

Application Report



Applicant Organization: Disability Voices United
Project Name: Emerging Leaders Program
Application ID: App-22-577
Funding Announcement: FY 22-23 Service Access and Equity Grant
Awarded Amount: \$240,000

Project Summary: The Emerging Leaders Project (ELP) gives self-advocates and family members from marginalized communities the tools and opportunities to meaningfully engage with, and lead in, the systems that serve them. This training series gives participants a background on advocacy, explains the role of narrative change and policy in our lives, connects participants with experienced leaders in their fields who have made a difference in their own communities, and provides networking opportunities long after the training ends with a monthly Leadership Access Connect meeting. Those who complete the Emerging Leaders Program also have the opportunity to join a privately funded Speakers Bureau, which will educate policymakers and the media on access, equity, and inclusion.

Authorized Certifying Official: Judy Mark Judymark@dvunited.org -

Project Director/Manager: Judy Mark Judymark@dvunited.org -

Project Manager/Coordinator: Judy Mark Judymark@dvunited.org -

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Section Name: Applicant Eligibility

Sub Section Name: Applicant Information

1. Applicant Question: Project Title

What is the Project Title?

Applicant Response:

Emerging Leaders Program

2. Applicant Question: Awarded Amount

What is the total amount awarded for the project?

Applicant Response:

\$240,000

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:

Disability Voices United is a statewide advocacy organization directed by and for people with disabilities and family members. We advocate for choice and control, meaningful outcomes, and systems that are equitable and accountable. DVU currently manages major projects funded by foundations, universities, and governments on issues related to self-determination, supported decision-making, cultural humility, and communication rights. We have trained thousands of self-advocates and family members in multiple languages and taught hundreds of professionals on cultural humility, including COVID contract tracers. We have also built statewide networks around these issues. We are relied upon by self-advocates and families to provide accurate information without bias. Our conferences and events are extraordinarily well-attended and get excellent reviews. Our websites, materials, and publications are widely used. We have earned the trust of the community we serve. DisabilityVoicesUnited.org

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

Attachment:

[DVU Ca Franchise Tax Board Letter of Good Standing.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

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
2021	The Statewide Equity Leadership Development and Collaborative Project	1	150,000
2022	The Statewide Emerging Leaders Program	2	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:

In our 2020-2021 project, we accepted 131 Emerging Leaders into our cohort. In our 2021-2022 project, which is still ongoing, we accepted 102 Emerging Leaders into our cohort. Of this pool of 233 people, roughly half are Latino and 93 speak languages other than English, including Korean, Vietnamese, Cantonese, American Sign Language, German, Spanish, Armenian, Tagalog, Amharic, and Portuguese (with 60 of those 93 requiring interpretation, in Spanish, Korean, and ASL.)

We offer self-advocates the opportunity to meaningfully engage with, and lead in, the systems that serve them. Our cohort includes self-advocates who type to communicate, and who have high support needs. Of particular interest is our mentor program, which pairs Emerging Leaders with established leaders in the fields. Self-advocates report that being paired with other leaders with disabilities is especially impactful, and provides them the opportunity to see themselves as leaders as well as the practical support they need to understand next steps in their advocacy.

In fall 2022, DVU is presenting the training to the second cohort of Emerging Leaders. This seven-part training includes sessions on ableism, narrative change, effective advocacy at the local and state levels, and serving on boards and committees, among other topics. It also offers the opportunity to hear leadership stories from people with disabilities such as Rebecca Cokley (Ford Foundation), Nikki Brown-Booker (Disability Inclusion Fund), and Judge Andi Mudryk, among others. This not only gives our Emerging Leaders a glance at what is possible, but provides much-needed representation of diverse leaders with disabilities and family members who are doing good work in their communities.

At the same time, the first cohort is already hard at work taking leadership roles in their communities, advocating for inclusion and for systems change in service of equity. DVU continues to support these leaders through monthly Leadership Collaborative Connect online meetings, where graduated Emerging Leaders share stories of advocating for their communities and get suggestions from others about strategies to be most effective. At these monthly meetings, education continues as we often include guest presenters on various topics.

Our outcomes, however, are best evaluated by the people we train who describe themselves as better prepared to advocate for themselves and their communities in a variety of settings. In their own words, a self-advocate offers, "The DVU Emerging Leaders Program was the first of its kind for me. This program took the things that are on the forefront of my daily thoughts and helped me to turn my challenges into assets... Many people do not know how to access the community, how to find information from community programs, how to navigate community websites, how to write a topical speech, or even how to write a short bio blurb about yourself. These were all important skills that were addressed in this program."

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:

Our proposed project would continue and expand our current work. We are hiring an additional staff member with lived experience of our community to assist in outreach to family members, recruiting new leaders, and supporting the leadership program.

We have also learned that Spanish-speaking participants benefit from a more solid foundation before the trainings. Our third year will incorporate a special session for each group to prepare them for what to expect during the training and address any concerns or questions they might have. We will also conduct regular check-ins to ensure they are getting the most out of the trainings.

The Emerging Leaders who have graduated our program and regularly attend our monthly Leadership Collaborative Connects have expressed a need for a broader understanding of local and state policies that affect their community members. To that end, we will also expand our curriculum to address policy’s role in advocacy and in our daily lives. Further, pandemic permitting, we will have in-person networking events in Northern, Central, and Southern California, cohosted by local leaders who understand their own regional issues.

In the next year we will also deepen our growing relationships with Korean and Black self-advocate and family communities; we will expand the hours that Miguel Lugo, our Assistant Director of Outreach and Training, spends recruiting. We will also add ASL interpretation to the roster of languages our trainings are interpreted in.

Finally, our next year will include the creation of our privately funded Self-Advocates Speakers Bureau. The Bureau will include graduates of our Emerging Leaders Program who will receive additional training in public presentations, speaking to the media, and testifying at hearings and task forces. These leaders will specialize in educating the media, the public, and decision-makers in the systems that serve them on disability, inclusion, and the vital need for equity.

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:

Education and Training

Applicant Comment:

The Emerging Leaders Program is an education and training program that gives people with disabilities and their families the tools they need to be leaders in their communities and the state. The program primarily serves people from marginalized communities, particularly people of color, people who speak languages other than English, and self-advocates, many of whom use alternative methods to communicate. The Emerging Leaders Program has thus far empowered two cohorts of self-advocates and family advocates, largely from underserved communities, with the skills and knowledge they need to serve as leaders for and in their communities. The core of the program consists of five trainings on leadership and systemic advocacy skills. The program does not end after the initial trainings as we continue to offer monthly virtual Leadership Collaborative Connect meetings to provide vital mentorship, confidence building, and support as the Emerging Leaders begin their journeys as community advocates. In the next year, we will be creating a privately funded Self-Advocates Speakers Bureau to train people with disabilities to appear before audiences and in the media and promote the participation of Emerging Leaders.

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:

- All Regional Centers/Statewide
-

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:

- All Counties / Statewide
-

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:

Not Applicable

Applicant Comment:

Not Applicable

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:

Our mission continues to center leadership development and collaboration. DVU has other private foundation funding to provide training and leadership development, as well as work on training and outreach around communication disabilities and self-determination. Disability Voices United is also expanding its fundraising efforts as a result of a recent five-year strategic plan. We will increase our outreach to individual donors and continue seeking philanthropic funding for this important work.

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:

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

Applicant Comment:

Other = people of multiple ethnicities

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)
Asian (incl. Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese)	35	31 English speakers, 3 Korean speakers, 1 Vietnamese speaker
Native American	3	English
Hispanic (English-speaking)	60	English
Hispanic (Spanish-speaking)	135	Spanish
Multiple ethnicities	15	English

3. Applicant Question: Age Group(s) Served

Select all Age Groups the project will serve.

Applicant Response:

- Birth up to Three (Early Start)
- Three to Five
- 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:

The statewide Emerging Leaders Program trains diverse self-advocates and family members, matches them with Experienced Leader mentors, hosts monthly meetings with program graduates, facilitates opportunities for leadership, creates a Self-Advocates Speakers' Bureau, and shares what has worked with other organizations to ensure meaningful participation.

The leadership training component is five-parts online – with two additional prep sessions for Spanish-speakers and self-advocates – for at least 100 self-advocates and family members from diverse and underserved communities. The participants are selected through an application process and ensures diversity based on race, ethnicity, geography, and languages spoken. The recruitment is extensive with connections made both in and out of the VDD community.

The online trainings, led by skilled trainers, cover a range of topics including leadership, communication, board and committee membership, policy, and consensus building. Each training session includes prominent guest speakers, such as diverse leaders telling their “Leadership Stories” to inspire the trainees. The program also includes mock meetings, discussions, and homework, such as creating a one-minute video to advocate for reducing disparities.

DVU will also host three in-person trainings – in Southern, Central, and Northern California. Emerging Leaders will be invited to one of the trainings depending upon their location. These trainings offer additional, more personal, opportunities for learning and networking. They will include public speaking training where the Emerging Leader is recorded and given the opportunity to improve their skills. There will also be networking opportunities with other Emerging Leaders in their area.

After the trainings, interested Emerging Leaders will be matched with experienced mentors to provide additional guidance. The mentors meet with the participants to share their personal experiences with leadership and assist them in exploring potential leadership opportunities.

We also host monthly meetings to provide continuing support for our Emerging Leaders. Our current cohort of Emerging Leaders also joins in these meetings. We will scaffold our trainings to encourage attendance at public meetings as chances to learn and practice their advocacy.

Finally, we will share our successes and lessons learned in our project with community groups, statewide disability organizations, and regional centers so that others can more meaningfully include people with disabilities and families in their groups' leadership opportunities.

Disability Voices United is uniquely qualified for this undertaking with our extensive experience in creating trainings and conferences related to disability advocacy. Our Outreach and Leadership Teams' extensive real-world advocacy skills, lived experience, and deep connections will allow our Emerging Leaders access to impactful changemakers already working in disability advocacy.

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:

Regional centers have been required to report their disparity data to the public for years, yet disparities seem to be entrenched. DVU has analyzed POS data and written reports available at disabilityvoicesunited.org/equity. When comparing overall POS data as a percentage of expenses on white people, Latinos still receive about half the amount of POS in almost every regional center despite massive investments in disparity reduction by the state. An even greater concern is that disparities seem to have worsened in most regional centers since DDS began awarding grants to reduce them.

Regional centers are mandated to have leadership that reflect the diversity of their communities. Most meet the “letter of the law,” but disparities persist, in part, because many diverse board members don’t have the knowledge and skills to meaningfully participate in oversight of the organization or to advocate effectively for reducing racial and ethnic disparities.

Producing profound change requires the voices of people of color with disabilities and their families to meaningfully participate on boards, task forces, and committees. The goal of this project is to nurture and support diverse leaders who come from the communities most impacted by disparities. They need to be part of developing the transformative solutions to address disparities, including policy discussions, and engage with the systems to ensure the solutions are implemented effectively.

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:

While other leadership trainings exist, this project uniquely centers self-advocates and family members of color by providing practical ongoing training on real-world advocacy and leadership supported by a network of experienced mentors. We host a monthly virtual gathering to answer questions, provide plain language assistance on complex issues and support for new skills, and analyze Emerging Leaders' ongoing experience of barriers to participation.

We will scaffold these trainings to events that offer the opportunity to advocate for things that matter to our Emerging Leaders in the real world, such as regional center board and committee meetings, oversight hearings, and community level meetings such as local commissions on disabilities. We will also specifically educate our Leaders on policy and how it affects outcomes, which we believe is a missing piece in many leadership trainings. Finally, we will share what we have learned about supporting self-advocates and families in leadership roles with other organizations and agencies.

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:

This project relates to the third area of focus of the Grant Guidelines: "Creating community partnerships for learning and advocacy development between individuals, families, service providers, regional centers, and local and state agencies to develop leaders from diverse communities. Leaders will gain awareness to understand policies and engage with service systems to voice service needs, identify opportunities for systematic improvement, and provide input through participation and influence." Self-advocates and families of color have often been systematically prevented from full participation at the decision-making table. Since they are the experts on equity, access, and systemic barriers just by virtue of their lived experience, we will give them accessible plain language tools and support to understand policy, ask questions, make comments, and share their stories. By developing leaders from deep within underserved communities of color and giving them the skills to represent their communities effectively, they will be able to work together with DDS, regional centers, and service providers to address the root causes of disparities and break down the barriers to services. In addition, they will also serve as leaders in other service systems that intersect with DDS, such as school systems and IHSS. Our monthly gatherings provide the foundation for long-term support and strategy-sharing among our Emerging and Experienced Leaders.

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:

This statewide project meets the vision that DDS has set out in the RFP, which says “that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities experience respect for their choices, culture and language preferences, beliefs, values, needs, and goals, from a person-centered service system made up of a network of community agencies that provide high quality, outcome-based and equitable services.” This vision requires systemic change: As it stands, our system demonstrably produces inequitable outcomes for self-advocates and families of color, and bars the door to leadership opportunities that might allow them to work meaningful systemic change. Our project centers the lived experience and wisdom of our Emerging Leaders, and gives them the tools and support they need to navigate leadership positions from which they have long been excluded. As an organization with years of experience in both training and in advocacy, we know that a meaningful seat at the table is the key to transformational change. The core of this project is about collaboration and development of leaders. DVU has extensive relationships with both local and statewide organizations that represent people with disabilities, as well as those that support them. We will bring together the organizations and leaders throughout the state with whom we have worked over the years.

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 we have proposed track the project objectives and activities. The first part of the measures list disparity target groups to focus on diverse and underserved communities within the target populations. The second part of the measures provides input into the effectiveness and impact the project is having directly on the emerging leaders. Additionally, the measures will also evaluate participants taking leadership opportunities and their successes. The ongoing monthly convenings will provide insight into the effectiveness of the project by hearing directly from the participants and continuing the support throughout the project.

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:

Disability Voices United's project budget is consistent with our stated project objective and activities. We have outlined in the budget narrative which measures relate to each of the project expenses. We have not included any non-allowable costs or costs funded by other sources.

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 will be sending a copy of our proposal to the Executive Directors and Equity/Disparity Managers of all 21 regional centers. We have ongoing relationships with most of the directors and have been working with 11 regional centers on our current project.

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.
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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
