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IA-0000000280

Individual Application

Application ID	IA-0000000280	Account	
Application Status	Submitted	Contact	Andee Lau

ACT 310 - Application for Grants

Legal Name of Requesting Org/Individual	Hawaii International Child Placement and Family Services Inc	DBA	A Family Tree and PonoRoots Counseling Center
Type of Business Entity	501 (C)(3) Non-Profit Corporation	Existing Service(Presently in Operation)	Yes
Mailing Address	1632 South King Street Honolulu, Hawaii 96826 United States	Amount of State Funds Requested	\$916,860.00
Island	Oahu		

Program Overview

Program 1 Overview

Program 2 Overview

Program 3 Overview

Department Notes

Agency Eligibility

Recipient of Terminated Federal Funding	No	Able to Provide Documentation Evidence	Yes
Serves Negatively Impacted Populations	Yes	Narrative	N/A
Date Funding Stopped	1/1/2025		

Amount of Other Funds Available

State Fund Total Amount		County Fund Total Amount	
Federal Fund Total Amount		Private/Other Fund Total Amount	\$25,000.00
Total Amount of State Grants	\$0.00	Unrestricted Assets	

Contact Person for Matters Involving this Application

Applicant Name	Andee Lau	Applicant Title	Office Manager
Applicant Phone	(808) 589-2367	Applicant Email	admin@afamilytree.org

State of Hawaii Eligibility

Organization is Licensed or Accredited	Yes	Nonprofit is a 501c3	Yes
Complies with Anti-Discrimination Laws	Yes	Nonprofit has Governing Board	Yes
Will not Use State Funds for Lobbying	Yes	Is Incorporated Under Laws of State	Yes
Will Allow Access to Audit Records	Yes	Has Bylaws and Policies	Yes

Account Information

Organization Name	Hawaii International Child Placement and Family Services, Inc	Organization DBA	A Family Tree and PonoRoots Counseling Center
EIN	██████████	Street	1632 S King St
Account Email	admin@afamilytree.org	City	Honolulu
Account Phone	(808) 589-2367	State	
Website	https://www.afamilytree.org	Zip	96826
Mission Statement	The mission of A Family Tree is to support family permanency through culturally aware adoption and foster care services, to increase equity and welfare by offering family planning options for women, and to provide compassionate mental health assessment and treatment for all members of the 'ohana. We are committed to holistic support for individuals, children and families, addressing mental health, trauma, and adjustment to challenges beyond adoption.		

Point of Contact

Point of Contact First Name	Andee	Point of Contact Last Name	Lau
Point of Contact Title	Office Manager	Point of Contact Email	andeel@afamilytree.org
Point of Contact Phone	(808) 589-2367		

Leadership

Leadership First Name	Kristine	Leadership Last Name	Altwies
Leadership Title	CEO	Leadership Email	kristine@ponoroots.org
Leadership Phone	(808) 589-2367		

Background and Summary

Applicant Background	Hawaii International Child Placement and Family Services, Inc., doing business as A Family Tree and PonoRoots Counseling Center, was established in 1975 as a nonprofit adoption and family services agency with the mission of supporting family permanency through culturally aware adoption and foster care services, and family and parenting counseling and support. Its mission also includes increasing equity and welfare by offering supportive, mother-lead family planning options for women and providing compassionate mental health assessment and treatment for all members of the 'ohana. Recognizing the evolving needs of the adults, families and children we serve, A Family Tree expanded its services to include counseling under the name PonoRoots Counseling. This addition reflected a broader commitment to holistic support for individuals, children and families, addressing mental health, trauma, and adjustment challenges beyond adoption. The name "PonoRoots" signifies a connection to Hawaii's values of balance, righteousness, and connection to one's roots. By integrating counseling services, A Family Tree evolved into a more comprehensive resource, offering therapeutic services that empower families and individuals to navigate life's
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challenges with resilience and cultural sensitivity. This expansion marked a significant enhancement of A Family Tree's mission, reinforcing our dedication to nurturing healthy, thriving families in Hawaii and beyond.

Funding Request Purpose	GOAL: To build Hawaii's behavioral health capacity by offering students a preceptorship program that provides training and hands-on experiences essential to becoming licensed mental health therapists. To support the future of Hawaii's mental health landscape by supporting future local mental health specialists, providing increased opportunity for work in and for Hawaii. To reduce barriers to mental health by providing lower cost options for mental health treatment, provided by trained specialists, under the supervision of licensed, local experts. To increase access to parent support in the form of parent training, using systems created by someone who has been working with local families for more than 30 years. OBJECTIVES: 1. PonoRoots Counseling will train a minimum of 15 students. 2. Students will receive 10 hands-on training hours per week during the preceptorship program, including practical skills and knowledge under supervision of an experienced practitioner in the field. 3. An estimated 200 children will receive pro bono or reduced-rate mental health treatment, or their families will receive parental training. 4. An estimated 100 individuals will receive support for trauma and or domestic violence. 5. An estimated 100 couples will receive parenting support directed towards reducing child harm. 6. PonoRoots Counseling will hire two (2) licensed and/or doctoral level mental health professionals (preceptors) (LMFT, LCSW, LMHT, or PhD) to support the supervision and training of the 15 mental health graduate students.
Geographic Coverage Served	PonoRoots serves children and families across the state of Hawaii offering telehealth for those clients residing on Kauai, Molokai, the Big Island, Maui, or Lanai and offers face to face as well as telehealth for clients living on Oahu. Historically the organization has served communities on all islands with face to face programs, and we plan to increase face to face work to all islands in the future.
Public Purpose or Need Served	Many children and families in Hawaii face unique challenges that require culturally competent, specialized care. Hawaii's diverse population, including individuals from various ethnic backgrounds, often experiences mental health issues intertwined with cultural factors. The prolonged impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated feelings of isolation, anxiety, and stress among youth, contributing to academic and emotional struggles. Hawaii also has one of the highest youth suicide rates in the nation, underscoring the urgent need for readily available therapeutic services to address these crises. Expanding the pool of trained therapists ensures Hawaii can provide personalized, culturally sensitive care to support children and families, particularly those affected by trauma and collective grief. The statewide shortage of mental health professionals further compounds these challenges. Hawaii's high youth suicide rates, along with the emotional toll of recent events like the Maui wildfires, have created an urgent need for expanded services. Many families affected by the fires have experienced significant loss, requiring specialized therapeutic care. In addition, the ongoing effects of the pandemic have left many children in need of timely intervention for their mental health struggles. With a limited number of trained therapists statewide, Hawaii's ability to respond to the needs of at-risk populations is constrained. Unfortunately, PonoRoots is forced to turn away a few dozen interns each semester who desperately need preceptor-guided learning experiences to become licensed mental health therapists. Currently, interns are trained by the lead clinician, which limits the number of interns being served each semester as training in the field of mental health necessitates 1-to-1 supervision. Increasing the capacity to train licensed therapists will enable PonoRoots to meet the growing demand for mental health services, providing consistent care and ensuring that children and families across the state receive the support they need to heal and build resilience. PonoRoots receives referrals from pediatricians, family law attorneys, crisis centers, school counselors, pastors, domestic violence shelters and the Veteran's Administration, seeking mental health support for the children and families they serve. Callers regularly state that they have been seeking support often for months, and that rather than receiving appointments, they are put on wait lists or offered telehealth at best. While telehealth may suffice for many things, children do best with face to face support. PonoRoots has the physical space and ability to treat more waiting children and families.
Target Population Served	This program would target current graduate students and pre-licensed staff with a degree in psychology, social work, marriage and family therapy, and related fields, as well as individuals who are in the process of obtaining their licensure in the same, but need supervised clinical experience. This program would also attract individuals looking to specialize in areas such as trauma, adoption, foster care, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, domestic violence, LGBTQIA, or culturally competent therapy, particularly those interested in working to address the mental health needs of children and families.

Summary and Outcomes

Measure(s) of Effectiveness

PonoRoots will report the following on a quarterly basis to the State:

1. Total number of students trained over 12 months
2. Total number of hands on training hours per student
3. Total number of children and families served through pro bono/reduced-rate mental health treatment or parental training

Projected Annual Timeline	If awarded State Grant-in-Aid, PonoRoots will immediately draw down on funds to hire additional key personnel essential to expanding the preceptorship program, with 100% of funds fully expended within 12 months of receiving the Notice to Proceed.
Quality Assurance and Evaluation Plans	PonoRoots will assess student performance through supervisor evaluations, client feedback when applicable and self-reflection, ensuring alignment with professional competency standards. Regularly scheduled supervision sessions, both individual and group-based, will incorporate case reviews, progress tracking, and constructive feedback to support skill development. Staff will evaluate the preceptorship program through surveys and/or focus groups with students, supervisors and stakeholders to identify strengths and areas for improvement. This data will be summarized and discussed with preceptors to ensure the Goal and Objectives of this project are met on time and with fidelity.
Scope of Work	Staff will work with current university partners offering advanced mental health degree programs to recruit student interns for the preceptorship program, including University of Hawaii at Manoa, Hawaii Pacific University, Chaminade University, National University and Touro University. Student Interns Staff will review CVs and interview interns expressing interest in the program, selecting up to six (6) student interns per semester. Once selected, interns will receive the rare opportunity to gain valuable hands-on experiences and practical skills, such as: • Shadowing with licensed therapists, learning the intricacies of a therapy practice • Receiving hands-on training from a practicing therapist, including client intake and documentation, developing and conceptualizing therapeutic cases, and gaining in-depth knowledge of a wide range of mental health conditions and diagnoses. • Guided clinical training with mainland experts in a variety of treatment-relevant topics. • Engaging in opportunities to conduct client sessions under supervision, receiving the critical training essential to complete graduate degrees • Participating in weekly group and individual supervision provided by the clinical director, who will oversee the intern's client caseload and offer guidance on therapeutic interventions. • Referring a client out and procedures for reporting a case for suspected abuse or neglect • Coding for insurance purposes • Managing challenging cases and when to terminate a client • Conducting child play therapy and when to consider a client for fetal alcohol spectrum disorder treatment • Working with diverse populations, including transgender awareness and LGBTQIA populations

Financial Information

Q1 Requested Amount	\$229,915.00	Q3 Requested Amount	\$229,915.00
Q2 Requested Amount	\$229,915.00	Q4 Requested Amount	\$229,915.00
Sources of Funding	None	State and Federal Tax Credits	N/A
State and Federal Contracts and Grants	N/A	Prior FY Balance of Unrestricted Assets	36,832.10

Experience, Capability, and Personnel

Skills and Experience	A Family Tree and PonoRoots Counseling Center are well-positioned to expand the preceptorship program, leveraging decades of experience and a strong commitment to cultivating Hawaii's next generation of licensed mental health therapists. Since 1975, A Hawaii International Child/A Family Tree has been dedicated to supporting families and children, building a legacy of trust and service in the community. CEO Kristine Altwies, with over 30 years of experience in family-centered care, established PonoRoots Counseling Center to address the growing need for mental health services, inspired by her deep understanding of the challenges and resilience she has witnessed in families across Hawaii. PonoRoots Counseling Center is a group practice rooted in family systems theory and enriched by evidence-based, supportive therapeutic approaches tailored to meet diverse client needs. The center's multidisciplinary team provides comprehensive mental health care, ensuring interns are exposed to a wide variety of cases and therapeutic modalities, including work with individuals, couples, families, and groups. The center's existing preceptorship program offers structured, hands-on training, emphasizing client documentation, case formulation, therapeutic interventions, and a nuanced understanding of mental health diagnoses. Interns also benefit from weekly group and individual supervision with the clinical director, fostering professional growth and ensuring high standards of care. By expanding its preceptorship program, PonoRoots Counseling Center aims to address Hawaii's critical shortage of licensed mental health professionals. The organization's established infrastructure, experienced leadership, and commitment to professional development provide a strong foundation for this growth. The
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expanded program will focus on increasing training opportunities, enhancing supervision capacity, and incorporating advanced topics such as cultural competency and the unique mental health needs of Hawaii's diverse populations. Through this expansion, PonoRoots will play a vital role in building a sustainable pipeline of skilled therapists equipped to serve Hawaii's communities with compassion, cultural sensitivity, and clinical excellence.

Facilities	PonoRoots rents a three-story building at 1632 S. King Street, which serves as the organization's main headquarters, providing ample space for a range of services, including counseling through PonoRoots Counseling Center. The facility is centrally located within the urban core of Honolulu and is accessible by public transportation. The facility is only a few miles away from Downtown Honolulu and the University of Hawaii at Manoa.
Proposed Staffing and Service Capacity	A Family Tree's dedicated staff is led by Executive Director and CEO Kristine Altwies, MA/LMFT (pending PhD candidate) whose extensive experience and visionary leadership have been instrumental in the organization's success and growth. With more than 30 years in family-centered care, Kristine brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to her role. She holds a Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology with a focus on Marriage and Family from Argosy University in Honolulu. As a Family Counselor, Kristine specializes in adoption/foster issues, trauma-informed care, FASD, parenting issues, and is a highly skilled marriage and relationship counselor. Her deep understanding of family systems, commitment to evidence-based practices, and passion for supporting individuals and families have shaped PonoRoots Counseling Center into a trusted provider of mental health services. Kristine's ability to mentor emerging therapists and develop innovative programs ensures that the preceptorship program is grounded in both clinical excellence and compassion, meeting the highest standards of training and care. Kristine is the mother of six children, three of whom she adopted, sits on the board of Holt International Children's Services in Oregon, was appointed by Governor Lingle to the Committee to Protect Reproductive Rights; was named by PBN as a 30 Under 30 awardee; was a Pacific Century Fellow; was named an Angel of Adoption by the Congressional Caucus on International Adoption; received the Honolulu OWL NP Woman Leader of the Year award, hosts a podcast called A Really Good Enough Parent; and is the most frequently cited expert in local media in print and television adoption stories.
Staff Position(s) and Compensation	Position Salary CEO \$90,000 Licensed Therapist \$70,000 Office Manager \$50,000

Other Information

Pending Litigation	None
Special Licensure or Accreditations	LMFT
Private Educational Institutions	N/A

Confirmations

Documentation of Federal Impacts	☒		
Hawaii Compliance Express Certificate	☒	Active Status with the Hawaii AG	☒
IRS Determination Letter	☒	Certificate of Good Standing by the DCCA	☒
Records Retention Policy	☒	By-laws or Corporate Resolutions	☒
Authorized Representative Certification	☒	Signee Title	Office Manager

System Information

Application Type	Act 310 Nonprofit Grant Application	Applied Date	10/24/2025, 9:22 AM
Owner Name		Category	Grant Application
Created By	Andee Lau, 10/15/2025, 9:00 AM	Created Date	10/15/2025, 9:00 AM
Last Modified By	Andee Lau, 10/24/2025, 9:22 AM	Last Modified Date	10/24/2025, 9:22 AM

Files

Federal Funding Reduction Narrative	Federal Funding Reduction Narrative
Last Modified 10/24/2025, 9:19 AM Created By Andee Lau	Last Modified 10/24/2025, 9:16 AM Created By Daniel Kwoikoski
Sustainability Plan	Proof of Active Status
Last Modified 10/23/2025, 4:17 PM Created By Andee Lau	Last Modified 10/21/2025, 11:06 AM Created By Andee Lau
IRS 501(c)(3) Determination Ltr	HIC Records Retention Policy 2009
Last Modified 10/21/2025, 11:01 AM Created By Andee Lau	Last Modified 10/21/2025, 10:59 AM Created By Andee Lau
HIC Amended Bylaws 2019 - signed	HIC COGS 9.30.25
Last Modified 10/21/2025, 10:41 AM Created By Andee Lau	Last Modified 10/21/2025, 10:39 AM Created By Andee Lau
Budget Request By Source of Funds	BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - PERSONNEL SALARIES AND WAGES
Last Modified 10/21/2025, 10:21 AM Created By Andee Lau	Last Modified 10/21/2025, 10:21 AM Created By Andee Lau
BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - EQUIPMENT AND MOTOR VEHICLES	PRCC Organizational Chart 2025
Last Modified 10/21/2025, 10:21 AM Created By Andee Lau	Last Modified 10/21/2025, 10:20 AM Created By Andee Lau
HIC PRCC Org Chart 2025	Budget Request By Source of Funds
Last Modified 10/20/2025, 3:12 PM Created By Andee Lau	Last Modified 10/20/2025, 1:15 PM Created By Andee Lau
BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - EQUIPMENT AND MOTOR VEHICLES	BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - PERSONNEL SALARIES AND WAGES
Last Modified 10/20/2025, 1:11 PM Created By Andee Lau	Last Modified 10/20/2025, 1:11 PM Created By Andee Lau
Certificate of Vendor Compliance 10-20-25	Budget Request By Source of Funds
Last Modified 10/20/2025, 1:05 PM Created By Andee Lau	Last Modified 10/16/2025, 2:25 PM Created By Andee Lau
BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - PERSONNEL SALARIES AND WAGES	BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - EQUIPMENT AND MOTOR VEHICLES
Last Modified 10/16/2025, 2:25 PM Created By Andee Lau	Last Modified 10/16/2025, 2:25 PM Created By Andee Lau