

Funding Announcement Title: Promoting Service Access and Equity Grant

Funding Announcement Number: FY 21-22

Announcement Type: Initial

Open Date: September 8, 2021

Close Date: November 3, 2021

Announcement Narrative:



Department of Developmental Services

Promoting Service Access and Equity Grant

Promoting Service Access, Equity, and Reducing Purchase of Service Disparities for Californians with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Grant Guidelines for Applicants

Fiscal Year 2021-22

Our Vision

Our vision is to create transformational changes toward a culturally and linguistically competent developmental disabilities system, which reflects service quality and is responsive to the beliefs, values, attitudes, language, behaviors, and choices of the diverse individuals and their families who receive services.

Background

California's landmark 1969 Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act provides an entitlement to services and supports for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, spoken language, or economic status. In FY 2021-22, the state's 21 nonprofit regional centers (RCs) are expected to serve over 360,000 individuals. Individuals served by RCs reflect the diversity of California, comprising at least 23 ethnicities and more than 45 languages.

Annually, RCs collaborate with the Department of Developmental Services (Department) to gather and report data related to purchase of service (POS) authorization, utilization, and expenditures for each RC per Welfare and Institutions Code (W&I) section 4519.5. This POS data indicates there are significant disparities based on race and ethnicity. RCs also undertake activities to identify significant disparities, and barriers to equitable access to services and supports, and to develop recommendations and plans to reduce existing disparities. RCs are required to report annually to the Department: 1) actions taken to improve public attendance and participation at stakeholder meetings related to POS data; 2) copies of minutes and attendee comments; and 3) the RC's recommendations and plan to promote equity and reduce disparities in POS, if the data indicate a need to reduce disparities. Due to the impact of COVID-19, the timeframe for which RCs are required to conduct public meetings to discuss their POS data was extended to June 30, 2021, and the time for providing the annual report was extended to August 31, 2021. Grantees are advised to use the most current posted RC POS reports and recommendations to submit their grant proposals.

The Department is committed to using the lens of cultural and linguistic competence to focus on disrupting social injustices and racial inequalities within the developmental services system. As California continues to meet the challenges of the pandemic, the Department will reinforce its efforts to advance service access and equity to support individuals with developmental disabilities from marginalized communities thrive. The Promoting Service Access and Equity Grant will be used to make measurable progress in reducing disparities and shifting the developmental services system to attain improved outcomes for diverse communities.

Grant Focus for 2021-22

This year's grant focus is to reinforce effective strategies that will lead to a culturally and linguistically responsive developmental disability service system to improve service access and empower all individuals and families served.

The Department has identified key grant priorities with input through its Developmental Services Task Force Service Access and Equity workgroup meetings, statewide stakeholder engagement meetings, community-based organization meetings, and individual and family testimony. Priority areas of focus are:

- Creating community partnerships for learning and advocacy development between individuals, families, service providers, regional centers, and local and state agencies.
- Developing leaders from diverse communities to engage with service systems through participation, influence, and timely input.

- Improving access to Early Start services, resources, and education for diverse, underserved or marginalized communities.
- Cultivating meaningful relationships and tribal engagement between the Native American community, regional centers, and community-based organizations.
- Increasing access to deaf services and resources to include training and education for self-advocates and families.
- Diversify the I/DD workforce to reflect California's demographics and be culturally and linguistically responsive to the choices and needs of individuals and families served.
- Improve access to culturally and linguistically responsive behavioral health services, supports and crisis intervention for self-advocates and families.

The Department seeks proposals that are innovative, demonstrate the capacity to carry out proposed activities and result in sustained strategies and collaborations after completion of the project. Proposals must address a local community or statewide issue/barrier identified through POS data, stakeholder feedback, and/or RC plans and recommendations to promote equity and reduce disparities. For the 2021-22 fiscal year, the Department may limit the number of grants awarded within the \$11M.

Available Funding and Project Term

Total funds of \$11 million will be awarded in the 2021-22 grant cycle. Typical project terms considered for funding are between 12 months and 24 months. For more information on the previously awarded grants, go to the Department's webpage [here](#).

Request for Proposal Timeline

The Department is seeking proposals from organizations with strong ties to the developmental services system. To be considered for funding, applicants must apply online at [GrantVantage - DDS Application Process](#). All proposals are due by 5:00 pm PST on November 3, 2021.

Timeline:

- September 8, 2021: Release of 2021-22 Promoting Service Access and Equity Grant Guidelines.
- September 16, 2021: Bidder's Conference for interested applicants.
- November 3, 2021: Proposals due by 5:00 pm PST.
- November 4, 2021 to December 31, 2021: Proposal evaluation and selection process completed.
- By January 31, 2022: Notification of grant awards will be made to all applicants and will be posted to the Department's website.

- February 1, 2022: Projects are anticipated to begin by February 1, 2022 but no later than March 1, 2022. Actual start dates will be dependent on the date the grant agreement is completed upon award.

Online Application

For the 2021-22 Promoting Service Access and Equity Grant application process, applicants will submit proposals using the Department's online grant management system at: [GrantVantage - DDS Application Process](#).

- Applications will be submitted online through the GrantVantage system. Applicants will be required to follow a series of steps to submit their application:
 1. Create an Applicant Profile
 2. Answer applicant questions
 3. Complete an Activities Template
 4. Complete a Budget Template
- Applicants will send technical support questions to GrantVantage at applicantssupport@grantvantage.com. Technical assistance will be available during business hours 8:00 am - 5:00 pm PST. Applicants will watch the online DDS Applicant video to complete the application process [here](#).
- For questions about the grant content, applicants will submit questions to the Department at SAEgrantprogram@dds.ca.gov.
- FAQs for the 2021-22 grant will be available on the Department's website [here](#) and will be updated based on questions received.
- CBOs are required to submit their application concurrently to the Department and to each RC(s) catchment the CBO is intending to serve. At the end of the application process in the GV system, CBOs must do the following:
 1. Download a PDF file of the completed grant application that includes three reports: (1) Application Report (2) Objective Report; and (3) Budget Report; and
 2. Submit the application to the RC(s) the project will serve. The RC contact list is available [here](#) at Attachment F.

General Information

- Organizations that plan to work together are strongly encouraged to submit one application rather than separate applications from multiple organizations.
- University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) organizations applying for grant funding must complete a Model Agreement concurrent with the application proposal. The Model Agreement template can be found at the

Department of General Services' webpage [here](#). Please note that the Department will require changes to the terms listed in the University Terms and Conditions.

Project Types

Applicants will be asked to select one of the four project types that best describes their activities from the list below:

- **Education and Training:** Increase self-advocate/family knowledge about topics relating to service access, the regional center system, leadership development, business development, advocacy, independent facilitation, implicit bias, and developmental disabilities.
- **Engagement and Outreach** - Increase community awareness and engagement through outreach activities (e.g., informational presentations, fairs, developmental screening events).
- **Community Connector** - Utilize community leaders, family members, and self-advocates to provide individualized support to assist families with accessing services. Promotora, Navigator, Peer/Parent Mentor or Independent Facilitator are examples of community connector projects.
- **Workforce Capacity and Development** - Diversify and increase cultural and linguistic competency of regional center and/or service provider staff, expand available workforce, and promote business ownership from diverse communities.

Grant Activities

Proposed grant activities should be clear in their design and detailed about the expected benefit or impact to the targeted population's consumer and/or family experience. All grant activities that are planned to occur in-person need to have a clear safety plan for grantee staff and participants to comply with all state and local health guidelines.

Grant Measures

All projects are required to report data to show progress and outcomes of activities. Projects may provide quantitative or qualitative data, or both.

- Quantitative data can be measured, such as the number of participants in Community Connector program, pre/post surveys that are scored with numbers, and comparison of POS expenditures before and after participation in a project.
- Qualitative data is a description, such as what participants say they learned in an orientation. Qualitative data is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons and motivations and uncover trends in thoughts and opinions. Qualitative data may be collected using open-ended written or verbal questions in surveys, focus groups, and interviews. Findings from qualitative data are typically summarized in writing.

Standardized Measures

All Education and Training, Community Connector, and Workforce Capacity and Development projects must provide pre/post assessments to measure their impact. All Community Connector projects must use the Department's standardized set of measures which are located [here](#) at Attachment B. Grantees may also collect additional information for these projects.

Grant Budget

Proposed budgets need to be directly tied to proposed grant activities and reflect reasonable costs. Grant budgets may not be used for activities that the organization is otherwise funded to conduct. Administrative costs are limited to 15% of the grant total. A list of allowable and unallowable expenses is located [here](#).

Quarterly Progress Reports

All grantees are required to submit reports every quarter over the course of the project and are due to the Department on the last day of the month following the end of each quarter (e.g. January 31, April 30, July 31, and October 31). Quarterly reports will be submitted in GrantVantage by updating performance measures, activities, and financial data. The reports will be used to assess performed activities and whether the project is on target with the approved work plan. The Department may request additional information regarding progress and supporting documentation.

Final Reports

All grantees are required to compile their data and complete a final report within 45 days of the end of a project. All grantees are required to submit a final report including projects continuing to the next grant year. Final reports will be posted to the Department's website pursuant to [Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 4519.5](#).

Proposal Review Process

Applicant Eligibility

Proposals from organizations and subcontractors must be in good standing with the California Secretary of State, California Franchise Tax Board, and/or California Department of Tax and Fee Administration to be considered for review.

The Department will use the following links to verify organizational standing:

- [Secretary of State](#)
- [Top 500 Tax Sales delinquent](#)
- [Top 500 Past Due Balances](#)
- [Valid Sellers Permit](#)

Reapplications

Reapplications are proposals that will continue an active project awarded in 2019-20 or 2020-21 without changes to the target population, geographic area, activities, or objectives; or, will expand a previously awarded project into other target populations, geographic areas, activities, or objectives. Reapplications that report remaining funding that is sufficient to continue activities in the 2021-22 year will not be considered for new funding.

Applicants proposing to continue an active grant project that is funded in 2019-20 or 2020-21 will be asked to provide information about their current grant and the following questions:

1. Provide a clear and concise explanation of the current grant's project activities and key accomplishments to date. Include data and participant experiences or other information that demonstrate the current project outcomes and impacts in serving the target communities.
2. Provide a clear and concise description of project activities and measures that remain to be completed and reasons why.

Reapplication Evaluation

Each question above will be rated as follows:

- **Exceptional** - Exceeds the minimum requirements and describes progress made and what has been accomplished, how the activities impacted the community, description of activities and transition plan.
- **Adequate** - Satisfies the minimum requirements and generally describes progress made, how previous year funding has impacted community, description of activities and transition plan.
- **Inadequate** - Does not satisfy the minimum progress or impact requirements or activities to be completed and transition plan.

If the reapplication scores two or more "Inadequate" ratings from the areas above, the reapplication will not be considered for funding.

All Applications

All applications that pass the previous evaluations will advance to a panel review. A review panel will evaluate and score each proposal. The scores from all reviewers will be averaged into a final score for each proposal. Proposals scoring 70 points and above out of 100 total possible points are eligible for funding and may be awarded. The Department may consider applications scoring less than 70 points to ensure the needs of each catchment area are met. If identified, the Department will work with these applicants to modify and strengthen the proposal.

Application Scoring Criteria	Point Value
Provide a clear and concise project summary that includes a defined target population, catchment area, and project design. Specifically describe what your project will accomplish and how it will benefit the community served. In your answer, include what experience your organization has working with the target population.	15
Explain how the target population(s) are underserved using RC POS data or other data as supporting evidence of the disparity. In your answer, include how your organization used input from the community and/or target population to design the project.	10
How is the proposed project unique or different from a currently funded grant (e.g., strategies, activities, and goals) in the proposed regional center catchment area? If the project is similar to a currently funded grant listed on the Department's website, how is the proposed project different?	10
How will your project improve equity, access and reduce barriers to services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families?	15
How does this project support the RC plan to promote equity and reduce disparities in their catchment area? If you are a RC, how does this project support your recommendations and plan to promote equity and reduce your identified disparities? How will your project collaborate with other organizations that serve individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families?	10
The schedule of activities clearly and specifically demonstrates the steps that the project will take to achieve its stated objective and measures.	10
The proposed measures are appropriate to track the project objective and activities, provide insight into the effectiveness of the overall design of the project and demonstrate how the impact on the community will be evaluated.	10
The project budget is consistent with the stated project objective and activities, and clearly and concisely explains how the proposed expenditures support the overall project design and proposed outcomes.	10
The project budget costs are clearly associated with the project activities and objective and does not include non-allowable costs or costs funded by other sources.	10
TOTAL POSSIBLE SCORE	100

Funding Review

All applications achieving a passing score will be reviewed by the Department and assessed for funding within the \$11 million available. Reviewers will evaluate the

proposals by intended target population, catchment area, and project type. The Department will prioritize funding projects that align with the identified focus areas, focus populations, the additional needs of each catchment area (after consideration of ongoing projects), and RC input. If necessary, applicants will be asked to clarify or adjust proposed objective, activities, measures and/or data collection methods.

Funding Review Scale:

- Meets - Satisfies the minimum requirements.
- Does Not Meet - Does not satisfy the minimum requirements.

Additional Considerations	1 = Meets 0 = Does Not Meet
The project’s target population does not duplicate current efforts in the same catchment area.	
The project targets a catchment area that is new and presently not being served.	
There are no similar project types (outreach, education, etc.) in the catchment area to what is being proposed.	

Notice of Decision and Grantee Responsibilities

By January 31, 2022, the Department will notify all applicants of the final decision via email. If the applicant is awarded funding, the notice will contain a formal cover letter, feedback on measures/data collection methods, and a grant agreement. After final awards are made, approved project proposals will be posted on the Department’s website [here](#). All grant agreements will be signed with DocuSign.

Invoicing and Payments for Grantees

Payee Data Record

Prior to the issuance of payments to grantees, a [Payee Data Record Form STD 204](#) must be submitted to the Department. The form is used to set up payments and tracking of payments issued from the State Controller’s Office to the grantee.

Financial Management Services (FMS) Requirement

CBOs may utilize an FMS provider to increase program fiscal accountability. FMS providers can make payments on the organization’s behalf and ensure that program funds are only used for authorized items.

CBOs must use an FMS if the CBO, or any of its CBO partners, does not have an established EIN. The cost of an FMS provider varies. The costs associated with an FMS must be included in the budget under operating expenses. The FMS must also be listed on the Payee Data Record form (STD 204) when the proposal is submitted. For more information about FMS services, please refer to the appropriate RC for a list of FMS agencies.

For CBO's considered for a grant award of \$200,000 or more, the Department will consider the grantee's capacity to administer state funds adequately and appropriately. After consideration, the Department may require a CBO to utilize a fiscal or management agent as a condition of award.

Payment Schedule for CBOs

Award Amount at or Above \$100,000

Project award amounts over \$100,000 will be paid, upon receipt of an invoice, as follows:

1. An initial payment of 25 percent of the approved grant amount will be made after execution of the Grant Agreement and submission of the first invoice by the Grantee to the Department.
2. A second payment of 25 percent of the approved grant amount will be made after the following conditions have been met:
 - a. The Department's has determined that the Grantees is meeting deliverables in accordance with Grant application and approves the first Quarterly Progress Report;
 - b. The Department has determined that the expenses in the first Quarterly Expense Report are appropriate and in accordance with the approved Budget;
AND
 - c. The grantee has expended at least 60 percent of the initial advance payment.
 - d. An invoice shall be submitted to the Department after the above conditions have been met.
3. A third payment of 25 percent of the approved grant amount will be made in accordance with the above requirements set forth in 2) for the second Quarter.
4. A fourth payment of 15 percent of the approved grant amount will be made in accordance with the above requirements set forth in 2) for the third Quarter.
5. A final payment of 10 percent of the approved grant amount will be made after all of the following conditions have been met:
 - a. The Grantee delivers its Final Report to the Department within 45 days of termination of the project;

- b. The Grantee provides a final accounting and reconciliation of funds received and actual Grant expenditures and delivers its accounting and reconciliation to the Department
- c. The Department has reconciled Grantee's invoices against its expenses, and the Department has made a determination that allowable expenses have exceeded the advance payments paid by up to 10 percent; AND
- d. The Department has made a determination that Grantee has satisfactorily completed all the terms and conditions required by this Agreement, including providing any additional information requested by the Department.
- e. An invoice shall be submitted to the Department after the above conditions have been met.

Report Schedule for 12-Month Projects	Payment Schedule for 12-Month Projects
Submit Initial Invoice	Receive first payment of 25 percent of grant after grant agreement execution and submittal of first invoice.
Submit 1 st Quarterly Report	Submit second invoice upon approval.
Submit 2nd Quarterly Report	Submit third invoice upon approval.
Submit 3rd Quarterly Report	Submit fourth invoice upon approval.
Submit 4th Quarterly Report	Receive approval of Quarterly Report. No invoice to submit.
Submit Final Report	Submit final invoice after approval of Final Report.

For two-year projects, the payment schedule will consist of 9 payments (5 in Year 1 and 4 in Year 2), based on the approved annual budget for each year. In addition, in Year one, an expanded fourth quarterly progress report must be submitted; and, in year Two, a final report must be submitted within 45 days of the completion of the project. Both reports will be in a format determined by the Department.

Award Amount Below \$100,000

Project award amounts under \$100,000 will be paid, upon receipt of an invoice, as follows:

1. An initial payment of 90 percent of the approved grant amount will be made after execution of the Grant Agreement and submission of the first invoice by the Grantee to the Department.
2. Final payment of 10 percent of the approved grant amount will be made after all of the following conditions have been met:

- a. The Grantee delivers its Final Report within 45 days of termination of the project;
- b. The Grantee invoices a reconciliation of the total amount received by the Grantee with a final accounting of actual Grant expenditures and delivers its reconciliation and accounting to the Department;
- c. The Department has reconciled Grantee's invoices against its expenses; AND
- d. The Department has made a determination that Grantee has satisfactorily completed all the terms and conditions required by this Agreement, including providing any additional information requested by the Department.

Note: CBO invoicing and payments may be adjusted based on the approved total budget, the duration of the project, Department approved activities, and the needs of the approved project.

Payment Criteria and Invoice Submittal

Grantees must obtain Department approval of their quarterly report prior to submitting an invoice. An invoice is required for payment and the invoice will be submitted online using the SAE DocuSign templates provided to grantees.

Invoicing and Payments for RCs

RCs will invoice and receive payments through the existing allocation and payment process. RCs must track and report individual project costs in GrantVantage.

Supporting Documentation

Grantees shall maintain supporting documentation for all expenses for each line item. Supporting documentation may be requested to support expenses at any time and be subject to audit during and after completion of the grant project. Examples of supporting documentation include but are not limited to the following:

- Timesheets
- Travel receipts (e.g., meals, hotels)
- Mileage logs
- Cancelled checks (stamped by the institution from which the money is drawn to indicate funds guaranteed on the check have been paid)
- Bank statements
- Purchase receipts
- Attendance records (e.g., workshops, trainings)

Project Change Requests and Amendments

All requests for project modifications and budget changes are required to be submitted and processed through the DDS grant management system (GrantVantage). Prior to implementing a change, grantees must receive Department approval. Grantees are required to complete a request for a project modification for any amendments to the approved project activities, including, but not limited to: deviation from the initial intent of a proposed activity, unexpected obstacles or delays in project implementation, or changes to the line items in the approved budget.

The Department will review request(s) and work with grantees to identify necessary actions to address any modifications. The Department must approve any project modifications or amendments prior to implementation. A change request form must be submitted for approval on extensions to project end dates. Access to the DDS grants management system (GrantVantage) will be provided to the grantee upon completion of the DDS online certification program.

Definitions of Key Terms

Community Based Organization (CBO)

For the purposes of this funding, a CBO is defined as a public or private nonprofit, or private for profit- organization that is representative of and advocates for a community or significant segments of a community. Each CBO must describe its organization and clearly state how it meets the definition of a CBO.

Regional Centers (RCs)

RCs are private nonprofit corporations that contract with the Department to provide or coordinate services and supports for individuals with developmental disabilities. There are 21 RCs in California. The RC contact list is located [here](#) at Attachment F.

Purchase of Services (POS)

Refers to authorization for and purchase of RC services for consumers and includes service authorizations and expenditures. POS expenditure data represent the cost of services that the RC paid to vendored service providers on behalf of the consumer and his/her family. RC POS data is located [here](#) at Attachment D.