



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Learning and Evaluation Partner:
Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) Pilot
for Expectant Families
in Seattle, WA



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**Learning and Evaluation Partner: Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) Pilot
for Expectant Families in Seattle, WA.**

Submission Deadline: November 5, 2021

Key Contacts

If you have questions about this funding opportunity, contact:
Gloris Estrella gloris@perigeefund.org.

To Apply

Applications are due by **November 5, 2021**, via email to Gloris Estrella.

The estimated contract timeline will run **January 2022 – July 2022**.

About Perigee Fund

Early experiences matter, and a child's earliest relationships with caregivers – starting prenatally – profoundly shape child development and caregiver wellbeing.

Background: Guaranteed Basic Income Pilot

Perigee Fund is a philanthropic organization based in Seattle, Washington. We are driven by a vision of communities in which all parents and primary caregivers are supported in caring for their children with confidence, competence, and joy. We focus our investments during the prenatal period up to age three, which is the most influential period of brain development for children and when adult caregivers develop their “parenting brain.” We are committed to advancing work in the areas of infant and early childhood mental health, as well as prenatal and postpartum mental health. While our deepest work is in Washington State, we also seek to advance national policies and practices to support families most impacted by trauma, racism, and poverty.

Infant and early childhood mental health is a field with the goal of supporting attuned, positive, and safe early parent-child relationships. Reducing parent stress is one way to support this goal. Boosting the financial security of low-income parents and primary caregivers with guaranteed basic income (GBI) or unrestricted cash has the direct effect of reducing the overload and immediate stress that families experience during this critical time. Decreased stress creates more space for hope and a broader horizon on which to envision your family's future.

We are funding a groundbreaking GBI pilot in Seattle, WA. The design would be anchored around an intent to enroll pregnant families in a no-strings-attached GBI program, supporting them from the time of pregnancy to the period up to age three. The program would ensure that participating families have the option of connecting to other resources and sources of emotional support, though not as a condition of participation. The cash received by participants should complement, not take the place of, other social services and income supplements participants receive.

This RFP is for a learning and evaluation partner who will participate in the design phase of the pilot, informing the pilot design and developing a pilot evaluation plan. Following the design phase, we anticipate funding implementation of the pilot and the corresponding learning and evaluation process.

For more information about Perigee fund, visit www.perigeefund.org.

TWO OPEN WINDOWS

Drs. Pilyoung Kim and Sarah Watamura of the University of Denver call the transition to parenting a co-occurring sensitive period, “two open windows,” a time when both infant and parent are especially receptive to being shaped by their environments and mutual interactions. Perigee Fund believes that focusing additional resources on supporting families and reducing stress during this exceptionally sensitive period can improve outcomes for children and parents.

The researchers have discovered that parents in adverse circumstances are also more sensitive to external inputs as they're transitioning to parenting. They want help and they want to adapt well to their role as parent and caregiver. From both a policy and practical perspective, this is a powerful time to create and deliver supports serving the whole family during this critical window when caregivers are interfacing with healthcare and other systems and are so motivated to grow in their new role.

[Read](#) their study.

Why Guaranteed Basic Income and Unrestricted Cash?

Unconditional and unrestricted cash embodies a set of values that depart sharply from the paternalistic, stigmatizing approach the U.S. has taken toward poverty alleviation for decades. Further, unconditional cash has numerous and well documented benefits for household economic stability and maternal and child health. Studies illustrate that the cognitive and brain development of low-income children differs from that of children in higher-income families. Higher family income is associated with better performance on assessments of children's language, memory, executive function, and socioemotional functioning, with corresponding associations found in the neural structure and function of brain regions that support these skills.

As an example, an adequate supply of diapers is a tangible way of reducing parenting stress, a critical factor influencing child health and development.¹ According to research conducted over seven years at the University of Manitoba (Canada), offering pregnant women \$81 per month without conditions improved health outcomes. Those who received the benefit had an 8% preterm birth rate, while those who did not had a 11% preterm birth rate.² According to March of Dimes, the health care costs associated with premature birth in the U.S. are estimated to be \$26.2 billion each year.

Our definition of guaranteed basic income (GBI) is aligned with the [Mayors for Guaranteed Income](#) project – a monthly cash payment given directly to individuals. It is unconditional, with no strings attached and no work requirements. A guaranteed income is meant to supplement rather than replace the existing social safety net and can be a tool for racial and gender equity.

The financial and health crises caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have heightened the experiences many struggling families face with economic insecurity, systemic racism, relived trauma, increased stress and social isolation. Now more than ever, it is critical to identify solutions that will have an immediate impact on both health and economic inequities. One highly effective intervention is among the simplest: giving families cash with no strings attached. A substantial body of evidence shows that cash payments have significant impacts on both economic stability and health, including maternal and child health. Unrestricted cash pilot programs in the U.S. and worldwide have been associated with higher birth weights, lower infant mortality, better nutrition and improved access to healthcare.

The rapid adoption of the recent measures of financial assistance (stimulus checks, refundable child tax credits, as well as extended and increased unemployment benefits) underscored two things:

1. unrestricted cash works and is recognized as the most efficient approach to enabling people to meet basic needs, and
2. the existing safety net is inadequate to the task of providing basic resources.

Addressing the current crises, and preparing for the next, requires that we put in place flexible and responsive structures that adequately protect pregnant people and caregivers with young children against the economic shocks caused by job and wage loss, or the sudden loss of any kind of support structure. The pandemic has exposed the deep inequalities and deficiencies in our social safety net that have relegated millions of families to the margins of the economy, while perpetuating racist myths about work and poverty.

¹ Unconditional Prenatal Income Supplement and Birth Outcomes, Marni D. Brownell, Mariette J. Chartier, Nathan C. Nickel, Dan Chateau, Patricia J. Martens, Joykrishna Sarkar, Elaine Burland, Douglas P. Jutte, Carole Taylor, Robert G. Santos, Alan Katz and On behalf of the PATHS Equity for Children Team

Pediatrics June 2016, 137 (6) e20152992; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2015-2992>

² Diaper Need and Its Impact on Child Health, Megan V. Smith, Anna Kruse, Alison Weir and Joanne Goldblum

Pediatrics August 2013, 132 (2) 253-259; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2013-0597>

Examples of Current GBI Pilots in the U.S.

Several groundbreaking basic income programs and cash transfer efforts focused on family support and healthy development are underway around the U.S. While a pilot program in Washington State may look very different than the ones described below, these efforts have been a source of inspiration for Perigee Fund and are reference points for the design of a pilot in Washington State.

Abundant Birth Project³

The Abundant Birth Project is a pilot program that provides targeted basic income to women during pregnancy and after giving birth. The pilot provides an unconditional monthly income supplement of \$1,000 to approximately 150 Black and Pacific Islander women in San Francisco for the duration of their pregnancy and for the first six months of their baby's life, with a goal of eventually providing a supplement for up to two years post-pregnancy. Expecting Justice, a collective impact initiative led by Dr. Zea Malawa at the San Francisco Department of Public Health and supported by the Hellman Foundation and the UCSF California Preterm Birth Initiative, will study the resulting health impacts of the pilot program, which is the first of its kind in the United States.

The Abundant Birth Project's approach to achieving better maternal health and birthing outcomes is providing pregnant Black and Pacific Islander women a monthly income supplement for during pregnancy and the postpartum period as an economic and reproductive health intervention. "Providing guaranteed income support to mothers during pregnancy is an innovative and equitable approach that will ease some of the financial stress that all too often keeps women from being able to put their health first," said Mayor Breed of San Francisco. "The Abundant Birth Project is rooted in racial justice and recognizes that Black and Pacific Islander mothers suffer disparate health impacts, in part because of the persistent wealth and income gap."

The Abundant Birth Project connects with local prenatal care providers and the City's own network of pregnancy support services to identify and enroll eligible clients over the next two years. Given the high cost of living in San Francisco, the project targets low-income and middle-income pregnant people for the income supplement. Community members were involved in developing the Abundant Birth Project. Black and Pacific Islander mothers were part of the design team and have been recruited and trained as community researchers to engage pregnant mothers and women with children to obtain accurate on-the-ground data about the actual needs of potential participants.

The effort is led by Expecting Justice, a Black-led Birth Justice initiative based in the San Francisco Department of Public Health. Grounded in the principles of collective impact, it is a collaboration between the Department of Public Health, the California Preterm Birth Initiative at UCSF, UC Berkeley School of Social Welfare, the San Francisco Human Rights Commission, the San Francisco Treasurer's Office, the San Francisco Human Services Agency, and First 5 San Francisco.

For more information about the Abundant Birth Project visit their website [here](#).

³ <https://www.expectingjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Abundant-Birth-Project-Fact-Sheet-11.19.pdf>

The Magnolia Mother's Trust⁴

In partnership with the Economic Security Project, The Magnolia Mother's Trust started with 20 Springboard to Opportunities families in Jackson, Mississippi, and has been giving \$1,000 cash on a monthly basis, no strings attached, for 12 months straight. The second cohort of The Magnolia Mother's Trust began in March 2020 and grew to serve 110 women. Families are free to use this money in whatever way they see fit to best meet their financial needs. While there have been several initiatives around a guaranteed income worldwide, this was the first that specifically focuses on resourcing extremely low-income families headed by an African American female living in affordable housing in the United States. The Magnolia Mother's Trust is a program that really is about restoring dignity into the lives of low-income African American mothers. This pilot started small, learning alongside the participating families about what cash assistance can really do. In an interview with ESSENCE, Aisha Nyandoro, who heads this pilot said, "this program is radical and women driven, Black women are—falsely—labeled 'welfare queens' and dehumanized just for trying to survive in a system constructed for us to fail—and it's not like foundations are lining up to give money to Black women."⁵

In addition to the no-strings-attached income, women in the pilot program also receive peer support and can participate in ongoing leadership opportunities designed to provide respite and external support. The Magnolia Mother's Trust believes in the need to provide holistic support for families at Springboard and they honor that in this effort. They also recognize the long-term trauma that is present for their families and offers individual coaching and counseling to help disrupt the scarcity mentality that so many families have had to adopt for basic survival.

In an interview for PBS, Nyandoro states, "we have seen as a whole collectively the 20 women in this pilot have paid off about \$10,000 in debt. And not only that, individuals on average have saved about \$500 which makes them better off than a lot of individuals that we're seeing when they know that very few Americans have \$400 saved to deal with an emergency. So they're saving, they're planning. We have seen women go back to school. We've seen now women actually complete their community college degrees because they now have opportunity to take time off from work or work less hours than when they had this income."⁶

To learn more about The Magnolia Mother's Trust, visit their website [here](#).

Baby's First Years⁷

Baby's First Years is the first study to test the causal connections between poverty reduction and healthy development, including brain development, among very young children. The project provides low-income mothers a monthly, unconditional cash gift starting at birth for the first three years of a child's life. One thousand low-income mothers and their newborns were recruited in several ethnically and geographically diverse communities. Mothers receive either (1) \$333 each month (\$4,000 each year), or (2) \$20 each month (\$240 each year), for the first 40 months of the children's lives with the first payments occurring shortly after the baby's birth.

Developmental scientists agree that poverty is especially likely to shape children's early development because of the high plasticity and rapid growth of the brain during the first three years of life. To test these

⁴ <http://springboardto.org/index.php/blog/story/introducing-the-magnolia-mothers-trust>

⁵ Magnolia Mother's Trust: 15 Black Mothers To Receive \$1000 Per Month in Basic Income Initiative, <https://www.essence.com/culture/magnolia-mothers-trust-15-black-mothers-to-receive-1000-per-month-in-basic-income-initiative/>

⁶ Aisha Nyandoro on Social Welfare Programs, <https://www.pbs.org/wnet/amanpour-and-company/video/aisha-nyandoro-on-social-welfare-programs/>

⁷ <https://www.babysfirstyears.com/about>

findings, researchers and policy makers called for a rigorous study to examine how providing income support to families may affect infants' and toddlers' brain function and development.

To understand how poverty reduction affects children's development and family life, quantitative data is being collected on or around the children's first, second and third birthdays. Each wave of data collection captures:

- Aspects of family life hypothesized to be affected by poverty, including parent stress, family expenditures, family routines, parents' time use and parenting practices, and childcare arrangements
- Children's development, as well as their physical health, stress and behavior

In addition, qualitative semi-structured interviews are being conducted with 80 randomly selected mothers in two of the four study sites at four different intervals during the period when mothers are receiving cash gifts and immediately following.

The study is designed to produce strong and clear evidence about the magnitude and pathways of causal connections between family income and early childhood development. Beyond its core contributions to science, the study will provide important evidence about the likely effects of tax and income-enhancement policies for families with young children, such as the Child and Earned Income Tax Credits, and related social policies designed to enhance family economic stability and well-being.

For more about the Baby's First Years, visit their website [here](#).

What Perigee Fund Believes

One of the ways we think about supporting caregivers in reducing cumulative stress is by funding work that guarantees them more time and agency.

We believe that providing parents/caregivers a guaranteed basic income (GBI) allows them to have more time and agency, which reduces stress and instability. This helps families thrive during a critical stage of life, which is critical to healthy early development and adults' ability to be the caregivers they want to be.

Community Pilot Design

Perigee Fund is currently partnering with group of leaders in the Urban Native community that is now organizing to design the guaranteed basic income pilot. We expect they will have a proposal to fund families via a GBI pilot in 2022. The program will enroll pregnant families within the Puget Sound urban Indian and Pacific Islander communities in a cash support program, from pregnancy through the first 3 years of the children's lives. The partners also manage culturally rooted programs that connect families to health care, doulas, home visiting, early care and education, heritage, and community. Perigee is funding them to engage in the design work and are committed to fund implementation when a plan and infrastructure is developed by the design team.

The implementation plan currently being designed should include the following:

- Goals that are aligned with Perigee Fund's intent, including a focus on serving pregnant or parenting people with an emphasis on attuned, safe and positive early relationships, ages 0 to 3, and an understanding of the role of stress, trauma and adverse childhood experiences in the lives of the target population
- Criteria for eligibility for inclusion in the pilot and a chosen target population, with an expected focus on families of color and centering caregivers in the planning phase
- An enrollment process for pilot participants

- GBI amounts and timeline of payments that fit with the design guidance received
- Mechanisms for managing a cash disbursement process, ensuring that the approach works for the population served
- An approach to connecting families to emotional supports and other resources available to participating families, either through a direct role or through referral relationships with community partners and other systems
- An analysis to understand the implications of additional income for enrolled families and risks to current eligibility for other public support, potentially including a plan to seek local and state policy change to ensure the GBI pilot increases total income and resources for participating families
- An approach to bringing voice and storytelling to communicate the value of unconditional cash assistance, or guaranteed basic income, particularly during this critical life stage and shifting narratives about family poverty
- An approach to participating in data collection and evaluation, which would be implemented by a third-party evaluator
- A budget for the capacity needed to implement the pilot along with the GBI payments

Learning and Evaluation Design

Perigee Fund seeks a learning and evaluation partner with experience in community evaluation methods including formative assessment, community based participatory research, and evaluation of community engagement processes. We expect this partner to design a process that will systematically gather data about the experiences of expectant families and families with young children 0-3, offer insights to the implementing organization along the way, help share the stories of what GBI means for families, and lend insights to the broader GBI movement.

In the initial design phase, before the pilot launches, the partner will develop a learning and evaluation plan guided by a set of key questions, with a data collection process that is informed by and welcomed by the team designing and implementing the pilot. The partner will also work alongside this team to inform critical choices in the pilot design, including the size of the cohort receiving GBI and the enrollment process.

While the specific scope of evaluation questions will be guided in collaboration with the learning and evaluation partner and Perigee Fund, Perigee envisions the partner will provide guidance in areas including, but not limited to:

- Criteria for eligibility for inclusion in the pilot and a chosen target population, with an expected focus on families of color and centering caregivers in the planning phase
- An enrollment process for pilot participants
- Number of participating families
- GBI amounts and timeline of payments that fit with the design guidance received

We also hope the learning and evaluation partner not only advises on the structure of the pilot, but also develops an evaluation plan for the pilot. The evaluation implementation plan should include the following, but not limited to:

- An analysis to understand the implications of additional income for enrolled families and risks to current eligibility for other public support, potentially including a plan to seek local and state policy change to ensure the GBI pilot increases total income and resources for participating families

- An approach to bringing voice and storytelling to communicate the value of unconditional cash assistance, or guaranteed basic income, particularly during this critical life stage and shifting narratives about family poverty
- Creative methods of data gathering and storytelling (e.g., personal narratives, imagery, documentary style videos)
- An approach to participating in data collection and evaluation
- Deliverables design to inform? policy makers
- Ethical approach to gathering community data

It is important to Perigee Fund to make a substantive contribution to the accumulating wisdom around the value of cash in the prenatal period. Given the importance and depths of the [Baby's First Years](#) study, we do not need to duplicate that level of research and evaluation.

As the pilot begins, we expect the learning and evaluation partner will be resourced by Perigee Fund to pursue the evaluation plan. Perigee Fund anticipates a mixed method approach of quantitative and qualitative data, as well as other creative ways of gathering data, to answer the key questions articulated in the evaluation plan, share insights from the families' experiences, offer recommendations to help the implementing organization adapt processes to address observable challenges, and inform policy conversations about the value of unrestricted cash assistance for families, particularly for expectant families and families with very young children.

Desired Characteristics of the Learning and Evaluation Partner

- Based in the Pacific Northwest and able to be present in the Seattle area
- Experience informing questions of policy and practice through evaluation
- Commitment to equitable evaluation in design and in practice
- Experience working in partnership with American Indian/Alaska Native communities
- Ability to build strong relationships and trust
- Familiarity with and willingness to engage in the GBI movement
- Ability to use multiple media outlets to share stories and findings
- Familiarity with decolonizing research methods
- Familiarity with child and maternal mental health learning and evaluation

Eligibility

- Open to the full spectrum of types of evaluation providers such as individuals, firms, academic centers and community-based groups.
- Priority will be given to groups with Indigenous leadership within the organization or institute.

Proposal Review Process

Evaluation design proposals will be screened by the Perigee Fund team and the pilot design partner. Finalists will be invited for a video conversation. Decisions will be made based on applicants' relevant skills and experience, the strength of the proposed approach relative to that of other applicants, and a demonstrated commitment to Perigee Fund's priorities in design and implementation. The review team will prioritize indigenous learning and evaluation partners.

How to Apply

Please submit your written proposal on or before **November 5, 2021**. Contact Gloris Estrella (gloris@perigeefund.org) with questions, to request an extension, or to set up a time to connect to learn more about this opportunity.

All responses must be:

- Page numbered with the organization's name on each page
- Organized according to the proposal elements
- No more than 7 pages, excluding attachments

All elements must be contained in a single PDF file emailed to Gloris Estrella (gloris@perigeefund.org) by **November 5, 2021**.

Proposal Elements

Proposal Narrative Questions:

- I. Contact information
- II. Motivations:
 - a. Why are you interested in working with Perigee Fund and the GBI pilot partner on this project?
 - b. Based on your review of relevant recent evaluations of GBI and similar efforts, what unique contributions do you believe an evaluation of this pilot can make to the GBI movement? Based on this, what is your initial thinking about essential key questions for the evaluation and what the evaluation should NOT try to include?
 - c. What existing policies and assumptions do you think this pilot has the opportunity to inform and challenge?
- III. Background information about mission, structure, services, and unique qualifications of your organization(s).
- IV. While methods will be fleshed out collaboratively in the design phase, what is your initial thinking about how you would approach the design and what methods you might use?
 - a. How do you bring a perspective and methods that value and validate the multiple truths of the human experience?
 - b. How would the design be informed by your previous work with American Indian/Alaska Native communities?
- V. How would you approach the process to design the evaluation for the implementation plan that includes the elements outlined in the "Learning and Evaluation Design" section of this RFP (pages 8-9)? What challenges and tensions do you anticipate in the design process? How would you address these?
- VI. Description of your experience with evaluations of comparable scale and budget.
- VII. Examples of how your evaluation work has been used to influence practice and policy and the role you played.

Design Phase Budget:

- Up to \$100,000. Evaluation implementation budget will be determined through the design process, in close conversation with Perigee Fund.

Project Timeline:

- The contract timeline will run January 2022 – July 2022 for evaluation design phase. Evaluation implementation plan will be determined through the design process, in close conversation with Perigee Fund.

Attachments Requested:

- Biosketches for all proposed team members and their roles.
- Budget, including % FTE or hourly rates by title or blended rate, and direct costs (e.g., subcontracted work, participant incentives).
- Two references. At least one reference should be able to speak to the value of work in and with indigenous communities. Briefly describe the project, dates of work, and a name, title, email, and phone.
- Sample work product(s) or link to online product(s) (in the public domain, with permission from past clients, or deidentified) that illustrate how you package findings for audiences with an action-orientation.

All responses must be:

- Page numbered with the organization's name on each page
- In font size 12 point for normal text and no less than 10 point for any graphics
- Proposal narrative of no more than 7 pages, excluding attachments and budget
- All elements must be contained in a single PDF file emailed to Gloris Estrella by **November 5, 2021**. Contact Gloris Estrella (gloris@perigeefund.org) with questions, to request an extension, or to set up a time to connect to learn more about this opportunity.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this opportunity.