

Funding Announcement Title: Employment Grants
Funding Announcement Number: 2022
Announcement Type: Initial
Open Date: June 29, 2022
Due Date for Online Application: August 24, 2022
Announcement Narrative:



Department of Developmental Services

Employment Grants

Developing and implementing innovative and replicable strategies and practices to increase paid work experiences and employment opportunities for Californians with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

2022 Grant Guidelines for Applicants

Our Vision

Our vision is to increase opportunities for competitive integrated employment and expand career pathways for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

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 fiscal year (FY) 2022-23, the state's 21 nonprofit regional centers (RCs) are expected to serve over 400,000 individuals.

On October 9, 2013, Governor Brown signed AB 1041 (Chesbro), which establishes in statute an Employment First Policy Welfare and Institution Code (W&I) Section 4869(a)(1):

“in furtherance of the purposes of this division (the Lanterman Act) to make services and supports available to enable persons with developmental disabilities to approximate the pattern of everyday living available to people without disabilities of the same age, to support the integration of persons with developmental disabilities into the mainstream life of the community, and to bring about more independent, productive, and normal lives...”

In May 2015, a partnership between the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) and California Department of Education (CDE) released the California Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) Blueprint in consultation and collaboration with Disability Rights California (DRC) detailing the coordinated efforts of the three departments. The purpose is to ensure that all youth and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who choose competitive integrated employment are provided opportunities to equip them with the skills and knowledge to participate in the workforce. The Blueprint is scheduled to end the fifth year of implementation on June 30, 2022.

In 2016, DDS created the Paid Internship Program (PIP) and the Competitive Integrated Employment Incentive Payment (CIE-IP) program to further support individuals served by regional centers to obtain competitive integrated employment and encourage providers to focus efforts into competitive integrated employment opportunities and retention (W&I Code Section 4870). California State Legislature approved ongoing funding for each regional center to hire an Employment Specialists to lead efforts, provide oversight and report on new competitive integrated employment initiatives.

The Developmental Services Budget Trailer Bill, AB 136 (Chapter 76, Statutes of 2021), effective July 16, 2021, authorized additional funding to advance competitive integrated employment. Enacted as W&I Code Section 4870.1, DDS, received \$10 Million in funding to increase pathways to employment. Through grant opportunities, entities can develop and implement innovative and replicable strategies and practices to increase paid work experiences and employment opportunities for individuals who are served by regional centers.

In 2021 DDS established an Employment Workgroup of individuals with developmental disabilities, family members, advocates, service providers, regional center staff, members of the DDS Developmental Services Task Force, DOR, CDE, and the

Employment Development Department (EDD). The stakeholders provide input on critical issues, priorities, and strategies related to building career pathways for individuals served by the regional centers. The Employment Grant Program was developed with input from stakeholders participating in the DDS Employment Workgroup. Information regarding the DDS Employment Workgroup is located on the [DDS website](#).

Additional information regarding DDS Employment Data can be found in the following links.

- [Facts & Stats - CA Department of Developmental Services](#)
- [Employment - CA Department of Developmental Services](#)

Employment Grant Program Description

The Employment Grant Program will be administered by DDS. The purpose of the grant program is to increase competitive integrated employment opportunities for individuals served by regional centers. DDS seeks proposals that will utilize new, innovative, best, or promising practices to support career pathways for youth and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and provide opportunities for competitive integrated employment. Proposals should be innovative, demonstrate the capacity to carry out proposed activities and result in sustained and replicable strategies and collaborations after completion of the project.

Employment Grant Priority Areas

DDS has identified key grant priorities with input from stakeholders through the Employment Workgroup. The priority areas of focus are:

- Implementing evidence-based, new, and emerging best practices for job attainment, retention, and career advancement through an individualized, self-directed, and whole-person approach to services.
- Providing pathways to employment for individuals with high support needs through an individualized and whole person approach to services.
- Developing business or industry focused collaborations to increase workforce preparation and employment opportunities.
- Increasing family, adult and youth knowledge and use of community employment-related resources and services.
- Changing service delivery models to promote competitive integrated employment for all individuals served.

Available Funding and Project Term

Total funds of \$10 million will be awarded in the 2022 grant cycle. Project terms considered for funding are between 12 months to 18 months.

Request for Proposal Timeline

To be considered for funding, applicants must apply online through DDS' online grant management system, [GrantVantage](#). All proposals are due by 5:00 pm PDT on August 24, 2022. Applications that do not meet this timeline will not be reviewed.

Timeline

- June 29, 2022: Release of 2022 Employment Grant Guidelines.
- July 7, 2022: 3:00 pm PDT: Bidder's Conference for interested applicants.
- August 24, 2022: Proposals due by 5:00 pm PDT.
- August 25, 2022 to October 31, 2022: Proposal evaluation and selection process completed.
- By November 30, 2022: Notification of grant awards will be made to all applicants and will be posted to the DDS website.
- December 1, 2022: Projects are anticipated to begin by December 1, 2022, but no later than January 1, 2023. Actual start dates will be dependent on the date the Grant Agreement is completed upon award.

Applicant Eligibility

This is an open application to organizations with strong ties to the developmental services system, including, but not limited to community-based organizations, colleges and universities, and employment providers. 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. Organizations vendored with regional center(s) must be compliant with [W&I Code Section 4652.5](#).

DDS 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](#)

Online Application

- For the 2022 Employment Grant application process, applicants will submit proposals using [GrantVantage](#). Instructions regarding how to complete the GrantVantage application are found in [Attachment A](#). 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 PDT. On August 24, 2022, technical support questions to GrantVantage are only accepted until 3:00 pm PDT. Applicants will watch the online [DDS Applicant video](#) to complete the application process.
- For questions about the grant content, applicants will submit questions to DDS at employmentgrant@dds.ca.gov.
- A list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for the 2022 Employment Grants will be available on the [DDS website](#) and will be updated based on questions received.
- Applicants are required to submit their application concurrently to DDS and to each RC(s) the Applicant is intending to serve. At the end of the application process in the GrantVantage system, Applicant 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 in [Attachment B](#).

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. Please note that DDS will require changes to the terms listed in the University Terms and Conditions.

Criteria for All Grants

- Expands opportunities for competitive integrated employment for all individuals;
- Utilizes person-centered career planning to identify personal outcomes, career goals, and preferences for achieving competitive integrated employment;
- Is realistic and feasible to implement (e.g., timeframe, funding, skilled personnel);
- Is replicable, using evidence based, promising or best practices;
- Is sustainable after the grant period;
- Includes individuals who are from diverse communities.
- Service Model Transformation Projects must also include a plan to make two community presentations to key stakeholders and community members. The first presentation is to receive feedback about the proposed changes within the agency. The second community presentation is to present the completed action plan.

Project Types

Applicants are asked to select one of the five project types that best describes their activities from the list below:

- **Business Focused Practices:** Establish ongoing employer or industry focused collaborations that support the success of the business and create more opportunities for the employment of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Business focused practices may include but are not limited to developing work-based learning opportunities, developing high quality matching of job candidates, access to job openings that may be customized to individual needs, personalized interactions with hiring personnel, and supporting disability inclusion in the workplace.
- **Employment Preparation Services and Supports:** Create innovative pathways to employment that utilize evidence-based, best, or promising practices in employment supports and strategies for job attainment, retention, and career advancements in competitive integrated employment. This may include, but is not limited to: family engagement, paid work experience, coordination of services, customized employment, postsecondary education or training, supported employment, benefits planning, and/or technology.
- **Service Models for Individuals with High Support Needs:** Establish new and innovative ways to achieve competitive integrated employment for individuals with high support needs utilizing a whole person approach through intensive employment services.
- **Service Model Transformation:** Develop an action plan for organizational transformation to a business and service delivery model that supports

competitive integrated employment for every individual served. The grant will support training and technical assistance for the planning process.

- **Training and Implementation:** May include multiple platforms or methods of training such as in-person, virtual, peer mentoring, peer learning, train the trainer, coaching and/or community of practice. This may also include cross-agency training that leads to improvements in planning and services for competitive integrated employment.
 - **Professional and Staff:** Increase statewide provider knowledge and use of evidence-based and best practices in competitive integrated employment and effective outreach and partnerships with businesses. Projects must include coaching or technical assistance for local implementation of practices learned. Projects may include cross agency training of professionals and staff that leads to improved planning, coordination, and services for competitive integrated employment.
 - **Family, Adult and Youth:** Increase family, adult and youth knowledge and use of resources, services, and supports for competitive integrated employment. This may include use of community resources, work experience opportunities, self-advocacy, transition planning from school to postsecondary education and employment, navigating adult service systems and benefits planning.

Grant Activities

Proposed grant activities should be clear in their design and detailed about the expected benefit or impact to the targeted consumer and/or family, provider, and employer 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 receiving new work-related services, number of work experiences.
- Qualitative data is information that can be observed and recorded but is not numerical in nature such as a description of the specific activities with each new employer (e.g., events, job fairs, touring business, etc.). Qualitative data is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons 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 and Individual Outcome Reporting

All Employment Grant projects must use the DDS standardized set of measures. All project types, except Service Model Transformation, will also provide individual participant outcome data for all participants served by the regional center. Standard project measures and individual outcome data requirements are in [Attachment C](#). 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 in [Attachment D](#).

Quarterly Progress Reports

All Grantees are required to submit reports every quarter over the course of the project and are due to DDS 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. DDS 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.

Proposal Review Process

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. DDS may consider applications scoring less than 70 points to

ensure the needs of each catchment area are met. If identified, DDS will work with these applicants to modify and strengthen the proposal.

Application Scoring Criteria	Total Points Possible	Score
Project Description		
<p>Did grant application provide a clear and concise narrative of the project focusing on one primary project type that includes the following:</p> <p><u>All project types must include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the target population and communities to be served; • Data or other information to describe the need for the project; • How the project will include participants from diverse backgrounds. <p><u>Project types: Business Focused Practices; Employment Preparation Services & Supports; Service Models for Individuals with High Support Needs; Training and Implementation must include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the project participants will be provided information, support services and/or practical experience to make an informed choice of career options and goals; • A description of the innovative, evidence-based, best, or promising practices, services and /or supports that will be used; • The number of individuals with I/DD who are projected to participate and/or benefit. <p><u>Project type: Service Model Transformation must include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the transformation team that will be developing the action plan and includes representation by individuals with I/DD, family members, those who provide direct support, and other relevant community members (businesses, peer organizations); • The objectives and strategic approach to be used in developing the action plan. • A detailed description of the planning process that will be used. 	30	
Project Evaluation & Activity Management		
<p>Did grant application include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear statement of the objective and activities that are attainable within the time frame of the grant; • Activities aligned with the stated need and objective; • A clear schedule of activities that specifies the steps the project will take to achieve the stated objective and complete activities; • A clear description of problems, challenges, or issues and how the project will address them. 	20	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear plan of how data will be collected to track project objectives, activities and measures (e.g., what data collection tools will be used, who will collect, software used to summarize, etc.) 			
Organizational Capacity			
<p>Did grant application adequately describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The primary purpose or mission of the applicant organization/agency; • Organization/ agency experience and current capacity to support grant-based activities and reporting; • Organization/agency experience providing services and supports to individuals with I/DD; • Organization/agency experience in providing services and supports for competitive integrated employment; • How the organization/agency will secure staff with the appropriate experience to support individuals with I/DD to attain competitive integrated employment; • How the grant will help the organization/agency build expertise to support individuals with I/DD to achieve competitive integrated employment; • A well-developed plan for sustainability beyond the funding period of the grant. 	20		
Engagement Plan			
<p>Did grant application include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the organization/agency will recruit participants and/or families for participation in the project; • How the organization/agency will collaborate with other groups, organizations, employers, and/or agencies to achieve the objectives and activities of the project. • Service Model Transformation Projects must also include a plan to make two community presentations to key stakeholders and community members. 	15		
Budget			
<p>Did grant application include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed and complete project budget; • A project budget that is consistent with the activities of the grant; • A project budget narrative that clearly and concisely explains how the proposed expenditures support the overall project design and activities; • A project budget that does not include non-allowable costs or costs funded by other sources. 	15		
TOTAL POSSIBLE SCORE		100	

Funding Review

All applications achieving a passing score will be reviewed by DDS and assessed for funding within the \$10 million available. Reviewers will evaluate the proposals by intended target population, catchment area, and project type. DDS 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, 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
Impacts individuals from diverse communities who have been historically marginalized or underserved.	
The project targets a geographic area that is new or presently not being served, a geographic distribution of grants across CA including regions that are urban, suburban, rural, and/or Tribal communities, as applicable.	
There are no similar project types in the geographic area to what is being proposed.	

Notice of Decision and Grantee Responsibilities

By November 30, 2022, DDS 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 [DDS website](#). 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 DDS. 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

Grantees 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.

Grantees must use an FMS if the Grantee, or any of its 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 Grantees considered for a grant award of \$200,000 or more, DDS will consider the Grantee's capacity to administer state funds adequately and appropriately. After consideration, DDS may require a Grantee to utilize a fiscal or management agent as a condition of award.

Payment Schedule for Grantees

Award Amount at or above \$100,000

Project award amounts at or above \$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 DDS.
2. A second payment of 25 percent of the approved grant amount will be made after the following conditions have been met:
 - a. DDS has determined that the Grantee is meeting deliverables in accordance with grant application and approves the first Quarterly Progress Report;
 - b. DDS 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 DDS 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 DDS 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 DDS;
 - c. DDS has reconciled Grantee's invoices against its expenses, and DDS has made a determination that allowable expenses have exceeded the advance payments paid by up to 10 percent; AND
 - d. DDS 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 DDS.
 - e. An invoice shall be submitted to DDS after the above conditions have been met.

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 50 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 DDS.
2. A second payment of 40 percent of the approved grant amount will be made after the following conditions have been met:
 - a. DDS has determined that the Grantees is meeting deliverables in accordance with grant application and approves the first Quarterly Progress Report;
 - b. DDS 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 DDS after the above conditions have been met.
3. 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 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 DDS;
- c. DDS has reconciled Grantee's invoices against its expenses; AND
- d. DDS 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 DDS.

Report Schedule	Payment Schedule for Below \$100,000	Payment Schedule for \$100,000 & above
Submit Initial Invoice	Receive first payment of 50 percent of grant after Grant Agreement execution and submittal of first invoice.	Receive first payment of 25 percent of grant after Grant Agreement execution and submittal of first invoice.
Submit 1 st Quarterly Reports	Submit second invoice upon approval.	Submit second invoice upon approval.
Submit 2 nd Quarterly Reports	Receive approval of quarterly reports. No invoice to submit.	Submit third invoice upon approval.
Submit 3 rd Quarterly Reports	Receive approval of quarterly reports. No invoice to submit.	Submit fourth invoice upon approval.
Submit 4 th Quarterly Reports	Receive approval of quarterly reports. No invoice to submit.	Receive approval of quarterly reports. No invoice to submit.
Submit Final Report	Submit final invoice after approval of Final Report.	Submit final invoice after approval of Final Report.

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

Payment Criteria and Invoice Submittal

Grantees must obtain DDS approval of their quarterly reports prior to submitting an invoice. An invoice is required for payment and the invoice will be submitted online using the Employment Grant DocuSign templates provided to Grantees.

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 GrantVantage. Prior to implementing a change, Grantees must receive DDS 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.

DDS will review request(s) and work with Grantees to identify necessary actions to address any modifications. DDS 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 GrantVantage will be provided to the Grantee upon completion of the DDS online certification program.

Definitions of Key Terms

Definitions of key terms used throughout the grant guidelines and grant application are found in [Attachment E](#).