1. **What is unique about the RVELC model?**

RVELC is unique in paving the way for a dynamic community-university partnership that will serve as a national model for authentic community driven work. It will be a hub of early learning excellence that is embedded within and part of the Rainier Valley Community, while leveraging UW's expertise in research and dissemination to have a national impact.

Furthermore, RVELC is focused on high quality learning for young children and for adults: from UW students earning bachelors and advanced degrees in early childhood to supporting working professionals seeking to enhance their careers development. Thus, the childcare center serves a dual purpose - early childcare and learning for children and families, and a learning lab for aspiring teachers and practitioners locally and around the world. Students in teacher training will have the opportunity to apply their learning to practice through the partnership with the community-led center. The model will also welcome early learning practitioners from around the world to come and learn solutions for enriching, high quality, place-based learning. Through this model of working in tandem with UW experts, with aspiring educators and with community care providers, breakthroughs in high-quality early learning practice will be rapidly disseminated nationwide.

Our vision is also unique in that it provides culturally affirming and anti-racist care and wellbeing for local children and their families. We will partner with the community to understand the hopes and dreams for the Rainier Valley and challenges to achieving these and then co-design resources and systems solutions to further equitable outcomes.

2. **What are the goals of RVELC?**

The RVELC aims to meet the following goals each year:

- Approximately 160 young learners and families across south Seattle will receive high-quality, affordable, culturally relevant early care and education.
- Hundreds of high school, undergraduate, and graduate students will pursue careers in early childhood care and education, including understanding the importance and shaping of public policy affecting children and families.
- Approximately 600 racially and linguistically diverse UW-educated practitioners will be prepared, meeting the state’s growing need for childcare and preschool educators.
- Programming for Head Start teachers, preschool educators and other state-subsidized providers will raise early learning quality in Washington state by providing current early care educators with BA degrees and offering research-driven culturally responsive workforce development training to teachers with BA degrees in unrelated fields.
- Physicians, mental health specialists, nurses, and others will collaborate to provide inclusive, prevention-focused services for children and families across the state.
- UW’s Cultivate Learning, a proven and nationally known incubator for early learning tools, web-based training, videos, and other materials, will reach more than 60,000 ECEAP, Head Start, and other early childhood educators across the country with digital skill-strengthening professional development instruction, modeling of best practices, and exposure to the latest research on what works best to prepare children to achieve their highest potential.

3. What need does the proposed work fill?

The proposed Campus will help fill a gap in direct services to children and families. It will help diversify the early learning workforce by preparing new teachers. It will provide continuing professional development to those already working in the field in our region, state, and country. It will be a center of research and evaluation of the best early learning practices and will share this knowledge with practitioners across the country. It will help shape new public policies for fair and equitable educator compensation, provide greater access and affordability for families seeking care and education for their children, and raise the bar on the quality of services.

4. How has the community been engaged?

The University of Washington’s College of Education has partnered with community to bring to life a vision for an early learning resource hub located at the Mt. Baker LINK station and serving the vibrant neighborhoods of the Rainier Valley. The College and our partners have dreamed a space shaped by community needs and community voice. We have worked together with partners from across the
southeast Seattle area, the Mt. Baker neighborhood in particular, alongside educators and early learning professionals across our community.

By February 2021, we had engaged with over two dozen organizations who serve the Mt. Baker and larger south Seattle communities, including:

- 139 family members of young children, community residents and organizational leaders
- 374 surveys from South Seattle residents translated in multiple languages
- 34 South King County child-, family and youth-serving organizations
- 42 UW faculty, staff and students
- City, county, state and federal offices and elected officials.

5. What is the vision for future RVELC collaborations?

The University of Washington recognizes that solutions to intractable systemic inequities can only be addressed by bringing together coalitions of cross-sector practitioners and university researchers from across multiple disciplines. RVELC is conceived by its university, community, and government partners as an exemplar of community engaged research and learning. The community engaged design process which has driven RVELC’s work to-date will continue to guide decisions related to which entities may eventually co-locate on site – and how the broader ecosystem of UW, public, private and community partners will collaborate to strengthen the fields of early care and learning.

Whole Child, Full Continuum

While UW’s contributions to RVELC’s design have been led by the College of Education, the deans and key faculty members from numerous disciplines have been engaged in RVELC “design sprints” and programmatic nodes are being built for potential connection to scholars and researchers from programs like the School of Nursing Barnard Center for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health, UW Medicine’s burgeoning program for prenatal equity, the School of Social Work, and several others. Participating programs are committed to the comprehensive wellbeing of children and their care systems. Similarly, while design focus of RVELC to-date has been on programing impacting children in their earliest years, our team recognizes the necessity of fluidity between disciplines serving the full continuum of youth from the prenatal years through adolescence and young adulthood.
We anticipate inviting community and multidisciplinary thought partners around issues such as:

- **Early and adolescent behavioral health**: We recognize that we cannot offer a holistic approach to serving children and families without also serving and supporting adolescent wellbeing — especially as we are co-located with affordable housing. As the University’s focus on this body of work evolves, RVELC’s scope and name might expand to represent our interdisciplinary partners and whole-child approach, however the vision of serving children and families will remain integral to the site through the community-provided childcare and aspiring educator training.

- **Legal and early childhood policy change**: Many of the challenges facing the field of early childhood, including pay parity, require systemic solutions. RVELC will be a hub for students and experts across the College of Education, School of Public Health, School of Law and policymakers to collect community input and co-create systemic solutions to pressing societal challenges impacting children and families. RVELC’s community-engaged lab model will be applied to identify and workshop practice and policy solutions across disciplines.

- **Holistic healthcare and health services for children and families**: We have explored ideas with UW Medicine and UW Nursing to utilize RVELC to expand access to health care services. Doing so will enable us to build on under-utilized but natural alignments between childcare physical, mental, and behavioral health screenings and primary care services for children, youth and families and to strengthen public health in Rainier Valley.

**6. What are the goals of Washington State Early Learning Pipeline and Capacity Building initiative funded by the Ballmer Group that will take place at RVELC?**

a. Increase the number of highly qualified and diverse early educators and leaders in Washington state through undergraduate early childhood education programs.

b. Attract and retain underrepresented early learning scholars, faculty and policy makers.
   
   i. Create a new Masters in Early Childhood Policy (ECP) to influence issues in the field such as pay equity
   
   ii. Increase diversity of faculty with the endowed Doctoral Fellowships and Professorships in Early Learning.