



**Request for Smart Start Funding Proposals
FY 2026-27, FY 2027-28, FY 2028-29**

The Stanly County Partnership for Children (SCPC) is seeking multi-year proposals from agencies and organizations with expertise in providing evidence-based/evidence-informed services focused on raising the quality of early care and education, supporting families, advancing child health and expanding literacy for children birth to age 5 and their families/caregivers in Stanly County for the 2026-2029 contract cycle, beginning July 1, 2026.

RFP Release Date:	March 23, 2026
Submit Questions to:	Tammy Albertson, Executive Director talbertson@stanlypartnership.org 704-982-2038 ext. 224
Deadline to Submit Questions:	Tuesday, April 6, 2026 – 5:00 p.m.
Deadline for Proposals:	Monday, April 13, 2026 – 4:00 p.m.
Electronic Submission:	Subject: 2026-2029 RFP talbertson@stanlypartnership.org
Grant Award notices:	After the May 18, 2026 Stanly County Partnership for Children Board meeting, no later than June 1, 2026.

Applications should be submitted both in hard copy and electronic format no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 13, 2026. Late applications will not be accepted. Faxed applications will not be accepted.

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Introduction

The Stanly County Partnership for Children (SCPC) is a 501 (c)(3), public-private organization dedicated to increasing learning and healthy development of children birth to age five. SCPC provides evidence based/evidence-informed services focused on raising the quality of early care and education, supporting families, advancing child health and expanding literacy for children birth to age 5 and their families/caregivers in Stanly County.

Smart Start is North Carolina's nationally recognized and award-winning early childhood initiative designed to ensure that every young child living in North Carolina enters school healthy and ready to succeed.

Mission: "SCPC supports the development of young children, families and their educators through programs and resources."

Vision: "All Stanly County children enter school prepared to learn."

SCPC is soliciting multi-year proposals to establish a contract through a competitive process.

Purpose of the Request

The purpose of this Request for Proposals is to acquire the services of a qualified contractor (hereinafter referred to as the "Contractor") to provide evidence-based/evidence-informed services for children birth to age 5 and their families/caregivers in Stanly County related to one of the following core service areas:

- Raising the quality of early care and education
- Supporting families
- Advancing child health
- Expanding literacy

ACTIVITIES

Proposed activities should address an identified community need as it relates to families and children age birth to five in at least one of the following areas:

- Early Child Education
- Pre-literacy
- Health
- Family Support
- Kindergarten Transition and Readiness

The 2011 legislation passed by the NC General Assembly reads:

SECTION 10.5.(k) The North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc., and its Board shall establish policies that focus the North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc.'s mission on improving childcare quality in North Carolina for children from birth to five years of age. North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc.-funded activities shall include assisting childcare facilities with (i) improving quality;

including helping one- and two-star rated facilities increase their star ratings, and (ii) implementing pre-kindergarten programs. State funding for local partnerships shall also be used for **evidence-based or evidence-informed** programs for children from birth to five years of age that do the following:

- (1) Increase children's literacy.
- (2) Increase the parents' ability to raise healthy, successful children.
- (3) Improve children's health.
- (4) Assist four- and five-star rated facilities in improving and maintaining quality.

Therefore, all proposed activities must show supporting documentation in relation to being either evidenced-based or evidence informed. Please see the following documents for further guidance – *Smart Start Evidence-Based/Evidence Informed Guide*

II. AVAILABLE FUNDING AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Award Term and Requirements

Funding for this project will be provided for a one year term and is contingent on funding availability and adherence to the requirements of the grant.

- A. The term of any resulting award is anticipated to be for one fiscal years from July 1, 2026 until June 30, 2027.
- B. The bidder must submit annual budgets ending June 30th (for years 2027, 2028, and 2029) with its proposal. Contracts for subsequent fiscal years in the multi-year bidding period will be executed only after a satisfactory evaluation of performance, availability of funds, and review and approval of proposed activities.
- C. Funds may not be used for goods or activities that are currently funded by other government sources to ensure no supplantation of funds.
- D. A 19% in kind program match is required that may include, but is not limited to, parent and community volunteer time, donations of goods and services, etc.
- E. A background check of each person providing direct services to children under the contract will be required at the expense of the Direct Service Provider in accordance with the Partnership's policy.
- F. SCPC will not contract with any applicant that fails to provide all required information and documentation. After all required information and documentation has been submitted, SCPC will prepare the contract, notify the applicant, and submit the contract for signature. A template of the Contract that the applicant will be required to sign is available upon request.
- G. If proposals are rejected, applicants will be notified promptly by SCPC.

If the application/proposal is approved for funding the applicant must agree to the following pre-contracting documents:

- A. Work collaboratively with the SCPC and across agency lines in a community context, to include:
 - a. Provide updates immediately if leadership of organization is changing; SCPC must be informed prior to changes occurring.

- b. Any changes are going to be made to the program as it is outlined in the proposal; SCPC must be informed prior to changes occurring.
- B. Regularly disclose that the activity receives funding from Smart Start and the SCPC.
- C. Be available for monitoring visits and meetings held by the SCPC.
- D. Comply with fiscal, program and evaluation reporting requirements and deadlines. Agree to evaluation of data collection to capture information around racial equity.
- E. Revert funds not spent by the end of the fiscal year, unless requested to do so prior to that date.
- F. Understand that funds must be spent according to the North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCP) Smart Start Cost Principles (found at www.stanlypartnership.org). If contract terms are not met, funds may be discontinued and any unspent funds returned to the SCPC.
- G. Comply with NCGS 143C-6.2 reporting requirements
https://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/HTML/BySection/Chapter_143C/GS_143C-6-23.html
- H. Participate in any audit/evaluation of the SCPC that is required by the NC General Assembly or any other State officials/agencies.
- I. Maintain the necessary fidelity bond and commercial liability insurance coverage required.
- J. Return items purchased with Smart Start funds should the entity no longer perform the services for which the assets were purchased.
- K. Provide the following information for the contract administrator – name; title; telephone and fax numbers; and mailing address, including street address and zip code.
- L. If a non-profit entity, provide a copy of the Internal Revenue Code 501(c)3 determination letter received from the IRS.
- M. Provide No Overdue Taxes Certification.
- N. Provide Board of Directors list (if a 501(c)3).
- O. Provide a copy of the Board Approved Bylaws (if a 501(c)3).
- P. Provide proof of insurance which may include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a. Workers' compensation.
 - b. General business liability.
 - c. Professional liability.
 - d. Fidelity bonding (e.g. employee crime or dishonesty).
 - e. Automobile (owned, hired or non-owned).
- Q. Completed Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form W-9.
- R. Must provide most recent audit report and/or financial statements.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants include non-profit, government agencies, community-based organizations and institutions of higher education with experience in delivering services to children, their families and child care professionals.

All proposals must impact children from birth through age five, not yet in Kindergarten. Programs directed at children older than five cannot be considered, by legislative mandate. Only Evidence-Based/Evidence-Informed Programming will be accepted. Please refer to [Smart Solutions](#) catalog for a listing of acceptable programming.

To be eligible to apply for this funding, applicants must demonstrate sound organizational and fiscal capacity. Funds should be used for activities, experiences, or other resources that have a beneficial impact on children and follow Smart Start legislative mandates and Cost Principles.

In addition, eligible applicant's programs must be located and provide the service within Stanly County. This is to ensure that applicants and their providers have a strong understanding of our community's needs and assets while having established relationships with other stakeholders.

The applicant must provide details of any pertinent judgment, criminal conviction, investigation or litigation pending against the applicant or any of its officers, directors, employees, agents or subcontractors of which the contractor has knowledge, or a statement that there is none. SCPC reserves the right to reject a proposal based on this information.

Selection Process

All applications received by the required deadline will be reviewed to ensure all necessary attachments and documentation are complete and included. **Applications that are incomplete, late, or submitted by non-eligible applicants will not be reviewed by the Program Committee of the SCPC Board. Nothing may be added to any application after it has been submitted, including a signed certification page.**

Applicants may be required to make a 15-minute presentation to the Program Committee of the SCPC Board to briefly describe their activity and answer specific questions. Presentation times, if needed, will be scheduled after proposal submission.

The Program Committee will meet to formulate recommendations to the full Board. Committee members will not include any representative who may have a conflict of interest regarding any funding decision.

Award notices will be provided after the May 18, 2026 Stanly County Partnership for Children Board meeting, no later than June 1, 2026.

The Program Committee will be recalled **IF** funding levels made by the General Assembly are not adequate to fully meet the approved program budgets.

III. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Application Format

Applications (proposals) must include the following components to be considered complete and responsive for funding. All documents are available at www.stanlypartnership.org. **Incomplete** applications (proposals) will **not** be reviewed or scored:

ALL APPLICANTS	NEW APPLICANTS ONLY
<input type="checkbox"/> RFP Application (including signatures) Attachment A	<input type="checkbox"/> Three(3) letters of support
<input type="checkbox"/> RFP Attachment B (Excel workbook)	<input type="checkbox"/> Written Program Guidelines
<input type="checkbox"/> Logic Model tab (2 yrs)	<input type="checkbox"/> Most recent audited financial statement
<input type="checkbox"/> Detailed and Narrative Budget tab (2 yrs)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Summary budget tab (this will auto populate)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Job descriptions of funded and in-kind staff	
<input type="checkbox"/> List of Board of Directors (if applicable)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Research/Articles (if not in NCPC EB/EI guide, then required)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other optional materials	

Basic format:

- The RFP application should be completed in the Proposal Application document and submitted electronically (to talbertson@stanlypartnership.org) with one printed copy on 8 ½ x 11 inch white paper submitted to the SCPC office. Font sizes of responses should not be changed.
- Respond to each criterion in the order listed in the Application Narrative.
- Page limit of the Application Narrative section, not including first 2 pages of application and attachments, is 9 pages. Reviewers will not consider material past the page limit in the printed report.
- The RFP Attachment B should be completed in, and submitted as, an Excel workbook.

Application Deadline

ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 4:00 P.M. ON APRIL 13, 2026.

- One (1) electronic submission of the Application, Attachment B, and if applicable, new applicant documents, should be sent to talbertson@stanlypartnership.org and must be received on or before the due date/time.
- One (1) signed original should be submitted via mail or placed in the SCPC drop box on or before the due date/time (call or email for drop box location).

**Physical Location:
Stanly County Partnership for Children
1000 North 1st Street, Suite 8
Albemarle, NC 28001**

**Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 2165
Albemarle, NC 28002**

Questions and Answers

- All questions must be submitted in writing (email preferred to talbertson@stanlypartnership.org), on or before 5:00 p.m. on April 6, 2026.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

1. **TERMS AND CONDITIONS.** All proposals are subject to the terms and conditions outlined herein. The prospective Contractor specifically agrees to the conditions set forth by signature to the proposal.
2. **ORAL EXPLANATIONS.** The Partnership shall not be bound by oral explanations or instructions given at any time during the competitive bidding process or after award.
3. **REFERENCE TO OTHER DATA.** Only information which is received in response to this RFP will be evaluated; reference to information previously submitted shall not be evaluated.
4. **COST FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION.** Any costs incurred by prospective Contractors in preparing or submitting offers are the prospective Contractor's sole responsibility; the Partnership shall not reimburse any prospective Contractor for any costs incurred prior to award.
5. **RIGHT TO SUBMITTED MATERIAL.** All responses, inquiries, or correspondence relating to or in reference to the RFP, and all other reports, charts, displays, schedules, exhibits, and other documentation submitted by the prospective Contractors shall become the property of the Partnership when received.
6. **OFFEROR'S REPRESENTATIVE.** Each prospective Contractor shall submit with its proposal the name, address, and telephone number of the person(s) with authority to bind the firm and answer questions or provide clarification concerning the firm's proposal.
7. **SUBCONTRACTING.** In the event the prospective Contractor desires to subcontract any part of the contracted services, the proposal must clearly indicate what work it plans to subcontract and to whom and must provide all required information for each subcontractor. Only the subcontractors specified in the proposal shall be considered approved upon award of the Contract.
8. **PROPRIETARY INFORMATION.** Trade secrets or similar proprietary data which the prospective Contractor does not wish disclosed to other than personnel involved in the evaluation or contract administration will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by N.C.G.S. 132-1.3 if identified as follows: each page shall be identified in bold face at the top and bottom as "Confidential." Any section of the proposal that is to remain confidential shall also be so marked in bold face on the top of the title page of that section. Cost information may not be deemed confidential. Despite what is labeled as confidential, the determination as to whether or not it is confidential shall be as governed by North Carolina law.