direction for BCYF's grantmaking activities.

Responsibilities may include:

a. Approving grantmaking policies and major program frameworks;

b. Approving funding recommendations and grant awards in accordance with BCYF's governance structure;

c. Hearing and determining appeals eligible for Board review;

d. Providing oversight of grantmaking performance, accountability, and impact;

e. Approving strategic priorities and investment approaches; and

f. Ensuring responsible stewardship of organizational resources.

President & CEO

The President provides executive leadership and oversight for BCYF's grantmaking and grant administration activities.

Responsibilities may include:

a. Implementing Board-approved policies and strategic priorities;

b. Overseeing grantmaking operations and organizational performance;

c. Exercising delegated approval authority;

d. Authorizing emergency funding adjustments and operational responses when appropriate;

e. Supporting organizational accountability and compliance; and

f. Representing BCYF in matters related to grantmaking, partnerships, and public accountability.

Executive Leadership Team

The Leadership Team provides strategic, operational, and administrative oversight of grantmaking activities.

Responsibilities may include:

a. Supporting implementation of grantmaking policies and procedures;

b. Reviewing funding recommendations and operational decisions;

c. Managing organizational risk and compliance activities;

d. Supporting cross-functional coordination across teams;

e. Monitoring grantmaking performance and organizational outcomes; and

f. Advising on complex grant administration matters.

Grant Seeker Team

The Grant Seeker Team is responsible for the administration of funding opportunities and management of the applicant and grantee experience throughout the grant lifecycle.

Responsibilities may include:

a. Developing funding opportunities and application materials;

b. Managing outreach and applicant engagement activities;

c. Supporting grant review and selection processes;

d. Developing funding recommendations and funding slates;

e. Managing grantee relationships;

f. Facilitating orientation and onboarding activities;

g. Reviewing programmatic reports and deliverables; and

h. Supporting grant implementation and community engagement activities.

Program Officers

Program Officers serve as the primary relationship managers for assigned grantees and funding portfolios.

Responsibilities may include:

a. Providing technical assistance and guidance to applicants and grantees;

b. Monitoring grant implementation and program performance;

c. Conducting site visits and monitoring activities;

d. Reviewing reports and supporting documentation;

e. Identifying compliance concerns and support needs;

f. Facilitating corrective action processes when necessary;

g. Supporting grant amendments and modifications; and

h. Coordinating grant closeout activities.

Compliance Team

The Compliance Team supports accountability, monitoring, and adherence to grant requirements.

Responsibilities may include:

a. Reviewing compliance documentation and certifications;

b. Conducting compliance reviews and monitoring activities;

c. Supporting risk assessment processes;

d. Managing corrective action and intervention procedures;

e. Reviewing organizational compliance requirements;

f. Supporting suspension, termination, and recovery activities when necessary; and

g. Maintaining compliance guidance and process documentation.

Financial Compliance Team

The Financial Compliance Team is responsible for financial oversight and stewardship of grant resources.

Responsibilities may include:

a. Reviewing and approving grant budgets;

b. Reviewing monthly financial expense reports and supporting documentation;

c. Monitoring compliance with financial requirements and grant spending guidelines;

d. Conducting financial reviews and expenditure verification activities;

e. Reviewing financial compliance reports and certifications;

f. Supporting risk assessment and financial monitoring activities;

g. Providing financial guidance and technical assistance; and

h. Supporting recovery of funds and financial reconciliation activities.

Finance and Grants Administration

The Finance and Grants Administration functions support the financial administration of grant awards.

Responsibilities may include:

a. Processing grant agreements and amendments;

b. Managing disbursements and payment processing;

c. Maintaining financial records and documentation;

d. Supporting ACH, Bill.com, and payment administration processes;

e. Reviewing W-9 and vendor documentation requirements;

f. Managing grant reconciliation activities; and

g. Supporting grant closeout and financial reporting.

Community Grant Reviewers

Community Grant Reviewers provide community-informed perspectives and expertise during the grant review process.

Responsibilities may include:

a. Reviewing assigned applications;

b. Applying published scoring criteria and evaluation rubrics;

c. Participating in reviewer training and calibration activities;

d. Providing scores, comments, and recommendations;

e. Complying with confidentiality and conflict-of-interest requirements; and

f. Supporting fair and equitable review processes.

Consultants, Contractors, and Subject Matter Experts

BCYF may engage consultants, contractors, facilitators, evaluators, or subject matter experts to support grantmaking activities.

Responsibilities may include:

a. Providing technical expertise and specialized support;

b. Conducting evaluations, assessments, or reviews;

c. Supporting training and capacity-building activities;

d. Facilitating community engagement or learning activities; and

e. Performing other duties authorized by BCYF.

All consultants and contractors shall comply with applicable BCYF policies, confidentiality requirements, and contractual obligations.

Grantees

Grantees are responsible for implementing funded activities and complying with grant requirements.

Responsibilities include:

a. Utilizing grant funds for approved purposes;

b. Implementing activities described in approved applications and grant agreements;

c. Maintaining required financial and programmatic records;

d. Submitting required reports and documentation;

e. Participating in monitoring, evaluation, and compliance activities;

f. Maintaining compliance with grant requirements and applicable laws;

g. Communicating significant organizational or programmatic changes to BCYF; and

h. Completing grant closeout requirements.

Shared Responsibility

Effective grantmaking requires collaboration among BCYF staff, leadership, reviewers, partners, and grantees. All parties involved in the grant lifecycle share responsibility for promoting transparency, accountability, equity, stewardship, continuous learning, and positive outcomes for Baltimore's children, youth, young adults, and communities.

Grant Cycle Phases

The BCYF grant cycle is designed to ensure that BCYF's funding decisions advance equity, strengthen organizational capacity, and create measurable community impact. Each stage of the process aligns with BCYF's mission to build a more just, creative, and abundant Baltimore, while upholding values of transparency, accountability, and community partnership.

By structuring the grant cycle intentionally, BCYF ensures that every phase—from outreach to closeout—reflects **mission alignment and strategic priorities**, while fostering trust and partnership with grantees.

Phase I: Strategy

BCYF's grantmaking strategy serves as the foundation for how resources are invested to advance positive outcomes for Baltimore's children, youth, and families. Through intentional, equity-centered funding strategies, BCYF aligns grantmaking investments with community priorities, organizational goals, and the long-term vision for a more just, abundant, and thriving Baltimore.

The purpose of the grantmaking strategy is to establish a clear framework for decision-making, resource allocation, community engagement, and accountability across all funding opportunities. Each funding strategy defines the purpose of the investment, target populations, intended outcomes, equity commitments, funding priorities, operational approach, and measures of success. Together, these strategies ensure that grantmaking decisions are transparent, responsive to community needs, and aligned with BCYF's mission and strategic priorities.

Grant Strategy Guides

To support consistency and clarity, BCYF develops a Grant Strategy Guide for each major funding opportunity. These guides serve as comprehensive planning and implementation documents that provide direction to BCYF staff, community reviewers, applicants, grantees, and other stakeholders throughout the grant lifecycle.

Each Grant Strategy Guide may include:

- Purpose and intended outcomes of the fund;
- Community needs, opportunities, and strategic context;
- Youth, community, and stakeholder input;
- Funding priorities and investment strategies;
- Equity goals and accountability measures;

- Eligibility requirements and award parameters;
- Application, review, and award processes;
- Capacity-building and technical assistance approaches;
- Communications and community engagement plans;
- Governance, decision-making, and operational structures;
- Budget and financial framework;
- Monitoring, evaluation, and learning strategies; and
- Risk management, sustainability, and continuous improvement considerations.

Grant Strategy Guides are intended to provide a shared understanding of why a fund exists, how funding decisions will be made, what outcomes are expected, and how success will be measured and communicated over time. Strategy Guides are developed prior to launch and are used throughout the grant lifecycle to inform implementation, evaluation, communications, and continuous improvement.

The primary audiences for Grant Strategy Guides include:

- **BCYF Staff**, who use the guides to manage implementation, decision-making, operations, communications, compliance, and evaluation activities;
- **Community Reviewers**, who use the guides to understand funding priorities, evaluation criteria, and intended outcomes;
- **Leadership and the Board**, who use the guides to provide oversight, approve funding strategies, and monitor progress toward strategic goals;
- **Applicants and Grantees**, who use publicly shared portions of the strategy to understand funding priorities, eligibility requirements, and expectations; and
- **Community Stakeholders and Partners**, who use the guides to understand BCYF's investment priorities, transparency commitments, and intended community impact.

By establishing clear strategic direction before funding opportunities are launched, Grant Strategy Guides help ensure that BCYF's grantmaking remains intentional, transparent, community-informed, and aligned with the organization's long-term vision for Baltimore's children and youth.

Grantmaking Priorities

BCYF's 2023-2025 priorities were determined through the People's Assembly, held in Spring 2022, where community members shared their experiences and areas of need. The priorities are also strongly grounded in research from the Nobody Asked Me campaign and The Wallace Foundation's connected learning initiative.

Priority	Overview	Outcome

Priority 1: **Culturally Sustaining**	Baltimore's children and youth deserve access to communities that center cultural wealth, learning based on cultures, and the identities of learners and the community, and leveraging cultural assets.	Young people have a sustained connection to culture, heritage, and/or community.
Priority 2: **Future Forward**	Baltimore's children and youth deserve access to resources and opportunities that will prepare them for the future.	Young people are connected to careers, relationships, and futures that are meaningful and linked to their interests.
Priority 3: **Doing Well by Doing**	Baltimore's children and youth deserve access to resources that support their social and emotional needs and overall well-being.	Young people feel that their social and emotional needs are met through their experiences.
Priority 4: **Youth Voice**	Baltimore's children and youth deserve equitable access to platforms that will allow them to develop their perspectives and leadership abilities and amplify their voices.	Young people's voices are valued in ways that change their communities.
Priority 5: **Networked**	Baltimore's children and youth deserve equitable access to opportunities that embed and expand learning in social networks that include youth, family, and facilitators.	Young people have access to more expansive networks and communities beyond one program.

Phase II: Application and Outreach

Purpose

BCYF is committed to administering grantmaking opportunities in a manner that is transparent, equitable, accessible, and community-centered. Through its grantmaking programs, BCYF

invests in organizations, programs, and initiatives that improve outcomes for Baltimore's children, youth, and young adults while strengthening the long-term capacity and sustainability of the city's youth-serving ecosystem.

The purpose of BCYF's application and outreach processes is to ensure that all eligible organizations have meaningful access to funding opportunities, information, technical assistance, and resources necessary to participate successfully in the grantmaking process. In alignment with the purposes of the Baltimore Children & Youth Fund, BCYF prioritizes investments that advance racial equity, support intergenerational leadership, strengthen community ownership, and promote collective decision-making.

Recognizing that organizations enter the grantmaking process with varying levels of capacity, experience, and access to resources, BCYF seeks to reduce barriers to participation by providing clear guidance, accessible application materials, pre-application technical assistance, and multiple opportunities for engagement and learning. These efforts are intended to increase applicant readiness, strengthen organizational capacity, and ensure that funding opportunities are accessible to a diverse range of organizations serving Baltimore City youth and young adults.

Through outreach, applicant support, and transparent grantmaking practices, BCYF seeks to foster broad community participation, expand access to resources, and support organizations in delivering meaningful impact for Baltimore's children, youth, families, and communities.

Outreach, Marketing, and Communications

BCYF conducts outreach, marketing, and communications activities to promote broad awareness of funding opportunities, increase applicant readiness, and support equitable participation in the grantmaking process. These activities are designed to ensure that organizations serving Baltimore's children, youth, and families have timely access to information regarding available funding opportunities, application requirements, applicant support resources, and grantmaking processes.

BCYF is committed to fostering broad community awareness, equitable access to information, and meaningful community participation throughout the grantmaking process. Outreach and communications efforts are intended to reduce barriers to participation, strengthen transparency, and encourage engagement from organizations representing diverse communities, neighborhoods, and youth-serving sectors across Baltimore City.

Outreach Strategies

BCYF utilizes a variety of outreach, marketing, and engagement strategies to connect prospective applicants with funding opportunities and grantmaking resources. Outreach activities may include:

a. Marketing and communications campaigns utilizing digital, print, and community-based communication channels;

b. Partnerships with community organizations, networks, coalitions, and stakeholder groups to expand awareness and reach;

c. Information sessions, application launch events, workshops, webinars, and other educational opportunities designed to support applicant understanding and readiness;

d. Digital outreach through the BCYF website, email communications, social media platforms, online resource hubs, and other electronic communication methods; and

e. Stakeholder engagement activities that encourage dialogue, information sharing, feedback, and participation from youth, families, community organizations, and other partners.

BCYF may tailor outreach approaches based on the goals of a funding opportunity, the populations being served, geographic priorities, and identified barriers to participation.

Accessibility Commitments

BCYF seeks to ensure that outreach materials, communications, and applicant resources are accessible, understandable, and responsive to the needs of prospective applicants.

To support equitable access to funding opportunities, BCYF shall:

a. Utilize plain-language communications whenever possible to improve clarity and understanding;

b. Disseminate information through multiple communication methods and channels to reach diverse audiences;

c. Develop and maintain accessible materials, resources, and technology platforms that support participation by organizations with varying levels of capacity and experience; and

d. Incorporate community feedback, lived experience, and applicant input into outreach and communication practices to continuously improve accessibility and effectiveness.

Through these efforts, BCYF seeks to foster transparency, strengthen community trust, increase organizational readiness, and ensure equitable access to grantmaking opportunities and resources.

Applicant Resources and Information

BCYF provides applicants with access to information, tools, guidance, and support resources designed to promote transparency, consistency, accessibility, and equitable participation in the

grantmaking process. These resources are intended to help prospective applicants understand funding opportunities, prepare competitive applications, navigate grant requirements, and access support throughout the application process.

BCYF shall develop, maintain, and publish applicant resources and information through its website and other appropriate communication channels. Resources may be updated periodically to reflect changes in funding opportunities, grantmaking practices, policies, and program requirements.

Publication and Accessibility

BCYF shall publish and maintain applicant resources and information on its website and other appropriate communication platforms. Information shall be provided in a manner that promotes transparency, consistency, accessibility, and equitable access to funding opportunities for all prospective applicants.

BCYF shall strive to ensure that resources are easy to locate, written in clear and understandable language, available through multiple communication channels, and accessible to organizations with varying levels of grantmaking experience, organizational capacity, and technical expertise.

Annual Review of Applicant Resources and Information

To ensure accuracy, transparency, and accessibility in BCYF's grantmaking processes, all applicant-facing resources and informational materials shall undergo a formal review at least annually.

The annual review shall include all printed and published applicant resources, including but not limited to application guides, eligibility requirements, funding guidelines, frequently asked questions, technical assistance materials, compliance guidance, scoring criteria descriptions, and other materials provided to prospective applicants.

The review process shall verify that:

- Information is current, accurate, and consistent with BCYF policies, funding priorities, and grantmaking procedures;
- Eligibility requirements, application instructions, and compliance expectations are clearly communicated;
- References to applicable laws, regulations, ordinances, and organizational policies remain current;
- All applicant materials and requirements comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws, Baltimore City ordinances, and any other regulatory requirements governing BCYF's grantmaking activities;
- Required disclosures, certifications, and compliance-related applicant attestations are current and properly incorporated into application materials;

- Materials reflect BCYF's commitment to accessibility, equity, and transparency;
- Outdated or superseded materials are revised, archived, or removed from circulation.

Documentation of the annual review, including any revisions made, identified compliance updates, and the date of completion, shall be maintained in accordance with BCYF's records management practices. Updated materials shall be approved through the appropriate internal review process before distribution or publication.

Standard Resources Provided for Each Grant Opportunity:

1. Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs)

For each funding opportunity, BCYF shall publish a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) that serves as the primary source of information regarding the funding opportunity. FOAs provide applicants with the information necessary to determine eligibility, understand funding priorities, and prepare a complete application.

At a minimum, each FOA shall include:

a. Eligibility requirements and applicant qualifications;
b. Application submission deadlines and key dates;
c. Funding priorities, goals, and intended outcomes;
d. Evaluation and scoring criteria;
e. Review processes, decision-making procedures, and anticipated timelines;
f. Applicable grant terms, conditions, and compliance requirements; and
g. Any additional requirements, restrictions, or expectations specific to the funding opportunity.

2. BCYF Grants Manual

BCYF shall maintain a Grants Manual that serves as the primary reference document for applicants, grantees, reviewers, and other stakeholders participating in BCYF grantmaking activities. The Grants Manual will be made a available to the public.

The Grants Manual shall describe the policies, procedures, requirements, and practices governing the grantmaking process and may include information regarding:

a. Grantmaking policies and procedures;
b. Review structures, panel processes, and decision-making protocols;
c. Eligibility requirements;
d. Application expectations and submission requirements;
e. Compliance, reporting, and monitoring standards;
f. Grant administration and post-award requirements; and
g. Other guidance necessary to support applicants and grantees throughout the grant lifecycle.

3. Application Toolkit, Standard Application Materials

BCYF shall provide standardized application materials for each funding opportunity to support consistent and equitable participation in the grantmaking process.

Application materials may include:

a. The grant application and rubric;

b. Application instructions and guidance;

c. List of required documents, attachments, and information;

d. Budget templates, budget narratives, and related guidance;

e. Submission procedures and technical requirements; and

f. Application timelines, milestones, and key dates.

G. Sample documents, templates, and examples;

Application materials shall be designed to clearly communicate requirements and minimize unnecessary administrative burden for applicants.

4. Tailored Applicant Support Resources by Grant Opportunity

BCYF shall provide applicant support resources to help prospective applicants understand funding opportunities, navigate application requirements, and strengthen their submissions.

Applicant support resources may include:

a. A calendar of Pre-Application Technical Assistance (PATA) events and other key events;

b. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs);

c. Instructional guides, toolkits, and reference materials, as needed;

d. Links to recorded training materials;

Rocket Resource Hub

BCYF shall develop, maintain, and publish resources through the Rocket Resource Hub to support applicants throughout the grant application process. The Rocket Resource Hub serves as a centralized repository of grantmaking resources, guidance materials, training content, templates, and support tools designed to improve applicant understanding, increase readiness, and support successful application submission.

Resources available through the Rocket Resource Hub may vary by funding opportunity and will be updated annually to reflect applicant needs, program requirements, and continuous improvement efforts.

Pre-Application Technical Assistance (PATA)

BCYF is committed to reducing barriers to funding access and supporting organizations in successfully navigating the grantmaking process. Through its Pre-Application Technical Assistance (PATA) framework, BCYF provides prospective applicants with information, guidance, learning opportunities, and individualized support designed to strengthen applicant readiness and promote equitable participation in funding opportunities.

The purpose of PATA is to ensure that organizations have access to the resources and support necessary to understand funding opportunities, interpret application requirements, develop competitive proposals, and successfully complete the application process. PATA is designed to increase transparency, improve applicant confidence, strengthen organizational capacity, and support equitable access to grant funding.

Technical assistance offerings may vary by funding opportunity and may be tailored based on applicant needs, organizational readiness, funding complexity, and available resources.

Grant Program Review & Application Walkthroughs

BCYF shall provide a Grant Program Review and Application Walkthrough for all funding opportunities. These sessions serve as the foundational component of the PATA framework and are designed to ensure that all prospective applicants receive consistent information regarding the funding opportunity and application process.

Grant Program Review and Application Walkthrough sessions may include:

a. Overview of the funding opportunity and program goals;

b. Eligibility requirements and applicant qualifications;

c. Application timelines and key dates;

d. Review criteria and funding priorities;

e. Application components and submission requirements;

f. Compliance and grant administration expectations; and

g. Opportunities for questions and clarification.

These sessions promote transparency, establish a shared understanding of application expectations, and help ensure that all applicants have access to the same foundational information before submitting an application.

Types of Pre-Application Technical Assistance

BCYF may provide multiple levels of technical assistance to meet the varying needs of applicants.

Low-Touch Technical Assistance

Low-Touch Technical Assistance provides broad, accessible support intended to help applicants independently navigate the application process. Support is generally informational in nature and is delivered through scalable formats that can serve a large number of organizations.

Examples may include:

- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs);
- Office hours;
- General question-and-answer sessions;
- Application walkthroughs;
- Webinars and workshops;
- Guidance documents and reference materials; and
- Email-based support.

Low-Touch Technical Assistance is intended to provide applicants with timely clarification and general guidance while promoting broad accessibility.

High-Touch Technical Assistance

High-Touch Technical Assistance provides more intensive, relationship-based support tailored to an applicant's specific circumstances, needs, or barriers. This support may involve multiple interactions and ongoing engagement throughout the pre-application period.

Examples may include:

- Organizational readiness support;
- Strategic application planning;
- Program design consultation;
- Budget development assistance;
- Proposal development support; and
- Guidance for first-time or emerging applicants.

High-Touch Technical Assistance is intended to strengthen applicant readiness, address barriers to participation, and support organizations requiring additional assistance to successfully compete for funding.

Application Coaching, In-Person and Virtual

Application Coaching provides individualized, one-on-one support focused specifically on preparing and submitting a grant application. Coaching is intended to help applicants better understand requirements, strengthen application responses, and navigate the submission process.

Application Coaching may include:

- Clarification of application questions;
- Guidance regarding narrative development;
- Budget review and alignment;
- Submission readiness support;
- Assistance understanding application requirements; and
- Support for first-time applicants.

Application Coaching provides targeted support while maintaining fairness, neutrality, and consistency within the grantmaking process.

BCYF may also leverage the Rocket Resource Hub, applicant support resources, and community partnerships to expand access to information and strengthen the overall applicant experience.

Organizational Eligibility

Purpose

BCYF establishes organizational eligibility requirements to ensure that grant funds are invested in organizations that are aligned with the purposes of the Baltimore Children & Youth Fund and possess the capacity to responsibly implement funded activities. Eligibility requirements provide a consistent framework for determining which organizations may apply for funding while maintaining flexibility to address the unique goals and requirements of individual funding opportunities.

Eligibility requirements are intended to promote fairness, transparency, accountability, and effective stewardship of grant resources. Satisfaction of eligibility requirements allows an application to proceed through the review process but does not guarantee funding.

Minimum Eligibility Requirements

Unless otherwise specified within a funding opportunity, organizations seeking funding through BCYF's direct grantmaking programs shall:

a. Be based in Baltimore City and provide services, programs, or opportunities that benefit youth and young adults ages 0–24;

b. Be recognized as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or operate under the sponsorship of an eligible fiscal sponsor;

c. Maintain an organizational workforce in which at least fifty-one percent (51%) of employees are Baltimore City residents;

d. Demonstrate a minimum of one year of organizational operations and experience providing youth-serving programs, services, or activities; and

e. Meet any additional eligibility requirements established for a specific funding opportunity.

Additional Eligibility Considerations

In addition to minimum eligibility requirements, BCYF may consider factors relevant to the organization's ability to successfully administer grant funds and achieve intended outcomes. Such considerations may include:

a. The organization's history, experience, and presence within the communities it seeks to serve;

b. Demonstrated credibility with and accountability to youth, families, and community stakeholders;

c. Organizational and operational capacity to implement proposed activities;

d. Alignment with BCYF's mission, strategic priorities, and the objectives of the funding opportunity;

e. Financial management practices and fiscal stewardship;

f. Compliance with applicable legal, financial, and administrative requirements; and

g. Any additional criteria identified within the Funding Opportunity Announcement.

Eligibility Determination

BCYF shall conduct an eligibility review as part of the preliminary application review process. During this review, BCYF verifies whether an applicant satisfies the minimum eligibility requirements and has submitted the required documentation necessary to proceed to the next stage of review.

Organizations that fail to satisfy eligibility requirements or submit required documentation may be deemed ineligible and removed from further consideration. BCYF may request clarifications,

corrections, or supplemental information when appropriate and consistent with the requirements of the funding opportunity.

Eligibility and Funding Decisions

Determination of eligibility shall not be interpreted as an endorsement of an organization's quality, competitiveness, program effectiveness, or likelihood of receiving funding. Eligible applications shall advance to the applicable review process, where they will be evaluated based on established review criteria, funding priorities, community impact, organizational capacity, available funding, and other factors identified in the Funding Opportunity Announcement.

Final funding decisions shall be made in accordance with BCYF's grantmaking policies, review procedures, and approval authorities.

Application Requirements

Purpose

The grant application serves as the primary mechanism through which BCYF evaluates an organization's eligibility, capacity, program design, community impact, and alignment with the goals of a funding opportunity. Application requirements are intended to provide BCYF with sufficient information to make informed funding decisions while balancing accountability, accessibility, and applicant experience.

Application requirements may vary based on the purpose, complexity, and objectives of a specific funding opportunity. BCYF seeks to ensure that application requirements are proportional to the size of the award, aligned with program goals, and responsive to the capacity of applicant organizations.

General Application Standards

At a minimum, applicants shall demonstrate that the proposed program, service, initiative, or project:

a. Are Active within Baltimore City and serves youth and young adults ages 0–24;

b. Is credible with and accountable to the youth, families, and communities it proposes to serve;

c. Includes meaningful youth engagement, youth leadership, youth participation, or youth-centered programming; and

d. Is designed to improve outcomes for youth and young adults through measurable activities, services, supports, opportunities, or interventions.

Applicants shall provide complete, accurate, and timely information in accordance with the requirements outlined in the applicable Funding Opportunity Announcement.

Organizational Information

Applicants shall provide organizational information sufficient to establish organizational identity, mission alignment, and community credibility. Required information may include:

a. Legal name, address, and contact information of the applicant organization;

b. Documentation of tax-exempt status or evidence of an eligible fiscal sponsorship arrangement;

c. Organizational mission, purpose, and primary activities;

d. A description of how the organization's work aligns with the purposes and priorities of the Baltimore Children & Youth Fund, including advancing racial equity, intergenerational leadership, community ownership, and collective decision-making;

e. A summary of the organization's experience serving youth and young adults; and

f. Information demonstrating credibility with and accountability to youth, families, community members, and the communities the organization intends to serve.

Programmatic Information

Applicants shall provide information describing the program, project, initiative, or activities for which funding is requested. Programmatic information may include:

a. A description of the proposed program, project, initiative, or activities;

b. Program purpose, goals, objectives, and intended outcomes;

c. Proposed implementation timeline and key milestones;

d. Performance measures, outcome indicators, or evaluation methods; and

e. Any additional information necessary to assess program quality, feasibility, alignment, and anticipated community impact.

Financial Information

Applicants shall provide information necessary to assess organizational financial health, capacity, and fiscal stewardship. Required information may include:

a. The organization's current operating budget;

b. The organization's most recent annual financial statements, as required by applicable funding thresholds;

c. The organization's most recent IRS Form 990, when applicable;

d. A current Maryland Certificate of Status demonstrating good standing; and

e. Any additional financial information required to evaluate fiscal capacity, financial management practices, or organizational sustainability.

Fiscal Sponsorship Documentation

Organizations applying through a fiscal sponsor shall provide documentation demonstrating the existence and appropriateness of the fiscal sponsorship relationship. Required documentation may include:

a. A signed fiscal sponsorship agreement or letter of commitment;

b. Documentation demonstrating the fiscal sponsor's tax-exempt status;

c. The fiscal sponsor's most recent audited or reviewed financial statements, when applicable;

d. The fiscal sponsor's most recent IRS Form 990; and

e. A current Maryland Certificate of Status demonstrating good standing.

Budget Information

Applicants shall submit a proposed budget that demonstrates how grant funds will be utilized to support the proposed activities and intended outcomes. Budget submissions may include:

a. A detailed grant budget;

b. A budget narrative and justification explaining proposed expenditures; and

c. Any additional budget information required by the funding opportunity.

Budget submissions shall be reasonable, aligned with proposed activities, and consistent with the allowable uses of grant funds.

Additional Documentation and Certifications

BCYF may require applicants to submit additional information, certifications, assurances, attachments, or supporting documentation necessary to evaluate eligibility, organizational capacity, compliance, risk, fiscal responsibility, or alignment with funding objectives.

Application requirements may be modified, expanded, or supplemented for individual funding opportunities provided that such requirements are clearly communicated in the applicable Funding Opportunity Announcement, application materials, or related guidance documents.

Application Design and User Experience

Purpose

BCYF seeks to design grant application processes that are clear, accessible, user-friendly, and responsive to the needs of applicants. Application design practices are intended to reduce unnecessary administrative burden, improve the applicant experience, and ensure that organizations can effectively communicate their work, community impact, and funding needs.

BCYF recognizes that application processes can create barriers to participation when they are overly complex, time-intensive, or difficult to navigate. Accordingly, BCYF strives to develop application materials and systems that promote equitable access while collecting the information necessary to make informed funding decisions and ensure responsible stewardship of grant resources.

Application Design Principles

BCYF shall seek to ensure that application requirements, processes, and materials are aligned with the purposes of the Fund, the goals of the funding opportunity, and the capacity of organizations seeking support.

Application design efforts may include:

a. Use of clear and plain-language instructions and guidance;

b. Streamlined application requirements appropriate to the size and complexity of the funding opportunity;

c. Consistent application structures and terminology across grant programs where feasible;

d. User-centered design practices that prioritize applicant understanding and ease of navigation;

e. Alignment between application requirements, review criteria, and funding objectives; and

f. Continuous assessment and refinement of application processes to improve accessibility and effectiveness.

Application Platforms and Technology

BCYF may utilize electronic grant management systems, online application platforms, and digital tools to support the application process. Application platforms shall be selected and configured to promote accessibility, efficiency, security, and ease of use.

BCYF shall provide applicants with instructions, guidance materials, and technical support resources necessary to successfully utilize designated application platforms and systems.

Applicant Feedback and Continuous Improvement

BCYF may solicit feedback from applicants, reviewers, grantees, staff, and community stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of application processes and identify opportunities for improvement.

Feedback may be gathered through surveys, interviews, technical assistance interactions, debrief sessions, user testing, or other engagement activities. Information gathered through these efforts may be used to improve application materials, technology platforms, support resources, communication strategies, and overall applicant experience.

Accessibility and Accommodations

BCYF is committed to promoting equitable access to funding opportunities and shall strive to ensure that application materials, technology platforms, and related resources are accessible to organizations with varying levels of grantmaking experience, organizational capacity, and technical expertise.

When appropriate, BCYF may provide accommodations, alternative formats, technical assistance, or other reasonable supports to help applicants successfully participate in the application process.

Through intentional application design and continuous improvement, BCYF seeks to create a grantmaking experience that is transparent, inclusive, efficient, and responsive to the needs of Baltimore's youth-serving organizations.

Application Submission and Review Preparation

Purpose

BCYF establishes application submission procedures to ensure that applications are received, reviewed, and processed in a fair, consistent, and transparent manner. Submission requirements are designed to provide applicants with clear expectations while supporting an efficient review process and responsible stewardship of grant resources.

Following submission, BCYF conducts preliminary reviews to verify eligibility, completeness, and compliance with application requirements before applications advance to the formal evaluation and funding recommendation process.

Application Submission

Applicants shall submit completed applications in accordance with the requirements, instructions, deadlines, and procedures established for the applicable funding opportunity.

Submission requirements may include:

a. Completion of all required application sections;

b. Submission of required attachments, certifications, and supporting documentation;

c. Compliance with established formatting, budget, and technical requirements;

d. Submission through designated application platforms or systems; and

e. Adherence to published deadlines and submission timelines.

BCYF may establish additional submission requirements based on the objectives, complexity, or administrative needs of a specific funding opportunity.

Applicant Responsibilities

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that all submitted information is complete, accurate, and current at the time of submission.

Applicants shall:

a. Review all funding materials, instructions, and requirements prior to submission;

b. Submit all required documentation and attachments;

c. Respond to requests for clarification or supplemental information, when applicable;

d. Verify the accuracy of information provided within the application; and

e. Comply with all requirements established for the funding opportunity.

Failure to submit required information or comply with submission requirements may result in delays, requests for correction, or removal from further consideration.

Preliminary Review

Following submission, BCYF shall conduct a preliminary review of applications to verify eligibility, completeness, and compliance with submission requirements.

The preliminary review may include:

a. Verification of organizational eligibility;

b. Review of required documentation and attachments;

c. Confirmation of application completeness;

d. Review of fiscal sponsorship documentation, when applicable;

e. Verification of compliance with submission requirements; and

f. Identification of any technical, administrative, or eligibility concerns.

BCYF may request clarification, corrections, or additional information when appropriate and consistent with the requirements of the funding opportunity.

Advancement to Review

Applications that successfully complete the preliminary review process shall advance to the applicable review and evaluation process. Applications that fail to satisfy eligibility requirements, submission requirements, or completeness standards may be deemed ineligible or removed from further consideration.

Advancement to formal review does not guarantee funding and shall not be interpreted as an endorsement of an application's competitiveness or merit.

Applications that advance shall be evaluated according to the review criteria, funding priorities, and decision-making processes established for the funding opportunity and described in the applicable Funding Opportunity Announcement.

3.Grant Review and Selection

BCYF utilizes a structured grant review and selection process to ensure that funding decisions are fair, transparent, equitable, and aligned with the purposes of the Baltimore Children & Youth Fund. The review process is designed to evaluate applications consistently, incorporate

community expertise and lived experience, promote responsible stewardship of grant resources, and ensure that investments support positive outcomes for Baltimore's children, youth, and families.

BCYF recognizes that effective grantmaking requires balancing community voice, programmatic quality, organizational capacity, fiscal responsibility, and strategic priorities. Accordingly, grant applications may be reviewed through community-led review processes, internal staff review processes, or a combination of both, depending on the goals, scope, complexity, and requirements of the funding opportunity.

The grant review and selection process is intended to:

a. Ensure applications are evaluated using established and transparent criteria;

b. Incorporate diverse perspectives, community knowledge, and subject-matter expertise into funding decisions;

c. Assess organizational capacity, fiscal stewardship, program quality, and anticipated community impact;

d. Advance equity-centered grantmaking practices and community accountability;

e. Support responsible management of public and philanthropic resources; and

f. Develop funding recommendations that align with BCYF's mission, strategic priorities, and the objectives of each funding opportunity.

All grant review activities shall be conducted in accordance with applicable law, BCYF policies, funding opportunity requirements, conflict-of-interest standards, and principles of fairness, consistency, and accountability.

Review Process Overview

BCYF utilizes a multi-stage review process designed to ensure that grant applications are evaluated consistently, transparently, and in alignment with the goals of each funding opportunity. The review process combines administrative review, due diligence, programmatic evaluation, community input, and organizational assessment to support informed funding recommendations and responsible stewardship of grant resources.

The specific review structure utilized for a funding opportunity may vary based on the nature of the grant program, funding amount, strategic objectives, and applicable legal or policy

requirements. Depending on the funding opportunity, applications may be reviewed through an Internal Grant Review, Community Grant Review Panel, or Hybrid Review Model.

The grant review and selection process generally includes the following stages:

Preliminary Application Review, Due Diligence

Upon receipt of an application, BCYF conducts an initial review to verify organizational eligibility, application completeness, compliance with submission requirements, and responsiveness to the funding opportunity. Applications that fail to satisfy minimum requirements may be removed from further consideration.

BCYF conducts additional organizational, financial, compliance, and risk assessments to evaluate an applicant's capacity to responsibly administer grant funds and successfully implement proposed activities.

Application Evaluation

Applications that successfully complete preliminary review and due diligence are evaluated using the review criteria, scoring methodologies, and funding priorities established for the funding opportunity. Evaluation may include assessment of organizational capacity, community impact, youth engagement, program quality, equity considerations, and alignment with strategic objectives.

Review Panel Deliberation

Reviewers may participate in panel discussions, consensus-building activities, and comparative review processes to ensure applications are considered thoughtfully and consistently. Review activities may include both quantitative scoring and qualitative assessment.

Funding Recommendation Development

Following evaluation, reviewers and BCYF staff develop funding recommendations based on application scores, review findings, funding priorities, available resources, and other factors relevant to the funding opportunity.

Slate Review and Approval

Funding recommendations are compiled into a proposed funding slate and transmitted to the appropriate approval authority for review and action. Staff may provide supplemental fiscal, compliance, operational, or risk analyses to support final decision-making.

Award Determination and Notification

Following final approval, BCYF communicates funding decisions to applicants and initiates award administration, onboarding, and grant implementation activities for selected organizations.

Additional procedures governing each stage of the review process are described in the sections that follow.

Preliminary Application Review, Due Diligence

Purpose

Following application submission, BCYF shall conduct an Application Screening and Due Diligence Review to verify eligibility, assess organizational readiness, validate application information, and identify any financial, operational, compliance, or risk considerations relevant to funding decisions. This review helps ensure that applications are complete, responsive, and eligible for consideration before advancing to formal evaluation and scoring.

The Application Screening and Due Diligence Review is conducted by BCYF staff and/or its designated fiscal agent and focuses on eligibility, organizational capacity, financial stewardship, compliance, and implementation readiness. This review is distinct from the formal application evaluation process and does not assess the comparative competitiveness of an application.

Eligibility and Application Screening

BCYF shall verify that the applicant satisfies the eligibility requirements established for the funding opportunity and has submitted all required application materials.

The review may include verification of:

a. Organizational eligibility requirements;

b. Tax-exempt status or fiscal sponsorship eligibility;

c. Geographic and population eligibility requirements;

d. Organizational experience and qualifications;

e. Completion of required application sections;

f. Submission of required attachments and supporting documentation;

g. Compliance with application instructions and submission requirements; and

h. Any additional requirements established for the funding opportunity.

Applications that fail to satisfy eligibility requirements or submission standards may be removed from further consideration.

Organizational Capacity Review

BCYF may assess the applicant organization's ability to successfully implement the proposed activities and responsibly administer grant funds.

Areas of review may include:

a. Organizational mission, vision, and values;

b. Organizational history and experience providing youth programming;

c. Leadership, staffing, and governance structures;

d. Organizational systems, policies, and operational capacity;

e. Community relationships, credibility, and accountability; and

f. Capacity to implement the proposed scope of work and achieve intended outcomes.

Programmatic Review

BCYF may review the proposed program, project, or initiative to assess alignment, feasibility, and anticipated impact.

Areas of review may include:

a. Program design and implementation approach;

b. Alignment with BCYF funding priorities and outcome areas;

c. Youth populations and communities to be served;

d. Program activities, outputs, and service delivery model;

e. Scope of work, implementation timeline, and milestones;

f. Expected participant outcomes and growth; and

g. Proposed outcome measures and evaluation methods.

Financial Review

BCYF may review organizational and programmatic financial information to assess fiscal stewardship and financial readiness.

Financial review activities may include:

a. Organizational operating budgets;

b. Grant budgets and budget narratives;

c. Financial statements, financial reviews, or audits, as applicable;

d. Revenue sources and financial sustainability;

e. Budget alignment with proposed activities and outcomes;

f. Fiscal sponsorship documentation and agreements; and

g. Organizational financial management capacity and controls.

Compliance and Risk Review

BCYF may assess compliance history and organizational risk factors that could affect grant implementation or stewardship of grant resources.

Review activities may include:

a. Verification of Maryland good standing status;

b. Verification of IRS tax-exempt status;

c. Prior BCYF compliance, reporting, and performance history, when applicable;

d. Outstanding audit findings, corrective actions, or reporting obligations;

e. Insurance, certifications, or required organizational documentation;

f. Legal, financial, operational, or reputational risk factors; and

g. Other matters relevant to organizational readiness and accountability.

Clarifications and Additional Information

BCYF may request clarifications, corrections, supplemental documentation, or additional information necessary to complete the review process. Requests for clarification shall not be used to materially alter the substance of an application but may be used to resolve administrative, technical, eligibility, or documentation issues.

Advancement to Formal Review

Applications that successfully complete the Application Screening and Due Diligence Review shall advance to the appropriate grant review process. Depending on the funding opportunity, applications may proceed to an Internal Grant Review, Community Grant Review Panel, Hybrid Review Model, or other review structure established by BCYF.

Completion of the Application Screening and Due Diligence Review does not constitute a funding recommendation or guarantee funding. Applications advancing to formal review shall be evaluated according to the scoring criteria, review standards, and funding priorities established for the funding opportunity.

Grant Review Models

Purpose

BCYF utilizes different grant review models to ensure that funding decisions are informed by appropriate expertise, community voice, organizational priorities, and the unique requirements of each funding opportunity. The review model selected for a funding opportunity shall be determined by BCYF based on factors such as funding purpose, award size, program complexity, strategic objectives, legal requirements, and operational considerations.

Depending on the funding opportunity, BCYF may utilize an Internal Grant Review, Community Grant Review Panel, Hybrid Review Model, or other review structure deemed appropriate to support fair, transparent, and informed funding decisions.

Internal Grant Review

An Internal Grant Review is conducted by BCYF staff and designated subject matter experts and is intended to leverage organizational expertise, operational knowledge, compliance considerations, and strategic priorities when evaluating applications.

Internal Grant Review may be utilized for:

a. Strategic investments and special initiatives;

b. Capacity-building or technical assistance grants;

c. Time-sensitive funding opportunities;

d. Discretionary or invitation-only funding opportunities;

e. Continuation funding opportunities; and

f. Other grant programs designated by BCYF.

Internal reviewers may assess organizational capacity, program design, compliance considerations, fiscal stewardship, risk factors, strategic alignment, and anticipated community impact.

Community Grant Review Panel

A Community Grant Review Panel incorporates community expertise, lived experience, youth voice, and stakeholder perspectives into the grantmaking process. Community reviewers provide independent evaluation and recommendations based on the published review criteria and funding priorities.

Community Grant Review Panels may be utilized for:

a. Competitive grantmaking opportunities;

b. Community-based funding programs;

c. Youth-serving program investments;

d. Multi-year grant opportunities; and

e. Other funding opportunities where community perspective is a critical component of decision-making.

Community reviewers evaluate applications using established scoring criteria and provide feedback, observations, and funding recommendations for consideration by BCYF.

Hybrid Review Model

A Hybrid Review Model combines Community Grant Review Panel assessments with Internal Grant Review processes. This model is intended to balance community voice, technical expertise, organizational knowledge, compliance considerations, and strategic priorities.

Under a Hybrid Review Model, community reviewers and BCYF staff may each conduct distinct components of the review process, including application scoring, panel discussions, due diligence review, fiscal review, risk assessment, and recommendation development.

Hybrid Review Models may be utilized when:

a. Funding opportunities require both community expertise and technical review;

b. Additional due diligence or compliance review is necessary;

c. Funding decisions involve significant financial investments;

d. Specialized subject matter expertise is required; or

e. BCYF determines that multiple review perspectives will strengthen decision-making.

Selection of Review Model

The review model utilized for a funding opportunity shall be documented within the applicable Grant Strategy Guide, Funding Opportunity Announcement, and related grantmaking materials. BCYF reserves the right to modify review structures as necessary to support effective grantmaking, compliance requirements, operational needs, or strategic objectives.

Regardless of the review model utilized, all applications shall be evaluated using established review criteria, documented review procedures, and applicable conflict-of-interest and confidentiality requirements.

Application Evaluation and Scoring

BCYF evaluates applications using established review criteria designed to assess program quality, organizational readiness, community impact, fiscal stewardship, and alignment with the goals of the funding opportunity. Evaluation criteria are intended to provide a consistent framework for application review while ensuring that funding recommendations are informed by community priorities, organizational capacity, and anticipated outcomes for children, youth, and families.

To promote transparency and equitable access to funding opportunities, each grant application shall be developed and published with a corresponding evaluation rubric that clearly communicates how applications will be assessed during the review process. Evaluation rubrics provide applicants, reviewers, and stakeholders with a shared understanding of funding priorities, scoring criteria, and expectations for successful applications. Evaluation criteria, scoring methodologies, and weighting structures may vary by funding opportunity and shall be communicated through the Funding Opportunity Announcement, application materials, evaluation rubric, reviewer guidance, and related grantmaking resources.

Evaluation Framework

Applications shall be evaluated using criteria established for the funding opportunity. Evaluation criteria may assess the extent to which an applicant demonstrates:

a. Alignment with BCYF funding priorities and intended outcomes;

b. A clear and compelling rationale for the proposed work;

c. Organizational capacity and readiness to implement proposed activities;

d. Meaningful impact for youth, families, and communities;

e. Feasibility of the proposed program design, timeline, and activities;

f. Appropriate methods for measuring success and outcomes;

g. Alignment between organizational mission, values, and proposed activities; and

h. Responsible use and stewardship of grant resources.

Application Evaluation Areas

Depending on the funding opportunity, applications may be evaluated across one or more of the following areas:

Justification and Community Impact

Reviewers may assess the extent to which the proposed work advances the goals, priorities, and intended outcomes of the funding opportunity. Consideration may be given to community need, anticipated impact, relevance of the proposed activities, and the applicant's ability to articulate how the work will benefit youth and young adults.

Success Measures and Outcomes

Reviewers may assess the applicant's approach to measuring success, including the quality of proposed outcome measures, performance indicators, evaluation methods, and plans for tracking participant growth and program outcomes.

Program Feasibility

Reviewers may assess whether the proposed activities, participant populations, implementation approach, timeline, staffing, and scope of work are realistic, achievable, and aligned with the intended outcomes of the project.

Organizational Alignment

Reviewers may assess the degree to which the proposed work aligns with the organization's mission, vision, values, experience, and existing programming. Consideration may also be given to the organization's history, community relationships, and demonstrated commitment to the populations being served.

Budget and Resource Alignment

Reviewers may assess whether the proposed budget and budget narrative clearly support the proposed activities, outcomes, and implementation plan. Budget review may include consideration of reasonableness, completeness, allowability of expenses, and alignment with grant objectives.

Scoring Methodology

BCYF shall develop and publish a scoring rubric for each funding opportunity. The rubric shall identify the evaluation criteria, scoring methodology, performance standards, and any weighting applied during the review process. Reviewers shall utilize the published rubric when evaluating applications, and applicants shall have access to the rubric prior to submission to support transparency and informed participation in the grantmaking process.

BCYF may utilize numerical scoring systems, rating scales, weighted criteria, rubrics, ranking methodologies, narrative assessments, or a combination thereof to evaluate applications. Reviewers shall be provided with scoring guidance and evaluation tools designed to promote consistency, fairness, and transparency throughout the review process.

The specific scoring methodology utilized for a funding opportunity shall be documented in the applicable Funding Opportunity Announcement, application materials, evaluation rubric, reviewer materials, and grantmaking guidance.

Reviewer Comments and Recommendations

In addition to numerical scores, reviewers may provide written comments, observations, strengths, concerns, and funding recommendations. Qualitative feedback may be considered alongside application scores when developing funding recommendations and proposed funding slates.

Reviewer comments are intended to provide context for scoring decisions and support informed decision-making throughout the review process.

Use of Evaluation Results

Application scores and reviewer feedback shall inform funding recommendations but shall not, by themselves, determine final funding decisions. BCYF may consider additional factors including due diligence findings, portfolio balance, geographic distribution, equity considerations, available funding, organizational risk, strategic priorities, and other factors relevant to the funding opportunity.

Evaluation results shall be used as one component of the broader grantmaking decision-making process and shall support the development of funding recommendations for approval by the appropriate decision-making authority.

Community Grant Review Panels

Purpose

Community Grant Review Panels provide community-informed perspectives, lived experience, subject-matter expertise, and youth-centered insight to the grantmaking process. Consistent with BCYF's commitment to community ownership, collective decision-making, and equitable grantmaking, Community Grant Review Panels play a critical role in evaluating applications and informing funding recommendations.

Community reviewers contribute perspectives that help assess the quality, relevance, responsiveness, and potential impact of proposed programs and initiatives within the communities they are intended to serve.

Use of Community Grant Review Panels

BCYF may convene a Community Grant Review Panel for funding opportunities that:

a. Are neighborhood-based or community-centered;

b. Are broad, competitive, or open to new applicants;

c. Require field-specific expertise or lived experience;

d. Support youth-serving programs and services;

e. Include multi-year investments; or

f. Would benefit from community-informed evaluation and recommendations.

The determination to utilize a Community Grant Review Panel shall be documented within the applicable Grant Strategy Guide and Funding Opportunity Announcement.

Responsibilities of Community Grant Review Panels

Community Grant Review Panels are responsible for reviewing assigned applications and evaluating them in accordance with the published evaluation rubric, funding priorities, and review procedures established for the funding opportunity.

Panel responsibilities may include:

a. Reviewing assigned application materials and supporting documentation;

b. Evaluating applications using the published scoring rubric;

c. Participating in panel discussions and deliberations;

d. Providing written comments and observations;

e. Identifying strengths, opportunities, and concerns associated with applications; and

f. Contributing to funding recommendations for consideration by BCYF.

Community Grant Review Panels serve in an advisory capacity. Reviewer scores, comments, rankings, and recommendations inform funding decisions but do not constitute final award determinations.

Community-Based Evaluation Considerations

In addition to the published scoring criteria, Community Grant Review Panels may consider the extent to which an applicant:

a. Demonstrates credibility with and accountability to youth, families, and the communities it seeks to serve;

b. Incorporates youth voice, youth leadership, and youth-centered practices;

c. Advances positive outcomes for children, youth, and young adults;

d. Responds to identified community needs, priorities, and opportunities;

e. Demonstrates alignment with BCYF's values of racial equity, intergenerational leadership, community ownership, and collective decision-making; and

f. Reflects an authentic understanding of the communities impacted by the proposed work.

These considerations are intended to complement, not replace, the published evaluation criteria and scoring rubric.

Advisory Nature of Community Review

Community Grant Review Panels provide recommendations and community-informed assessments for consideration by BCYF staff, leadership, and approving authorities. Final funding decisions remain subject to additional review processes, due diligence findings, organizational considerations, available funding, and applicable approval authorities.

Community reviewer participation is intended to strengthen transparency, accountability, community voice, and trust in BCYF's grantmaking process while ensuring that funding decisions are informed by those most closely connected to Baltimore's youth and communities.

Community Reviewer Eligibility and Selection

Purpose

BCYF seeks to recruit and engage Community Grant Review Panel members who bring diverse perspectives, lived experience, professional expertise, and community knowledge to the grantmaking process. Community reviewers play an important role in ensuring that funding recommendations are informed by the experiences, needs, and aspirations of Baltimore's children, youth, families, and communities.

BCYF is committed to maintaining review panels that are qualified, representative, and reflective of the diversity of Baltimore City.

Community Reviewer Eligibility

Individuals serving on Community Grant Review Panels shall:

a. Maintain residency within Baltimore City;

b. Demonstrate a commitment to improving opportunities and outcomes for Baltimore's children, youth, and young adults;

c. Possess knowledge, experience, or expertise relevant to youth development, education, workforce development, community engagement, racial equity, nonprofit management, public health, arts and culture, or other areas related to the funding opportunity;

d. Demonstrate the ability to conduct fair, objective, and independent review of grant applications;

e. Participate in all required reviewer orientation, training, and calibration activities;

f. Comply with all confidentiality, ethics, and conflict-of-interest requirements established by BCYF; and

g. Meet any additional qualifications established for a specific funding opportunity.

Panel Composition

BCYF shall seek to assemble review panels that collectively reflect the diversity of Baltimore City and the communities served through BCYF investments.

In establishing review panels, BCYF may consider:

a. Geographic representation across Baltimore City neighborhoods and regions;

b. Racial, ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity;

c. Youth and young adult representation;

d. Lived experience relevant to the funding opportunity;

e. Professional and subject-matter expertise;

f. Community leadership and engagement experience; and

g. Representation from multiple sectors and stakeholder groups.

Community Grant Review Panels may include youth leaders, community residents, educators, nonprofit practitioners, parents and caregivers, subject-matter experts, former grantees, and other individuals possessing relevant experience or expertise.

Recruitment and Outreach

BCYF shall establish procedures for recruiting Community Grant Review Panel members through methods designed to promote broad participation and diverse representation.

Recruitment methods may include:

a. Public application processes;

b. Community nominations;

c. Direct outreach;

d. Professional and community networks;

e. Partnerships with community-based organizations; and

f. Other outreach strategies determined appropriate by BCYF.

Information regarding reviewer opportunities, eligibility requirements, qualifications, and expectations shall be made publicly available.

Reviewer Selection and Appointment

BCYF shall establish and administer a reviewer selection process designed to identify qualified individuals whose experiences, expertise, and perspectives align with the needs of the funding opportunity.

In selecting reviewers, BCYF may consider:

a. Eligibility requirements;

b. Relevant professional expertise;

c. Lived experience and community knowledge;

d. Alignment with the purpose of the funding opportunity;

e. Diversity and representation goals;

f. Prior reviewer experience; and

g. The overall composition and balance of the review panel.

BCYF reserves the right to appoint reviewers in a manner that supports effective panel composition, operational needs, and equitable representation.

Reviewer Service and Removal

Community reviewers serve at the discretion of BCYF and are expected to uphold all reviewer requirements, policies, and standards of conduct.

BCYF may remove a reviewer from participation for reasons including, but not limited to:

a. Failure to complete required training;

b. Failure to disclose a conflict of interest;

c. Violation of confidentiality requirements;

d. Failure to participate in required review activities;

e. Misconduct or unethical behavior; or

f. Any circumstance that may compromise the integrity, fairness, or effectiveness of the review process.

Removal decisions shall be made by BCYF and may occur at any point during the reviewer lifecycle.

Reviewer Orientation, Training, and Calibration

Purpose

BCYF is committed to ensuring that all reviewers possess the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to conduct fair, consistent, objective, and informed evaluations of grant applications. Reviewer orientation, training, and calibration activities are intended to promote transparency, strengthen reviewer preparedness, reduce bias, and support consistent application of evaluation criteria and scoring methodologies.

All individuals participating in Community Grant Review Panels shall successfully complete required orientation and training activities prior to accessing application materials or participating in review activities.

Reviewer Orientation

BCYF shall provide an orientation for all reviewers that introduces the funding opportunity, review process, reviewer responsibilities, and expectations for participation.

Reviewer orientation may include:

a. An overview of BCYF's mission, values, strategic priorities, and grantmaking approach;

b. The purpose, goals, and intended outcomes of the funding opportunity;

c. The structure and timeline of the review process;

d. Reviewer roles, responsibilities, and expectations;

e. Funding priorities and applicant eligibility requirements; and

f. Resources available to support reviewer participation.

Reviewer Training

BCYF shall provide training designed to prepare reviewers to effectively evaluate applications and participate in panel deliberations.

Training topics may include:

a. Application review procedures and workflows;

b. Evaluation criteria and scoring methodologies;

c. Use of scoring rubrics and reviewer tools;

d. Documentation of scores, comments, and recommendations;

e. Equity-centered and bias-aware review practices;

f. Confidentiality requirements;

g. Conflict-of-interest standards and disclosure procedures;

h. Ethical conduct and reviewer expectations;

i. Public accountability and stewardship of grant resources; and

j. Any additional programmatic, technical, legal, or operational considerations relevant to the funding opportunity.

Reviewer Calibration

To promote consistency and fairness across reviewers and review panels, BCYF may conduct calibration activities prior to or during the review process.

Calibration activities may include:

a. Review of sample applications;

b. Discussion of scoring standards and evaluation expectations;

c. Interpretation of scoring rubric criteria;

d. Alignment of reviewer understanding regarding funding priorities and evaluation standards;

e. Facilitated discussions regarding scoring differences; and

f. Other activities designed to improve scoring consistency and reliability.

Calibration activities are intended to establish a shared understanding of evaluation criteria and minimize variation in scoring practices across reviewers.

Training Completion Requirements

Completion of all required orientation, training, and calibration activities shall be a condition of participation in the review process.

BCYF may require reviewers to:

a. Attend live training sessions;

b. Complete online learning modules;

c. Participate in calibration exercises;

d. Acknowledge reviewer policies and procedures; and

e. Complete any required certifications, attestations, or agreements.

Reviewers who fail to complete required training activities may be deemed ineligible to participate in the review process.

Training Documentation

BCYF shall maintain records demonstrating reviewer participation in required orientation, training, and calibration activities in accordance with applicable records retention requirements and organizational policies.

Training records may be used to support reviewer management, quality assurance, continuous improvement, and compliance with grantmaking requirements.

Reviewer Confidentiality, Ethics, and Conflict of Interest

Purpose

BCYF is committed to maintaining a grant review process that is fair, impartial, transparent, and free from undue influence. Reviewers are entrusted with access to confidential information and play an important role in shaping funding recommendations. Accordingly, all reviewers are expected to uphold the highest standards of ethics, professionalism, integrity, and accountability throughout the review process.

The requirements outlined in this section are intended to protect the integrity of the grantmaking process, safeguard applicant information, and ensure that funding recommendations are based solely on the merits of each application and the established evaluation criteria.

Reviewer Ethics and Conduct

Reviewers shall conduct themselves in a professional, respectful, and ethical manner throughout all review activities.

Reviewers are expected to:

a. Evaluate applications fairly, objectively, and independently;

b. Apply evaluation criteria and scoring standards consistently;

c. Exercise sound judgment and professionalism during review activities and panel discussions;

d. Respect differing perspectives and contribute constructively to deliberations;

e. Avoid actual, perceived, or potential bias in the review process; and

f. Act in a manner that preserves public confidence in the integrity of BCYF's grantmaking activities.

Confidentiality Requirements

All grant applications, supporting materials, reviewer notes, scores, comments, deliberations, recommendations, and related review materials shall be treated as confidential unless disclosure is otherwise required by law.

Reviewers shall not:

a. Share application materials with unauthorized individuals;

b. Discuss application information outside of approved review activities;

c. Use information obtained through the review process for personal, professional, organizational, or financial benefit; or

d. Retain, reproduce, distribute, or disclose confidential materials following completion of the review process except as authorized by BCYF.

Confidentiality obligations shall survive the completion of reviewer service and continue after the conclusion of the grant review process.

Conflict of Interest

Reviewers shall disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest that could compromise, or reasonably appear to compromise, their ability to provide an impartial review of an application.

Conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:

a. Employment, consulting, or contractual relationships with an applicant organization;

b. Service as a board member, officer, volunteer, advisor, or representative of an applicant organization;

c. Financial interests that could be affected by a funding decision;

d. Familial, personal, or close professional relationships with individuals affiliated with an applicant organization; or

e. Any other circumstance that may create the appearance of bias or preferential treatment.

Conflict Disclosure and Recusal

Reviewers shall disclose conflicts of interest in accordance with BCYF procedures prior to receiving application assignments and throughout the review process if new conflicts arise.

A reviewer with a conflict of interest shall:

a. Refrain from reviewing the affected application;

b. Abstain from scoring, discussing, ranking, or recommending the affected application;

c. Leave panel discussions involving the affected application when directed by BCYF; and

d. Comply with any additional conflict management procedures established by BCYF.

BCYF shall determine whether a disclosed conflict requires recusal and shall document conflict determinations in accordance with organizational procedures.

Reviewer Agreements and Acknowledgements

BCYF may require reviewers to execute confidentiality agreements, conflict-of-interest disclosures, ethics acknowledgements, or other reviewer certifications as a condition of participation.

Reviewers may also be required to acknowledge completion of orientation, training, and calibration requirements before participating in review activities.

Violations and Corrective Action

Failure to comply with confidentiality requirements, conflict-of-interest standards, ethical expectations, or reviewer policies may result in corrective action, including removal from the review process, disqualification from future reviewer service, invalidation of reviewer scores or recommendations, and any other action deemed necessary to protect the integrity of the grantmaking process.

BCYF reserves the right to investigate potential violations and take appropriate action to ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability throughout the review process.

Reviewer Records

BCYF shall maintain records related to reviewer participation, training completion, confidentiality acknowledgements, conflict-of-interest disclosures, recusal determinations, and other reviewer management activities in accordance with applicable record retention requirements and organizational policies.

Internal Grant Review

Purpose

Internal Grant Review provides BCYF with the opportunity to evaluate applications through the lens of organizational strategy, fiscal stewardship, operational feasibility, compliance, and programmatic alignment. Internal review leverages the expertise of BCYF staff and subject matter experts to assess applications and develop funding recommendations that support the responsible administration of grant resources and advancement of BCYF's mission.

Internal Grant Review may be conducted independently or as part of a Hybrid Review Model, depending on the nature and requirements of the funding opportunity.

Use of Internal Grant Review

BCYF may utilize Internal Grant Review for funding opportunities that:

a. Are time-sensitive and require expedited review and recommendations;

b. Support strategic initiatives or organizational priorities;

c. Are invitation-only, discretionary, or targeted funding opportunities;

d. Involve technical assistance, capacity-building, or specialized investments;

e. Require significant fiscal, operational, or compliance analysis; or

f. Are otherwise designated by BCYF for staff review.

The review model utilized for each funding opportunity shall be documented within the applicable Grant Strategy Guide and Funding Opportunity Announcement.

Review Team Composition

Internal Grant Reviews may include staff representing grantmaking, compliance, finance, operations, capacity building, data and evaluation, and other functional areas relevant to the funding opportunity.

BCYF may establish review teams, working groups, or cross-functional review panels as necessary to ensure appropriate expertise is incorporated into the review process.

Areas of Review

Internal reviewers may evaluate applications using the published evaluation rubric and may consider information obtained through the Application Screening and Due Diligence Review process.

Areas of review may include:

a. Alignment with the goals and priorities of the funding opportunity;

b. Program design, implementation approach, and anticipated outcomes;

c. Organizational capacity and readiness;

d. Fiscal stewardship and budget alignment;

e. Compliance history and organizational risk factors;

f. Operational feasibility and implementation considerations;

g. Alignment with BCYF strategic priorities and investment goals; and

h. Other factors relevant to the funding opportunity.

Review Responsibilities

Internal reviewers may be responsible for:

a. Reviewing and scoring applications;

b. Conducting fiscal, compliance, operational, and risk analyses;

c. Participating in review discussions and recommendation meetings;

d. Documenting observations, concerns, and recommendations;

e. Identifying conditions, technical assistance needs, or monitoring requirements; and

f. Contributing to the development of funding recommendations and proposed funding slates.

Funding Recommendations

Upon completion of the review process, internal reviewers may develop funding recommendations based on application evaluations, due diligence findings, funding priorities, available resources, and other factors relevant to the funding opportunity.

Internal review recommendations are advisory in nature and shall be transmitted through BCYF's established approval process. Final funding decisions remain subject to the authority of the appropriate approving body and do not occur until all required approvals have been obtained.

Hybrid Review Model

Purpose

BCYF may utilize a Hybrid Review Model when a funding opportunity would benefit from both community-informed evaluation and internal organizational review. The Hybrid Review Model is intended to balance community voice, lived experience, subject-matter expertise, fiscal stewardship, compliance oversight, and strategic decision-making within a single review process.

By incorporating multiple perspectives, the Hybrid Review Model strengthens transparency, accountability, and the quality of funding recommendations while ensuring that grantmaking decisions reflect both community priorities and responsible stewardship of grant resources.

Use of the Hybrid Review Model

BCYF may utilize a Hybrid Review Model for funding opportunities that:

a. Require both community expertise and technical review;

b. Involve significant financial investments or multi-year commitments;

c. Require enhanced fiscal, compliance, operational, or risk assessment;

d. Support strategic initiatives with broad community impact;

e. Include complex programmatic, organizational, or implementation considerations; or

f. Would benefit from multiple perspectives to inform funding recommendations.

The determination to utilize a Hybrid Review Model shall be documented within the applicable Grant Strategy Guide and Funding Opportunity Announcement.

Roles and Responsibilities

Under a Hybrid Review Model, Community Grant Review Panels and Internal Grant Review Teams may perform distinct but complementary review functions.

Community reviewers may be responsible for:

a. Evaluating program quality, community relevance, and anticipated impact;

b. Assessing alignment with community priorities and youth needs;

c. Evaluating youth engagement, community accountability, and lived experience considerations;

d. Providing qualitative feedback and funding recommendations; and

e. Scoring applications using the published evaluation rubric.

Internal reviewers may be responsible for:

a. Conducting organizational, financial, compliance, and operational assessments;

b. Reviewing budgets, fiscal capacity, and stewardship considerations;

c. Assessing organizational readiness, implementation feasibility, and risk factors;

d. Evaluating alignment with BCYF strategic priorities and funding objectives; and

e. Providing supplemental analysis and recommendations to inform funding decisions.

Evaluation and Recommendation Process

The specific structure of a Hybrid Review Model may vary by funding opportunity. BCYF may determine whether community reviewers, internal reviewers, or both participate in scoring activities, recommendation discussions, or funding deliberations.

Hybrid review processes may include:

a. Independent scoring by community reviewers and staff reviewers;

b. Separate review and recommendation processes;

c. Joint review discussions or deliberations;

d. Weighted scoring methodologies;

e. Supplemental due diligence reviews; and

f. Integrated recommendation development processes.

Any scoring methodology, weighting structure, or recommendation framework utilized within a Hybrid Review Model shall be documented in the applicable funding materials and reviewer guidance.

Funding Recommendations

Funding recommendations developed through a Hybrid Review Model shall consider community reviewer assessments, internal reviewer analyses, due diligence findings, funding priorities, available resources, and other factors relevant to the funding opportunity.

The Hybrid Review Model is intended to ensure that funding recommendations are informed by both community expertise and organizational stewardship considerations. Recommendations generated through the Hybrid Review Model are advisory and shall be transmitted through BCYF's established approval process for consideration by the appropriate approving authority.

Flexibility of Review Structure

BCYF reserves the right to adapt the structure, composition, and procedures of the Hybrid Review Model to meet the needs of a particular funding opportunity, provided that review expectations, evaluation criteria, and decision-making processes are documented and communicated to applicants and reviewers as appropriate.

Regardless of the review structure utilized, all participants shall comply with applicable reviewer training, confidentiality, ethics, and conflict-of-interest requirements.

Funding Slate Development and Recommendations

Purpose

The Funding Slate Development and Recommendation process is the final stage of application review and serves as the mechanism through which review findings, application evaluations, due diligence results, and funding priorities are translated into proposed funding recommendations. The purpose of this process is to ensure that funding recommendations are informed, equitable, transparent, and aligned with the goals of the funding opportunity and the broader mission of BCYF.

Funding slates provide a structured summary of review outcomes and serve as the basis for approval and award decisions by the appropriate decision-making authority.

Development of Funding Recommendations

Following completion of the applicable review process, BCYF shall develop funding recommendations based on application evaluations, reviewer assessments, due diligence findings, funding priorities, available resources, and other factors relevant to the funding opportunity.

Funding recommendations may consider:

a. Application scores and reviewer feedback;

b. Programmatic quality and anticipated impact;

c. Organizational capacity and readiness;

d. Financial stewardship and fiscal capacity;

e. Compliance history and organizational risk factors;

f. Alignment with funding priorities and intended outcomes;

g. Geographic distribution of investments;

h. Equity considerations and community impact; and

i. Available funding and portfolio considerations.

Funding recommendations may result in full funding, partial funding, conditional funding, placement on a waitlist, or non-selection.

Funding Slate Development

Funding recommendations shall be documented within a proposed funding slate prepared by BCYF staff.

At a minimum, the funding slate shall include:

a. The name of each applicant organization;

b. The final score, score summary, or evaluation outcome assigned to each application, as applicable;

c. The recommended funding amount, if any;

d. Funding conditions, contingencies, or special requirements, when applicable; and

e. Any additional observations, findings, or considerations relevant to the funding opportunity.

BCYF may include supplemental analysis, summaries, or supporting documentation as necessary to inform decision-making.

Supplemental Staff Analysis

Where recommendations are informed by Community Grant Review Panels or Hybrid Review Models, BCYF staff may provide supplemental information to support funding decisions and responsible stewardship of grant resources.

Supplemental analysis may include:

a. Financial and budget reviews;

b. Compliance and monitoring considerations;

c. Organizational risk assessments;

d. Operational and implementation considerations;

e. Portfolio management and funding distribution analyses; and

f. Other information relevant to the funding opportunity.

The purpose of supplemental analysis is to provide decision-makers with a comprehensive understanding of application strengths, risks, opportunities, and implementation considerations.

Recommendation Review

Prior to submission for approval, funding recommendations and proposed slates may be reviewed by appropriate BCYF staff, leadership, committees, or other designated parties to verify consistency with funding priorities, available resources, grantmaking policies, and operational requirements.

BCYF may revise proposed funding slates based on additional information, due diligence findings, budget considerations, strategic priorities, or other factors identified during the review process.

Transmission for Approval

Upon completion of the funding slate development process, recommendations shall be transmitted to the appropriate approving authority for consideration and action in accordance with BCYF governance documents, delegation of authority, and applicable policies.

Funding recommendations generated through Community Grant Review Panels, Internal Grant Review processes, or Hybrid Review Models are advisory in nature and do not constitute final funding decisions.

Final approval authority shall be exercised in accordance with the requirements outlined in the following section.

Final Recommendation Authority and Award Approval

Purpose

The Final Recommendation Authority and Award Approval process establishes the procedures through which funding recommendations are reviewed, approved, modified, or denied following completion of the grant review process. This process ensures that funding decisions are made in accordance with BCYF's governance structure, grantmaking policies, fiduciary responsibilities, available funding, and strategic priorities.

While application evaluations, reviewer assessments, and funding recommendations provide critical input into grantmaking decisions, final award determinations remain subject to review and approval by the appropriate decision-making authority.

Advisory Nature of Funding Recommendations

Funding recommendations developed through Community Grant Review Panels, Internal Grant Reviews, Hybrid Review Models, or other review processes are advisory in nature.

Review scores, rankings, comments, recommendations, and proposed funding slates are intended to inform decision-making and shall be considered alongside:

a. Due diligence findings;

b. Organizational risk assessments;

c. Compliance considerations;

d. Fiscal stewardship requirements;

e. Portfolio balance and funding distribution considerations;

f. Strategic priorities and investment objectives;

g. Available funding resources; and

h. Other factors relevant to the funding opportunity.

The existence of a funding recommendation shall not constitute an award commitment or guarantee funding.

Approval Authority

Final funding decisions shall be made in accordance with BCYF's governance documents, delegation of authority framework, Board-approved policies, and applicable legal requirements.

Depending on the funding opportunity, approval authority may be exercised by:

a. The Board of Directors;

b. Authorized Board Committees;

c. The President;

d. Designated staff acting within approved authority limits; or

e. Other authorized decision-making bodies established by BCYF.

The approval authority applicable to a funding opportunity shall be determined in accordance with BCYF policies and funding procedures.

Review and Modification of Recommendations

The approving authority may review proposed funding slates and supporting documentation prior to taking action.

During the approval process, the approving authority may:

a. Approve funding recommendations as presented;

b. Approve funding recommendations with modifications;

c. Adjust recommended funding amounts;

d. Impose funding conditions or requirements;

e. Request additional information or review; or

f. Deny recommended awards.

Any modifications to funding recommendations shall be documented in accordance with BCYF procedures.

Award Determinations

Following approval, BCYF shall establish final award determinations, including:

a. Award recipients;

b. Approved funding amounts;

c. Award periods and grant terms;

d. Special conditions or requirements, when applicable; and

e. Any additional administrative, compliance, or reporting requirements associated with the award.

Funding awards remain contingent upon completion of all required pre-award activities, execution of grant agreements, verification of eligibility and compliance requirements, and the continued availability of funds.

Finality of Funding Decisions

Unless otherwise provided within a specific funding opportunity, grant program, applicable law, or BCYF policy, funding decisions are final.

Submission of an application does not create an entitlement to funding, and BCYF reserves the right to decline funding recommendations, reduce award amounts, modify funding priorities, suspend funding opportunities, or cancel funding opportunities when necessary to fulfill organizational, fiduciary, legal, or operational responsibilities.

Documentation and Records

BCYF shall maintain records of funding recommendations, approval actions, award determinations, and related decision-making documentation in accordance with applicable record retention requirements and organizational policies.

Approval records shall support transparency, accountability, audit readiness, and the responsible stewardship of grant resources.

Phase IV: Decision Communications

Award Notification is the process through which BCYF formally communicates funding decisions to applicants following completion of the grant review, recommendation, and approval process. The purpose of Award Notification is to ensure that applicants receive timely, accurate, and transparent information regarding the status of their application and any next steps associated with the funding decision.

BCYF is committed to communicating funding decisions in a manner that promotes transparency, accountability, and respectful engagement with applicants.

Notification of Funding Decisions

Following approval by the appropriate decision-making authority, BCYF shall notify applicants of the outcome of their application.

Funding decision notifications may include:

a. Award Notifications; and

b. Non-Selection Notifications,

Notifications may be delivered through electronic mail, grant management systems, written correspondence, or other communication methods designated by BCYF.

Award Notifications

Applicants selected for funding shall receive a formal Award Notification outlining the proposed grant award and any applicable next steps.

Award Notifications may include:

a. Approved funding amount;

b. Grant period and award term;

c. Funding purpose and scope;

d. Grant agreement requirements;

e. Conditions of award, if applicable;

f. Orientation, onboarding, or pre-award requirements;

g. Reporting, compliance, and administrative expectations; and

h. Additional information necessary to activate the grant award.

Award Notifications do not constitute authorization to expend funds and do not become effective until all required pre-award activities have been completed and a Grant Agreement has been fully executed.

Non-Selection Notifications

Applicants not selected for funding shall receive notification that their application was not approved for award.

BCYF will provide applicants with application feedback from the community grant reviewers and technical assistance resources.

aNon-selection does not preclude an organization from applying for future BCYF funding opportunities, provided eligibility requirements are satisfied.

Public Announcement of Awards

Following applicant notification and completion of any required administrative processes, BCYF may publicly announce grant awards through its website, press releases, public reports, community meetings, social media platforms, or other communication channels.

Public announcements may include information regarding awarded organizations, funding amounts, funding purposes, community impact, and other information determined appropriate by BCYF.

Transition to Grant Implementation

Organizations receiving funding shall proceed through BCYF's grant implementation process, including execution of Grant Agreements, completion of orientation and onboarding requirements, and fulfillment of any pre-disbursement conditions.

The Grant Implementation phase begins upon acceptance of the award and completion of all required pre-award activities and continues through the duration of the grant period and closeout process.

Phase V: Grant Implementation

The Grant Implementation phase begins upon approval of a grant award and continues through the completion of the funded grant period. During this phase, BCYF and grantees work collaboratively to establish the conditions necessary for successful program delivery, responsible stewardship of grant funds, and achievement of intended outcomes.

The purpose of the Grant Implementation phase is to ensure that grantees understand and fulfill their obligations under the grant award while receiving the support, resources, and technical assistance necessary to effectively carry out funded activities. This phase includes the execution of grant agreements, completion of required orientation and onboarding activities, establishment of reporting and communication protocols, disbursement of funds, ongoing monitoring and compliance activities, and access to capacity-building resources.

BCYF is committed to implementing grants in a manner that is transparent, supportive, equitable, and relationship-centered. Grant implementation activities are designed not only to ensure compliance and accountability but also to strengthen organizational capacity, promote learning, and support the long-term success and sustainability of grantee organizations.

The Grant Implementation phase includes, but is not limited to, the following components:

- Grant Agreements;
- Grant Orientation Certification through #bcreds;
- Grantee Onboarding;
- Grant Disbursement and Financial Administration;
- Reporting and Monitoring;
- Compliance Review and Support;
- Technical Assistance and Capacity Building; and
- Ongoing Communication and Relationship Management.

Requirements and procedures for each component are outlined in the sections that follow.

Grant Agreements

BCYF shall execute a written Grant Agreement with each awarded grantee prior to the disbursement of funds. The Grant Agreement shall establish the rights and responsibilities of both parties and shall include, at a minimum:

a. The approved grant amount and funding period;
b. The scope of work;
c. Payment terms and disbursement schedules;

Grant Agreements shall be executed by authorized representatives of both BCYF and the grantee organization.

Orientation through #bcreds

BCYF shall require all awarded grantees to complete a Grant Orientation Certification through **#bcreds**, BCYF's professional learning and micro-credentialing program, to support grantee understanding of grant requirements, organizational expectations, and available resources.

#bcreds is the Baltimore Children & Youth Fund's micro-credential professional learning program for Baltimore youth-serving programs and organizations. A micro-credential is a short, competency-based recognition that demonstrates mastery in a specific area of practice. Through #bcreds, participants design their own learning agenda by selecting learning modules aligned with their organization's needs, priorities, and areas for growth. Modules are research-informed and designed to be personalized, flexible, and interactive. Successful completion results in a shareable professional endorsement from BCYF.

The Grant Orientation Certification shall provide grantees with foundational knowledge necessary for successful grant administration

Completion of the Grant Orientation Certification is required prior to grant activation, onboarding completion, or disbursement of funds, as determined by BCYF.

Onboarding

BCYF shall implement an onboarding process to ensure grantees are prepared to administer grant funds and fulfill program requirements. The onboarding process may include:

a. Collection and verification of required organizational documentation;
b. Completion of grant setup and payment requirements;
c. Confirmation of authorized organizational contacts;
d. Establishment of reporting and communication protocols;
e. Completion of any additional requirements necessary for grant activation.

During the Grant Implementation phase, BCYF provides oversight, technical assistance, compliance monitoring, financial stewardship, and relationship management to support successful grant execution and organizational growth. These activities are coordinated across multiple functional teams and are designed to ensure accountability while advancing BCYF's commitment to trust-based, equitable grantmaking.

Financial Compliance and Fiscal Oversight

The Financial Compliance Team is responsible for reviewing, monitoring, and approving financial activities associated with grant awards. This work helps ensure that grant funds are managed responsibly, expended in accordance with approved budgets, and compliant with applicable funding requirements.

Financial oversight activities may include:

- Grant budget review and approval;
- Review and approval of monthly financial expense reports;
- Oversight of special funding programs, including the President's Fund, General Reserve Fund (GRF), Community Assistance Fund (CAF), and Annual Grantmaking Mechanisms (AGM);
- Review and approval of proposed budget modifications;
- Development and dissemination of financial guidance and documentation;
- Financial compliance monitoring and reporting; and
- Technical assistance related to fiscal management and grant expenditures.

Compliance Review and Risk Management

The Grantmaking and Compliance Team administers compliance processes that support organizational accountability, risk mitigation, and adherence to grant requirements. Compliance activities are intended to strengthen grantee systems while ensuring compliance with applicable legal, regulatory, and funding obligations.

Compliance activities may include:

- Review and approval of City of Baltimore monitoring requirements;
- Collection and review of Certificates of Insurance;
- Criminal History Record Check affidavits and related documentation;
- Monitoring of MOED local hiring requirements and monthly reporting obligations;
- Review of financial system affidavits and organizational certifications;
- Processing and administration of appeals;
- Organizational assessments and risk reviews;
- Disbursement clearances and compliance approvals; and
- Development of compliance guidance, policies, and process documentation.

BCYF prioritizes corrective support, education, and partnership-based solutions when addressing compliance concerns.

Grants Administration and Financial Operations

The Grants and Contracts function manages the administrative and financial processes necessary to establish, modify, and close grant awards. These activities ensure that grants are properly documented, payments are processed accurately, and grant records are maintained throughout the grant lifecycle.

Grants administration activities may include:

- Preparation, execution, and maintenance of Grant Agreements;
- Processing grant amendments, including budget modifications, grant increases, and no-cost extensions;
- Collection and management of required finance documentation;
- W-9 collection and verification;
- Bill.com and ACH payment processing;
- Grant disbursement administration and reporting;
- Coordination of closeout communications and final grant documentation; and
- Maintenance of grant records and administrative files.

These activities support timely fund distribution and effective stewardship of grant resources.

Portfolio Management, Technical Assistance, and Grantee Support

The Grantmaking Portfolio Team serves as the primary relationship manager for grantees throughout the grant period. Through technical assistance, monitoring, learning opportunities, and ongoing engagement, the Portfolio Team supports grantees in achieving programmatic goals while strengthening organizational capacity.

Portfolio management activities may include:

- Program Officer technical assistance and coaching;
- New grantee orientation and onboarding through #bcreds and related supports;
- Site visits and program monitoring activities;
- Review and approval of quarterly programmatic reports;
- Monitoring participant service records and records retention requirements;
- Organizational assessments, including color-coded risk and capacity assessments;
- Support and intervention for grantee non-compliance or underperformance, including Level 6 support protocols;
- Distribution of grantee newsletters and communications;
- Facilitation of grantee working groups and peer learning opportunities;
- Connection to BCYF capacity-building resources and technical assistance providers;
- Support for community events, convenings, and Learning Lab activities; and
- Ongoing relationship management, problem-solving, and partnership development.

BCYF's approach emphasizes trust, continuous learning, and organizational growth, recognizing that strong relationships and responsive support are essential to achieving positive outcomes for Baltimore's children, youth, and families.

Suspension, Termination, and Recovery of Funds

Purpose

BCYF is committed to supporting grantee success through proactive communication, technical assistance, monitoring, and compliance support. When significant performance, compliance, financial management, or organizational concerns arise, BCYF may implement corrective actions to protect grant resources, support organizational improvement, and ensure accountability to youth, families, communities, and funding partners.

This policy establishes the procedures governing corrective action, Level 6 Intervention, suspension of disbursements, early termination of grants, and recovery of grant funds.

Whenever possible, BCYF shall seek to resolve concerns through communication, technical assistance, and corrective action planning before pursuing more restrictive remedies. However, BCYF reserves the right to take immediate action when circumstances warrant intervention to protect grant funds, participants, organizational integrity, or legal compliance.

Corrective Action

When BCYF identifies performance concerns, reporting deficiencies, compliance issues, financial management concerns, or other matters requiring attention, BCYF may require the grantee to participate in a corrective action process.

Corrective action measures may include:

a. Technical assistance and coaching;

b. Increased monitoring or reporting requirements;

c. Submission of corrective action plans;

d. Additional documentation or verification requirements;

e. Programmatic or financial remediation activities; and

f. Other actions deemed necessary to address identified concerns.

BCYF shall communicate identified concerns, required corrective actions, and expected timelines to the grantee.

Level 6 Intervention

A Level 6 Intervention represents BCYF's highest level of compliance and performance intervention and may be initiated when significant concerns exist regarding a grantee's ability or willingness to meet grant requirements.

Circumstances that may result in a Level 6 Intervention include, but are not limited to:

a. Persistent non-compliance with grant requirements;

b. Failure to submit required reports or documentation;

c. Significant performance deficiencies;

d. Material misuse of grant funds;

e. Fraud, misrepresentation, or falsification of records;

f. Organizational instability that jeopardizes grant performance;

g. Failure to implement required corrective actions; or

h. Other circumstances determined by BCYF to present substantial risk to grant resources or program outcomes.

The Program Officer shall complete a Level 6 Intervention assessment and recommendation for review by designated leadership. Based on the findings, BCYF may determine that continued corrective action, suspension, termination, or other intervention is appropriate.

Suspension of Disbursements

BCYF may suspend grant disbursements when a grantee fails to meet grant requirements or when additional review is necessary to assess significant concerns.

Grounds for suspension may include:

a. Outstanding reporting obligations;

b. Failure to maintain compliance with grant requirements;

c. Unresolved financial management concerns;

d. Failure to provide requested documentation;

e. Pending investigation of potential misconduct or misuse of funds;

f. Organizational instability affecting grant implementation; or

g. Other material concerns identified by BCYF.

During a suspension period, BCYF may withhold future disbursements until identified concerns have been resolved to BCYF's satisfaction.

Suspension of disbursements does not constitute grant termination and may be lifted upon successful resolution of identified issues.

Early Termination

BCYF may terminate a grant prior to the end of the approved grant period when corrective actions have been unsuccessful, when substantial compliance concerns exist, or when continued funding is determined to be inconsistent with the responsible stewardship of grant resources.

Prior to termination, BCYF may consider:

a. Program performance and implementation history;

b. Compliance history and corrective action efforts;

c. Financial management practices;

d. Organizational capacity and stability;

e. Risk to participants, communities, or grant resources; and

f. Other relevant factors.

When termination is approved, BCYF shall issue a formal written notification describing the effective date of termination, required closeout activities, reporting obligations, and any financial reconciliation requirements.

Upon termination, BCYF may cease future disbursements and initiate grant closeout procedures.

Recovery of Funds

BCYF may require repayment or recovery of grant funds when funds have been improperly used, expended for unallowable purposes, remain unspent at the conclusion of the grant period, or when other circumstances warrant recovery.

Recovery actions may include:

a. Return of unspent funds;

b. Return of funds expended for unallowable costs;

c. Reimbursement of questioned costs identified through monitoring, audits, or investigations;

d. Offsetting future grant payments; and

e. Other lawful recovery actions available to BCYF.

BCYF shall provide written notice describing the basis for the recovery action, the amount due, and any applicable repayment requirements.

Relationship to Grant Closeout

Suspension, termination, and recovery actions do not eliminate a grantee's obligation to complete required closeout activities, submit final reports, cooperate with monitoring or audit activities, maintain required records, or satisfy any continuing obligations established by the Grant Agreement.

Grants subject to suspension, termination, or recovery actions shall proceed through the applicable closeout process in accordance with BCYF grant administration procedures.

6. Grant Closeout

Grant closeout is the final phase of the grant lifecycle and represents the formal conclusion of the funding relationship between BCYF and a grantee. The purpose of closeout is to verify that all programmatic, financial, administrative, and compliance obligations associated with the grant award have been satisfactorily completed, while creating an opportunity to document accomplishments, capture lessons learned, and ensure responsible stewardship of grant resources.

BCYF views closeout as more than an administrative requirement. It is an important milestone that provides accountability to community stakeholders, funders, and the public while recognizing the work completed by grantees in service of Baltimore's children and youth. Through the closeout process, BCYF confirms that grant funds were used for their intended purposes, required deliverables have been completed, reporting obligations have been fulfilled, and any outstanding matters have been resolved.

Because grants may conclude under different circumstances, BCYF maintains multiple closeout pathways, including Standard Closeout, Transfer to a New Entity, Early Termination, and No-Cost Extensions. Each pathway is designed to ensure that grants are concluded consistently, equitably, and in accordance with applicable requirements while supporting organizational continuity and minimizing disruption to program participants whenever possible.

The closeout process may include programmatic and financial reviews, compliance verification, reconciliation of expenditures, resolution of outstanding reporting requirements, return of

unexpended funds, documentation of outcomes and lessons learned, and formal notification of award closure. Following completion of the appropriate closeout pathway, BCYF issues a final determination regarding the status of the grant and maintains grant records in accordance with applicable record retention requirements.

Standard Grant Closeout

The Standard Grant Closeout process is used when a grant reaches the end of its approved grant period and all funded activities are expected to conclude as originally planned. As grants approach the end of the award term, BCYF initiates a closeout readiness review to assess the status of programmatic, financial, and compliance requirements. The Program Officer conducts a comprehensive audit of grant records, reports, and deliverables to determine whether all obligations have been satisfied.

If deficiencies, missing documentation, unresolved compliance matters, or rejected submissions are identified during the review process, the grantee enters a closeout reporting phase. During this period, the grantee works collaboratively with BCYF staff to submit outstanding materials, resolve findings, and complete any remaining requirements. Grantees that have fully met all obligations may bypass this phase and proceed directly to reconciliation.

Once all programmatic requirements have been satisfied, BCYF conducts a final reconciliation of grant funds and expenditures. The Grants & Contracts Manager works with the grantee to resolve any outstanding financial matters, including the return of unspent or disallowed funds when applicable. Following successful completion of all closeout activities, BCYF formally closes the grant and issues notification confirming that the award has been fully concluded.

Transfer to New Entity

In certain circumstances, a grantee may seek to transfer an active grant award to a successor organization or newly established legal entity. Because grant awards are made to specific legal entities, all transfer requests require formal review and approval by BCYF. The process begins when a grantee submits an Intent to Transfer request outlining the rationale for the transfer, the proposed successor entity, and any anticipated impacts on grant implementation. The request is reviewed by the Program Officer, relevant Directors, and the President to determine whether a transfer is appropriate and in the best interest of the funded work and community served.

If BCYF approves the transfer request, the existing grant award proceeds through the standard closeout process. The Program Officer conducts a comprehensive review of programmatic performance, compliance obligations, and financial activity to ensure that the original grantee has fulfilled all applicable requirements. Any outstanding reporting, compliance, or documentation issues must be resolved before the award can be closed. Financial reconciliation is completed, including the return of any unspent funds associated with the original award.

Upon successful closeout of the original grant, BCYF may invite the successor entity to submit a new application for consideration. The successor organization must satisfy all applicable eligibility, compliance, and onboarding requirements. If approved, BCYF executes a new Grant

Agreement with the successor entity and initiates grant implementation under the terms of the new award.

Early Termination and No-Cost Extensions

BCYF recognizes that circumstances may arise that require a grant award to be terminated before the end of the approved grant period or extended beyond its original end date. In such situations, BCYF follows established procedures to ensure decisions are made consistently, transparently, and in alignment with the organization's fiduciary and programmatic responsibilities.

Early termination may occur when significant compliance concerns, organizational instability, performance challenges, misuse of funds, or other material risks jeopardize the successful implementation of the grant. Prior to termination, the Program Officer conducts a formal review and documents findings through BCYF's intervention and escalation process. Recommendations are reviewed by leadership to determine whether suspension, corrective action, or termination is warranted. If termination is approved, BCYF provides written notice to the grantee and initiates a structured closeout process. The grantee remains responsible for submitting required reports, resolving outstanding compliance matters, and participating in financial reconciliation activities. The grant is formally closed only after all remaining obligations have been addressed and any unspent funds have been returned.

Conversely, BCYF may approve a No-Cost Extension (NCE) when additional time is needed to complete approved grant activities and outcomes, provided that no additional funding is requested. Requests for an NCE may originate from the grantee or be identified through ongoing monitoring and communication with the Program Officer. The grantee must submit a formal request describing the reasons for the extension, the remaining activities to be completed, and the proposed revised timeline. BCYF reviews requests through its established approval process, considering factors such as project progress, performance history, remaining funds, and overall feasibility. Following review, BCYF communicates its decision to the grantee and documents the outcome internally. Approved extensions are implemented through an amendment to the Grant Agreement, allowing grant activities to continue through the revised end date. Denied requests proceed through the standard grant closeout process.

Part IV. Governance and Administrative Policies

Conflict of Interest

Baltimore Children & Youth Fund (BCYF) is committed to conducting all grantmaking activities with integrity, transparency, fairness, and accountability. This policy establishes requirements for identifying, disclosing, and managing actual, potential, and perceived conflicts of interest that may arise during the grantmaking process.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that funding decisions are made solely in the best interests of BCYF's mission and the communities it serves.

This policy applies to all individuals participating in BCYF grantmaking activities, including but not limited to:

- Board members
- Staff members
- Contracted consultants
- Grant reviewers
- Subject matter experts
- Advisory committee members
- Any individual participating in funding recommendations or decisions

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Definition of Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest exists when an individual's personal, professional, financial, organizational, or familial interests could influence, or appear to influence, their ability to perform grantmaking responsibilities objectively and impartially.

Conflicts may be:

Actual Conflict

A direct conflict currently exists.

Potential Conflict

A situation may develop into a conflict in the future.

Perceived Conflict

A reasonable person could conclude that an individual's judgment may be influenced, even if no actual conflict exists.

BCYF recognizes that perceived conflicts can undermine public trust and therefore must be addressed with the same level of care as actual conflicts.

Examples of Conflicts

Conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:

Organizational Relationships

The individual:

- Serves as a board member of an applicant organization
- Is employed by an applicant organization
- Serves as a consultant or contractor to an applicant organization
- Has ownership or financial interest in an applicant organization

Family Relationships

The individual has a spouse, domestic partner, parent, child, sibling, or other close family member affiliated with an applicant organization.

Financial Interests

The individual may receive financial benefit from the approval, denial, or administration of a grant.

Close Personal Relationships

The individual has a close personal relationship that could reasonably affect impartial decision-making.

Disclosure Requirements

Individuals covered under this policy must disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as they become aware of them.

Disclosure must occur:

- Prior to participating in application review
- Prior to funding recommendations
- Prior to funding decisions
- Whenever circumstances change during the grant period

BCYF may require written disclosure documentation.

Review of Disclosed Conflicts

The appropriate authority shall review disclosed conflicts to determine whether mitigation measures are necessary.

Review authority may include:

Individual	Reviewing Authority
Staff Member	Supervisor and/or VP of Operations & Culture
Reviewer or Consultant	Designated BCYF Staff Lead
Executive Leadership	Board Chair or designated Board Committee
Board Member	Board Chair and Governance Committee

The determination shall be documented when required by BCYF procedures.

Conflict Management and Recusal

When a conflict is identified, BCYF may implement one or more mitigation measures, including:

- Limiting access to application materials
- Restricting participation in discussions
- Removing participation from scoring activities
- Recusal from recommendations
- Recusal from voting or approval decisions

Individuals with a conflict shall not:

- Score affected applications

- Participate in deliberations regarding affected applications
- Influence funding recommendations
- Vote on funding decisions related to the conflict

Documentation

BCYF shall maintain documentation of:

- Conflict disclosures
- Conflict determinations
- Required recusals
- Mitigation actions taken

Documentation shall be retained in accordance with BCYF record retention requirements.

Failure to Disclose

Failure to disclose an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest may result in:

- Removal from review activities
- Removal from decision-making responsibilities
- Termination of consulting or contractual relationships
- Other corrective action deemed appropriate by BCYF

Where undisclosed conflicts may have affected funding decisions, BCYF reserves the right to reevaluate decisions and implement corrective measures.

Grant Amendments and Modifications

BCYF recognizes that circumstances may arise during the grant period that require adjustments to approved grant activities, budgets, timelines, or other award conditions. The purpose of the Grant Amendments and Modifications process is to provide a structured mechanism for reviewing, approving, documenting, and communicating changes to active grant awards while maintaining accountability, transparency, and alignment with grant objectives.

Grant amendments and modifications are intended to support successful grant implementation while ensuring that changes are appropriately reviewed and authorized prior to implementation.

Types of Grant Amendments and Modifications

BCYF may approve modifications to an active grant award when justified by programmatic, operational, financial, or organizational circumstances. Amendments may include, but are not limited to:

Budget Modifications

Changes to approved budget categories, expenditure allocations, or use of grant funds that exceed thresholds established by BCYF or materially alter the approved budget.

Scope of Work Modifications

Changes to approved activities, program design, service delivery models, participant populations, deliverables, outcomes, or other elements of the approved scope of work.

Grant Period Modifications

Changes to the approved grant period, including extensions of the performance period through a No-Cost Extension.

Organizational Changes

Changes to organizational structure, leadership, fiscal sponsorship arrangements, legal status, or other organizational circumstances that may affect grant administration or performance.

Funding Adjustments

Changes to the approved award amount, including grant increases, reductions, reallocations, or other funding modifications approved by BCYF.

Other Administrative Modifications

Any other change that materially affects the administration, implementation, monitoring, or compliance requirements of the grant.

Amendment Request Process

Grantees shall obtain BCYF approval prior to implementing any material change to an approved grant award.

Requests for amendments or modifications shall be submitted in the format and manner prescribed by BCYF and may require supporting documentation sufficient to evaluate the proposed change.

Amendment requests should include:

a. A description of the proposed modification;

b. The reason for the requested change;

c. The anticipated impact on grant activities, outcomes, timeline, or budget;

d. Any revised budgets, workplans, or supporting documentation; and

e. Other information requested by BCYF.

Submission of a request does not constitute approval.

Review and Approval

BCYF shall review amendment requests to determine whether the proposed modification is reasonable, necessary, and consistent with the purpose of the grant award.

Review considerations may include:

a. Alignment with grant objectives and intended outcomes;

b. Programmatic impact;

c. Budget implications;

d. Compliance requirements;

e. Organizational capacity and readiness;

f. Grant performance history; and

g. Any additional factors relevant to the request.

Approval authority for grant amendments shall be exercised in accordance with BCYF's delegation of authority and applicable grant administration procedures.

No-Cost Extensions

A No-Cost Extension (NCE) may be approved when additional time is necessary to complete approved grant activities and achieve intended outcomes without increasing the total award amount.

Requests for a No-Cost Extension shall be submitted prior to the expiration of the grant period and shall include justification for the extension and a revised implementation timeline.

Approval of a No-Cost Extension is at the discretion of BCYF and is not guaranteed.

Transfer to a New Entity

In limited circumstances, a grantee may request to transfer grant activities to a newly established or successor entity.

Transfer requests shall be subject to BCYF review and approval and may require:

a. Submission of a formal Intent to Transfer request;

b. Organizational due diligence;

c. Completion of grant closeout activities for the original grantee;

d. Submission and approval of a new grant application;

e. Execution of a new Grant Agreement; and

f. Satisfaction of any additional requirements established by BCYF.

Approval of a transfer request is at the sole discretion of BCYF.

Documentation of Amendments

Approved amendments shall be documented through written correspondence, amendment agreements, revised grant documents, system records, or other documentation determined appropriate by BCYF.

Where required, grantees shall execute formal amendment agreements before changes become effective.

Effective Date of Modifications

No amendment, modification, or change to a grant award shall be effective until approved by BCYF and documented through the appropriate approval process.

BCYF reserves the right to deny amendment requests that are inconsistent with grant objectives, funding requirements, compliance obligations, organizational capacity, or the responsible stewardship of grant resources.

Suspension, Termination, and Recovery of Funds

Purpose

BCYF is committed to supporting grantee success through proactive communication, technical assistance, monitoring, and compliance support. When significant performance, compliance, financial management, or organizational concerns arise, BCYF may implement corrective

actions to protect grant resources, support organizational improvement, and ensure accountability to youth, families, communities, and funding partners.

This policy establishes the procedures governing corrective action, Level 6 Intervention, suspension of disbursements, early termination of grants, and recovery of grant funds.

Whenever possible, BCYF shall seek to resolve concerns through communication, technical assistance, and corrective action planning before pursuing more restrictive remedies. However, BCYF reserves the right to take immediate action when circumstances warrant intervention to protect grant funds, participants, organizational integrity, or legal compliance.

Corrective Action

When BCYF identifies performance concerns, reporting deficiencies, compliance issues, financial management concerns, or other matters requiring attention, BCYF may require the grantee to participate in a corrective action process.

Corrective action measures may include:

a. Technical assistance and coaching;

b. Increased monitoring or reporting requirements;

c. Submission of corrective action plans;

d. Additional documentation or verification requirements;

e. Programmatic or financial remediation activities; and

f. Other actions deemed necessary to address identified concerns.

BCYF shall communicate identified concerns, required corrective actions, and expected timelines to the grantee.

Level 6 Intervention

A Level 6 Intervention represents BCYF's highest level of compliance and performance intervention and may be initiated when significant concerns exist regarding a grantee's ability or willingness to meet grant requirements.

Circumstances that may result in a Level 6 Intervention include, but are not limited to:

a. Persistent non-compliance with grant requirements;

b. Failure to submit required reports or documentation;

c. Significant performance deficiencies;

d. Material misuse of grant funds;

e. Fraud, misrepresentation, or falsification of records;

f. Organizational instability that jeopardizes grant performance;

g. Failure to implement required corrective actions; or

h. Other circumstances determined by BCYF to present substantial risk to grant resources or program outcomes.

The Program Officer shall complete a Level 6 Intervention assessment and recommendation for review by designated leadership. Based on the findings, BCYF may determine that continued corrective action, suspension, termination, or other intervention is appropriate.

Suspension of Disbursements

BCYF may suspend grant disbursements when a grantee fails to meet grant requirements or when additional review is necessary to assess significant concerns.

Grounds for suspension may include:

a. Outstanding reporting obligations;

b. Failure to maintain compliance with grant requirements;

c. Unresolved financial management concerns;

d. Failure to provide requested documentation;

e. Pending investigation of potential misconduct or misuse of funds;

f. Organizational instability affecting grant implementation; or

g. Other material concerns identified by BCYF.

During a suspension period, BCYF may withhold future disbursements until identified concerns have been resolved to BCYF's satisfaction.

Suspension of disbursements does not constitute grant termination and may be lifted upon successful resolution of identified issues.

Early Termination

BCYF may terminate a grant prior to the end of the approved grant period when corrective actions have been unsuccessful, when substantial compliance concerns exist, or when

continued funding is determined to be inconsistent with the responsible stewardship of grant resources.

Prior to termination, BCYF may consider:

a. Program performance and implementation history;

b. Compliance history and corrective action efforts;

c. Financial management practices;

d. Organizational capacity and stability;

e. Risk to participants, communities, or grant resources; and

f. Other relevant factors.

When termination is approved, BCYF shall issue a formal written notification describing the effective date of termination, required closeout activities, reporting obligations, and any financial reconciliation requirements.

Upon termination, BCYF may cease future disbursements and initiate grant closeout procedures.

Recovery of Funds

BCYF may require repayment or recovery of grant funds when funds have been improperly used, expended for unallowable purposes, remain unspent at the conclusion of the grant period, or when other circumstances warrant recovery.

Recovery actions may include:

a. Return of unspent funds;

b. Return of funds expended for unallowable costs;

c. Reimbursement of questioned costs identified through monitoring, audits, or investigations;

d. Offsetting future grant payments; and

e. Other lawful recovery actions available to BCYF.

BCYF shall provide written notice describing the basis for the recovery action, the amount due, and any applicable repayment requirements.

Relationship to Grant Closeout

Suspension, termination, and recovery actions do not eliminate a grantee's obligation to complete required closeout activities, submit final reports, cooperate with monitoring or audit activities, maintain required records, or satisfy any continuing obligations established by the Grant Agreement.

Grants subject to suspension, termination, or recovery actions shall proceed through the applicable closeout process in accordance with BCYF grant administration procedures.

Appeals and Reconsideration

Purpose

BCYF is committed to administering grants in a manner that is fair, transparent, equitable, and accountable. The Appeals and Reconsideration process provides grantees with an opportunity to request review of certain grant administration, compliance, and enforcement decisions that may affect their grant award, organizational standing, or continued participation in BCYF-funded activities.

The appeals process is intended to support procedural fairness, ensure consistent application of policies and procedures, and provide an avenue for review of specific administrative decisions. The appeals process is not intended to serve as a mechanism for reconsideration of competitive funding decisions or grantmaking priorities.

Non-Appealable Grantmaking Decisions

Funding recommendations and award decisions resulting from BCYF's grant review and selection process are final and are not subject to appeal.

The following matters are not eligible for appeal:

a. Funding denials;

b. Application scores, rankings, or reviewer evaluations;

c. Funding recommendations or funding slate determinations;

d. Funding priorities established by BCYF;

e. Grantmaking strategies approved by the Board of Directors;

f. Competitive grant selection decisions; and

g. Other grantmaking determinations designated by BCYF as final.

Applicants may not appeal funding decisions solely because they disagree with reviewer assessments, funding priorities, award amounts, or final funding determinations.

Appealable Administrative and Compliance Decisions

Grantees may submit an appeal regarding the following decisions:

a. Grant suspension;

b. Early termination of a grant agreement;

c. Denial of reinstatement following suspension;

d. Reduction of an approved award amount;

e. Compliance determinations resulting in formal sanctions;

f. Denial of a requested grant amendment or modification that materially affects grant implementation;

g. Recovery of grant funds;

h. Other administrative or compliance decisions specifically identified by BCYF as appealable.

Filing an Appeal

Appeals must:

a. Be submitted in writing;

b. Clearly identify the decision being appealed;

c. Describe the basis for the appeal;

d. Explain the relief or action requested; and

e. Include any supporting documentation the grantee wishes BCYF to consider.

Appeals must be submitted within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of the written decision or notice being appealed. BCYF may establish procedures identifying the appropriate submission method, contact person, or required forms for appeal submission.

Administrative Review

Upon receipt of an appeal, BCYF shall conduct an administrative review to determine whether:

a. The appeal was submitted within the required timeframe;

b. The matter is eligible for appeal;

c. Required information and supporting documentation have been provided; and

d. The appeal satisfies applicable procedural requirements.

BCYF may request additional information, deny an appeal administratively, or decline to advance an appeal that is untimely, incomplete, or outside the scope of this policy.

Board Review

Appeals determined to be eligible shall be referred to the Board of Directors for consideration.

BCYF shall provide the grantee with written notice of the date, time, and format of the Board review process. Grantees may be provided an opportunity to submit written materials, recorded presentations, live presentations, or other information in accordance with procedures established by BCYF.

In reviewing an appeal, the Board may consider:

a. Whether BCYF policies and procedures were followed;

b. Whether the original decision was supported by available documentation;

c. New or clarifying information provided by the grantee;

d. Organizational responsiveness and engagement;

e. Equity and contextual considerations;

f. Financial, operational, or programmatic risks; and

g. Other factors deemed relevant to the matter under review.

Effect of Appeal During Review

Submission of an appeal does not automatically suspend, reverse, delay, or invalidate the original decision.

Unless otherwise communicated by BCYF:

a. Suspension conditions remain in effect;

b. Payment holds remain active;

c. Compliance requirements continue to apply; and

d. Existing grant obligations remain in force during the appeal process.

Appeal Determinations

Following review, the Board may:

a. Uphold the original decision;

b. Modify the original decision;

c. Reverse the original decision; or

d. Direct additional review or corrective action.

BCYF shall provide the grantee with written notice of the final determination and any required next steps.

Finality of Decision

The Board's determination on an appeal is final. No further internal appeal process exists within BCYF.

Records and Documentation

BCYF shall maintain records of appeal submissions, supporting documentation, review materials, determinations, and related correspondence in accordance with applicable record retention requirements and organizational policies.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

BCYF is committed to protecting confidential information, maintaining the privacy of applicants, grantees, reviewers, and stakeholders, safeguarding sensitive organizational and financial information, and ensuring the responsible collection, use, storage, disclosure, and retention of data obtained throughout the grant lifecycle.

The purpose of this policy is to establish standards governing confidentiality, information security, data management, and public records compliance in support of transparent, accountable, and legally compliant grantmaking practices.

This policy applies to all information collected, received, created, maintained, or disclosed by BCYF in connection with grantmaking, grant administration, monitoring, compliance, evaluation, appeals, and related organizational activities.

This policy applies to BCYF staff, board members, reviewers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, and any individual or entity authorized to access BCYF information systems, records, or grant-related materials.

Confidential Information

BCYF may receive, create, or maintain information that is confidential, sensitive, proprietary, or otherwise protected from unauthorized disclosure.

Confidential information may include, but is not limited to:

a. Grant applications and supporting documentation;

b. Organizational assessments and due diligence materials;

c. Financial statements, budgets, audits, and financial records;

d. Monitoring, compliance, and investigative records;

e. Grant agreements, amendments, and closeout documentation;

f. Reviewer assignments, scores, comments, deliberations, and recommendations;

g. Appeals submissions and related materials;

h. Personally identifiable information (PII);

i. Personnel, employment, or human resources information;

j. Proprietary business information, trade secrets, or confidential commercial information; and

k. Any information protected by law, contract, policy, or organizational determination.

Collection and Use of Information

BCYF shall collect, access, and utilize information only for legitimate organizational purposes related to the administration of its mission and grantmaking activities.

Information may be used for purposes including:

a. Application review and funding decisions;

b. Grant administration and monitoring;

c. Compliance oversight and risk management;

d. Financial stewardship and audit activities;

e. Program evaluation and learning;

f. Reporting to funding partners, governing bodies, and stakeholders;

g. Appeals and administrative review processes; and

h. Other purposes consistent with BCYF's legal responsibilities and organizational mission.

Information obtained through BCYF activities shall not be used for personal benefit or unauthorized purposes.

Access and Information Sharing

Access to confidential information shall be limited to individuals who require such access to perform authorized duties or responsibilities.

BCYF may restrict access based on:

a. Role and responsibilities;

b. Confidentiality requirements;

c. Conflict-of-interest considerations;

d. Legal or regulatory obligations;

e. Data classification and sensitivity; and

f. Operational and risk management considerations.

Individuals granted access to confidential information are responsible for protecting such information from unauthorized access, disclosure, or misuse.

Data Security and Protection

BCYF shall maintain reasonable administrative, technical, and physical safeguards designed to protect information from unauthorized access, disclosure, loss, alteration, misuse, or destruction.

Safeguards may include:

a. Secure grant management and information systems;

b. Role-based access controls;

c. Password protection and authentication protocols;

d. Secure storage and transmission of records;

e. Data backup and recovery procedures;

f. Device and network security measures;

g. Records management procedures; and

h. Other security practices adopted by BCYF.

BCYF may periodically review and update information security practices to address operational needs, technological changes, and evolving risks.

Maryland Public Information Act (MPIA)

As a public entity, BCYF is subject to the Maryland Public Information Act (MPIA), which provides the public with broad access to governmental records while recognizing the need to protect confidential, privileged, and sensitive information.

Records maintained by BCYF may be subject to disclosure in response to a valid MPIA request unless disclosure is prohibited by law or an applicable exemption applies.

Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted as guaranteeing that information submitted to BCYF will remain confidential if disclosure is required under the MPIA or other applicable law.

BCYF may withhold, redact, or deny disclosure of records when authorized or required by law, including records containing:

a. Personally identifiable information;

b. Personnel and employment records;

c. Attorney-client privileged communications or attorney work product;

d. Confidential commercial or financial information;

e. Trade secrets or proprietary information;

f. Deliberative or pre-decisional materials protected by law;

g. Information protected by contractual, statutory, regulatory, or court-ordered confidentiality requirements; and

h. Other information exempt from disclosure under applicable law.

Applicants and grantees may identify information they believe contains proprietary, confidential commercial, confidential financial, trade secret, or otherwise sensitive information. Such

identification shall assist BCYF in evaluating applicable disclosure exemptions but shall not guarantee nondisclosure.

BCYF shall process public information requests in accordance with applicable law and organizational procedures.

Disclosure of Information

BCYF may disclose information when:

a. Required by law, regulation, subpoena, court order, or legal process;

b. Required for audits, investigations, or regulatory review;

c. Necessary for grant administration or program operations;

d. Authorized by the applicant, grantee, or affected party;

e. Required pursuant to contractual obligations; or

f. Otherwise permitted by law or organizational policy.

When disclosure is required, BCYF shall take reasonable steps to protect confidential information to the extent permitted by law.

Reviewer, Board, and Staff Confidentiality

Individuals participating in grant review, decision-making, compliance oversight, appeals, or other grantmaking activities may be required to execute confidentiality agreements, nondisclosure acknowledgements, conflict-of-interest disclosures, or other certifications as a condition of participation.

Confidentiality obligations shall survive the completion of an individual's service, employment, contract, or participation with BCYF.

Data Breaches and Unauthorized Disclosure

Any actual or suspected unauthorized access, disclosure, loss, theft, misuse, or compromise of confidential information shall be reported promptly to appropriate BCYF leadership.

BCYF may investigate information security incidents and implement corrective actions necessary to:

a. Protect affected information;

b. Mitigate risk and potential harm;

c. Restore system integrity;

d. Comply with applicable legal obligations; and

e. Prevent future incidents.

Records Management and Retention

Information collected and maintained by BCYF shall be retained, archived, and disposed of in accordance with BCYF's Record Retention Policy and applicable legal, regulatory, contractual, and operational requirements.

Records shall be maintained in a manner that supports transparency, accountability, audit readiness, compliance, and organizational continuity.

Violations

Failure to comply with this policy may result in corrective action, removal from participation in grantmaking activities, termination of contractual relationships, disciplinary action, referral to appropriate authorities, or other remedies deemed appropriate by BCYF.

Fraud, Waste, and Abuse

BCYF is committed to the responsible stewardship of public and philanthropic resources and maintaining the integrity, transparency, and accountability of its grantmaking activities. BCYF has a zero-tolerance approach toward fraud, waste, abuse, misrepresentation, and other misconduct that undermines the effective use of grant funds or public trust in the organization.

The purpose of this policy is to establish expectations, reporting requirements, investigative authority, and corrective actions related to suspected or confirmed fraud, waste, and abuse involving BCYF resources, grant-funded activities, applicants, grantees, contractors, reviewers, consultants, board members, or staff.

This policy applies to all individuals and organizations participating in, receiving, administering, reviewing, monitoring, or overseeing BCYF-funded activities.

Definitions

Fraud

Fraud is any intentional act of deception, misrepresentation, concealment, falsification, or dishonest conduct undertaken to obtain an unauthorized benefit, financial gain, grant award, payment, or other advantage.

Examples may include:

a. Falsification of grant applications or supporting documentation;

b. Submission of false financial reports or invoices;

c. Misrepresentation of program activities, participant data, or outcomes;

d. Forgery or alteration of records;

e. Theft, embezzlement, or diversion of grant funds; and

f. Knowingly providing false information to BCYF.

Waste

Waste is the careless, inefficient, excessive, or unnecessary use of grant resources that results in avoidable costs or diminished program effectiveness.

Examples may include:

a. Excessive or unreasonable expenditures;

b. Failure to appropriately safeguard grant resources;

c. Inefficient use of grant-funded assets; and

d. Spending that does not support approved grant purposes.

Abuse

Abuse is conduct that is inconsistent with sound financial, operational, or management practices and results in misuse of authority, resources, or organizational assets.

Examples may include:

a. Unauthorized use of grant funds;

b. Circumvention of grant requirements or controls;

c. Conflicts of interest that are not disclosed or managed appropriately; and

d. Repeated noncompliance with grant requirements.

Duty to Report

Applicants, grantees, staff, reviewers, consultants, contractors, and board members are expected to promptly report suspected fraud, waste, abuse, financial misconduct, misrepresentation, or other serious compliance concerns involving BCYF-funded activities.

Reports may be submitted through channels established by BCYF and should include sufficient information to support review and investigation.

Individuals who report concerns in good faith shall not be subject to retaliation for making a report or participating in an investigation.

Review and Investigation

BCYF reserves the right to review, investigate, and verify allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, misconduct, or misrepresentation.

Investigative activities may include:

a. Review of financial records and supporting documentation;

b. Monitoring visits or compliance reviews;

c. Interviews with relevant parties;

d. Requests for additional information;

e. Consultation with legal counsel, auditors, or subject matter experts; and

f. Coordination with governmental agencies, law enforcement, or funding partners when appropriate.

Applicants and grantees shall cooperate with investigations and provide access to records, documentation, personnel, and information reasonably requested by BCYF.

Corrective Actions

Where concerns are substantiated, BCYF may implement corrective actions, including:

a. Technical assistance or corrective action plans;

b. Enhanced monitoring or reporting requirements;

c. Suspension of grant disbursements;

d. Recovery of grant funds;

e. Disqualification from future funding opportunities;

f. Early termination of grant agreements;

g. Referral to governmental authorities; and

h. Any other action necessary to protect grant resources and organizational integrity.

Corrective actions shall be proportional to the nature, severity, and impact of the violation.

Recovery of Funds

BCYF may seek recovery of funds that were obtained, expended, retained, or reported improperly as a result of fraud, waste, abuse, misrepresentation, or other violations of grant requirements.

Recovery procedures shall be administered in accordance with BCYF policies governing grant administration, compliance, and recovery of funds.

Relationship to Other Policies

This policy shall be administered in conjunction with:

- Conflict of Interest Policy;
- Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy;
- Suspension, Termination, and Recovery of Funds Policy;
- Audit and Financial Review Policy; and
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Documentation and Record Retention

BCYF shall maintain records related to reported concerns, investigations, findings, corrective actions, and resolutions in accordance with applicable record retention requirements and organizational policies.

Record Retention

BCYF is committed to maintaining complete, accurate, and accessible records that support transparency, accountability, compliance, operational continuity, audit readiness, and responsible stewardship of grant resources. The purpose of this policy is to establish requirements for the retention, storage, management, and disposal of records created or maintained throughout the grant lifecycle.

Effective records management supports grant administration, compliance monitoring, financial oversight, reporting, evaluation, public accountability, legal compliance, and organizational learning.

This policy applies to all grant-related records maintained by BCYF, including records created, received, or stored by staff, board members, reviewers, consultants, contractors, and authorized representatives acting on behalf of BCYF.

This policy also establishes record retention requirements applicable to grantees as a condition of funding.

Records Subject to Retention

Records subject to retention may include, but are not limited to:

Grantmaking Records

a. Funding Opportunity Announcements;

b. Grant Strategy Guides;

c. Application materials and supporting documentation;

d. Evaluation rubrics and scoring materials;

e. Reviewer assignments, comments, and recommendations;

f. Funding slates and approval records; and

g. Award notification records.

Grant Administration Records

a. Grant agreements and amendments;

b. Budgets and budget revisions;

c. Disbursement records;

d. Reporting submissions;

e. Monitoring and compliance documentation;

f. Technical assistance records;

g. Corrective action plans;

h. Suspension and termination records; and

i. Grant closeout documentation.

Financial Records

a. Financial reports;

b. Audit reports;

c. Invoices and reimbursement requests;

d. Payment records;

e. Recovery and repayment documentation; and

f. Other financial oversight records.

Governance and Administrative Records

a. Appeals submissions and determinations;

b. Conflict-of-interest disclosures;

c. Confidentiality agreements;

d. Investigation records;

e. Policy and procedure documentation; and

f. Other records supporting grant administration and governance activities.

Retention Period

Unless otherwise required by law, regulation, contract, funding source requirements, litigation hold, audit requirements, or Board action, BCYF shall retain grant-related records for a minimum of seven (7) years following grant closeout, final payment, resolution of audit findings, or completion of any related legal proceedings, whichever occurs later.

BCYF may establish longer retention periods for specific record categories when necessary to satisfy operational, legal, historical, or compliance requirements.

Grantee Record Retention Requirements

As a condition of receiving funding, grantees shall maintain complete and accurate records sufficient to document:

a. Grant expenditures;

b. Program activities and performance;

c. Participant records, when applicable;

d. Compliance with grant requirements;

e. Supporting documentation for financial and programmatic reports; and

f. Any additional records required by BCYF or applicable funding requirements.

Grantees shall retain grant-related records for a minimum of seven (7) years following grant closeout unless a longer period is required by law, regulation, contract, audit requirements, or written notice from BCYF.

Access to Records

BCYF reserves the right to access, inspect, review, copy, or audit records related to BCYF-funded activities during the retention period.

Grantees shall provide reasonable access to requested records in connection with:

a. Monitoring activities;

b. Compliance reviews;

c. Audits;

d. Investigations;

e. Appeals;

f. Public information requests; and

g. Other legitimate administrative or legal purposes.

Storage and Protection of Records

Records shall be maintained in a manner that protects their integrity, accessibility, confidentiality, and security throughout the retention period.

BCYF may maintain records in electronic, physical, or hybrid formats and may utilize grant management systems, document management systems, cloud-based platforms, or other approved storage solutions.

Reasonable safeguards shall be implemented to protect records from unauthorized access, alteration, destruction, theft, or loss.

Litigation Holds and Special Circumstances

BCYF may suspend normal record destruction procedures when records are subject to:

a. Pending or anticipated litigation;

b. Audits or investigations;

c. Appeals or administrative proceedings;

d. Public information requests;

e. Regulatory reviews; or

f. Other circumstances requiring preservation of records.

When a litigation hold or preservation requirement exists, records shall be retained until BCYF authorizes release of the hold.

Disposal of Records

Upon expiration of the applicable retention period, records may be destroyed in accordance with BCYF procedures and applicable legal requirements.

Records containing confidential, sensitive, financial, personnel, or personally identifiable information shall be disposed of in a secure manner designed to prevent unauthorized access or disclosure.

Audit and Financial Review

BCYF is committed to ensuring the responsible stewardship of grant resources and maintaining accountability, transparency, and financial integrity throughout the grant lifecycle. The purpose of this policy is to establish BCYF's authority to conduct audits, financial reviews, and other oversight activities necessary to verify compliance with grant requirements, assess financial management practices, and ensure that grant funds are used for their intended purposes.

Audit and financial review activities are intended to support risk management, strengthen organizational capacity, promote compliance, and protect public and philanthropic investments.

This policy applies to all organizations receiving BCYF funding and all grant funds administered through BCYF grant programs.

BCYF reserves the right to conduct audit and financial review activities during the grant period and throughout the applicable record retention period.

Financial Oversight Framework

BCYF utilizes a risk-based financial oversight approach that may include ongoing financial monitoring, desk reviews, documentation reviews, expenditure verification, compliance assessments, audits, and other financial review activities.

The scope and frequency of financial oversight activities may vary based on:

a. Grant size and funding level;

b. Organizational capacity and financial management systems;

c. Prior compliance and performance history;

d. Risk assessment results;

e. Audit findings or financial concerns;

f. Complexity of funded activities; and

g. Other factors determined relevant by BCYF.

Financial Reviews

BCYF may conduct financial reviews to assess compliance with grant requirements and verify the appropriate use of grant funds.

Financial reviews may include examination of:

a. Financial reports and supporting documentation;

b. General ledger transactions;

c. Invoices, receipts, and expenditure records;

d. Payroll and personnel records related to grant-funded positions;

e. Bank statements and reconciliations;

f. Budget-to-actual expenditure comparisons;

g. Internal controls and financial management practices; and

h. Other records relevant to grant administration.

Financial reviews may be conducted remotely, electronically, or on-site.

Desk Reviews

BCYF may conduct desk reviews as part of routine grant administration and financial oversight.

Desk reviews may include review of:

a. Financial reports;

b. Budget modifications;

c. Supporting documentation;

d. Compliance certifications;

e. Grant expenditures; and

f. Other materials submitted by the grantee.

Desk reviews may result in requests for clarification, corrective actions, technical assistance, additional documentation, or expanded monitoring activities.

Audit Requirements

BCYF may require grantees to submit audits, financial reviews, independent accountant reports, or other financial assessments based on grant requirements, organizational size, funding levels, risk factors, or applicable legal requirements.

BCYF may review:

a. Independent financial audits;

b. Management letters;

c. Findings and recommendations;

d. Corrective action plans;

e. Single audits, where applicable; and

f. Other financial assurance reports.

Grantees shall cooperate with requests related to audit review and corrective action implementation.

Access to Records

As a condition of receiving funding, grantees shall provide BCYF and its authorized representatives reasonable access to records necessary to conduct financial oversight activities.

Access may include:

a. Financial records;

b. Accounting systems and reports;

c. Supporting expenditure documentation;

d. Policies and procedures;

e. Personnel responsible for financial management; and

f. Other information reasonably necessary to assess compliance and stewardship of grant resources.

Findings and Corrective Actions

When financial reviews or audits identify deficiencies, noncompliance, questioned costs, internal control weaknesses, or other concerns, BCYF may require corrective action.

Corrective actions may include:

a. Submission of additional documentation;

b. Technical assistance or training;

c. Corrective action plans;

d. Enhanced monitoring;

e. Repayment of disallowed costs;

f. Suspension of disbursements;

g. Grant modifications; or

h. Other actions authorized under BCYF policies.

Grantees shall respond to findings within timelines established by BCYF.

Questioned and Disallowed Costs

BCYF may identify expenditures that require additional review or are determined to be unallowable under grant requirements.

Questioned costs are expenditures that require additional documentation, clarification, or review before allowability can be determined.

Disallowed costs are expenditures determined to be unallowable, unsupported, unreasonable, unauthorized, or inconsistent with grant requirements.

BCYF may require reimbursement of disallowed costs in accordance with applicable grant agreements and organizational policies.

Cooperation Requirements

Grantees are expected to cooperate fully with audit and financial review activities, including providing timely access to records, personnel, systems, and documentation.

Failure to cooperate may result in corrective actions, suspension of disbursements, recovery of funds, grant termination, or other actions authorized by BCYF policies.

Relationship to Other Policies

This policy shall be administered in conjunction with:

- Reporting and Monitoring Policy;
- Compliance Review and Support Policy;
- Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Policy;
- Suspension, Termination, and Recovery of Funds Policy;
- Record Retention Policy; and
- Applicable grant agreements and funding requirements.

Site Visits and Monitoring Activities

BCYF utilizes monitoring activities to support successful grant implementation, ensure compliance with grant requirements, strengthen organizational capacity, verify program performance, and promote responsible stewardship of grant resources. Monitoring activities are intended to be collaborative, supportive, and risk-informed while providing BCYF with reasonable assurance that funded activities are being implemented as approved.

The purpose of this policy is to establish BCYF's authority to conduct site visits, programmatic monitoring, compliance reviews, documentation reviews, and other oversight activities throughout the grant lifecycle.

This policy applies to all organizations receiving BCYF funding and all activities supported through BCYF grant programs.

Monitoring activities may occur throughout the grant period and, when necessary, during closeout, audit, compliance review, or post-award follow-up activities.

Monitoring Framework

BCYF utilizes a monitoring framework designed to balance accountability, capacity building, relationship management, and continuous improvement.

Monitoring activities may be conducted to:

a. Assess progress toward grant objectives and outcomes;

b. Verify compliance with grant requirements;

c. Evaluate implementation of approved activities;

d. Review financial and programmatic performance;

e. Identify technical assistance needs;

f. Support organizational learning and improvement; and

g. Mitigate financial, operational, or compliance risks.

Monitoring activities may vary based on grant size, risk level, organizational capacity, funding type, compliance history, and other relevant factors.

Types of Monitoring Activities

BCYF may conduct one or more of the following monitoring activities:

Desk Monitoring

Review of reports, documentation, financial records, participant data, deliverables, and other information submitted by the grantee.

Site Visits

In-person or virtual visits conducted to observe program operations, verify implementation activities, review records, and engage with organizational leadership, staff, participants, or stakeholders.

Compliance Reviews

Focused reviews conducted to assess compliance with grant agreements, reporting requirements, financial requirements, participant protections, and other grant obligations.

Financial Monitoring

Review of grant expenditures, financial records, budgets, supporting documentation, and financial management practices.

Follow-Up Monitoring

Additional monitoring activities conducted to verify implementation of corrective actions, resolution of findings, or progress related to identified concerns.

Site Visits

BCYF may conduct announced or unannounced site visits during the grant period when deemed appropriate.

Site visits may include:

a. Observation of program activities;

b. Interviews with staff, leadership, participants, or partners;

c. Review of programmatic and financial records;

d. Verification of participant enrollment or service delivery activities;

e. Assessment of implementation progress; and

f. Review of compliance with grant requirements.

Site visits are intended to strengthen understanding of grantee operations while supporting accountability and continuous improvement.

Access to Records and Facilities

As a condition of receiving funding, grantees shall provide BCYF with reasonable access to facilities, records, documentation, personnel, systems, and information necessary to conduct monitoring activities.

Access may include:

a. Financial records;

b. Programmatic records;

c. Participant service documentation;

d. Policies and procedures;

e. Organizational certifications and compliance records;

f. Grant-related communications; and

g. Other records reasonably necessary to verify compliance and performance.

Participant Records and Confidential Information

When reviewing participant records or sensitive information, BCYF shall take reasonable steps to protect confidentiality and privacy.

Monitoring activities shall be conducted in accordance with:

a. Applicable privacy laws;

b. Confidentiality requirements;

c. Data protection policies;

d. Grant agreement requirements; and

e. Other applicable legal or regulatory obligations.

Monitoring Findings

BCYF may document observations, findings, strengths, opportunities for improvement, compliance concerns, risks, or recommendations identified during monitoring activities.

Monitoring findings may result in:

a. Technical assistance recommendations;

b. Requests for additional documentation;

c. Corrective action plans;

d. Enhanced monitoring;

e. Compliance interventions;

f. Financial review activities; or

g. Other actions authorized by BCYF policies.

BCYF shall communicate monitoring results and required follow-up actions to the grantee.

Corrective Actions and Follow-Up

When monitoring activities identify deficiencies, noncompliance, performance concerns, or other issues requiring attention, BCYF may require corrective action.

Corrective actions may include:

a. Submission of a corrective action plan;

b. Technical assistance participation;

c. Additional reporting requirements;

d. Follow-up monitoring activities;

e. Compliance review;

f. Financial review; or

g. Other actions necessary to address identified concerns.

Failure to resolve identified concerns may result in escalation under BCYF's Compliance Review and Support Policy or Suspension, Termination, and Recovery of Funds Policy.

Relationship to Capacity Building

Monitoring activities are intended not only to assess compliance but also to support organizational growth, strengthen grant implementation, identify opportunities for technical assistance, and promote continuous improvement.

BCYF seeks to utilize monitoring activities as a partnership-based process that balances accountability with support and learning.

Risk Assessment Framework

BCYF utilizes a risk-based approach to grant administration, monitoring, compliance, and financial oversight. The purpose of the Risk Assessment Framework is to support responsible stewardship of grant resources by identifying, evaluating, and managing factors that may affect a grantee's ability to successfully implement funded activities, comply with grant requirements, and achieve intended outcomes.

The Risk Assessment Framework enables BCYF to allocate oversight, monitoring, technical assistance, and compliance resources proportionate to the level of risk associated with a grant award while maintaining equitable and supportive relationships with grantees.

Guiding Approach

BCYF utilizes risk assessment as a proactive management tool designed to support grantee success, strengthen organizational capacity, and ensure responsible stewardship of grant resources. Risk assessment is not intended to create barriers to funding or participation. BCYF recognizes that organizational characteristics such as size, age, budget, staffing levels, or community-based leadership do not inherently indicate risk and is committed to balancing accountability with equitable grantmaking practices.

Risk assessments help BCYF identify opportunities to provide targeted support, allocate resources effectively, and address challenges before they affect grant performance or compliance. Assessment results are used to inform monitoring and compliance activities, guide technical assistance and capacity-building investments, determine the appropriate scope and frequency of financial oversight, identify emerging concerns that may require intervention, and support proactive problem-solving throughout the grant period. By utilizing a risk-informed approach, BCYF seeks to strengthen organizational success, improve grant outcomes, protect

grant resources, and ensure that oversight activities are proportionate, supportive, and aligned with the needs of grantees and the communities they serve.

Risk Assessment Factors

BCYF may consider a variety of factors when assessing organizational and grant-related risk.

Factors may include:

Organizational Capacity

a. Leadership stability;

b. Staffing capacity;

c. Governance structures;

d. Operational systems and procedures;

e. Organizational growth or transition; and

f. Prior experience managing grants of similar size or complexity.

Financial Management

a. Financial management systems and controls;

b. Financial reporting history;

c. Audit results or findings;

d. Cash flow and financial stability;

e. Budget management capacity; and

f. Prior financial compliance performance.

Compliance History

a. Timeliness of reporting submissions;

b. Prior monitoring findings;

c. Corrective action history;

d. Documentation deficiencies;

e. Grant administration performance; and

f. Previous suspension, termination, or recovery actions.

Programmatic Performance

a. Progress toward approved outcomes;

b. Service delivery performance;

c. Program implementation challenges;

d. Participant engagement and retention; and

e. Achievement of grant objectives.

Grant Characteristics

a. Award amount;

b. Funding type;

c. Complexity of grant activities;

d. Number of participants served;

e. Length of grant period; and

f. Other operational considerations associated with the award.

Risk Assessment Process

BCYF may conduct risk assessments:

a. During application review and due diligence;

b. Prior to grant activation;

c. Throughout the grant period;

d. During monitoring and compliance reviews;

e. Following significant organizational changes; and

f. At other times determined necessary by BCYF.

Risk assessments may be updated as new information becomes available throughout the grant lifecycle.

Risk Levels

BCYF may categorize grants or organizations into risk levels to inform oversight activities.

Risk levels may include:

Low Risk

Organizations demonstrating strong performance, compliance, financial management, and operational capacity with limited oversight needs.

Moderate Risk

Organizations requiring routine monitoring, targeted support, or additional oversight based on identified factors.

Elevated Risk

Organizations presenting significant compliance, financial, operational, or programmatic concerns requiring enhanced monitoring, technical assistance, or intervention.

BCYF reserves the right to establish, modify, or remove risk classifications as circumstances warrant.

Use of Risk Assessment Results

Risk assessment results may be used to inform:

a. Monitoring frequency and intensity;

b. Site visit scheduling and scope;

c. Financial review activities;

d. Reporting requirements;

e. Technical assistance priorities;

f. Compliance interventions;

g. Corrective action planning;

h. Audit selection; and

i. Other grant administration activities.

Risk assessment results are intended to guide oversight activities and do not, by themselves, determine funding eligibility or award decisions.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

When appropriate, BCYF may utilize risk assessment findings to provide targeted support designed to strengthen organizational capacity and improve grant performance.

Support may include:

a. Training and professional development;

b. Coaching and technical assistance;

c. Financial management support;

d. Compliance guidance;

e. Peer learning opportunities; and

f. Other capacity-building resources.

Documentation and Confidentiality

Risk assessment activities, findings, and supporting documentation shall be maintained in accordance with BCYF confidentiality, data protection, and record retention requirements.

Risk assessments are internal management tools intended to support grant administration and may not be shared outside BCYF except as required by law or organizational policy.

Learning, Evaluation, and Impact Assessment

Purpose

BCYF is committed to fostering a culture of learning, continuous improvement, accountability, and community impact. The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework for collecting, analyzing, sharing, and utilizing information that strengthens grantmaking, supports grantee success, informs strategic decision-making, and advances positive outcomes for Baltimore's children, youth, young adults, and communities.

BCYF views learning and evaluation as tools for growth, reflection, and improvement rather than solely mechanisms for compliance or performance measurement. Evaluation activities are intended to generate meaningful insights, elevate community voice, strengthen organizational effectiveness, and inform future investments.

Learning and Evaluation Approach

BCYF's learning and evaluation activities are guided by principles of equity, community engagement, continuous improvement, and shared accountability.

Evaluation efforts may seek to:

a. Understand the impact of funded programs and initiatives;

b. Assess progress toward strategic goals and intended outcomes;

c. Identify effective practices and emerging innovations;

d. Strengthen organizational and sector capacity;

e. Inform future funding strategies and investments;

f. Support data-informed decision-making; and

g. Elevate the experiences and perspectives of youth, families, communities, and grantees.

Scope of Evaluation Activities

BCYF may conduct or support evaluation activities at multiple levels, including:

Grant-Level Evaluation

Assessment of individual grants, programs, projects, or initiatives to understand implementation, outcomes, challenges, and lessons learned.

Portfolio-Level Evaluation

Assessment of groups of grants, funding strategies, issue areas, or investment portfolios to understand collective impact, trends, and opportunities for improvement.

Organizational Learning

Assessment of BCYF's grantmaking practices, systems, policies, processes, and strategic initiatives to improve organizational effectiveness and responsiveness.

Community and Systems-Level Learning

Evaluation of broader community outcomes, ecosystem trends, collaborative efforts, and systemic factors affecting youth and community well-being.

Data Collection and Reporting

BCYF may collect qualitative and quantitative information necessary to support learning, evaluation, reporting, and impact assessment activities.

Information may include:

a. Participant demographics;

b. Service delivery data;

c. Program outputs and outcomes;

d. Performance indicators;

e. Financial and operational information;

f. Surveys and feedback;

g. Interviews, focus groups, and community engagement activities;

h. Success stories and case studies; and

i. Other information relevant to evaluating impact and effectiveness.

Data collection requirements shall be proportional to the size, scope, purpose, and complexity of the funded activity.

Community Voice and Participatory Learning

BCYF recognizes that meaningful evaluation requires the inclusion of those most directly impacted by funded programs and investments.

When appropriate, learning and evaluation activities may incorporate:

a. Youth voice and leadership;

b. Family and caregiver perspectives;

c. Community feedback;

d. Grantee experiences;

e. Stakeholder engagement processes; and

f. Participatory evaluation methodologies.

BCYF seeks to ensure that evaluation activities reflect community knowledge, lived experience, and culturally responsive practices.

Grantee Participation

As a condition of funding, grantees may be required to participate in learning, evaluation, research, assessment, or impact measurement activities reasonably related to the administration of grant programs.

Participation may include:

a. Submission of outcome and performance data;

b. Completion of surveys or assessments;

c. Participation in interviews or focus groups;

d. Attendance at learning sessions or convenings;

e. Contribution to case studies, reports, or learning products; and

f. Other activities designed to support organizational and community learning.

BCYF shall seek to minimize unnecessary reporting burdens and align evaluation requirements with the purpose and scale of the grant.

Learning Products and Knowledge Sharing

BCYF may develop and disseminate reports, dashboards, case studies, research summaries, impact assessments, presentations, publications, and other learning products derived from evaluation activities.

Learning products may be used to:

a. Share findings and lessons learned;

b. Inform stakeholders and community members;

c. Support transparency and public accountability;

d. Strengthen grantee capacity;

e. Advance field knowledge and best practices; and

f. Guide future funding decisions and strategic planning.

When appropriate, BCYF may publicly share aggregate findings while protecting confidential or personally identifiable information.

Continuous Improvement

BCYF shall utilize evaluation findings, stakeholder feedback, monitoring results, and organizational learning to improve grantmaking practices, policies, procedures, funding strategies, and operational systems.

Continuous improvement activities may include:

a. Revising grantmaking processes;

b. Refining funding priorities;

c. Enhancing technical assistance offerings;

d. Improving reporting and monitoring systems;

e. Strengthening applicant and grantee supports; and

f. Identifying opportunities for innovation and collaboration.

V. Appendices

Appendix A: BCYF Investment Documentation Framework

Level	Document	Primary Function	Content
Policy	**Investment Policy**	Establishes the governance framework, authority, principles, requirements, and oversight standards governing BCYF investments.	Investment philosophy, grantmaking governance, roles and responsibilities, review and approval requirements, grant administration, compliance, monitoring, risk management, appeals, closeout, evaluation, and oversight policies.

Strategy	**Grant Strategy Guides**	Defines the strategic purpose, intended outcomes, priorities, and investment approach for individual funds and funding opportunities.	Theory of change, target populations, funding priorities, intended outcomes, eligible activities, investment rationale, community needs, success measures, and fund-specific guidance.
Opportunity	**Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs)**	Serves as the official announcement and primary source of information for a specific funding opportunity.	Eligibility requirements, application deadlines, funding priorities, award amounts, evaluation criteria, review processes, grant terms and conditions, compliance requirements, and opportunity-specific expectations.
Guidance	**BCYF Grants Manual**	Provides applicants, grantees, and reviewers with guidance for participating in BCYF funding opportunities and managing grants.	Application requirements, review processes, reporting requirements, grant administration expectations, compliance standards, monitoring requirements, technical assistance resources, and grantee supports.
Tools	**Standard Application Materials**	Provides the forms, templates, instructions, and submission requirements necessary to apply for funding opportunities.	Application forms, application instructions, required attachments, budget templates, budget guidance, submission procedures, timelines, and required certifications.

Support	**Applicant Support Resources**	Supports applicant readiness and equitable access to funding opportunities.	PATA event calendars, FAQs, instructional guides, webinars, training materials, sample documents, templates, technical assistance resources, Rocket Resource Hub resources, and applicant support tools.
Operations	**Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)**	Provides detailed internal procedures for administering grant lifecycle activities and operational processes.	Workflow instructions, process maps, approval matrices, timelines, forms, checklists, system procedures, quality control processes, compliance procedures, and staff responsibilities.

Document Hierarchy

Investment Policy → Grant Strategy Guides → Funding Opportunity Announcements → BCYF Grants Manual → Application & Support Resources → Standard Operating Procedures

Together, these documents establish BCYF's comprehensive investment framework by connecting policy, strategy, funding opportunities, applicant guidance, support resources, and operational implementation processes.