

# RFP: Childcare Center Needs and Feasibility Study for the Rosebud Reservation

March 25



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DUE DATE FOR PROPOSALS: 4/8/2024

Sicangu Co is seeking proposals from consulting organizations to conduct a needs and feasibility study for a childcare center for working families on the Rosebud Reservation.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Rosebud Reservation is located in South Central South Dakota and is comprised of 20 communities, with 21,245 enrolled members living on the reservation. Tribal headquarters is in Rosebud, South Dakota. Sicangu Co includes the Rosebud Economic Development Corporation (REDCO), which is the economic arm of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe. REDCO completed a feasibility study for the Sicangu Innovation Center, a multipurpose facility to support economic growth on the Rosebud Reservation, and childcare was identified as a top need to sustain Rosebud's current and future economic growth.

In addition, an analysis of the economic dependency ratio, the ratio of nonworking people to employed people, illustrated Rosebud's growing workforce, and need for childcare. This analysis found that on the reservation, the economic dependency ratio is almost three times higher than the South Dakota average, partly due to the large proportion of children and partly due to the high number of working age people who have dropped out of the labor market, at least partially due to people staying home to take care of children. The economic dependency ratio for seniors is also lower than the South Dakota average, indicating that more seniors on the reservation are still in the workforce.

As a result of these findings, we are seeking applications from consulting organizations to conduct a needs and feasibility study for a childcare center for the Rosebud Reservation to serve working families to meet the current and growing childcare needs of the Reservation.

### **HOW TO APPLY**

Please email submissions in PDF format to [faith@sicangu.co](mailto:faith@sicangu.co) by 11:59 PM CT on April 8, 2024.

Strong applications will include your firm's qualifications and experience relating to the specific project described in this Request For Proposal. Such qualifications may include narratives, resumes of key personnel, or successful previous projects. Additionally, proposals should highlight any experience with, and/or approach to providing such services in Native and rural communities. Finally, proposals should clearly state an estimated timeline with deliverables completed no later than September 1, 2024, and a budget for the project.

We anticipate two major components to this project that should include qualitative and quantitative data. The first component is the Listening Phase, which will include the following deliverables:

- Review of relevant existing data and literature
- Interviews with key stakeholders
- Survey of the major employers on the reservation that include mostly government and education offices to investigate working people's childcare needs and challenges.
- Community meetings (likely a mix of in-person and virtual sessions)

The second component is the Analysis and Reporting Phase, which will utilize data gathered in the listening phase along with a wide variety of quantitative data sources to provide the following deliverables:

- Analysis on the needs and feasibility for a childcare center in the Keya Wakpala development specifically as a part of the planned Sicangu Innovation Center.

- Assessment of the market need and feasibility of a wide range of childcare options in terms of pricing model, hours of operation, partnerships, high quality daycare elements, and transportation options.
- A phased approach for possible childcare expansion
- Funding options available

The above deliverables shall be completed no later than September 1, 2024. Please provide a detailed proposed timeline with milestones. Below you can find additional details that provide more context and considerations for the above deliverables that could be helpful in understanding areas that we would like to explore and needs of our Reservation:

- Innovative Pricing Model
  - Which pricing model is best for the daycare, should there be an employee match that companies, government offices, and organizations can include for their employees to utilize the daycare?
  - To what level are employees on average willing to pay for childcare?
  - Should childcare be a free benefit to employees? If so, how would companies, government offices, and organizations sustain this model, and is it possible?
  - Should companies, government offices, and organizations pay a fee to secure a number of slots at each daycare for their employees?
- Partnerships
  - What partnerships would aid in this effort to provide solutions to the growing childcare needs of the Reservation?
  - Right now, just within our ecosystem we have REDCO (economic arm of Rosebud Sioux Tribe), Sicangu CDC (non-profit), and Tatanka Funds (emerging CDFI).
  - Other existing childcare options on the Rosebud Reservation include RST Childcare, RST Daycare, RST Early Head Start, and SGU Daycare for Students.
- What elements of a high-quality daycare can we bring to Rosebud?
  - What is the most effective childcare provider to child ratio?
  - What Montessori methods and other innovative learning methods can the daycare employ to provide the highest level of learning and care for daycare participants?

- How can we provide Lakota immersion instruction and learning into the daycare?
  - Sicangu CDC has a K-3 Lakota immersion school. Sicangu CDC can leverage their knowledge and expertise in this area to provide insight into employing language immersion principles and an immersion curriculum into our daycare. The Lakota immersion school, Wakanyeja Ki Tokeyahci, has seen an increase in attendance, higher test scores, increased retention of learning material, and an increase in social and emotional well-being of students when students learn in Lakota.
  - Larger cities have the option of immersion daycare, which has been proven to provide many positive benefits that children can access at an early age. Providing an additional element of Lakota immersion for children at our daycare would allow rural families to access a high-quality daycare option that is usually only seen in large metropolitan cities.
- What transportation options are needed for the daycare?
    - The Rosebud Reservation encompasses the entirety of Todd County in South Dakota, and includes tribal trust lands in surrounding counties, including Mellette, Tripp, and Gregory counties. The Rosebud Reservation also includes twenty tribal communities. Rosebud does not have any public transportation options available. An area this large, without any public transportation options, will require an innovative solution to transportation challenges for transporting children to daycare.
    - Through this feasibility study we hope to explore a busing program, rideshare program, and what public transportation could look like if created. While Rosebud does not have existing public transportation infrastructure in the form of a subway or city buses, there could be a way to create something that mirrors public transit in larger cities. For example, the daycare could provide busing options by having a dedicated fleet of vehicles or buses that reach each community during hours of operation including after school hours to allow organizations like Sicangu Health Initiative, Tatanka Funds and other organizations that have evening programming access to childcare services.
- What is the potential to expand an initial daycare into satellite daycares to serve the Reservation as economic development continues to grow.

- The Sicangu Innovation Center incubator will nurture and support entrepreneurship and workforce development to create much needed jobs, generate income for small business owners and workers, meet unmet needs by providing goods and services that are not currently available on the Reservation, and contribute to the economy on and off the Reservation, positively benefiting not only Rosebud, but also reach beyond Rosebud to all of South Dakota.
- The Sicangu Innovation Center will undoubtedly create more companies, businesses, and jobs in Rosebud who are going to need childcare options as economic development expands.
- We would like to use the innovative model that is developed through this feasibility study to replicate satellite daycares that can continue to expand the daycare options available in Rosebud to support the growing economy and working households.

Please direct any questions to Faith Begay-Dominique at [faith@sicangu.co](mailto:faith@sicangu.co)

### **SELECTION PROCESS**

Proposals will be reviewed and scored by the Sicangu Co team, and a decision will be made no later than April 24, 2024.

Sicangu Co reserves the right to amend this RFP at any time.