Application Report

Applicant Organization:	Teach Acquire Thrive LLC
Project Name:	Creating an Inclusive and Sustainable Workforce for the Solano, Sonoma and Napa Counties.
Application ID:	App-22-677
Funding Announcement:	FY 22-23 Service Access and Equity Grant
Awarded Amount:	$310,000

Project Summary: For those that have or at risk of having developmental disabilities, early intervention and access to services is critical. All throughout our state, we are seeing families in crisis over not being able to access services that they need that include but are not limited to: early intervention, applied behavior analysis therapy, social skills groups, parent training, respite care and more. Solano, Sonoma, and Napa counties are no stranger to this struggle to locating providers that have the capacity and ability to service their loved ones. A new senate bill passed in July 2022 by Governor Gavin Newsom (SB221) requires that all mental and behavioral health providers offer services to clients a minimum of every 10 business days. This new bill has put immense pressure on agencies providing these services to hire and retain more providers in order to keep up with the provision of services for current individuals served, let alone intake additional children and young adults in need of services. However, provider requirements for many funding sources require certain certifications and training in order to provide these services that individuals in the community do not have the time or financial abilities to complete. In addition to Solano, Sonoma, and Napa counties being highly impacted by number of individuals waiting for and requiring services, inflation and cost of living in these areas has skyrocketed in the last several years and since COVID-19, causing many providers to seek other forms of employment or move elsewhere in order to be able to afford to live. This begs the question, how are we going to rise to the occasion of increasing service providers so that our population of those with and/or at risk of developmental disabilities get access to the services they deserve and have the right to receive? Teach, Acquire, Thrive, LLC. strives to produce 50 additional trained behavioral therapists to provide behavior analytic, early intervention, and/or social skills group training by January 2025. Of those 50 additional trained therapists, we would ensure that at least 30 of them were bilingual/bi-cultural so that individuals receiving services can receive them in their native first language and/or by a trained therapist that is of the same ethnic group (upon request). This would be achieved through the creation and implementation of a paid training program that would lead to more Registered Behavior Technicians. This would include a background check, 40-hour course/training, 80 hours of shadowing and Behavioral Skills Training, passing of a competency checklist, cultural competencies and client dignity training, Crisis Prevention and Intervention Training, and additional monthly ongoing job specific trainings. Training will be conducted through a combination of virtual and in-person. After training is completed, therapists would be required to take and pass a national exam through the Behavior Analyst Certification Board for a Registered Behavior Technician Certification. After taking the exam, behavioral therapists would be placed with clients. Full time behavioral therapists would be able to serve up to 2-3 individuals needing services per day, part-time behavioral therapists would be able to serve 1-2 individuals needing therapy per day. This would lead to approximately 50-150 more individuals needing services being served per day. Teach, Acquire, Thrive, LLC. would use evidenced based training methods in order to train behavioral therapists. When doing research regarding reasons for burnout, turnover, ethical dilemmas and more, there is resounding evidence that this stems from poor training, lack of supervision and support, and inadequate preparation for the position. This is why a comprehensive in-house training program would be developed and implemented to reach greater success in not only providing 50 new RBT's, but effective, ethical, diverse, and competent ones.

Authorized Certifying Official: Jenna Morgan   jenna@teachacquirethrive.org   -

Project Director/Manager: Jenna Morgan   jenna@teachacquirethrive.org   -

Project Manager/Coordinator: Jenna Morgan   jenna@teachacquirethrive.org   -

Compliance/Fiscal Officer: Jenna Morgan   jenna@teachacquirethrive.org   -

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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:

Creating an Inclusive and Sustainable Workforce for the Solano, Sonoma and Napa Counties.

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2. Applicant Question: Awarded Amount

What is the total amount awarded for the project?

Applicant Response:

$310,000

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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

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:

www.teachacquirethrive.org

Teach, Acquire, Thrive, LLC. provides passionate and inclusive ABA therapy that focuses on the individual needs of their clients and families. TAT is an inclusive work environment that respects, appreciates, and celebrates all differences among their families and their team. At TAT we believe that everyone can learn and that the client's needs always come first. Our team consists of a diverse, passionate, and positive force of people whose mission sis to inspire others to achieve beyond what they thought was possible.

We have received funding from PPP loans and ERTC credits and used the funds solely for the purpose of providing additional jobs and payroll for employees. The outcomes from that were successful as we were able to grow our agency to the size it is today with those funds. We meet the CBO definition as a public for profit LLC working with individuals with developmental disabilities.

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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_1666494657377.pdf - PDF FILE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA (1).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

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:

No

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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
N/A	N/A	N/A	

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:

Not Applicable

Applicant Comment:

Not Applicable

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:

Workforce Capacity and Development

Applicant Comment:

Workforce Capacity and Development

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:

- North Bay 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:

- Napa County
- Solano County
- Sonoma 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:

Not Applicable

Applicant Comment:
Not Applicable

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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?

Applicant Response:

TAT's goal is to create a sustainable and repeatable training program that results in effective, ethical, and certified RBT's that will continue to service the communities. Through the use of data collected throughout the implementation of the project, we can use that to replicate this project again, in other service areas as well as to increase the workforce in these service areas.

After the grand funding has concluded, we would be able to hire several of the trained therapists and utilize them to serve members and through additional funding we are able to generate or receive, continue to train additional RBT's to add to the workforce. In our design, we would like this to be the kickstart to a long time and sustainable hiring project to increase services across the state of California.

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
- Hispanic
- Other (list)
- Pacific Islander (list)
- Indian (list)

Applicant Comment:

This project intends to serve any populations of developmental disabilities and autism despite race but the primary focus will be on increased access to services for those that are African American and Hispanic. We have access to several bilingual providers that can train additional bilingual service providers.

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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	25	English
Hispanic	25	Spanish
Other	50	English

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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

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:

For those that have or are at risk of having developmental disabilities/autism access to services is critical, thus will be our target population, We are seeing families in crisis over not being able to access services that they need that include but are not limited to: early intervention, applied behavior analysis therapy, social skills groups, parent training, respite care, and more. Solano, Sonoma, and Napa counties are no stranger to this struggle to locating providers that have the capacity and ability to service their loved ones.

SB221 requires that all mental/behavioral health providers offer services to clients a minimum of every 10 business days. Thus placing immense pressure on agencies providing these services to hire and retain more providers to keep up with the provision of services for current individuals served, let alone intake additional children and adults in need of services. Provider requirements for many funding sources require certain certifications and training in order to provide these services.

Solano, Sonoma, and Napa counties have been highly impacted by number of individuals waiting for and requiring services, inflation and cost of living in these areas has skyrocketed in the last several years since COVID-19, causing further barriers to services, Many services require traveling and using your vehicle for in home services and that has deterred people from working in the developmental disabilities service industry.

TAT strives to produce 50 additional trained behavioral therapists to provide behavior analytic, early intervention, and/or social skills group training by January 2025. We would ensure that at least 30 new providers are bilingual/bi-cultural to further increase our diversity, inclusion, and equity for both employees and individuals receiving services.

This would be achieved through the creation and implementation of an evidence based paid training program that would consist of a background check, 40 hour classroom course, 80 hours or shadowing and Behavioral Skills Training, competency checklist, passing a national exam, Crisis Prevention and Intervention Training, Client Dignity and Cultural Awareness training. After all of these, we would have Registered Behavior Technicians that are not only certified, but competent, ethical, and effective.

Adding 50 RBT's to the workforce would lead to additional serviced provided for up to 200 individuals, including regional center clients. TAT is a vendor with the regional center to provide early infant services and is working on getting approved for early start services.

Currently, TAT employs 40 clinical staff and serves near 120 individuals with autism/developmental disabilities. While there is a similar grant currently working on increasing RBT workforce, there is not one in the catchment area for NBRC for Solano, Napa, and Sonoma Counties.

TAT will interview and screen candidates and have training groups that cycle every 60 days until 50 new RBT's are produced.

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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:

Our targeted population of individuals with autism or at risk of developmental disabilities came through the review of POS data from the regional center, contacts received on our website for services, contacts made by local agencies asking us to provide services, that shows that there crisis count of individuals on the autism spectrum waiting for services. Looking at the RC POS data we can see that there is still a desperate need for early intervention services to be provided as well as behavior analytic services to a wide variety of populations.

In addition through out community data such as support groups, surveys, contacts, and more we have determined that families are not able to fully utilize services they are authorized for due to lack of service providers. Specifically, early intervention early start services have difficulty getting the services before the children age out of the program.

Using data also collected through the top reasons for staff burnout and moving away from working in the field, we have created what we believe to be a sustainable training model that will result in ethical, effective, and certified staff that can lead to the services of potentially hundreds of additional regional center clients.

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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:

While there are other grants in place that are similar to this project, the catchment area is different. There are not any grants currently looking to increase the workforce in Solano, Napa, and Sonoma counties. Inflation has proven to be a significant problem in this service area which has caused people to move away or seek other forms of employment and resulting in a loss of workforce staff. Our project aims to be unique in the way that not only are we focused on providing adequate training and certification, we also know that we have the ability to place and hire staff at our agency which would have an immediate result in increased services being provided. The ability that we have to then hire the staff directly for regional center clients and start offering services right away is unique when compared to other projects that are just providing the training.

One of the major reasons people quit working in the field is due to lack of supervision, oversight, training, and continued growth in the field. Our proposal targets additional training outside of the classroom and an exam through hands on, evidence based Behavioral Skills Training, Crisis Prevention Training, Competency Checklists, Diversity and Inclusion Training, Client Dignity Training, and ongoing monthly training that would help to further skillsets and better prepare RBT's for the work they will face on a day to day basis. Preparation leads to a decrease in burnout, which makes this system have continuity of care.

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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 following barriers to services will be addressed and measured through this project:

1) Access to services in a timely fashion: currently there are hundreds of kids not able to even get on a wait list for services due to agencies being so impacted by service demands and lack of access to providers. This barrier will be addressed through the training and addition of 50 RBT's to the workforce. For each RBT up to 3 additional individuals with developmental disabilities can be served daily, with the potential for up to 15 per week. If we multiply that across the 50 RBT's we will add to the workforce through this project that can yield measurable results of up to 750 additional individuals with developmental disabilities accessing services.

2) The project also proposes that at least 30 of the 50 will be bilingual/bi-cultural RBT's which will also increase access to populations that are underserved and provide equity to accessing a provider of similar cultures/upbringing and therefore increasing diversity and inclusion.

3) As we hire, we would be able to accept more clients needing services when they reach out and do community outreach to announce that we have the capacity to serve more individuals.

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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:

Yes, one of the qualifying projects is creating and increasing access to services through the addition to the workforce. Our program aims to add to the workforce through the expansion of 50 RBT's to the workforce which would lead to up to 750 additional clients being served. The promotion of equity and reduction of disparities would be that individuals with developmental disabilities and autism would have not only more access to services they are needing, but also in a faster time frame. We will work with any other organizations to share our training program and promote inclusion.

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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:

Yes, proposed measures match the activities scheduled and help to show progress on the overall objective of adding 50 additional RBT's to the workforce and increasing services for regional center clients.

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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:

TAT verifies that the budget outlines is in accordance with only associated costs related to the activities being performed and is in guidelines with allowable expenses.

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:

Ana Horta, Gabriel Rogin.

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