

Application Report



Applicant Organization: TransCen, Inc.
Project Name: Customized Employment, Principles to Practice
Application ID: [REDACTED]
Funding Announcement: DDS Employment Grant
Requested Amount: [REDACTED]

Project Summary: TransCen's Customized Employment 2.0: Principles to Practice proposal seeks to use a workshop training, coupled with a virtual Community of Practice learning collaborative, to promote the use of CE methods and improve the capacity of Job Developers in California to more effectively engage with employers.

Authorized Certifying Official: [REDACTED]
Project Director/Manager: [REDACTED]
Project Manager/Coordinator: [REDACTED]
Compliance/Fiscal Officer: [REDACTED]

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
- Regional Center Vendor

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:

TransCen (TCI), a 501(c)(3) established in 1986, is dedicated to improving the education and employment success of individuals with disabilities. Our work is driven by the belief that employment and active community participation are attainable for all individuals, regardless of disability or other perceived barriers to employment. We redefine transition from school to work and disability employment through strong business and community partnerships, tailored training, and field-based research.

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:

[REDACTED]

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:

Training and Implementation - Professional and Staff

2. Applicant Question:

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

Applicant Response:

18 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](#).

Applicant Response:

- Harbor Regional Center
- Redwood Coast Regional Center
- Golden Gate Regional Center

4. Applicant Question: Counties Served

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

Applicant Response:

- Del Norte County
- Humboldt County
- Lake County
- Mendocino County
- Marin County
- San Francisco County
- San Mateo County
- 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:

Not Applicable

Applicant Comment:

Not Applicable

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"

Applicant Response:

Laura Owens, President of TCI, possesses over 40 years of experience in transition and employment for people with disabilities. She is a national leader in the disability employment field. Laura is a Professor at UW-Milwaukee in the Exceptional Education Department where she teaches courses on inclusion, employment and transition from school to work. Prior to joining TCI, Laura was the Executive Director of APSE. She is an internationally known speaker who presents throughout the US and abroad.

Sara Murphy is an Associate at TCI and Director of WorkLink, TCI's nationally-recognized program for people with disabilities. For 40 years, Ms. Murphy's focus has been employment for people with disabilities. She has extensive experience in program development, system transformation and CIE. Ms. Murphy works on many of TCI's federal/state initiatives. She has written *Customized Employment* standards and has been providing CE training for 25 years to state agencies, schools and service providers.

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:

Not Applicable

Applicant Comment:

Not Applicable

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:

80

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:

125

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:

80

Applicant Comment:

Following the workshop training, TCI trainers will facilitate a Community of Practice (CoP) learning collaborative. We estimate 80 workshop participants will join the CoP. Each CoP participant will identify a job seeker from their agency and utilize the tools and strategies presented in the workshop to develop a customized position. The CoP will serve 80 Job Seekers, and will place 40-60% in customized positions by the end of the grant period (April 2024).

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:

- Indian
 - Pacific Islander
 - Slavic
 - Other
 - African American
 - Hispanic
 - White
-

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:

Customized Employment (CE) has proven to be an effective approach for placing people with more significant disabilities in competitive jobs. Throughout the state, Service Providers are learning about CE methods and how to develop jobs in a new way. TransCen's *Customized Employment 2.0: Principles to Practice* proposal, seeks to use a workshop training, coupled with a virtual Community of Practice learning collaborative, to promote the use of CE methods and improve the capacity of Job Developers in California to more effectively engage with employers.

Our CE 2.0 training and TA will focus on the employer engagement aspects of Customized Employment – a critical part of the process that most CE training cover quickly- or ignore completely. When surveyed, Job Developers are often confident in their ability to profile a job seeker and present the individual's skills to a potential employer. However, they often struggle with how to approach a business about customizing a job and how to work with employers to build a new position.

Why should employers restructure a workflow processes or create a customized job? How do job developers market the idea of Customized Employment and present their candidates and program services? How do we work with employers to identify job opportunities that will address the business's needs and match our jobseeker's skill set? The 2-day CE 2.0 workshop will address these questions. Following the workshop, TransCen's trainers will facilitate a virtual Community of Practice (CoP) (1x mth calls, May-August) during which participants will work with a job seeker from their agency, using the tools and strategies presented in the workshop to develop a customized job. The CoP will give providers a chance to learn from each other and the build skills and confidence they need to effectively engage with employers and better support job seekers with complex needs.

2. Applicant Question: Need for Project Question 1

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

Applicant Response:

CE is a highly successful method for increasing CIE outcomes for people with IDD. It is a person-centered approach that tailors positions to meet both the needs of the job seeker and an employer. To find jobs, most job developers focus on posted positions. CE requires job developers to actively partner with employers in new ways. This proposal will help job developers learn the skills needed to effectively engage with employers and successfully support jobseekers with more complex needs.

3. Applicant Question: Need for Project Question 2

Provide facts or data to support the need for this project

Applicant Response:

While DDS has made significant efforts to increase employment through service transformation grants, incentive payments and internship programs, the number of RC clients who are earning a paycheck remains low. In 2020 (the last year reported), only 13.5% of RC clients reported earning a wage. If we are going to increase CIE, service providers must adopt a "business" mindset and learn to effectively use CE methods.

Employers hire people who solve problems or add value to their workforce. In a 2006 study published in the *Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counseling*, employers who used CE strategies reported that doing so helped them meet production goals, increase customer satisfaction, improve operations, support their core team, serve more customers and reduce backlogs. The CE 2.0 proposal stresses business principles and process improvement strategies. Job developers will learn to effectively engage with employers and find creative ways candidates with IDD can benefit business.

4. Applicant Question: Need for Project Question 3

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

Applicant Response:

Families from diverse backgrounds or who experience poverty traditionally do not access services at the same rate as other families. This results in poor employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities from diverse populations. This project will seek local partners that work with diverse populations so access to training is equitable. This may include working with community-based organizations to broaden workshop promotion efforts, offering training slots to those serving diverse communities, and having interpreters available. The CE training will stress the importance of an equity mindset and since CE is a person-centered approach to job placement, starting with an in-depth discovery process, job developers will be better equipped to target employers and job settings that reflect the candidate's personality and culture.

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 the CE 2.0 proposal is to build provider capacity to use Customized Employment (CE) methods and better support job seekers with more significant disabilities. To meet this objective, TCI will conduct a 2-day workshop titled *CE 2.0: Principles to Practice* in three locations in California. The in-person workshop will focus on CE principles and methods and will emphasize the *employer engagement* aspects of the CE process. Using case studies and group activities, TCI's trainers will demonstrate strategies for profiling job seekers and engaging with business. Participants will learn to target businesses based on a job seeker's profile, assist employers to identify needs and negotiate customized jobs.

Participants will learn to:

- target employers using job seeker profile and Venn diagrams;
- assist employers to identify business needs;
- market CE and their job seekers in value-adding ways;
- negotiate customized positions
- use Lean principles and process improvement methods to restructure work processes and organize new positions;
- systematically teach job skills using positive instructional strategies

The workshops will be hosted with support from the following Regional Centers: Redwood Coast RC; Golden Gate RC; and Harbor RC. The RCs support this proposal and agreed to help outreach to local providers and assist with the workshop. RCs will provide or advise on training locations/sites and help accommodate the accessibility needs.

2-day Workshop (January - April 2023)

Day 1: Overview of CE and discovery process; profiling job seeker and targeting employment settings. Employer engagement; Elevator Speeches, Lean process improvement principles & methods; assessing needs and opportunities; evaluating fit for job seeker.

Day 2: Marketing CE and presenting job seekers skill set; using Potential Task Lists and a Cost Savings analysis to negotiate positions. Post-placement support, instructional strategies and data collection.

Following the workshop, TCI's trainers will facilitate a statewide CoP via 4 zoom calls. The purpose of CoP will be to facilitate and guide practice with the tools and strategies presented during the workshop. CoP participants will select a job seeker from their agency. With support from Trainers, CoP participants and their job seekers will *test-drive* the tools and strategies presented during the workshop. The CoP will give Job developers and job seekers from across the state an opportunity to share insights, brainstorm challenges and celebrate their successes. .

Community of Practice (90-minute zoom call 1x month May-Aug 2023)

COP1: Discovery and Positive Personal Profile tool.

COP2: Venn Diagrams. Elevator Speeches & informational Interviews

COP3: Identifying needs, developing potential tasks lists and cost savings analysis

COP4: Post-placement supports: Organizing job tasks using Lean methods; systematic instruction

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 job developers/agencies participating in CoP will continue to support their job seekers/placements made through the CoP.

8. Applicant Question: Sustainability Question 2

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

Applicant Response:

TCI's trainers will coordinate and facilitate a Community of Practice (CoP) for workshop participants and job seekers, providing coaching and consultation to implement the tools and strategies presented in the workshop. The CoP purpose will be to build capacity, facilitate conversation, and guide the implementation of the CE tools and strategies. CoP participants will actively work with a job seeker from their agency to complete a profile and customized job development plan and test-drive the strategies presented during the workshop. Job developers will have an opportunity to share insights, brainstorm challenges and celebrate successes leading to sustainable change and ongoing use of CE methods within the participating agencies.

9. Applicant Question: Sustainability Question 3

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

Applicant Response:

Regional Centers will play a crucial role in supporting their employment providers to implement customized employment. And quality training around implementing a customized employment process is likely something every Regional Center would see as valuable. Every participating Regional Center and employment provider will receive a full suite of tools they can customize and utilize with job seekers. TransCen would be interested in further work with all California Regional Centers to improve the capacity to deliver quality employment services.

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:

TransCen, Inc (TCI) was established in 1986 with a mission to improve education and employment success for youth and adults with disabilities. For more than 30 years, TCI has been at the forefront of developing, implementing, and evaluating innovations in integrated employment for individuals with disabilities. For over 20 years, TransCen has operated direct service programs in California and Wisconsin that utilize *Customized Employment* methods. Our direct service programs have enabled TCI to field-test best practices and *operationalize* CE principles and methods. What we learned in the process, and the tools and strategies we developed, have improved our training and TA, and informed our research and policy work. TCI's depth of experience and real-world experience allows our trainers to provide innovative ideas and practical methods. Our trainings have benefitted federal/state agencies, school systems and employment services throughout the country- and beyond.

11. Applicant Question: Organizational Capacity Question 2

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

Applicant Response:

For over 30 years, TCI has utilized CE methods and focused its services on Community Integrated Employment. Our direct service teams in WI and CA have developed highly effective strategies and tools for operationalizing CE principles and engaging with employers. TCI's training and consultation team draws from years of field experience to provide state-of-the-art training, including ACRE certified training with CE standards and methods for employment professionals.

12. Applicant Question: Organizational Capacity Question 3

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

Applicant Response:

TransCen provides direct services in San Francisco (WorkLink) and Milwaukee (CEO) that place job seekers with IDD using customized employment methods. In California, WorkLink provides Adult Day Services and Supported Employment services for RC/DOR clients. This braided approach provides wrap-around services for individuals with more complex support needs. We also provide training/TA for state agencies, school districts, and service providers, and employer partners throughout the state.

13. Applicant Question: Organizational Capacity Question 4

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

Applicant Response:

Through the workshop training and guided practice (CoP), job developers from across the state will gain skills and confidence in customizing jobs and engaging with employers.

14. Applicant Question: Organizational Capacity Question 5

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

Applicant Response:

Transcen is an independent training and consulting organization that has successfully conducted high quality training projects on the federal, state, and local level for 35 years. Our organization employs an experienced Contracts Manager and has the capacity to meet all grant requirements, including reporting.

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:

TransCen's team will partner with three Regional Centers to determine the most suitable location for the training and to assist our team with outreach to their catchment areas.

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:

Through the Community of Practice (CoP) efforts, TCI will engage with service providers from across CA and will provide technical assistance to implement the training tools and strategies. We will be supporting their job development and employer outreach efforts.

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:

The objective of the project is to build capacity of the Regional Centers to provide Customized Employment (CE) service. The project is designed to offer expanded opportunities for quality training to disal

- Understanding the foundations of quality employment services
- Implementing a strength-based discovery and assessment process
- Engaging families and caregivers in job development
- Targeting employers and conducting informational interviews
- Writing employment proposals
- Providing workplace supports to individuals and employers
- Teaching new skills, collecting data, and fading supports

In an effort to build capacity, skills, and promote the use of the tools and strategies presented in the CE 2.0 workshop, TCI's trainers will coordinate and facilitate a Community of Practice (CoP) for worksh

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.).

Applicant Response:

The project will use paper evaluations to track both attendance and participant satisfaction for the CE training sessions. We will develop pre and post surveys that measure level of knowledge of tools and strategies for CE, employer engagement, and post-placement support/systematic instruction. Phone surveys will be used on a smaller number of attendees to gauge the impact of the training and how they might use the information in their work with individuals with disabilities and their families. Data will be collected from attendees of the CoP in the same way. After the training, the project team will conduct an on-line survey with participants to determine how the training impacted their service methods.

Sara Murphy will be Project Manager for this project. She will create an Excel spreadsheet to use for tracking progress of key activities, and will collect and summarize the evaluation data. Ms. Murphy will ensure all grant required reporting is met and attend all required meetings with DDS.

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.

Applicant Response:

TransCen is proposing a total project budget of [REDACTED]

Sara Murphy will serve as the Project Manager, with the primary responsibility of planning with the Regional Centers, creating and revising training content, presenting the training sessions and guiding the evaluation activities, and will spend 150 estimated hours on the project. All of the stated Activities will be managed by Ms. Murphy. Laura Owens will serve as a SME and Trainer consulting on the training content and presenting the training sessions, for an estimated 125 hours. Ms. Owens will concentrate her work in Activity 3 and 5, however may be pulled into other activities as needed. Emily Malsch will serve as the Project Assistant, assisting with the graphic design of training materials, coordinating meeting spaces and training logistics, and conducting participant follow up surveys, for an estimated 52 hours.

In addition, this project requires office space for project management, onsite training space, and trainer travel to the training sites. All of these expenses are listed under Operational Expenses; the project has budgeted [REDACTED] for these costs. Also included are required project administration expenses such as office supplies, Zoom video meeting subscription for the virtual CoP sessions, printing training materials, and meals for training participants (it has been our experiences that offering a meal increases attendance at training events).

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

Attachment:

[RCRC LOS for TransCen signed.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

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:

Redwood Coast RC: Cindy Claus-Johns, Sierra Braggs and Jonathan Padilla

Golden Gate RC: Amanda Pyle, Sean Galvin and Julian McCarthy

Valley Mountain RC: Enos Edmerson

Harbor RC: Elizabeth Garcia-Moya and Brenda Bane

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 [Attachment C](#) 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
