

Application Report



Applicant Organization: Friends of Children with Special Needs
Project Name: Community Connector
Application ID: App-22-548
Funding Announcement: FY 22-23 Service Access and Equity Grant
Awarded Amount: \$165,000

Project Summary: To build a network of parent navigators who can provide 1:1 navigator service to individual families needing personalized support. The parent navigators will help other families understand and navigate the regional center system as well as obtaining generic services to meet the person-centered needs of their children with disabilities.

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:

Parent Navigators to Support Service Access for Asian Families

2. Applicant Question: Awarded Amount

What is the total amount awarded for the project?

Applicant Response:

\$165,000

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
2021	Asian Outreach, Mentorship, Empowerment and Service Capacity Building	21-C24	\$275,000
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:

As recipients of the 2020-21 and 2021-22 grant, we continued to work closely with Asian families on educating, mentoring and empowering them to advocate for regional center and generic services to meet the needs of their children with disabilities.

Even though the pandemic affected our programs, we were able to continue providing support to our Asian families via online parent support meetings held twice a week: one for Cantonese and one for Mandarin. These meetings provided Asian parents an opportunity to connect with each other to get emotional support and share their experiences. At these meetings, we continue to provide guidance and information on various special needs topics by inviting speakers such as regional center representatives, community partners, and other specialists to present to them. In the last 2 years, we had over 400 families who have attended at least one of our meetings.

In October 2021, we restarted our in-person coffee socials held twice a month: one in East Bay and one in South Bay. Although attendance was lower than prior to the pandemic, we were still able to support over 50 families through these socials. In February 2022, we also restarted our family seminars held twice a month: one in the East Bay and one in the South Bay. We also resumed in-person outreach events such as:

- Special Needs Talent Showcase in April 2022
 - First time in show's history that we had a hybrid show
 - Over 600 people watched the show
- Spring Carnival in May 2022 (over 200 attendees)
- Family Day in June 2022 (over 200 attendees)
- The Disability Community & First Responder event in September 2022
 - Goal of promoting positive relationships between the disability community and the police and fire departments.
 - 24 community partners, which includes regional center, State Council, Office of Clients' Rights and Advocacy, Dept. of Rehab, SELPA and many others including Deaf/IDD and Latinx community, provided resources and service information to our disability community.
 - Close to 500 people of different ethnicities and abilities attended this event.

Additionally, we developed five new programs: 2 for high need clients which has 7 clients and 3 SDP ready programs which has 30 clients as of 10/6/22.

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:

In our current and previous projects, our focus was to outreach and educate the Asian families to advocate for generic and RC services in the RCEB and SARC catchment area.

The new proposed project will expand to the GGRC catchment area because since the pandemic, we have been supporting many Chinese families, many who are monolingual, in this catchment area via our weekly online parent meetings. Additionally, we will continue to outreach to attract and meet new Asian families; however, our focus will shift to building a network of culturally and linguistically competent parent navigators who can provide 1:1 navigator services to support and mentor the targeted Asian families who:

- Are monolingual or have limited English abilities
- Are new immigrants or recently moved to the Bay Area
- Have children who are newly diagnosed
- Are struggling with navigating the regional center, school district and/or generic service systems

Our services will include:

- Individualized consultation and support via phone calls, zoom meetings, office visits or home visits
- Navigating the RC Intake Process (ie. making initial contact to RC, completing application, attending IPP meetings, etc.)
- Navigating the IEP Process (ie. reviewing IEP documents, attending IEP meetings, etc.)
- Attending appeal process meetings
- Referrals to other service providers and generic services
- Provide parent support groups
- Interpreter and Translator Services
- Handling Paperwork and Applications

FCSN is proposing this change because after years of outreach and education to our Asian families, many still require a lot of personalized help. We provided limited mentorship in past years but found that families are in need of much more support to navigate and understand the RC and generic systems due to their language limitation and cultural needs. Therefore, this upcoming grant year, we would like to dedicate more funding and time in this effort so we can help and support families and individuals more effectively.

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:

Community Connector

Applicant Comment:

Our project will be to build a network of parent navigators who can provide 1:1 navigator service to individual families needing personalized support. The parent navigators will help other families understand and navigate the regional center system as well as obtaining generic services to meet the person-centered needs of their children with disabilities.

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
 - Golden Gate 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
 - San Francisco County
 - San Mateo 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:

N/A

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:

During this project, we will adopt the "Train the Trainer" concept, which means the staff will be training parents to become mentors/navigators who can then train and mentor other new parents. We plan to grow a network of volunteer parent navigators with language capacity emphasizing on supporting the Mandarin-speaking, Cantonese-speaking and Vietnamese-speaking families. We can also support other Asian languages as requested. With a group of volunteer parent mentors/navigators, we hope to continue this in the future with less dependency on paid staff, therefore, decreasing the cost of running this program to increase the sustainability of the program without grant funding.

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
- Vietnamese

Applicant Comment:

Our project emphasizes on supporting Chinese and Vietnamese families; however, we can support Japanese, Korean, Thai and Filipino families as requested.

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	50	Mandarin
Chinese	60	Cantonese
Vietnamese	10	Vietnamese

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:

Our project for this year will focus on serving the Asian IDD population in the RCEB, SARC and GGRC catchment area. 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.

Our project design will be to build a network of culturally and linguistically competent staff and parent navigators who can support other Asian families in navigating the regional center system as well as accessing generic resources to meet their children's person-centered needs. The staff and parent navigators will be the bridge that connect the families with other service providers and advocacy agencies who can better serve their individual needs. The target families that would benefit from our project will be those who have limited English capacity, are new immigrants have newly diagnosed children and/or have challenging situations. Our navigators will be able to support these families in the following ways:

- Guide families through the regional center intake process (ie. initial contact to RC, help families with intake application, interpret phone calls and translate documents, attend their initial IPP, etc.)
- Translate and interpret documents and materials from regional center
- Review IEP documents and/or attend IEP meetings
- Attend Appeal Process Meetings
- Assist with applying for generic services (ie. IHSS, SSI, etc.)
- Host parent support groups
- Educate and train families individually on the regional center system and services

By providing these personalized supports to the individual families, the families will be able to access service that they may not be getting without our support due to their language and cultural barriers as well as their lack of knowledge of their rights to services. With our support and guidance, these parents will be more confident in building a better and trusting relationship with the regional centers and other advocacy agencies.

FCSN will work with the local regional centers by connecting our families to them for services and resources. We collaborate with the regional center by:

- Actively participating in their equity and access task force meetings.
- Inviting the their representatives to present at our seminars and events
- Attending their events
- Communicating with their service coordinators/case managers to address the targeted families' unmet needs.

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:

According to the 2019-20 RC data, it shows that 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 and input from families via personal interviews and semi-annual surveys. When families register to attend, some of the questions we ask are:

- How has FCSN's events and activities helped with their knowledge of services?
- How can FCSN help their families?
- Are you regional center client? If not, why?
- What is the reason for not applying for regional center intake?

These data helped us determine that some families, even though, they have attended to our seminars, coffee socials or parent support meetings, still find it challenging to deal with their regional center because of their limited English capacity, the complexity of their processes or lack of trust of the regional center. They would like more support to help them through the process.

With these input from families, FCSN feels it is important to mentor these families individually to ensure that they develop trust with the regional center, understand the services that they are entitled to and how and where to get those services so that their children's unique needs are met.

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:

FCSN's proposed project will focus mainly on building a parent navigator network to provide 1:1 navigator services that targets the unique cultural and linguistic needs of Asian individuals and their families in the SARC, RCEB and GGRC catchment area. Our navigator will consist of staff or parents who can understand the culture and speak the language of the families that they mentor. Currently there are no organizations in our catchment areas providing 1:1 navigator services specifically for Asian special needs families with language and cultural capacity of Mandarin, Cantonese and Vietnamese.

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:

Through our numerous years of outreaching and educating many Asian families, we noticed that some Asian families are still hesitant to make the first move to access necessary services due to the following reasons:

- Overwhelmed by the amount of information being provided to them that they don't know where to start.
- Complicated Application Process
- Limited Language Capacity to communicate with the RC, government agencies, school districts and community organizations
- Continued lack of trust with the RC, government agencies and other community organizations

Therefore, FCSN's 1:1 parent navigator project will greatly improve equity and access for these Asian families by:

- Providing individual families with comprehensive support and step-by-step instructions in applying for regional center service intake to ensure the process is followed through
- Supporting regional center client families who are unfamiliar with this entitlement system
- Helping client families who have low or no POS utilization to access their needed services
- Assisting families to access generic services from the government and community to meet their children's needs
- Reviewing the IEP documents and attending the IEP with the families to ensure that the child is receiving appropriate services and support from the school.
- Supporting families through the appeal process as needed
- Interpreting and translating documents and materials to help families understand the system in their own language

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:

FCSN has always collaborated with the regional centers. We participate in the Diversity and Equity Taskforce for both RCEB and SARC catchment areas since 2014 to provide feedback and help the regional center adapt the best strategies to reduce disparities and outreach to the Asian communities. We have supported the RC by connecting Asian family to them by inviting:

- Cultural Specialists to present the disparity data to our Asian community annually.
- Director of Consumer Services from the regional centers to meet our parents to discuss the challenges in accessing regional center services.
- Executive Directors of the regional centers to speak to the Asian special needs community at our big outreach events.
- Regional Center representatives to attend and host a resource booth at our outreach events

We are collaborating with county and city government, the school district, various children and adult special needs services, park and recreation services, community organizations, health organizations and other Spanish speaking and deaf organizations to provide a more inclusive community.

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 following measures will be used to track the progress and outcome of our 1:1 navigator project:

- Number of Cantonese-speaking parents trained as parent navigators
- Number of Mandarin-speaking parents trained as parent navigators
- Number of Vietnamese-speaking parents trained as parent navigators
- Number of Cantonese-speaking families reached at the disability community events
- Number of Mandarin-speaking families reached at the disability community events
- Number of Vietnamese-speaking families reached at the disability community events
- Number of Cantonese-speaking families who attended parent support group
- Number of Mandarin-speaking families who attended parent support group
- Number of Vietnamese-speaking families who attended parent support group
- Number of Asian families served in the 1:1 navigator program to navigate the regional center intake process
- Number of Asian families served in the 1:1 navigator program to increase POS utilization
- Number of Asian families served in the 1:1 navigator program for generic services
- Number of Asian families served in the 1:1 navigator program for IEP or school service
- Number of Asian families served in the 1:1 navigator program for the Appeal Process

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 budget will consist of hiring the program director and outreach coordinator (existing positions) to oversee and coordinate the program. We also need to hire PT Navigator trainers who speaks Mandarin, Cantonese and Vietnamese to train the parent navigators. The parent navigators will receive a stipend for their work with the families.

The other operating costs are costs need to run the program.

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

SARC - Javier Zaldivar

GGRC - Eric Zigman

Attachment:

[Email Support from GGRC.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

[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
