

# Application Report



**Applicant Organization:** A Better Life Together, Inc.  
**Project Name:** B.R.I.D.G.E. project  
**Application ID:** App-22-663  
**Funding Announcement:** FY 22-23 Service Access and Equity Grant  
**Awarded Amount:** \$450,000

**Project Summary:** The BRIDGE Project will provide education and training to the African American Community and continue to support incoming assistance request from previous outreach.

**Authorized Certifying Official:** Kimberly Mills    kmills@abetterlifetogether.org    6197411548  
**Project Director/Manager:** TBD TBD    bridge@abetterlifetogether.org    619-741-1548  
**Project Manager/Coordinator:** TBD TBD    bridge@abetterlifetogther.org    619-741-1548  
**Compliance/Fiscal Officer:** Clyde Williams    cwilliams@abetterlifetogether.org    6197411548

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**Section Name:** Applicant Eligibility

**Sub Section Name:** Applicant Information

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**1. Applicant Question:** Project Title

What is the Project Title?

**Applicant Response:**

B.R.I.D.G.E. (Bridging Resources into Diverse Groups Everywhere)

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**2. Applicant Question:** Awarded Amount

What is the total amount awarded for the project?

**Applicant Response:**

\$450,000

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**3. Applicant Question:** Organization Type

Choose the response that best describes your organization.

**Applicant Response:**

Community Based Organization, non-501(c)(3) EIN

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**4. Applicant Question:** Description of Organization/Group

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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:**

A Better Life Together, Inc. (ABLT) is a multicultural vendor of the San Diego Regional Center. ABLT has worked to increase awareness of services available to individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families. We have assisted families to access services since 2018 through funds from the Department of Developmental Disabilities' Services Access and Equity (formally Disparity) grants. ABLT conducts webinars, provides intensive case management supports to families navigating the system and assists with other generic resources. We assist individuals and families in advocating for their needs. ABLT also provides supported living services, independent living services, employment services, and customized tailored day and community-based services. We have two certified Person Centered trainers and execute person centered plans for families along with offering independent facilitation to individuals in the self determination program within the San Diego Regional Center.

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**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:**

[Certificate of Status.pdf ABLT.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

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**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

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**Section Name:** Grant Reapplication Information

**Sub Section Name:** Grant Reapplications Only

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**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

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**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
2019-2020	B.R.I.D.G.E. Project	18-C43	140990
2020-2021	B.R.I.D.G.E. Project	19-C43	158400
2021-2022	B.R.I.D.G.E. Project	20-C43	222650
2022-2023	B.R.I.D.G.E. Project	21-C43	200000

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**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 year 2020-21, we started with some very aggressive goals and it goes without saying that the pandemic changed everyone's directives. We anticipated being out in the community suddenly close contact wasn't possible. We focused our priority on calling consumers from POS data making almost 4000 calls; just shy of our target. It was a struggle trying to develop partnerships in the community because many organizations were either closed or unavailable due to their work priorities that did not include our project. In calling we found ourselves addressing immediate covid needs of delivering PPE, connecting with food banks to name a few. The largest percentage of contacts were Hispanic, followed by African American. The calling gave incredible insight on barriers/challenges. some immediate educational needs to target for the future and we quickly realized ethnicities that would be more difficult to connect and began strategizing our strengths and how we could make our targets more precise for the upcoming year.

In 2021-22 we working working under a hybrid community connector objective. We had to do quite a bit of pivoting to accommodate the ebbs and flows due to the covid pandemic. We began to set the platform for digital, electronic and social media outreach. We superseded our educational webinars by reaching 12 additional sessions above our targeted 6. We realized a decrease in calls with the POS due to swiftly approaching exhausting the entire listing through direct calls and email communication. We recognized trends pointing to many hours spent on what we defined as intensive supports. These were families with needs so great and required many hours to address multiple needs that stemmed from other resources such as food insecurities and utility/rental/housing assistance. We did identify individuals receiving new and increased services with SDRC, but did not have the assistance to track as effectively as we would have liked with the regional center. However, towards the end of the contract year we made great strides in collaboration with SDRC and started a workgroup meeting to better inform service coordinators of the process and what work we were doing with families. Moving into the new year, we were poised to make significant strides in the newly formed collaboration workgroup with SDRC. We began sharing documents, brochures and advertisements that could be used translated into multiple languages.

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**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:**

ABLT will be able to smoothly transition if awarded a new grant as some of the activities will continue such as conducting outreach to targeted communities who continue to experience disparity in services. We have a Regional Center which will allow us to identify barriers and work towards solutions to create more opportunities for individual to access services. Some of the progress was impacted by the pandemic as we could not meet face to face with leaders in the community. Meetings increased in this past year and there was an increase in attending community events which has allowed us to develop more partners. Our current project involves training leaders, who will provide the education to families and other community based organizations highlighting SDRC services utilizing their specific cultural nuances equipping the community. The information was made available to service providers to assist service delivery in a culturally specific manner. This project will focus on targeted outreach events in primarily African American communities in addition to continuing any follow up from previous ethnicities served, while increasing our advertisement reach and social media platforms to promote, educate and assist with SDRC and other generic resources. It is our goal to begin the first quarter of the 2 year project with a Town Hall Meeting to include SDRC, our local Legislators and the African American Community at large to listen for understanding and immediate direction and needs that will allow us to target specific areas of resolution. Our goal is not to be their voice, but to listen, educate and help translate their truth, which many times comes through the lense of trauma imposed by poverty and socio-economic life events that may have been previously been judged and/or misinterpreted. This will allow us to also teach/lead by providing examples of effective advocacy.

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**Section Name:** General Application

**Sub Section Name:** Proposal Summary

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**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:**

ABLT proposes to provide education and training for individual and families from the African American community. The focus is to create community partnerships for learning and advocacy between individuals, families, service providers, regional centers, and community leaders. ABLT will host 2 Town Hall meetings and invite San Diego Regional Center staff, community leaders, individuals and families, and other stakeholders to provide a safe space for listening to needs and develop solutions to address unmet needs. The expected outcome of the Town Halls is to develop a "Community of Opportunity". Participants can rally around each other in support and create effective advocacy partnerships. ABLT will also host webinars and small group trainings to assist individuals and families to effectively advocate for their needs and to share resources. We will continue the work of the Service Access & Equity workgroup with SDRC.

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**2. Applicant Question:** Duration of project

Choose the duration of your project.

**Applicant Response:**

24 months

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**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:**

- San Diego Regional Center
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**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:**

- San Diego County
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**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:**

ABLT will work with several community based organizations and community leaders in the African American community. Some include the Live Well San Diego, Special NEEDs Resource Foundation of San Diego as well as Faith and Community based organizations. We will continue to partner with our established community partners and build on the relationships formed in the past years. We have recently met new organizations that will be instrumental in our efforts such as the Black Chamber of Commerce.

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**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

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**7. Applicant Question:** Strategies and Sustainability

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

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**Applicant Response:**

Staff will build upon established relationships with community based organizations to continue to educate about various services offered to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. ABLT will strengthen its relationship with the San Diego Regional Center by assisting individuals and their families to reduce barriers and receive needed services. ABLT will continue advocating for services for all and work with existing community based partners to advocate and educate as requested. ABLT will continue sharing information through our social media platform and website. ABLT is apart of local and statewide vendor groups such as the Developmental Disability Provider Network and the California Community Living Network and will continue our advocacy work.

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**Sub Section Name:** Target Population

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**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
- Other (list)

**Applicant Comment:**

Individuals of African Descent, individual who were listed in the other category. Follow up with connections from previous ethnicities.

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**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)
African American	150	English
Other (African Descent)	15	Unknown
Native American	20	English

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**3. Applicant Question:** Age Group(s) Served

Select all Age Groups the project will serve.

**Applicant Response:**

- Three to 21
- 16 to 21
- Three to Five
- 22 and older
- Birth up to Three (Early Start)

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**Section Name:** Project Application

**Sub Section Name:** Project Application

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**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:**

A Better Life Together, INC.'s B.R.I.D.G.E Project proposes to target African American and people of African Descent in San Diego County.

The B.R.I.D.G.E. Project will provide engagement and outreach activities to include:

- Host a town hall meeting for the African American community. Representative from the San Diego Regional Center will be invited to attend as well as African American individuals and families. Other community stakeholders will be invited.
- Attend 4 health and resource fairs in the community that will attract individuals from our target communities. Staff will serve as a resource for individuals and families and disseminate information.
- Conduct small group presentations at faith and community based organizations about services offered by the San Diego Regional Center and assist families as needed.
- Continue Service Access and Equity workgroup with the San Diego Regional Center to discuss barriers to service and focus on solutions.
- Conduct 6 trainings/workshops virtually or in person on topics related to advocacy, effective communication, etc. These trainings will be a safe space for individuals and families to share their challenges and frustrations and allow for solutions to be developed to eliminate barriers to receiving services.
- Continue our Wednesday webinars that focus on a variety of topics including Cultural Specific, IEP rights, advocacy, Lanterman Services, housing rights, rental assistance and mental health support just to name a few.
- Continue social media posts related to disability rights, generic resources, trainings and other relevant topics.

The project will create a community of practice where individuals and families will be given tools and knowledge to navigate the regional center service system. This project will also increase the knowledge of the regional center system. The project will allow individuals and families to share resources and provide emotional support.

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**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:**

The San Diego Regional Center Purchase of Service Data report dated March 3, 2022 showed a disparity between White client expenditures as opposed to other races and ethnicities. For example, White consumer per capita expenditures were \$20,036 as opposed to Black/African American which were \$15,638. During the meeting, several recommendations were discussed. In the outreach and education staff currently conduct, several parents have shared their frustration with accessing services through SDRC. Despite our best efforts to encourage the families to call back many indicated that they handled things on their own and didn't need services for their loved ones. During a recent service access and equity workgroup with the San Diego Regional Center on October 5, 2022, it was suggested that we narrow our focus as SDRC has its own efforts and noted cultural specific projects for the Native American.

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**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:**

The B.R.I.D.G.E project is different from other projects awarded in the San Diego Regional Center catchment area. Previous projects focus on disparities in general and others are specific to the Native American and Hispanic community. No other project focuses on the African American community specifically.

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**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:**

The B.R.I.D.G.E project will improve equity, access and reduce barriers to services by providing education to families to empower them to ask for services they may not be aware of. The project will also continue the service access and equity workgroup with the San Diego Regional Center to discuss barriers to services and work on solutions so individuals and families can receive the services and supports they need. According to Williams and Cooper (2019), *Reducing Racial Inequalities in Health: Using What we Already Know to Take Action*, "reducing inequalities in health requires dismantling the systems that initiate and sustain the inequalities in a broad range of societal institutions that are the drivers of inequalities in health". These systems were created by racism and to neutralize the impact and negative effects that will lead to healthier and more equitable communities, "communities of opportunities". These communities will bring stakeholders from education, healthcare, housing, labor, spiritual and other sectors together to mitigate the effects of racism.

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### **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:**

The B.R.I.D.G.E Project supports the plan of the San Diego Regional Center to reduce disparities. ABLT staff meet with the Cultural Specialist monthly to discuss issues and to share information with service coordinators. On October 5th, SDRC staff suggested that ABLT narrow its focus as there were other projects focused on the Native American and Hispanic communities. Therefore our main focus was devoted to the African American community with basic follow to others we have connected in the past. And of course helping any ethnicity that reaches out based on our previous engagements or new encounters. We don't plan to turn anyone away without some initial assistance where we can.

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### **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 objective of the project is to increase knowledge and to gain tools to effectively advocate for needs of African American individuals and families. To achieve this ABLT proposes to host 2 town hall meetings that will serve as listening sessions for individuals and families can share their experiences regarding accessing regional center services. Small group trainings will be conducted that will offer a safe space for sharing knowledge and gaining support from the attendees. Monthly educational webinars will serve as a tool to increase knowledge on advocacy, generic resources, IEP, employment, and other related topics.

By bringing stakeholders together in a variety of ways, individuals and families will gain the knowledge and emotional support they may need.

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### **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:**

The project budget is consistent with stated project objective and activities and clearly explains how the expenditures support the overall objective and outcomes. The proposed budget is for 2 years with the 2nd proposing a 3% increase for the project manager and project coordinator. The budget shows personnel costs as well and operating and indirect costs. The event budget includes a large venue for townhalls.

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**Section Name:** Proposal Certification

**Sub Section Name:** Certification

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### **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

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### **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:**

Clyde Williams met with Brenda Bello Vasquez, Kate Kinnamont, Gabriella Ohmstede and Pamela Starmack on 10/05/2022. During the meeting Clyde shared our ideas for this years focus. It was suggested we narrow our focus. The proposal final was submitted to Brenda Vasquez.

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### **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

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