



ESPN RePlay Program REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Overview

The RePlay Program (the “Program”) is a national effort led by ESPN and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) with the purpose and goal of revitalizing vacant lots into places for sports, recreation, and play. With financial support from ESPN and Under Armour, along with technical assistance from LISC, RePlay will provide grants to local community-based groups and other qualified organizations for planning and support of early stage projects, support of capital improvements and to close funding gaps for projects that are in the implementation phase of projects.

In order to be eligible for a grant under the Program, projects must be sponsored by non-profit community-based organizations registered as exempt from Federal Income Tax under Internal Revenue Service Code Section 501(c)(3). In addition, all organizations applying for funds must serve low to moderate-income areas located specifically and exclusively within Milwaukee, WI, Cincinnati, OH, Flint, MI and Newark, NJ.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the extent to which they: (1) seek to revitalize a vacant lot or space into a place for sports, recreation, and/or exercise; (2) show strong community support and organizational commitment; (3) *for implementation grants*, attract matching funds that exceeds the minimum required match of 1:1; (4) involve local partnerships with public and non-profit community partners.

Grants will be awarded in two categories: planning & capital expenditures. Applicants may request a maximum of \$10,000 for planning and \$75,000 for implementation grants.

Proposals are due by April 30, 2021

Please read the complete RFP before submitting a proposal.

**EMAIL SUBMISSIONS TO
SportsAndRec@lisc.org**

**PLEASE SEND THE PROPOSAL AS A PDF ATTACHMENT AND INCLUDE ALL
REQUIRED DOCUMENTS AS PER THE RFP.**

DO NOT SEND THE PROPOSAL IN THE BODY OF THE EMAIL.

Please title the attachment with Organization and Project name.

Program Background

Vacant lots and properties adversely affect communities in numerous interconnected ways. They are more than just eyesores-- they create a cycle of blight. Research has tied vacant lots and abandoned properties to increased police drug and violence calls, lower property values for the surrounding properties, and erosion in social cohesion and neighborhood pride. They are a real challenge for cities across America. Residents may eye vacant spaces in their neighborhoods with great potential to develop and bring vitality back to their community, but there are many hurdles to overcome and issues to address to successfully turn vacant spaces into fun places.

ESPN RePlay Program Objectives

The goal of the ESPN RePlay Program is to repurpose vacant or underutilized spaces and increase access to quality recreation opportunities in low to moderate income neighborhoods in Milwaukee, WI, Cincinnati, OH, Flint, MI and Newark, NJ.

LISC will identify projects and provide technical assistance to residents and community groups, assisting them in the predevelopment and construction phases to project completion.

Non-profit, neighborhood-based organizational partners can play a leading role in converting vacant lots into active recreation spaces. With experience in both real estate development and community building, many of these organizations possess the capacity to address both the capital aspects of land development and additionally, the program elements (i.e. youth sports tournaments, science fairs, summer festivals, community celebrations, and after-school events). Equally important, neighborhood-based organizations have connections to their community that legitimize their operations and draw resident support for their work. Residents need to have a sense of ownership and see themselves as stakeholders in the creation and maintenance of recreation spaces for them to be protected and preserved for long-term use.

Availability of Funding

There are two levels of funding available:

Planning Grants (\$10,000): applicants may submit requests of up to \$10,000 to hire architects to draw up preliminary plans, conduct community outreach and surveys, organize a coalition of public/private partners around a specific project, or to conduct other planning/pre-development activities. Applicants must demonstrate access to the property through memorandums of understanding or joint use agreements with vacant lot owners.

Implementation Grants (\$75,000): applicants may submit requests of up to \$75,000 for implementation or capital improvement funding. These funds can be used to finance hard costs, such as excavation, materials, labor, and other related expenditures.

Organizational Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the ESPN RePlay Program, organizations applying for grant funds must meet **all** the criteria listed below:

- Be a community-based organization, serving a neighborhood consisting primarily of low and moderate-income families and individuals.
- Be in existence for at least three years.

- Have 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status and have at least one full-time staff person (all-volunteer organizations will not be considered unless partnering with a qualifying local nonprofit).
- Have a proven track record in real estate development and parks or youth programming
- Be located in Milwaukee, WI, Cincinnati, OH, Flint, MI and Newark, NJ.

Selection Criteria (Planning Grants)

1. **Feasibility of the proposed project.** Applicants should clearly explain how they will work to develop a comprehensive development plan and prioritize implementation actions as well as demonstrate project feasibility by including relevant documentation or plans to develop these documents [e.g. zoning, ownership, surveys, usage agreements, memorandums of understanding, and joint use agreements].
2. **Impact upon neighborhood and support from the community.** Proposals that locate projects in low and moderate-income communities will be considered. The proposal should clearly state how the project would benefit the community and clearly detail how many youth and adults will have access to the site. Support letters from local neighborhood and partner organizations must be included. Proposals should demonstrate local youth involvement in the planning and design of the project.
3. **Capacity of organization and its partners to carry out project.** The applicant organization must demonstrate, through its current management team and previous experience, the ability to plan and manage a project of this size and nature.
4. **Project readiness.** Other potential sources of funding for the project should also be identified. A draft project budget and timeline should be specified in the proposal.
5. **Security, maintenance, and safety of play space.** Proposals should identify potential relationships or agreements that would ensure the future sustainability of the project site.

Selection Criteria (Implementation Grants)

1. **Feasibility of the proposed project.** The budget must be based upon realistic costs, preferably written contractor's estimates. Proposals should demonstrate project feasibility by including relevant documentation [e.g. zoning, contractor estimates, architectural renderings, ownership, surveys, usage agreements, memorandums of understanding, and joint use agreements].
2. **Project readiness.** A project timeline must be specified in the proposal. Sources of other funding for the project should also be identified.
3. **Impact upon neighborhood and support from the community.** Proposals that locate projects in low and moderate-income communities will be considered. The proposal should clearly state how the project would benefit the community and clearly detail how many youth and adults will have access to the site. Support letters from partner organizations and joint use agreements must be included as well as contact information. Proposals should demonstrate local youth involvement in the implementation of the project (a community day of service, installing a mural, etc.)
4. **Match funding.** A minimum local match of one dollar for every ESPN RePlay Program dollar (1:1) is required. Match funding at a higher ratio will strengthen the proposal.
5. **Security, maintenance, and safety of play space.** Proposals must have written maintenance plan and corresponding funding for minimum of five years to ensure the future sustainability of the project site.

6. **Capacity of organization and its partners to carry out project.** The applicant organization must demonstrate, through its current management team and previous experience, the ability to manage a project of this size and nature.

Application Procedures

To apply for funding under the ESPN RePlay Program, please submit a pdf of all required documents as an attachment to SportsAndRec@lisc.org

Cover Sheet: A one-page cover sheet including the following information:

- Name, address, e-mail address, telephone, and facsimile numbers of the organization
- Executive director and contact person (if different) for this application
- Brief description of proposed project
- Amount of funding requested

Please note that use of the ESPN, Under Armour, or LISC logos are expressly prohibited.

Narrative: In no more than three (3) typed pages, address the following:

- *Description of the organization:* mission, history, and accomplishments, with a focus on capacity to develop the proposed project.
- *Description of the neighborhood:* boundaries of the catchment area, income levels and ethnicity of the population served, condition of housing stock and main commercial areas, existence and conditions of local parks and open spaces (including community facilities).
- *Description of the project:* location, current condition, plans for site use, progress on this plan (including status on site control, zoning, environmental review, and physical improvements), project budget and match funding, timeline for completion of the project, community support for project, and agreements with partner organizations.
- *Impact of the project and future sustainability:* planned or anticipated programming for space, plans for continued maintenance and safety of area, and how project fits into community plans for the neighborhood.
- *Please indicate how you learned about the ESPN Replay Program.*

Organizational Attachments: Please attach the following items:

- IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter
- The most recent audited financial statement (preferably annual statement for 2018 or 2019)
- Most recent IRS 990 form (preferably 2019)
- Current List of organization's Board of Directors (contact information)
- IRS W-9 Form

Project Attachments: Please include a copy of the following items:

- Project / planning budget
- Financing commitment letters from match funding sources
- Detailed maintenance plan and corresponding financial commitment (if applying for Implementation Grant)
- Landscaping and design plans
- Environmental reports (if necessary)
- Letters of support and joint use agreements from potential users and community organizations
- Contact information for the community organizations and programs scheduled to utilize the space

Proposals are due by April 30, 2021

Please read the complete RFP before submitting a proposal.

Please title the attachment with Organization and Project name.

EMAIL SUBMISSIONS TO

SportsAndRec@lisc.org

If you have questions regarding this RFP, please contact Beverly Smith at LISC in New York at (212) 455-9881 or by e-mail at bsmith@lisc.org