

Application Report



Applicant Organization: Friends of Children with Special Needs
Project Name: Building Capacity to Serve More Asian Individuals with Disabilities and Their Families
Application ID: App-22-602
Funding Announcement: FY 22-23 Service Access and Equity Grant
Awarded Amount: \$300,000

Project Summary: FCSN plans to build program capacity to develop more programs and increase the bilingual workforce by retaining and hiring more staff to serve more clients that are Asians. Additionally, FCSN wants to increase the entrepreneurship in the special needs community to reduce disparities in employment.

Authorized Certifying Official: Kelly Ko kellyko@fcsn1996.org -
Project Director/Manager: Kelly Ko kellyko@fcsn1996.org -
Project Manager/Coordinator: Kelly Ko kellyko@fcsn1996.org -
Compliance/Fiscal Officer: Lilian Lin lilianhlin@fcsn1996.org -

Section Name: Applicant Eligibility

Sub Section Name: Applicant Information

1. Applicant Question: Project Title

What is the Project Title?

Applicant Response:

Increasing Entrepreneurship, Staffing and Programs to Reduce Disparities in Asians with IDD

2. Applicant Question: Awarded Amount

What is the total amount awarded for the project?

Applicant Response:

\$300,000

3. Applicant Question: Organization Type

Choose the response that best describes your organization.

Applicant Response:

Community Based Organization (CBO), 501(c)(3)

4. Applicant Question: Description of Organization/Group

Provide a brief description of the organization or group. Explain what experience your organization has managing a project similar to the proposal and state the outcomes of that project. You may upload your brochure or add a website link.

Applicant Response:

FCSN, a 501(c) non-profit organization founded by 10 Asian families in 1996, now serves over 1000 families with 2 centers in the Bay Area: Fremont & San Jose. Our mission statement is to help individuals with special needs and their families find love, hope, respect and support through integrated community involvement. FCSN, a recipient of the Disparity Funds from 2016 to 2021, has been working successfully with Asian special needs families in educating, mentoring and empowering them to advocate and get services for their loved ones by hosting various family events, gatherings, and trainings. FCSN also provides various culturally and linguistically appropriate vendorized services and enrichment programs for the special needs. FCSN has the highest service capacity and is the largest advocacy group that serves Asians with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families in the SF Bay Area. With 26 years of effort, FCSN has built a trusted and solid relationship with them.

5. 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

6. 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?

Applicant Response:

Not Applicable

Section Name: Grant Reapplication Information

Sub Section Name: Grant Reapplications Only

1. Applicant Question: Previous Award(s)

Did your organization receive DDS grant funding in fiscal year 2020-21 or 2021-22? If yes, go to question 2 to complete each column. If no, skip this category and go to category 3.

Applicant Response:

Yes

2. Applicant Question: Previous Grant Award(s)

Since fiscal year 2020, complete a row for each DDS Service Access and Equity grant your organization was awarded funding.

Applicant Response:

Year Awarded	Project Title	Grant Number	Award Amount
2020	Asian Outreach, Mentorship, Empowerment, and Service Capacity Building	20-C24	370,000
2019	Asian Mentorship: Empowerment, Education, and Staff Retention	19-C24	364,291
2018	Asian Mentorship: Empowerment, Education and Access to Services	18-C24	377,338
2017	Asian Empowerment, Education and Services	17-C21	491,050
2016	Asian Outreach and Mentorship Program		150,000

3. Applicant Question: Previous Grant Outcomes

Provide a brief grant summary of your project outcomes for fiscal year 2020-21 and/or 2021-22.

Applicant Response:

Building Program Capacity

With the SDP rollout and low utilization of POS due to the lack of services for Asian clients with special needs, FCSN has been trying to build program capacity since the 2020-21 grant year to:

- Allow SDP clients to have more program choices so they can meet their person-centered needs
- Meet the unique language and cultural needs of these Asian clients.
- In order to be able to provide linguistically and culturally competent programs, FCSN needs to build a workforce of bilingual staff to support our Asian clients.

As of today, FCSN has developed five additional programs that provide language and culture needs for our Asian clients: 2 programs supports high needs clients and 3 supports SDP clients. Currently, there are 34 total students in these classes, and the clients and their families have provided positive feedback regarding the new classes.

Retaining and Increasing the Bilingual Workforce

In order to provide linguistically and culturally competent programs to our Asian clients, FCSN needs to retain and build a workforce of bilingual staff to support our Asian clients. Therefore, in past years, FCSN has been granted funds to provide higher salaries, benefits and incentives to retain our existing bilingual staff and to hire new ones. As a result, our staff retention rate for bilingual staff has slightly improved over the last 2 years. In the 2020-2021, our average bilingual staff turnover rate related to salary is 1.08%; however in the 2021-2022 grant, it is currently at 0.63%. We are also hiring more people to not only to replace those who have left but also to expand our bilingual workforce. In 2020-21, we have hired a total of 28 bilingual staff, and for the 2021-22 grant year, we have so far hired 16 staff with more in the process.

4. Applicant Question: Project Transition

If awarded, how will your current project(s) transition into the 2022-23 proposed project? Does your proposed project expand or continue your current project, if so how? What activities, measures, or target groups are being added? Provide a summary of the differences and reasons why you are proposing the change.

Applicant Response:

FCSN's project will continue staff retention/expansion and program capacity building into the next grant year due to:

- Bilingual and bicultural staff leaving for higher pay/benefits elsewhere
- Low or no POS usage for Asians due to the lack of appropriate programs that meets their needs
- With SDP, clients are looking for more program options that can meet their PCP goals.
- Service providers reject Asian clients with behavioral, sensory and medical challenges because they do not have the expertise to meet the clients' unique needs.

Therefore, FCSN will continue to build programs to provide:

- More culturally and linguistically appropriate programs so that Asian clients can increase their POS utilization.
- More options for SDP clients to choose from to meet their PCP goals
- Programs for the high needs clients who have a difficult time finding a bilingual program with trained staff to support their needs.

FCSN needs to retain 140 bilingual and cultural staff in order to run our children programs, adult programs, outreach and family support programs. We serve over 500 clients daily and support over 1000 families. It is critical for FCSN to continue to offer competitive salaries and benefits to retain and attract more bilingual staff to expand our workforce for our existing and new programs.

New Component

Besides increasing capacity this year, FCSN is adding a new component to the project: To increase entrepreneurship in the IDD population, especially Asians. This will be a pilot program to help eight clients with talents in visual or performing arts to become entrepreneurs. We will hire one full-time Business Developer to train and support the clients throughout their business development process.

We are including this component because individuals with special needs are the most unemployed and under-recognized population. It is extremely difficult for these individuals to find a career that utilizes their talents, so we want to help them succeed and live a fulfilled life.

Section Name: General Application

Sub Section Name: Proposal Summary

1. Applicant Question: Project Type

Choose the project type that best describes your activities from the list below:

Applicant Response:

Workforce Capacity and Development

Applicant Comment:

FCSN plans to build program capacity to develop more programs and increase the bilingual workforce by retaining and hiring more staff to serve more clients that are Asians. Additionally, FCSN wants to increase the entrepreneurship in the special needs community to reduce disparities in employment.

2. Applicant Question: Duration of project

Choose the duration of your project.

Applicant Response:

12 months

3. Applicant Question: Regional Centers

Choose the Regional Center(s) that your project will serve. Check all that apply. If you are proposing a statewide project, select the All Regional Centers/Statewide option.

Applicant Response:

- Regional Center of the East Bay
 - San Andreas Regional Center
-

4. Applicant Question: Counties Served

List the county or counties your project proposes to serve. Check all that apply. If you are proposing a statewide project, the select All Counties / Statewide option.

Applicant Response:

- Alameda County
 - Contra Costa County
 - Santa Clara County
-

5. Applicant Question: Community Based Organizations

Will you be working with one or more Community Based Organizations? If so, provide the name of the organization and how you will be working together.

Applicant Response:

FCSN will be working with Diversity in Health Training Institute (DHTI). They will train bilingual and bicultural direct service providers to be hired for FCSN's existing and new proposed programs. Attached is the letter of support and collaboration from DHTI for our collaboration. We are also collaborating with Autism Career Pathway to do career assessment our clients in the Entrepreneurship project.

6. Applicant Question: Multiple Organizations

Does your project include partnership 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: Strategies and Sustainability

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

Applicant Response:

Building Program Capacity

The funding we are requesting from the grant is mainly for the development of the programs. Once the program is developed and established, the program will sustain itself when clients enroll in it, paying for the program fees with the following options:

- SDP funding received from the RC.
- RC Purchase of Services (POS)
- Self-Pay (only for SDP ready programs)

Staff Retention and Expansion

We will continue to need DDS grant funding until DDS established its own bilingual pay differential for service providers. It is crucial that we have DDS funding allocated to keep our staff's wages and benefit competitive to reduce staff turnover and increase staff hiring.

Increase Entrepreneurship within the IDD Population

The funding request is only for the pilot program. Once the pilot program is completed, we will no longer need the funding. At that time, the program would be fully developed, and clients would be able to enter the program using their SDP funding or RC POS.

Sub Section Name: Target Population

1. Applicant Question: Ethnicity Groups Served

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

Applicant Response:

- Chinese
 - Japanese
 - Korean
 - Vietnamese
-

Applicant Comment:

Our project emphasizes on supporting Chinese, Vietnamese, Japanese and Korean families; however, we can support other Asian ethnicities as needed.

2. Applicant Question: Ethnicity Group(s), Language(s) and Number of Individuals Served

For each ethnicity group, provide the number of individuals your project intends to serve and the related language(s).

Applicant Response:

Ethnicity Group(s)	Individuals Served	Language(s)
Chinese	40	Mandarin
Chinese	31	Cantonese
Vietnamese	5	Vietnamese
Japanese	2	Japanese
Korean	2	Korean

3. Applicant Question: Age Group(s) Served

Select all Age Groups the project will serve.

Applicant Response:

- Three to 21
 - 16 to 21
 - 22 and older
-

Section Name: Project Application

Sub Section Name: Project Application

1. Applicant Question: Project Summary and Organizational Experience

Provide a clear and concise project summary that includes a defined target population, catchment area, and project design. Specifically describe what your project will accomplish and how it will benefit the community served. In your answer, include what experience your organization has working with the target population and how your organization will work with the local RC(s).

Applicant Response:

Our project for this year will continue to focus on serving the Asian IDD population in the RCEB and SARC catchment areas. FCSN was founded by 10 Asian families in 1996 and now has 26 years in working with the Asian special needs population. Eighty percent of its current clients are Asians while 95% of its staff and 100% of the BOD are Asian and bilingual in English and another Asian language. FCSN has been a recipient of the Service Equity and Access Grant since 2016 and therefore, has outreached, educated and mentored over 500 Asian families with special needs since then. We have also developed numerous programs for our special needs clients over the years. Our project design for this year includes:

Building Program Capacity

In order to reduce service disparities for Asian individuals with disabilities, FCSN plans to:

- Provide more culturally and linguistically appropriate programs so that Asian clients can use their POS, thus increasing POS utilization for this ethnic population.
- Provide more person-centered programs for SDP clients to choose from to meet their individual interest and needs
- Provide programs for the high needs clients who have a difficult time finding a program that will accept them and meet their unique needs

Retaining and Increasing the Bilingual Workforce

Retaining and expanding our bilingual staff is most crucial in service capacity building to reduce disparities in the Asian IDD community. Since the Bay Area is a high cost area, FCSN needs to keep the wages competitive by continuing to pay our staff the \$1/hr. bilingual pay differential to retain our experienced & bilingual staff. During the pandemic, some of the staff left FCSN, resulting in severe staff shortage.

Competitive wage is necessary to attract & hire qualified bilingual staff to replace them. We also need to hire more staff so we can expand our workforce, allowing us to continue providing quality care and linguistically and culturally appropriate programs to Asian IDD clients.

Increase Entrepreneurship within the IDD Population

Because of the stigma that most people have with the special needs, it is very difficult for these individuals to find a job with employers. As an alternative, those with special talents can use their talents to build their own business. Entrepreneurship can provide individuals with developmental disabilities a way to do meaningful work while earning a living.

Therefore, FCSN wants to increase entrepreneurship in the special needs population, especially Asians. This will be a pilot program to help eight individuals with talents in visual or performing arts to become business owners. We will hire one full-time Business Developer who will

- Train the clients on business skills (ie. marketing, book-keeping, customer-service, etc.)
- Obtain business license for the clients' businesses
- Connect clients with the different channels and opportunities to sell their products or negotiate performance contracts.
- Guide the clients through the business development process

2. Applicant Question: Data and Community Input

Explain why you have selected your priority population(s) using RC POS data and other data as supporting evidence of the disparity or inequity. Include how your organization used input from the community, target population, and RC to design the proposal.

Applicant Response:

Building Program Capacity

The 2019-20 RC data shows the overall annual expenditure per capita by ethnicities for Asians is only 40% of whites. The biggest disparity gap exists among clients age 22+ for their day program and living services utilization.

FCSN collects data from semi-annual surveys and interviews from the families to receive feedback regarding their level of satisfaction with accessing services and services the clients want so that we can decide on what programs to develop that meet their needs.

Retaining and Increasing the Bilingual Workforce

When FCSN staff resigns, we complete exit interviews. One of the questions on the exit interview asked the staff to provide their reason of leaving. In the past, many have stated that they found a higher paying job elsewhere so they can survive the high living cost of the Bay Area.

Increase Entrepreneurship within the IDD Population

Eighty-five percent of the population with disabilities are unemployed. Minorities face even more hardship compared to its white counterparts in securing employment opportunities despite their capability, desire, and willingness to work in the community. However, we have discovered many talents in the special needs community through our Special Needs Talent Show and Art Exhibit. Many of these talented people have received offers for performances or requests for their artwork to be sold. This indicates that entrepreneurship for these clients can be a great way for them to make a living.

3. Applicant Question: Uniqueness

How is the proposed project unique from a currently funded grant (e.g., strategies, activities, and goals) in the proposed RC catchment area? If the project is similar to a currently funded grant listed on the Department's website, how is the proposed project different?

Applicant Response:

This year's project uniqueness is with our new component to increase entrepreneurship in individuals with special needs, especially for Asians. Although there are projects to increase employment for the special needs to reduce disparities, there are no projects to help this population get employment through self-employment. Our project focuses on helping those individuals with talents in visual and performing arts to become business owners by selling their own handmade products or to sign entertainment contracts.

4. Applicant Question: Improve Equity and Service Access

How will your project measurably improve equity, access, and reduce barriers to services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families?

Applicant Response:

Many Asian families have under-utilized POS due to the lack of cultural and linguistic appropriate services. Additionally, FCSN itself have over 200 people on the waitlist who we cannot support due to lack of capacity. Our project will improve equity, access and reduce barriers to services by:

- Develop more un-vendorized / SDP Ready programs to provide more options to meet the needs and PCP goals of SDP clients
- Develop programs to meet the unique needs of Asian high-needs clients who are currently underserved
- Sustain and Expand the bilingual workforce at FCSN so that we can improve equity and access to our program and services
 - Maintaining the \$1/hr. bilingual pay differential set in the 2017 grant to retain bilingual staff until DDS implements its own pay differential across all 21 regional centers
 - Hiring more linguistically and culturally competent staff to serve more Asian clients

To reduce service disparity in employment, FCSN will offer an alternate option to employment by helping talented individuals to utilize their skills to develop their own business. This will also reduce unemployment in the special needs population.

5. Applicant Question: Support of RC Plan

Does the project support the RC plan to promote equity and reduce disparities in their catchment? If you are a RC, how does this project support your recommendations and plan to promote equity and reduce your identified disparities? How will your project collaborate with other organizations to promote community inclusion?

Applicant Response:

Yes, our project supports equity and reduce disparities in SARC and RCEB catchment area by:

- Retaining and hiring more bilingual and bicultural staff to support the language and cultural needs of Asian clients.
- Creating more linguistically and culturally competent programs to serve the Asian IDD population so their POS utilization will increase
- Improving the employment rate in Asian clients by helping them to become a business owner by utilizing their talents and skills.

Our project will collaborate with Diversity in Health Training Institute (DHTI) to expand our bilingual and bicultural workforce. We will be supporting their DSP training by providing parent speakers to their program. DHTI will refer their trained DSP to work at FCSN.

Our Entrepreneurship component of the project will be collaborating with community partners and business entities such as the Rotary Clubs, Lion Clubs and the Chambers of Commerce so that our clients can be integrated with other business owners. We will also integrate our clients by having them sell their products or perform at city and county fairs and festivals.

6. Applicant Question: Project Activities and Measures

Note: Before answering this question, applicants must complete the Activities Template located in the middle tab directly above.

The schedule of activities clearly and specifically demonstrates the steps that the project will take to achieve its stated

objective and measures. Do the proposed measures appropriately track the project objective and activities, provide insight into the effectiveness of project, and demonstrate impact on the target population?

Applicant Response:

The measures for this project will consists of the following:

Staff Retention and Hiring

- Percentage of Bilingual Staff leaving due to Salaries
- Number of Bilingual Staff hired

Building Program Capacity

- Number of students enrolled in new programs
- Summary of satisfaction ratings for the new pilot programs

Increasing Entrepreneurship in IDD Population

- Number of clients attending each workshop
- Number of business channels or opportunities explored
- Number of products sold
- Number of paid performances

7. Applicant Question: Budget Template and Narrative

Note: Before answering this question, applicants must complete the Budget Template located in the tab directly above.

The project budget is consistent with the stated project objective and activities, and clearly and concisely explains how the proposed expenditures support the overall project design and outcomes. The project budget costs are clearly associated with the activities and does not include non-allowable costs or costs funded by other sources.

- Budget Template example is located at [Attachment C](#).
- Budget Details and Restrictions are available [here](#).

Applicant Response:

See budget and budget narratives.

Section Name: Proposal Certification

Sub Section Name: Certification

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

CBOs are required to discuss their proposal with each RC(s) the CBO is intending to serve. If you are a CBO, have you discussed your proposal with each RC you are intending to serve?

Applicant Response:

Yes

2. Applicant Question: RC Contact

CBOs are required to submit their application concurrently to the Department and to each RC(s) catchment the CBO is intending to serve. If you are a CBO, state the name(s) of the contact person(s) at each RC you have emailed your proposal application. The RC contact list is available here at [Attachment F](#).

Applicant Response:

We reached out to the following RC executive directors and send them a copy of the project application.

RCEB - Lisa Kleinbub | lkleinbub@rceb.org

SARC - Javier Zaldivar | jzaldivar@sarc.org

Attachment:

[Email with SARC.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

[Email with from RCEB.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

3. Applicant Question: Code of Conduct

Grantee Code of Conduct

The Department is committed to supporting services and programs with integrity that foster collaboration and professionalism. Grantees are expected to conduct project activities in a professional and respectful manner that include:

- **Valuing Diversity and Inclusion.** Grantees should embrace diversity that includes but is not limited to: ability, race, language, national origin, citizenship, age, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, and religion.
- **Conducting Activities with Personal and Professional Integrity.** All activities with individuals, families, community organizations, regional centers, and state, local and federal agencies should be conducted with professionalism, dignity, respect, and fairness. Grantees should be open to listening to different points of view and fostering productive communication.
- **Providing a Positive Work Environment:** All projects should foster a positive and respectful work environment with their colleagues and other grantees.

Applicant Response:

- I acknowledge that I have reviewed the Code of Conduct.
-

4. 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
