

Application Report



Applicant Organization: Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center
Project Name: Mental Health Supports
Application ID: App-22-609
Funding Announcement: FY 22-23 Service Access and Equity Grant
Awarded Amount: \$100,000

Project Summary: Creation of a Mental Health Specialist position to promote universal access to Mental/Behavioral Health Services. This position will focus on providing support to individuals served in navigating systems and benefits through training and by establishing linkages with key organizations within the ELARC and LA County community.

Authorized Certifying Official: Gloria Wong gwong@elarc.org 626-299-4738
Project Director/Manager: Elizabeth Harrell eharrell@elarc.org 626-299-4730
Project Manager/Coordinator: Roxana Ortiz rortiz@elarc.org 626-299-4817
Compliance/Fiscal Officer: Patricia Alvarez palvarez@elarc.org 626-299-4794

Section Name: Applicant Eligibility

Sub Section Name: Applicant Information

1. Applicant Question: Project Title

What is the Project Title?

Applicant Response:

Mental Health Supports

2. Applicant Question: Awarded Amount

What is the total amount awarded for the project?

Applicant Response:

\$100,000

3. Applicant Question: Organization Type

Choose the response that best describes your organization.

Applicant Response:

Regional Center (RC)

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:

Mission Statement: Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center (ELARC) is committed to serving individuals with developmental disabilities and their families by promoting partnerships which empower them to achieve meaningful and fulfilling lifestyles in their community.

For over twenty years, ELARC has had a strong partnership with the County of Los Angeles Department of Mental Health (DMH) to address issues of mental health/illness for individuals with developmental disabilities. Through this long established partnership both entities work together to provide a coordinated services to improve the lives of the individuals we serve.

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
2020/2021	Ongoing Service Coordination (Reduced Caseload)	20-ELARC	\$360,772.00

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:

2020/2021: ELARC have been able to effectively manage the implementation of the reduced caseload (1:40) program and clearly identify impacts the project have had in supporting the participants. The project demonstrated an increase in purchase of services expenditures among underserved communities in ELARC's catchment area as an outcome of the participants. Most significantly, ELARC valued the partnerships established and the input provided from the individuals and families through the Project to help identify challenges they face in accessing services.

- Impacts and outcomes accomplished:
- Increased purchase of services expenditures
- Increased the understanding of: role of regional centers, role of service coordinator, child's diagnosis, access services/supports, and IPP process
- Enhanced relationships between the individuals and families and ELARC
- Empowered individuals and families to be partners with ELARC and other community organizations
- Supported newly eligible families through person centered approach
- Identified barriers to access to services and supports stated by individuals and families
- Identified and provided generic resources as additional support to address barriers

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:

The Enhanced Service Coordination (Reduced Caseload) project has now been implemented statewide at all regional centers as a result is SB154. The successful impact the reduced caseload model provided will serve as a template for the proposed Self-Determination Specialized Caseloads (SDSC).

While the current proposal is not directly part of the Enhanced Service Coordination project, there communities of focus will be the same, Hispanics and Asians. Through the lessons learned from the enhance Service Coordination project the Mental Health Specialist can individualize and tailor an effective approach when working with these underserved communities. One of the many valuable lessons from the Enhanced Service Coordinator project was the barriers that were identified in these communities, that will give the Mental Health Specialist an advantage when working with these families.

(see attached document)

Attachment:

[POS_Data_Presentation_FY20-21-Barriers.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

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:

Creation of a Mental Health Specialist position to promote universal access to Mental/Behavioral Health Services. This position will focus on providing support to individuals served in navigating systems and benefits through training and by establishing linkages with key organizations within the ELARC and LA County community. Mental health issues impacting individuals on the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) include anxiety, depression, suicide, self-injurious and aggressive behavior, this compounds issues these individuals and their caregivers already face (<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics>) Facing cultural stigma, many Hispanic and Asian caregivers are left alone to deal with such issues. This position will be a support to the service coordinator and a valuable resource to the caregiver when facing crises.

2. Applicant Question: Duration of project

Choose the duration of your project.

Applicant Response:

24 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:

- Eastern Los Angeles 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:

- Los Angeles 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:

We embrace organic partnerships with community based organizations (CBOs), we will continue to build on the existing partnership with the multiple County of Los Angeles departments such as the Department of Mental Health (DMH), Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), and the Department of Probation. (see attached document)

Attachment:

[LA_CountyDepartments_RC_Agreement.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

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:

Sustaining this project is key. Through our current partnership with the LA County Department of Mental Health (DMH) it will allow for continuation of the level of expertise that are existing data shows that reducing caseload ratios is positive all around. A considerable area of focus is the level of expertise the service coordinators for these specialized caseloads will receive, which will result in improved service delivery. There are three main areas to ensure sustainability of the SDSC project.

Also the projected work of the Systemic, Therapeutic, Assessment, Resources and Treatment (START) project, will enhance the availability of resources and support for families and individuals facing a crisis.

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
 - Hispanic
-

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)
Hispanic	28	Spanish
Asian	12	Cantonese/Mandarin

3. Applicant Question: Age Group(s) Served

Select all Age Groups the project will serve.

Applicant Response:

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

Section Name: Project Application

Sub Section Name: Project Application

1. Applicant Question: Project Summary and Organizational Experience

Provide a clear and concise project summary that includes a defined target population, catchment area, and project design. Specifically describe what your project will accomplish and how it will benefit the community served. In your answer, include what experience your organization has working with the target population and how your organization will work with the local RC(s).

Applicant Response:

The Mental Health Specialist (MHS) position will be a support to ELARC’s historically underserved communities, providing training to demystify the stigma associated with mental health/illness in the Hispanic and Asian communities. The MHS will target to train 100 Hispanics participants and 50 Asian participants during the duration of the project. While ELARC has a small number of individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing, it will be ensured that the Hard of Hearing Specialist is consulted regarding any specialized mental health needs for this population. The MHS will provide plain language information in a culturally appropriate manner. The MHS will work with professionals that can help them understand at the earliest stages what might be happening to the individual. Families need a bridge with other parents who are experiencing the same challenges. The MHS will collect and interpret individual information, at the earliest point, to identify targeted care and supports. The MHS will also serve to support ELARC’s internal after hours approach to crisis. The MHS’ knowledge of and experience in navigation of systems will help an on call ELARC staff to better address the needs of family in crisis. The MHS can support and guide on Issues of extreme distress, medication mismatches, psychosis, etc. This position will deepen existing partnerships and establish new linkages with mental health community based organizations (CBOs), including DMH, (to assess proper/accurate referrals), the medical community, and vendored services such as the newly established START program. The MHS will also provide guidance to SCs, and serve as the agency point person to guide them on the steps then can take to or avert or manage crises.

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:

ELARC used a variety of data points to identify our priority population. ELARC serves a diverse population. The top three ethnic groups served are Latino, Asian and White. The percentage breakdown shows that 70% of the individuals served identify as Latino, 13% as Asian and 10% identify as White. Collectively the top two ethnic groups represent 83% of all individuals served by ELARC.

ELARC has received public comments through Board of Directors meetings, Purchase of Service Data public meetings, and the most recent one during the Performance Contract public meetings with cases of mental health needs. COVID19 intensifies this need. According to the CDC, young adults in the general population reported considerable elevated adverse mental health conditions associated with COVID19. Young adults, minorities reported having experienced disproportionately worse mental health outcomes (source: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6932a1.htm>).

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:

Integrated Community Services has a current project that increase mental health access and quality of crisis intervention services for bilingual and bicultural communities in the Golden Gate Regional Center area. ELARC's proposal is to have a dedicated Mental Health Specialist that will provide training and awareness to these underserve communities and aid in decreasing the stigma associated with mental health. Two major attitudes impact ELARC's two primary group to reach out and open up about mental health crisis and issues. Faith can be a protective factor and contributes to the stigma (i.e. demons, lack of faith, sinful behavior, etc.) against seeking mental health help. Also the perception, especially among older folks that discussing problems with mental health can create embarrassment and shame for the family and couple that with a developmental disability, also results in fewer parents/caregivers seeking help. The Mental Health Specialist will bridge these factors and work with staff, families/caregivers and individuals to help assess situations at an early stage and be able to implement services and supports before the situation becomes a crisis.

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 Mental Health Specialist will work with individuals served by ELARC with a focus on the Hispanics and Asian communities. Hispanics are less likely to seek mental health treatment adding to the increased disparity to access treatment. These cultural differences sometimes lead to misdiagnosis and also fear of having the stigma of mental illness prevents some cultures from seeking help. They don't want to be viewed as weak or mentally unfit, and sometimes identify the mental health symptoms on physical terms rather than emotional. The Mental Health Specialist will provide awareness through trainings and consultations to decrease the stigma among Hispanic and Asian communities. Taking their beliefs, values and cultural differences into account can help ensure proper services, supports, and intervention.

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:

Disparities and mental health are more evident within the underserved communities. For ELARC the two primary groups are Hispanics and Asians. Some areas of concern include limited access and the availability of culturally grounded services. Conducting trainings, doing consultations, and creating materials and content that help bridge the gap in knowledge about mental health conditions with the goal to normalize conversations around mental health in these communities.

Overall, looking at different angles of disparities within the developmental disabilities system needs to begin with a paradigm shift to move towards more justice based. Viewing disparity within a reality perspective, one group gets more that is needed. As the paradigm shifts to equality, it is the assumption that everyone benefits from the same supports, from the equity perspective everyone gets the supports they need. However once justice is reached the cause if the inequity is addressed (the systemic barrier has been removed) (source: <https://www.bu.edu/diversity/resource-toolkit/inequity-equality-equity-and-justice/> (credit: @restoringracialjustice)).

Through the existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, the partnership to continue to strive for inclusion for the individuals we serve.(see attached document). Lastly, collaborating with the newly implemented START program will also provide an array of expertise and supports.

Attachment:

[LA_CountyDepartments_RC_Agreement.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

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:

One of the first activities will be to hire a bilingual (Spanish or Cantonese/Mandarin) Mental Health Specialist within the first three (3) months of project start.

This position will also conduct training every four (4) months to provide awareness to Hispanic and Asian communities in Spanish and/or Cantonese/Mandarin with interpretation if needed. There will be a pre and post test provided to measure learning.

This position will also be available for individual consultations with staff and individual/family, with an approximate average of two (2) consultations per month.

Lastly, this position will create and develop culturally appropriate informational materials in plain language such as fact sheets, brochures, pictographs/infographics in both Spanish and Traditional Chinese. Lastly, creating a culturally appropriate screening tool to help identify symptoms of a mental health condition.

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 proposal is for one full-time Mental Health Specialist position, which includes salary and fringe benefits. The budget total \$208,572.00 is for a two (2) year cycle.

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:

Workforce Capacity and Development

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:

N/A

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
