

# **Attachment 2**

# **Funding Proposal Executive Summary Promotion of Self-Advocacy at Texas Conferences**

## **Background**

TCDD stipends assist more than 500 individuals with developmental disabilities and/or their family members to attend various conferences and seminars each year. Additionally, TCDD occasionally receives requests from other organizations to provide financial assistance for or to “co- sponsor” conferences. Although TCDD has funded, hosted, and/or contributed to the support of various types of conferences, the Council rarely provides financial support to bring in individual speakers or panels.

Currently, the types of support that TCDD staff provide to organizations holding conferences include:

- Providing handout materials (such as the People First Language Materials);
- Disseminating promotional information about conferences via media releases and materials;
- Presenting at the conference when possible; and
- Registering and staffing an exhibit table or booth at events.

One impact of current financial times is that it is increasingly difficult for organizations holding conferences that benefit people with developmental disabilities to have the financial ability to pay speaker fees and at times, even to reimburse their travel expenses. Unfortunately, this means both that fewer Texans have the opportunity to hear from and meet nationally known speakers, and that individuals who do not have disposable income are unable to present or serve on panels at conferences if it would require travel and/or an overnight stay. This situation creates the opportunity for TCDD to promote an increased understanding of the importance of self-advocacy, self-determination, and full inclusion by offering financial assistance for organizations who wish to contract with speakers who are experts in these topics or in related topics that are consistent with TCDD’s philosophy.

Three different mechanisms could be used to facilitate these outcomes:

1. Supporting self-advocates to serve as speakers at in-state conferences;
2. Sponsoring plenary speakers at in-state conferences; and/or
3. Sponsoring concurrent sessions or “tracks” at in-state conferences.

Council Procedures, as noted below, currently allow: the Executive Director to approve stipends for financial assistance for individuals attending a conference; the Executive Director and Chair to jointly approve “non-financial sponsorship” of conferences; and the Executive Committee to approve financial sponsorships.

### ***Council Procedure #4: TCDD Co-Sponsorship of Conferences***

***Financial Sponsorship.*** *If financial sponsorship is requested, the Executive Committee will review each request individually and can take various actions, including disapproval;*

*approval of sponsorship for a specific function such as a speaker, stipends, etc.; or approval of other types of support as appropriate*

**Non-Financial Sponsorship.** *If Non-financial sponsorship is requested, the Executive Director and the Council Chair will make a decision based upon the program's consistency with the Council's philosophies.*

*-Approved by the Council February 7, 1997*

The DD Act Amendments of 2000 **require** Councils to include a goal and/or an objective in their State Plans to “support opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities who are considered leaders to provide leadership training to individuals with developmental disabilities.” Currently, TCDD addresses this requirement through peer to peer advocacy training projects. However, the TCDD FY 2012-2016 State Plan includes an activity to promote self-advocates as speakers.

TCDD staff propose developing a grant project to increase the number of Texas conference speakers, mentors, or facilitators who are self-advocates; and propose developing a process through which TCDD can sponsor plenary session speakers and/or concurrent session presentations or “tracks” that are related to advancing self-advocacy, self-determination or inclusion. Such opportunities can promote the Council’s vision and values and can further self-advocacy efforts in Texas.

## State Plan Goal(s)

**Goal 6:** Work with others to double the number of identified leadership development and advocacy training programs that are able to provide culturally appropriate training for people with developmental disabilities without ongoing grant funding from TCDD, by 9/30/2016.

**Objective 2:** *Each year of the plan, support opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities who are considered leaders to provide leadership training to individuals with developmental disabilities who may become leaders.*

**Activity 1:** Each year provide opportunities for groups organizing disability-related conferences to apply for stipends to support speakers, mentors, or facilitators who have developmental disabilities and who have a philosophy consistent with that of TCDD.

## Expected Outcome

1. TCDD would sponsor at least 50 different self-advocates who have diverse backgrounds to speak and/or serve as a mentors or facilitators at in-state conferences by 9/30/2016.
2. TCDD would sponsor at least 20 general or concurrent session speakers at conferences by 9/30/2016.

## Project Description

1. **Support for Self Advocates as Speakers:** TCDD would develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) for an organization to provide administrative support, outreach and promotion for this activity. The selected grantee will:

- Use a range of communication strategies that are culturally appropriate for multiple different cultures to locate, evaluate, and promote self-advocates who are public speakers and/or facilitators;
  - Advertise and promote self-advocates as speakers and provide information, using a range of culturally appropriate communication strategies, about how organizations hosting conferences may apply for financial support for self-advocates to serve as speakers;
  - Review and evaluate applications from organizations hosting conferences for support of self-advocates to present, and provide information to TCDD for final review and approval;
  - Ensure that:
    - Any one speaker is be supported by TCDD funds more than 3x per year in the first year of the grant and 2x per year each year after that.
    - Presenters show evidence that they have presented previously at a reasonably similar event and provide references.
    - No more than 5 self advocate presenters or panelists, and not more than 20% of the total number of presenters or panelists, are supported per conference.
    - No organization would be eligible for support for speakers for more than 1 conference yearly. Conferences could also apply for a stipend grant to assist attendees.
    - Awards do not exceed \$7500 per event, and conference hosts provide a 10% match.
  - Reach out to existing Speakers' Bureaus to promote inclusion of self-advocates in their pools of speakers.
  - Disburse funds; and
  - Provide quarterly reports to TCDD.
2. **Sponsorship of Plenary Speakers:** TCDD staff would develop a process through which organizations could apply for TCDD sponsorship of a plenary session speaker. The proposed process will be reviewed by the Executive Committee with final approval by the Council as appropriate. The process would outline application requirements, guidelines by which applications would be evaluated, limitations on funding amounts, expectations and responsibilities of the applicant organization, and a recommended review and approval procedure. Staff propose that Plenary Speaker sponsorship requests would be approved jointly by the Council Chair and the Executive Director.
  3. **Sponsorship of concurrent session speakers or "tracks":** TCDD staff would develop a process through which organizations could apply for TCDD sponsorship of concurrent session speakers or tracks. The proposed process would be reviewed by the Executive Committee with final approval by the Council as appropriate. The process would outline application requirements, guidelines by which applications would be evaluated, limitations on funding amounts, expectations and responsibilities of the applicant organization, and a recommended review and approval procedure. Propose approval jointly by Council Chair and Executive Director. *This would likely be a very staff intensive process, which must be taken into consideration.*

## Proposed Funding Amount

**Support for Self Advocates as Speakers:** Up to \$125,000 award (that amount would include up to \$75,000 per year for direct support of speakers).

**Sponsorship of Plenary Speakers:** Up to \$75,000 available for all speaker supports in this category, per year; up to \$7500 per event, for up to one event per year per organization. This is consistent with the current stipends policies.

**Sponsorship of concurrent session speakers or “track”:** Up to \$75,000 available for all stipends in this category, per year; up to \$7500 per event; and not more than 5 sessions per event.

## Proposed Duration

**Support for Self Advocates as Speakers:** Up to four years.

**Sponsorship of Plenary Speakers:** To be determined from review after first year; quarterly reports to Executive Committee and Council.

**Sponsorship of concurrent session speakers or “track”:** To be determined from review after first year; quarterly reports to Executive Committee and Council.

## Other Considerations

Related projects that might be considered include working with an organization, or organizations, that provide training to help people to develop presenting skills, to enable them to include and supports self-advocates to participate fully in their trainings.