Application Report

Applicant Organization:	Heluna Health
Project Name:	Heluna Health SAE 22-23
Application ID:	App-22-527
Funding Announcement:	FY 22-23 Service Access and Equity Grant
Awarded Amount:	$250,000

Project Summary: The proposed project activities are best described as Education and Training to create community partnerships for learning and advocacy development between individuals, families, service providers, regional centers, and local and state agencies to develop leaders from diverse and underrepresented communities to make change in the developmental services system. Leaders will increase their awareness and skills to understand policies and engage with services systems to voice service needs, identify opportunities for systems improvement, and provide input through mutual participation and influence

Authorized Certifying Official:	Peter Dale	contracts@helunahealth.org	-
Project Director/Manager:	Yvette Baptiste	ybaptiste@elafrc.net	-
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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:

Launching Community of Practice for Equity

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2. Applicant Question: Awarded Amount

What is the total amount awarded for the project?

Applicant Response:

$250,000

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3. Applicant Question: Organization Type

Choose the response that best describes your organization.

Applicant Response:

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

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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:

The Heluna Health/ Eastern Los Angeles Family Resource Center (ELAFRC) is in Eastern Los Angeles County. Our mission is to assist parents, caregivers and professionals in locating resources to make informed decisions to meet the needs of those who have developmental and healthcare needs. Resilient families raise happy and healthy children. We are on the same campus as the Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center and share a long history of policy forward programming and system improvement advocacy in California's developmental services system. We provide parent to parent emotional support, information,

ELAFRC has been a program of Heluna Health for over 25 years.

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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

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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:

Yes

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
2021	Early Start Transition Advocacy Training	20-C53	126343
2019	Grass-Roots Organizations Working Network (GROWN)	18-C53	

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:

20-C53: ELAFRC developed a transition curriculum for monolingual Spanish and Vietnamese speaking parents transitioning from Early Start to school district services. The 6 module- 12 lesson training has been very well received by families and will conclude with its current team at the end of February. We will have exceeded the number of Spanish speaking families to be trained with high satisfaction outcomes and look forward to sustainability by making the training available to other FRCs and parent organizations. We will continue the training annually as part of our Early Start and FEC program.

18-C53: Four community-level trainings were held for the GROWN mentees that sought, along with their monthly cohort trainings and mentorship meetings, to increase their organizational capacity in the areas of leadership, management/operations, community engagement, and evaluation. The trainings involved objectives and content related to parent-to-parent support, grant writing, evaluation, and communication. Due to COVID-19, these trainings were virtual and made available statewide to all CBOs.

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:

Not Applicable

Applicant Comment:

Not Applicable

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 proposed project activities are best described as *Education and Training* to create community partnerships for learning and advocacy development between individuals, families, service providers, regional centers, and local and state agencies to develop leaders from diverse and underrepresented communities to make change in the developmental services system. Leaders will increase their awareness and skills to understand policies and engage with services systems to voice service needs, identify opportunities for systems improvement, and provide input through mutual participation and influence.

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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:

- All Regional Centers/Statewide

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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:

- All Counties / Statewide

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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:

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:

Yes

Attachment:

Letter of Support_Collective Learning.docx - WORD DOCUMENT

7. Applicant Question: Strategies and Sustainability

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

Applicant Response:

If funding is granted over a two-year period, the first-year strategies will focus on training, introductions and forming relationships among regional organizations that will sustain over time, and year two strategies will focus on implementing the community of practice plan that the regional partners develop together to ensure all their needs are met while also contributing to the collective learning and action needed to improve the DD system. Communities of Practice will continue based on the building of partnerships across roles and responsibilities.

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

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/Black	100	English

3. Applicant Question: Age Group(s) Served

Select all Age Groups the project will serve.

Applicant Response:

- 22 and older

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:

The current CA developmental disabilities services system has been growing and changing, which may be leading to some fractures and bubbling up of longstanding pain and resentment. Multiple groups, most notably African American/Black, Indigenous and Latinx communities, are concerned with disparities and acting to improve access and equity within their regions. Recently, members of the Black community (e.g., self-advocates, family members, and service providers) have been more vocal about lack of access and equity. These challenges can create opportunities to heal and act together in the best interest of individuals and system improvement. If people had best practice, evidence-based tools to convene groups, suspend judgment and span the boundaries of existing "turf," each area could learn together and formulate innovative solutions to old problems. Regionally, they can form communities of practice to decide how and what changes they need to implement locally that have the potential to improve practices that make a positive difference.

This proposal outlines how ELAFRC will in Year 1, convene 2 statewide training to assist self-advocates, families and professionals to learn about the benefits of communities of practice and create a plan to implement within their region to improve equity and service access. In Year 2, selected entities in 6 areas (TBD in Year 1) will focus on issues with impact to *Black/African American service providers, individuals, and families*. will receive expert technical assistance to test out the community of practice approach to support change locally and measure whether it was implemented as intended to improve results. The selection of those groups will surface during the training and the identification of the 6 groups as a project objective during the first year of the project.

The ELAFRC is uniquely qualified and positioned to support the cross-cutting conversations and community building needed to address the inequities by –

- Convening groups and facilitating conversations to bridge understanding and jointly identify solutions to the most prevalent problems of the local interagency council in East LA. This has resulted in increased community participation in EII.
- Identifying positive examples of high-quality service delivery models that can be shared with other groups for potential replication and scale up in the development of the FRCNCA SAE grant focused on Latinx and Black students, and in collaboration with SCLARC for improvements in SE practices for young children.

The project will invite all Regional Centers statewide to join a two-day training to learn how to identify and unite partners around improving DD services for Black children, youth, adults, and their families. Training participants will build their understanding of how convening and cultivating communities of practice can increase their response to the community, especially those with whom conflicts exist.

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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:

A review of Purchase of Services Expenditures and Demographic Data from FY 20-21 shows disparity among African Americans in the following categories:

- Timely eligibility determinations
- Access to Early Start
- African Americans have the lowest share of authorized services of all ethnic groups
- The largest gap in POS equity across the age span is found among Hispanic and African American groups, and these two groups also have the lowest average POS expenditures for adaptive skills training (AST) compared to Whites
- The Supported Living Services is one of the highest POS expenditures per capita for is used disproportionately by White consumers
- There are also inequities within the Supported Employment Program (SEP), with the most prevalent disparities found among Hispanic and African American adults.

Families have reported barriers to initial contact with regional centers, and ELAFRC has also heard anecdotal reports from Black providers that they are not being assigned to cases as often as their white colleagues, despite being equally or more qualified. Across the state, recent summits dedicated to improving transition for Black and Latinx children from Part C to Part B of IDEA found that Black families were underrepresented among participants engaged in conversations about culturally responsive services that improve access, equity, and inclusion of the families served.

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:

There have been few Statewide efforts to develop communities of practice to provide a space for collective learning and action among various groups. There have been local efforts to engage the Black community to educate and train mentors to increase family leadership, however our effort here is unique because ELAFRC would like to provide training to introduce the concept to all but then focus on the African American population with their existing networks to facilitate communities of practice and build on the strength of their networks to tackle issues important to them. Through this work, for the Black community, we will surface the most prevalent regional issues and lead on topics that will make the most positive difference for Black children, youth, and families. Tapping into these leadership networks has the potential to both enhance Black participation *and* improve the overall system.

Communities of practice are a promising and viable approach because of the unique benefits they offer, as shown below. A community of practice approach to solving complex problems contributes to problem solving, requests for information, seeking experience, reusing assets, coordination and synergy, building solutions, growing confidence, discussing change, documenting efforts, sharing information, and identifying gaps in competence.

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:

Because African American consumers are not equitably represented in the early years, are not accessing the self-determination options available to them, and providers are not adequately represented within the provider community resources more effort is needed to amplify the voices within the diverse community of Black leaders, who have participated in longstanding networks dedicated to building communities, creating associations, and promoting access in ways that have become foundational pillars which other underrepresented groups have built upon for more person-centered and inclusive systems. Progress will be measured by self-identified culturally and regionally relevant measures of progress. ELAFRC expects the regional action plans to address these problems and will work with the regional leaders, and community of practice consultants, to design methods for the community of practice memes to measure progress and evaluate results. Some of these measures may include successful changes to RC policies or procedures, legislation or policy initiatives, development of specialized networks or partnerships for provider support, or increases in the use/utilization of POS dollars by Black individuals and families.

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 is a statewide project that seeks to improve access using a centralized-decentralized approach. Our model is not a top-down model and is more appropriate for Black people, people who are historically oppressed and those crushed by economic inequities. The project will ensure that in Year 2 any financial support and project activities support the RC plan to promote equity and reduce disparities in their catchment area. The year 2 regional groups must include an RC representative to ensure that those in the community that have authority and responsibility for services are part of the partnership and decision making.

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 project will provide individual and community level training to understand, determine and plan a community of practice as the best approach to improve equity and service access. The training will include a pre- and post-test survey instrument to measure the extent to which participants understand what a community of practice is and when it is considered a viable approach to solving problems and reducing disparities in DD service delivery. As a follow-up to the two-day training events, participants will be invited to web-based learning sessions and interactive meetings to develop standards of practice and criteria that the regional groups will use to monitor the success of their communities of practice. They will develop performance measures to know when the community of practice is making progress and consider what they will do when specific strategies and activities employed by the communities of practice are not working as intended. These standards and criteria will be integrated into their community of practice action plans.

In Year 1, we will use the two-day training to surface critical issues that need to be addressed to improve access to DD services for under-represented groups and improve the quality of the referral and service delivery system. Training participants will build their understanding of how convening and cultivating communities of practice can increase the The meeting will include a targeted strand for recruiting 10-12 people who want to receive more in-depth training to use the community of practice approach to reducing disparities in identification and access to services, discrimination within the referral process and service delivery system, and disproportionate representation of Black groups within programs that could benefit young children, youth, families, and providers.

In Year 2, groups in the northern and southern regions will be invited to submit action plans that outline how they intend to improve equity and service access using a community of practice approach. The regional communities of practice leaders will gather data and community input to explain why they have selected certain partners and activities. They will use RC POS data and other data as supporting evidence of the disparity or inequity they are addressing and each selected group for post convening support must include a regional center agency representative.

The community of practice consultants and project staff will support regional facilitators as they measure progress and evaluate the results of their plans.

In summary, communities of practice provide a space for collective learning and action. In Year 1, regional groups will learn about the benefits of communities of practice and create a plan to implement within their region to improve equity and service access. In Year 2, they will test out the community of practice approach to measure whether it was implemented as intended to improve results.

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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:

Attached is the budget narrative.

Attachment:
Budget Narrative.docx - WORD DOCUMENT

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

Attachment:
Communication to RCs.pdf - PDF FILE

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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:

Attached is the communication submitted to the RC's. This was sent to each of the RC's listed in Attachment F. Once this application is submitted a copy will be provided to each as well.

Attachment:
Communication to RCs.pdf - PDF FILE

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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