Application Report



Applicant Organization:

Special Needs Network

YELEP - Youth Employment Leadership and Empowerment Program

Project Name:

Application ID:

FundingAnnouncement:

DDS Employment Grant

Requested Amount:

Project Summary: YELEP is an employment preparation training program that will create a clear pathway to employment with Special Needs Network and other partner agencies or companies.

Authorized Certifying Official:		
Project Director/Manager:		
Project Manager/Coordinator:		-
Compliance/Fiscal Officer:		

Section Name: Applicant Eligibility

Sub Section Name: Applicant Information

1. Applicant Question: Organization Type

Check all that apply. If selecting "Other" please specify your type of organization.

Applicant Response:

• Community-Based Organization

2. Applicant Question: Description of Agency/Organization

Provide a brief description of the organization or group. You may add a website link for additional information.

Applicant Response:

https://snnla.org/mission-values/

Special Needs Network, Inc. (SNN) is a non-profit grassroots organization responding to the crisis of autism and other developmental disabilities in underserved communities. We recognize the intersectionality of individuals with disabilities and that their fight for disability rights is inextricably tied to the fight for racial justice and the civil rights of all people.

3. Applicant Question: Applicant in Good Standing

Is the applicant in good standing with the California Secretary of State, California Franchise Tax Board, and California

Department of Tax and Fee Administration? Please upload confirmation letter(s) or proof of good standing.

Applicant Response:

Yes

Attachment:

4. Applicant Question: Subcontractors in Good Standing

Are the applicant's subcontractors in good standing with the California Secretary of State, California Franchise Tax Board, and California Department of Tax and Fee Administration? Select "N/A" if you do not plan to use subcontractors for your project.

Applicant Response:

Not Applicable

Applicant Comment:

Not Applicable

Section Name: Grant Application

Sub Section Name: Proposal Summary

1. Applicant Question: Project Type

Choose one project type that best describes your activities.

Applicant Response:

Employment Preparation Services and Supports

2. Applicant Question: Duration of Project

Choose the duration of your project, 12 months or 18 months.

Applicant Response:

12 months

3. Applicant Question: Regional Centers in Service Area

Identify the Regional Center(s) in the community to be served by this project. Select all that apply. For a regional center map, see Attachment F.

- Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center
- Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center
- North Los Angeles County Regional Center
- San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center
- South Central Los Angeles Regional Center
- Westside Regional Center
- Harbor Regional Center

4. Applicant Question: Counties Served

List the county or counties that the project will serve. Check all that apply.

Applicant Response:

Los Angeles County

5. Applicant Question: City of Los Angeles

If your project proposes to serve the City of Los Angeles, list the zip codes your project will serve.

Zip code information for Los Angeles County can be found here. If your project does not serve the Los Angeles area, select "N/A".

Applicant Response:

90016, 90018, 90007, 90008, 90043, 90062, 90037, 90011, 90044, 90001, 90002, 90003, 90059, 90262,

90061, 90222, 90248, 90220, 90221, 90723, 90262

6. Applicant Question: Collaborating Organizations or Other Entities

Does your project include partnerships with one or more organizations either as a co-applicant or subcontractor? If "yes", please upload a letter of support from each organization, that includes an explanation of their role in the partnership.

Applicant Response:

No

7. Applicant Question: Consultants and Trainers

Describe the qualifications of the consultant/trainer/training organization, including their subject matter expertise in competitive integrated employment for individuals with developmental disabilities. Describe their prior experience as a consultant/trainer, professional credentials, including names of other organizations/entities for whom they have provided consultation or training.

If question does not apply to your project, select "N/A"

Attachment:

Section Name: Target Population

Sub Section Name: People Served

1. Applicant Question: Number of youth (under 18) with I/DD that will be served

Specify number of people to participate or be served by this project. If question does not apply to your project, select "N/A".

Applicant Response:

15

2. Applicant Question: Number of adults (18 and older) with I/DD that will be served

Specify number of people to participate or be served by this project. If question does not apply to your project, select "N/A".

Applicant Response:

20

3. Applicant Question: Number of family members that will be served

Specify number of people to participate or be served by this project. If question does not apply to your project, select "N/A".

Applicant Response:

Not Applicable

Applicant Comment:

Not Applicable

4. Applicant Question: Number of professionals and staff that will be trained

Specify number of people to participate or be served by this project. If question does not apply to your project, select "N/A".

Applicant Response:

Not Applicable

Applicant Comment:

Not Applicable

5. Applicant Question: Number of other individuals that will be served/trained

Specify number of people to participate or be served by this project. Please describe the individuals that will be served. If question does not apply to your project, select "N/A".

Applicant Response:

Not Applicable

Applicant Comment:

Not Applicable

6. Applicant Question: Ethnicity Group Served

Select the ethnicity group(s) the project will serve. For "Indian", "Pacific Islander", "Slavic" or "Other" use comment section to list specific groups.

- "Indian" includes: Indian (nationals of the present-day Republic of India), Bangladeshi, Nepalese, Pakistani, and Sri Lankan.
- "Pacific Islanders" includes: individuals whose origins are the original peoples of Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia. Polynesia includes Guam, Hawaii (Native Hawaiian), Samoa (Samoan), American Samoa (Samoan), Tokelau (Tokelauan), Tahiti (Tahitian), Tonga (Tongan) and other Pacific Islands.
- "Slavic" includes: Russian, Ukrainian, and Belorussian (East Slavic), Polish, Czech, Slovak, and Sorbian (West Slavic), and Bulgarian, Serbian, Croatian, Macedonian, and Slovene (South Slavic).
- The "other" category includes ethnicities not specified in the ethnicity options.

Applicant Response:

- African American
- Cambodian
- Chinese
- Filipino
- Hispanic
- Hmong
- Indian
- Japanese
- Korean
- Mien
- Native American
- Vietnamese
- Pacific Islander
- Slavic
- White
- Other

Section Name: Project Application Sub Section Name: Project Application

1. Applicant Question: Project Abstract

Provide a clear and concise project summary that includes a defined target population, geographic area, and project design. Specifically describe what your project will accomplish and the intended impact it will have on the employment of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Applicant Response:

The Youth Employment Leadership and Empowerment Program (YELEP) has been a flagship on the list of Special Needs Network's programmatic offerings for over 12 years. This is a unique enrichment opportunity for youth ages 16-24 who are interested in gaining valuable and practical skills in the fields of developmental disabilities, health sciences, psychology, speech and language pathology, and education. Youth are mentored by seasoned professionals through assigned internships and assignments designed to prepare them for careers in those fields. 90% of the youth are given the opportunity to work as camp counselors at our inclusive summer camp, gaining priceless on the job experience. Participants are offered a robust curriculum that includes college and career counseling, job readiness skills, and leadership training, and more. YELEP to date has placed over 150 youth as behavior technicians working for Special Needs Network. It has created a clear pipeline for employment with the organization and others. To date the program has netted LCSW's, Psy-D's, Board Certified Applied Behavior Analysts and teachers.

Special Needs Network is driven to expand this program, which already serves a small number of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We have found that camp participants who attended our summer camp for most of their childhood, are now teenagers and young adults. It is a natural progression to now help these individuals to prepare for college, the workforce and eventually job placement. Through a year-long robust training program, creation of training videos, and a pending pilot program with Amazon, we our confident that we will change the lives of these individuals.

SNN has access to experienced professionals and partners that will solidify the training program that will take place in South Los Angeles. We will also create a series of professional training videos for those that are not able to participate in person.

2. Applicant Question: Need for Project Question 1

Please describe the underlying problem, challenges, or issues that your project will address.

Applicant Response:

Individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities have always faced higher unemployment rates, in no small part because of employer discrimination and implicit biases. In addition, a report released by the Center for American Progress in May 2022 found that Black and Hispanic workers with disabilities saw higher unemployment rates than their white counterparts in 2021.

3. Applicant Question: Need for Project Question 2

Provide facts or data to support the need for this project

Data to support the need to address the employment gaps for person with disabilities (https://disabilitycompendium.org/compendium/2020-annual-disability-statistics-supplement) California

- There are 4,131,700 Californians with disabilities.
- There are 1,910,288 working-age Californians with disabilities. Out of that number, 731,093 working-age Californians with disabilities had jobs in 2019. California's disability employment rate was 38.2 percent in 2019.
- The employment rate for working-age Californians without disabilities was 76.4 percent in 2019.
- There was a 38.1 percent Gap in Labor Force Participation Rates between persons with disabilities and those with out.
- The poverty rate for working-age Californians with disabilities was 22.8 percent.

Los Angeles

- In total, there are 992,719 Angelenos with disabilities living in L.A. County.
- There are 466,385 working-age Angelenos with disabilities living in L.A. County. Only 169,322 working-age Angelenos with disabilities had jobs.

4. Applicant Question: Need for Project Question 3

Describe how the project will involve and benefit participants who are from diverse backgrounds

Applicant Response:

Special Needs Network prides itself at being at the forefront of social and racial justice as it pertains to individuals with disabilities. Our staff, trainers, and consultants are all culturally sensitive and from diverse backgrounds themselves. 95% of program participants are BIPOC. Data supports that these participants are impacted the most by obstacles that impede potential employment and participation in the workforce. They will benefit from this program by receiving personalized training and assistance that will lead to job readiness and employment either with SNN or partner companies. Surveys of the parents in our network, show that their young adults ages 16-24 are discouraged to consider entering the workforce. This program aims to change that.

5. Applicant Question: Approach Question 1A

For Business Focused Practices, Employment Preparation Services and Supports, Service Models for Individuals with High Support Needs, and Training and Implementation project types.

- Describe the objective for your project
- Describe the new or innovative methods and activities that will be used that correspond to the proposed objective and project type that:
 - Use innovative, evidence-based, best, or promising practices, services and /or supports
 - Promote increased and meaningful opportunities for participants to make an informed choice for career options and prepare

for CIE

- Are designed to achieve, maintain, or advance individuals with I/DD in competitive integrated employment
- Are designed to be replicable
- Include how you used input from the community and/target population in the design of the project
- Describe any project deliverables

If your project is not Business Focused Practices, Employment Preparation Services and Supports, Service Models for Individuals with High Support Needs, or Training and Implementation, select "N/A".

Applicant Response:

The objective of YELEP is ultimately to break barriers to employment for youth ages 16-24 with intellectual or developmental disabilities and facilitate job placement opportunities both with SNN or partner agencies or companies.

The existing YELEP program although open to youth of all abilities, is not catered specifically to the needs of those individuals with disabilities. It is a training program that leads to employment at our inclusive summer camp, and has done so for the past 10 years. This summer camp experience and the program's curriculum lead to an employment pipeline for Special Needs Network to meet our hiring needs as our ABA program grew. To date a substantial number of behavior technicians, behavior consultants, and BCBA's in our program are products of YELEP. This includes individuals in leadership and or management positions.

As our camp participants aged out of our summer camp, we were faced with the realization that we had nothing ready to offer them. In 2018 as a pilot to expand YELEP and encourage former campers and others with disabilities to return as "junior' counselors, we welcomed four individuals to partake in the training program. All four individuals to date have been hired as camp counselors since then minus the two Covid-19 years when camp went virtual. Their individual and special skill sets have been utilized to play important roles in camp operations as either in-class assistants, office aides, or as part of maintenance teams.

The expansion of this program would create a specific year-long training program catered to those individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. As opposed to the current program that is a one-week course, we plan to expand the training over the course of 6-8 months in order to provide the individual time and attention needed to fulfill the needs of this cohort. The training program will also be available to those individuals with physical obstacles to attend training sessions. This will be aided by the creation of training videos produced/written from start to finish by a young man on the autism spectrum.

Through the feedback of parents and caregivers over the years who have participated in our various program, we attained the insight to develop a program of this nature. The concept was standing in front of us over the years, and we are glad that is now materializing. It is the perfect time to make it happen.

The expected deliverables are black and white. We plan to employee the individuals in this special program cohort either at Special Needs Network or a partner agency or organization. As we apply for this grant, we are in the very early planning stages of a pilot program with Amazon so we will not confirm details at this time. However, we will share that there is a very realistic chance of the creation of an employment pipeline and training component with the company during this potential grant period.

6. Applicant Question: Approach Question 1B

For project type, Service Model Transformation

• A description of the transformation team that will be developing the action plan and includes representation by individuals with

ID/D, family members, those who provide direct support, and other relevant community members (e.g., businesses, peer organizations, partnerships, etc.,)

- The objective and activities to be used in developing the action plan, including an outline of the areas to be addressed in the transformational planning and organizational change that will affect the CIE employment services.
- Include how you used input from the community and/target population in the design of the project?
- A detailed description of the planning process that will be used
 - Descript project deliverables
 - Describe how you plan to engage the regional center in the transformation plan

If your project type is not Service Model Transformation, select "N/A".

Applicant Response:

Not Applicable

Applicant Comment:

Not Applicable

7. Applicant Question: Sustainability Question 1

How will individuals served by the project continue receiving employment services and supports once the project has ended?

Applicant Response:

The Youth Employment Leadership and Empowerment Program (YELEP) for special needs individuals is a program that will be sustainable and ongoing once participants complete the training program. Program trainers and consultants will serve as mentors to the participant for up to a year after employment is attained. Participants will be assigned to a trainer to serve as their mentor immediately upon program completion.

The goal is continue the program as funding permits. Previous participants will be encouraged to return for a refresher course as a module will be added for those individuals.

8. Applicant Question: Sustainability Question 2

How will your project continue its work after the grant funding has concluded?

Applicant Response:

Special Needs Network will continue to seek funding from various sources to sustain the program past potential DDS funding. We will incorporate request for funding for YELEP into our successful spring fundraising gala, which typically funds our inclusive summer camp and has done so successfully for 14 years.

In addition the Amazon program/partnership under development would potentially provide the necessary support to continue the program in the near future.

9. Applicant Question: Sustainability Question 3

Describe your plan to engage the regional center for future sustainability of the project and individuals served.

The outreach and recruitment phase of our project is when we plan to reach out to the regional centers for support. Per DDS instructions, the project will be shared with all servicing regional centers. In turn, as program collateral material (flyers, ads, etc.) is completed, it will immediately be shared with Family Resource Centers for distribution to families. In addition to distribute recruitment materials, our team would secure time to present at various parent meetings at all local regional centers.

We hope to build a pipeline of regional center clients for years to come to insure that YELEP is populated.

10. Applicant Question: Organizational Capacity Question 1

Please include details about the history of the organization, its mission or purpose, summary of major programs, services and activities and details about how they tie to the target population. If from a large organization with multiple departments, provide a brief overview of entire organization and then focus on the department or program involved with this proposal. Describe any ongoing collaborative partners in your community.

Applicant Response:

Attached.

Attachment:

11. Applicant Question: Organizational Capacity Question 2

Describe your agency's experience supporting the proposed target population.

Applicant Response:

As shared in previous responses, Special Needs Network has been serving this specific target population for over 16 years since its inception. Developmentally challenged youth between the ages of 5 and 24 have been primarily served by the organization in several capacities, which includes, our ABA program, summer camp, and through the child care component of our parent education programs.

12. Applicant Question: Organizational Capacity Question 3

Describe employment (or other relevant services) you currently provide.

Applicant Response:

Special Needs Network currently provides employment training and job placement services for typically developing youth. Participants in the current program are employed as summer camp counselors and upon high school graduation, are invited to apply for behavior technician positions. ABA leadership then mentor these new employees in their behavior health careers and assist them with college preparedness providing them a clear path to meet their career goals in other ABA or other related fields.

13. Applicant Question: Organizational Capacity Question 4

How will the grant help the organization/agency build expertise to support individuals with I/DD to achieve competitive integrated employment?

This employment grant will allow Special Needs Network to grow its capacity to serve this population and expand a program that is currently in a pilot stage. With the program up and running the staff through consistent feedback and date from both participants, families, trainers, and employers, will have developed a confidence and expertise to ensure that several more cohorts are to follow. We expect to have a solid grasp of what it takes to support the participants on their paths.

14. Applicant Question: Organizational Capacity Question 5

Describe your organization/ agency experience and current capacity to support grant-based activities and reporting.

Applicant Response:

Special Needs Network has been a recipient of several grants since its inception in 2005. We have successfully completed all proposed grant-based activities and reporting on every awarded grant. In addition, SNN has been humbled to be recipient of DDS funding via the Disparities program and through advocacy campaigns for several years now. We have successfully met our grant obligations.

15. Applicant Question: Engagement Plan Question 1

Describe how the organization/agency will recruit participants and/or families for participation in the project.

Applicant Response:

Special Needs Network boasts a robust outreach and engagement program. This a program that relies heavenly on digital collateral which includes flyers, social media, and newsletters. As Covid-19 safety protocols continue to be lifted, our "boots on the ground' approach to outreach has taken flight once again. Our SNN street team is back at community events recruiting families for our various events and programs. Recruitment for this program will begin with regional center partnership and through our ABA services program. Within our program, youth of working age will be identified, and groomed into the program once we have full buy-in and commitment. As the program grows and if funding allows, we would grow a waitlist for further training cohorts down the line.

16. Applicant Question: Engagement Plan Question 2

Describe how the organization/agency will collaborate with other groups, organizations, employers, and/or agencies to achieve the objective of the project.

Applicant Response:

In order for this project to be successful, the collaboration of partner groups is necessary. SNN has a strong network of similarly focused partners and governmental agencies ready to support our work. We hope to garner the support local elected officials who typically champion our causes to join us in this most important program. As an example, the Assembly Member for the 54th District, the Honorable Isaac Bryan took time out of his busy schedule to address the four young people who embarked on their first employment this year after the completing the pilot YELEP program this summer.

Aside from collaborative discussions and planning with partner organizations and the support of local elected officials, the burgeoning relationship we have with Amazon will lead to a priceless opportunity with this employer. We are currently discussing strategies and mapping out what the opportunities will look like when tied in to our YELEP program.

17. Applicant Question: Engagement Plan Question 3

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. Describe your plan for these two community presentations.

If your project is not Service Model Transformation, please select "N/A"

Applicant Response:

Not Applicable

Applicant Comment:

Not Applicable

18. Applicant Question: Project Activities

Clearly and specifically state how the schedule of activities demonstrates the steps that the project will take to achieve its stated objective and measures. See Attachment H for instructions on entering objective and activities into GrantVantage.

Applicant Response:

SNN has established activities that make up the framework of our new YELEP program. These activities will lead to the successful attainment of our stated objective. Effective immediately once the grant work can officially begin, a robust outreach and engagement plan will kick into effect for the first 60 days. The SNN communications and marketing team will develop collateral material that is culturally sensitive for outreach and recruitment.

Outreach Strategy:

- Communication with regional centers (collateral shared)
- SNN ABA Clients invited via email blast and through communication with their behavioral technicians.
- Flyer distribution at community and partner events
- Email blasts to SNN Database

YELEP program implementation (60 days)

- Trainers and training dates secured
- Training sessions finalized

For the duration of the grant period, a cohort of at least 35 participants will engage in their 8 session training program. During this time program staff will begin to plan for post training activities. These include:

- Identifying mentors for participants
- Planning for job placement at SNN's Summer camp, Amazon, or other opportunities.

Job Placement is estimated to begin in the summer of 2023.

19. Applicant Question: Project Data

Provide 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, who will summarize, etc.).

Special Needs Network will closely monitor and analyze collected data throughout the grant period, to ensure that our objective is met and that our project design is effective. The use of pre/post surveys will be utilized with both families and participants before and after the program. This data will be utilized to immediately make any changes to design an/or methods, but also to assess the impact of the program.

It will also be very important for us to gain feedback from our professional team of trainers and consultants. We will be conducting interviews with each person following theirs sessions as well checking-in throughout the mentoring phase to gain as many valuable insights as possible.

In addition, the SNN clinical team we will make an assessment of each participant and assist in the vetting process as we build the first cohort. This team will also be responsible, along with the program director to summarize all the data collected throughout the grant period.

SNN is wholly committed to evaluating our programmatic progress and impact, as well as to sharing these outcomes with stakeholders. We have extensive experience using the methods described above to assess the progress of our programs and participants and to determine if our stated goals have been met. We will build off this track record to successfully measure YELEP's program impact.

20. Applicant Question: Budget Template and Narrative

Explain how the project budget is consistent with the stated project objective and activities, and clearly and concisely explain how the proposed expenditures support the overall project design.

These budget items are essential to the execution of the program:

Trainers - 7 Trainers and Career Specialists paid at a flat rate for per trainer.

Camp counselors positions - 20 camp positions for employment at the inclusive summer camp. 120 hours of employment at **country**.

Director of Clinical and Intervention Services - Annual Salary. 40% of which will be spent working on this DDS Grant = **Constant**. Position is responsible for the overall management of the Program, reporting and evaluation of course materials, briefings and structure.

Assistant Clinical and Program Director - Annual Salary. **Constitution** of which will be spent working on this DDS Grant = **Constitution**. Position is responsible for the execution of the Program, preparation of course materials, schedules, coordinating with trainers and overview of recruitment and outreach.

Outreach and Engagement Coordinator - Annual Salary. 16% of which will be spent working on this DDS Grant = **Output**. Position is responsible for community and engagement, recruiting and marketing materials.

Benefits to Personnel -

Training Technology/IT Services - Equipment, professional training video production, slides and electronic handouts. Media and all related materials that will be needed by each individual trainer.

Supplies - Supplies for Trainees including but not limited to office supplies as well as equipment for individual trainees.

Outreach and Advertisement - All Marketing Materials development and advertisements.

21. Applicant Question: Budget Costs

Confirm that that budget does not include non-allowable costs or costs funded by other sources. See Attachment D for allowable and non-allowable costs.

Applicant Response:

I Confirm

Section Name: Proposal Certification

Sub Section Name: Certification

1. Applicant Question: Confirm Proposal Discussion with RC(s)

Applicants are required to discuss their proposal with each RC(s) service area to be served. Have you discussed your proposal with each RC you are intending to serve?

Applicant Response:

Yes

2. Applicant Question: RC Contact

Applicants are required to submit their application concurrently to the Department and to each RC(s) service area the applicant is intending to serve. State the name(s) of the contact person(s) at each RC you have discussed your proposal with.

Applicant Response:

Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center - Pablo Ibanez East Los Angeles Regional Center - George de la Loza Harbor Regional Center - Heather Diaz North Los Angeles County Regional Center - Lauren Morton San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center - Lucina Galarza Westside Regional Center - Lidenera Amador South Central Los Angeles Regional Center - Wendy Castillo

3. Applicant Question: Regional Center Service Provider

If you are a vendored regional center service provider, are you in compliance with Welfare and Institutions Code Section 4652.5?

If you are a not a vendored regional center service provider, please select "N/A".

Applicant Response:

Yes

4. Applicant Question: Confirm review of Standard Measures

DDS has developed standard project measures for each project type. Have you read the guidelines and agree to the standardized measures for your project type. See <u>Attachment C</u> for Standard Project Measures.

Applicant Response:

Yes

5. Applicant Question: Applicant Certification

By submitting this application, the applicant is certifying the truth and accuracy of the proposal. The applicant also certifies that if you have subcontracting organizations, each participating organization has reviewed your project and agrees to their assigned activities, measures, and the budget.

Applicant Response:

Yes