

**Background:**

TCDD has experienced success in connecting to groups that are composed of individuals and families of individuals who have developmental disabilities and strongly identify with an ethnic minority group. The success is largely due to the availability of \$10,000 Grants for Outreach and Basic Development Projects. Funds were originally authorized for ten grants and eight have now been awarded. The enclosed Executive Summary proposes that TCDD continue to offer these grants, on a more limited basis, for an additional three years.

**Project Development  
Committee****Agenda Item 7.****Expected Action:**

The Project Development Committee will discuss Outreach and Development projects, and may make recommendations to the Council.

**Council****Agenda Item 8. A.****Expected Action:**

The Council will consider recommendations from the Project Development Committee.

# Funding Proposal Executive Summary Grants for Outreach and Basic Development

## Background

Over the last two and a half years, the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities (TCDD) has offered \$10,000 Grants for Outreach and Basic Development designed to develop a better understanding of how culture influences the effectiveness of service systems. Recognizing that it would be necessary to develop relationships with “cultural brokers” to provide guidance, TCDD offered these grants only to groups of people who strongly identify with a specific ethnic culture and are working to promote culturally competent disability-related supports for people who also identify with that same ethnic group. Some of these grantees have presented at Council meetings, and many Council members expressed appreciation for the accomplishments achieved by these small, mostly-volunteer organizations. Council members have also acknowledged that much has been learned through the relationships created through these grants.

Prior to offering these small grants, TCDD had initiated multiple efforts to develop connections with diverse cultural groups with the goals of increasing input received from people who are ethnic minorities and broadening the diversity of the people who are reached by and benefit from TCDD grants. However, the Grants for Outreach and Basic Development effort was the first TCDD strategy to be successful. The relationships developed through these grants have had a significant positive impact for both the communities reached by the grant and on TCDD’s ability to work towards its mission statement, “so that **all** people with disabilities are fully included in their communities...” Additionally, through these grants, these mostly volunteer-run groups had the opportunity to learn how to manage grants - many for the first time.

At the Council meeting October 26, 2012, the Council approved funding for up to five “Culturally Competent Family Supports” projects to build on the successes achieved through the Council’s outreach efforts. Grants will be awarded up to \$75,000 per year for up to four years to assist five of these small groups to establish or further develop their infrastructure and to expand the availability of culturally-competent supports for families of people with developmental disabilities. Additionally, the grantees will support families and individuals to become active advocates or self-advocates. TCDD developed the proposed projects based on input received from the former Outreach and Basic Development grantees; this most likely would not have been possible without the original \$10,000 grants serving as an early and important step toward building capacity.

As of January 2013, eight of the ten \$10,000 grants originally authorized have been awarded; three are currently active, and funds for two additional projects remain available. Our experience thus far is that these grantees are generally smaller organizations that benefit from active support from TCDD grants staff. Based on the experience supporting and monitoring these eight grants, TCDD grants management staff recommend limiting the number of active Outreach and Basic Development grants to five at any one time to allow grants staff to provide that extra level of support required. Staff recommend that the

Council continue to offer these grants in order to connect to diverse communities around the state, but limit the number of grants to five each grant year, and award them in such a manner that no more than five are active at any one time.

### **State Plan Goal and Objective**

**Goal 7** Each year the Council and its Committees receive staff and administrative support to effectively implement activities for at least 90% of all identified objectives noted under Goals 1-6, by September 30, 2016.

**Objective 2** Each year of the State Plan, coordinate the Council's planning, project development, evaluation, and reporting processes, with special attention to strategies to address issues related to the diversity of ethnicity, age, income, and geographic areas of Texas.

### **Expected Outcome**

The Council will develop and implement projects and activities that more accurately reflect the diversity that exists in Texas.

### **Project Description**

TCDD will continue to accept proposals submitted in response to the Grants for Outreach and Basic Development RFP and initiate approved grants so that there are no more than five active projects at any one point in time.

Organizations receiving grants under this RFP would be required to:

- Hold public meetings at least once every 3 months and work with TCDD staff to develop a deeper understanding of the needs and values of their members who have disabilities.
- Allow TCDD staff to attend at least one meeting to gather information directly from members.
- Pay for one person, representing the group, to speak to the TCDD Council members at a meeting in Austin if requested.
- Give TCDD ideas for actions to increase the diversity of the people who work with TCDD.
- Work to make positive changes that will help people with disabilities and their families to have more control over their lives.

### **Proposed Funding Amount**

Up to \$10,000 per project, for up to five projects each year, for fiscal years 2014, 2015, and 2016. Grantees will be expected to provide match as per TCDD guidelines.

### **Proposed Duration**

Each grant may last no more than 18 months.

### **Other Considerations**