

Attachment 1

Applicant: A Circle of Ten, Inc., dba A Circle of Ten, Inc.~Network for Collaboration

Project Area: Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, and Waller

Project Director: Kathy Holdway

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
TCDD Funds:	\$75,000				
Match :	\$32,000				

Project Abstract: A Circle of Ten, Inc. and twelve Partners propose Expanding Community Collaborative Capacity Opportunities (ECCCO) Project building on existing 2012 momentum in the Gulf Coast Area. Our PAC’s “Establish a Gulf Coast Network of 28-42 diverse agencies/individuals to collaboratively develop a Strategic Plan to increase their internal and community capacity to provide holistic services to people with disabilities and families, decreasing the need institutionalization. Our PAC leaders, people with disabilities, their families and advocates believe ECCCO is “next step” to build community capacity through collaboration benefitting people with disabilities “who live, work & play” in our communities.

Overall Comments

Strength: Partnerships are already in place.

Concern: A large number of agencies are to be involved as “partners.” It is possible that it may get difficult to manage that much active involvement by that many agencies in the development of a strategic plan. The grantee should ensure that they have a plan for managing this, and it would be helpful if they could provide information about their experience managing supporting this many agencies collaborating on a single effort like development of a strategic plan.

Network Development and Activity

Strength: Since this project is a “next step,” much of the network building is already done. The Circle of Ten, Inc., has established partnerships with other TCDD grantees and partners.

Concern: The RFP requires that the networks includes self-advocates, family members of people with developmental disabilities, board-certified behavior analysts or board-certified associate behavior analysts, service providers, local authorities, and local medical providers. The existing network, as described, does not appear to include medical providers or behavior analysts, and the proposal does not specify a strategy to recruit representatives from either groups.

Concern: The proposal indicates that the partners will participate actively primarily by attending training. Little information is provided regarding what “in-kind” contributions the partners will make. It is important that all partners contribute to the project.

Note: It is highly likely that it will be difficult to include a BCBA or BCABA in the network, and this is a requirement. Funded applicants may need to progressively pursue different options for recruitment – such as approaching universities with Behavior Analysis programs and/or requesting assistance from the Texas Association for Behavior Analysis. Applicants may also need to be prepared to use funds to support the inclusion of a BCBA or BCABA.

Development of Strategic Plan

Strength: The proposal notes that an assessment tool will be used to evaluate partners’ internal capacities.

Concern: The proposal does not reference including healthcare providers, which will be key in developing a strategic plan that builds the capacity to support individuals with complex medical needs in the community.

Cultural Competence

Strength: The Rural Collaboration Resource Center is noted and should be beneficial in project activities. It appears that a diverse group of partners were involved in the development of this proposal, which lends a “United Nations” feel to it.

Relevant Public Policy Issues

Weakness: The proposal states that the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) will determine “if/what relevant policies will be addressed.” The PAC is expected to determine “what” policies will be addressed – not “if” – and how they will be addressed. At the very least, the PAC should provide information to TCDD regarding policy barriers identified by families or other partners, and if possible, suggest related solutions.

Note: This was identified as a weak area in all proposals. Understanding and addressing relevant public policy issues will be beneficial to creating sustainability. In addition, great change can be achieved by mobilizing communities to advocate for policy that supports the rights of individuals with developmental disabilities to live in communities, to practice self-determination, and to be fully integrated. The same is true regarding policy that provides support for families of people with developmental disabilities. Applicants who receive funding must be prepared to learn about relevant public policy and to work with families and individuals to develop a better understanding of policy-related barriers and solutions.

Financial Information & Sustainability

Strength: The applicant notes that the Boards of partner organizations will be required to show some commitment to the network. This is a good requirement to have and might increase the likelihood of the project being sustainable for Boards of organizations to be included. The applicant is already providing trainings to some of the partner organizations.

Concern: The proposal references the use of Adaptive Services Consultants to support full participation in “the class,” but it is unclear what this class is and how it will contribute to the overall goal of the project. In addition, the budget narrative notes that these consultants will be paid \$2,000 and a Gulf Coast liaison will be paid \$2,600, but the budget page shows that Consultants will be paid \$7,100 on TCDD funds. This needs more explanation or revision.

Concern: The Project Coordinator is shown as being the same person as the Financial Authority. This is not allowable and is unwise, as it does not provide for a strong system of checks and balances.

Organizational Structure & Qualifications of Personnel

Strength: For the most part, the personnel appear qualified. One person is designated to take care of “oversights.” This should be explained more fully, however.

Concern: There is no evidence that the Financial Authority has experience in finance, accounting, or bookkeeping.

Other Comments

Some aspects of the proposed project appear to be duplicated in the East Texas Center for Independent Living (ETCIL) proposal, and Circle of 10 has significant involvement in the project proposed by ETCIL. It is unclear how the two networks will work together and how the workload of the Circle of 10 staff will be structured. Collectively, Circle of 10 will receive \$95,485 in salary and benefits if both ETCIL and Circle of 10 proposals are funded, and it may be that efficiencies might be identified to reduce this amount. Alternately, the primary strength of Circle of 10 appears to be in providing training and technical assistance. An alternative might be to identify another partner committed to this project who would be more appropriate as a lead agency.

Attachment 2

Applicant: East Texas Center for Independent Living

Project Area: Smith, Wood, Van Zandt, Cherokee, Henderson, and Rusk

Project Director: Sherlon Spurling

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
TCDD Funds:	\$75,000				
Match :	\$27,507				

Project Abstract: Through existing relationships and establishing additional diverse collaborative community partners, East Texas Center for Independent Living (ETCIL) and A Circle of Ten, Inc. (C10) will form East Texas Disability Services Network (ETDSN) to identify, enhance and expand community supports for people with disabilities. ETDSN will be inclusive of individuals with developmental disabilities and their family members, mental health authorities, human service providers, educators, medical, vocational and transportation services, and others representing varied backgrounds. The ETDSN will formulate a strategic plan especially focused on persons with developmental disabilities living in institutionalized settings or those at risk.

Overall Comments

Strength: The verbiage used very clearly reflects the basic value that people with disabilities have a right to be fully included in their community and to practice self-determination. The proposal is written in respectful language throughout. There is evidence that people with disabilities and/or family members were involved in the development of the proposal and/or will be involved in the implementation.

Strength: The proposal shows clearly that individuals with developmental disabilities and families of individuals with developmental disabilities will be included in leadership roles.

Network Development and Activity

Strength: The RFP requires that the Networks includes self-advocates, family members of people with developmental disabilities, board-certified behavior analysts or board-certified associate behavior analysts, service providers, local authorities, and local medical providers. The proposal clearly articulates that all the required groups are included, and the letters of support are specific to the groups required to participate.

Strength: The proposal demonstrates an expectation that partners will provide matching funds

Concern: It would be helpful to include more specific regarding evaluation.

Note: It is highly likely that it will be difficult to include a BCBA or BCABA in the network, and this is a requirement. Funded applicants may need to progressively pursue different options for recruitment – such as approaching universities with Behavior Analysis programs and/or requesting assistance from the Texas Association for Behavior Analysis. Applicants may also need to be prepared to use funds to support the inclusion of a BCBA or BCABA.

Development of Strategic Plan

Strength: The proposal includes a solid outline of how the plan will be developed.

Strength: The proposal demonstrates that there is commitment and good “buy-in” by partner organizations.

Concern: The proposal lacks specifics regarding how their process will be evaluated.

Cultural Competence

Strength: The applicant does a good job of addressing cultural diversity and cultural competence as it relates to their community.

Relevant Public Policy Issues

Strength: The applicant expresses the intention to “advocate for all,” although there needs to be further development of their plan for doing this and for ensuring that their efforts are coordinated with those of others in the area.

Note: This was identified as a weak area in all proposals. Understanding and addressing relevant public policy issues will be beneficial to creating sustainability. In addition, great change can be achieved by mobilizing communities to advocate for policy that supports the rights of individuals with developmental disabilities to live in communities, to practice self-determination, and to be fully integrated. The same is true regarding policy that provides support for families of people with developmental disabilities. Applicants who receive funding must be prepared to learn about relevant public policy and to work with families and individuals to develop a better understanding of policy-related barriers and solutions.

Financial Information & Sustainability

Strength: The proposal describes an expectation that partners will provide matching funds, which should help with sustainability. Additionally, there is evidence that the applicant intends to begin planning for sustainability from the very beginning.

Concern: The largest single expenditure is in consultant services to Circle of 10 who will be organizing PAC meetings, networking, collaborating and other related activities. Would it not be possible for ETCIL to take on some of these activities?

Organizational Structure & Qualifications of Personnel

Strength: Staff appear to be qualified to implement this project.

Other Comments

Some aspects of the proposed project appear to be duplicated in the Circle of 10 proposal. It is unclear how the two networks will work together and how the workload of the Circle of 10 staff will be structured. Collectively, Circle of 10 will receive \$95,485 in salary and benefits if both ETCIL and Circle of 10 proposals are funded, and it may be that efficiencies might be identified to reduce this amount.

Attachment 3

Applicant: Sabine Valley Regional MHMR Center dba Community Healthcore

Project Area: Gregg, Harrison, Marion, Panola, and Upshur. As there is already a separate application including Rusk County, Community Healthcore will participate in that project as a Local Authority for Rusk County. In the event that application is unsuccessful Community Healthcore will also serve Rusk County.

Project Director: Lee Brown

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
TCDD Funds:	\$75,000				
Match :	\$22,667				

Project Abstract: Community Healthcore (CHC) and East Texas Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) are seeking \$75,000 funding to strengthen its network of diverse organizations in the ADRC’s service area. The project will be operated by the ADRC and implemented first in Gregg County, then introduced to the other surrounding counties. ADRC will use the Asset Based Community Development model to build the capacity of our community to provide community-based services that will decrease the need for individuals with disabilities to be served in an institution. The project includes person/family-centered healthcare services, behavior supports, and/or respite for people with developmental disabilities.

Overall Comments

Strength: The language used throughout the proposal is respectful and demonstrates the applicant’s commitment to an inclusive philosophy and a strength-based approach.

Weakness: The proposal referenced inclusion of people with disabilities in the implementation phase, but it does not appear that they were involved in the development of the proposal. The applicant must assure that people with developmental disabilities and families receive appropriate and sufficient support to be meaningfully involved.

Network Development and Activity

Strength: The RFP requires that the Networks includes self-advocates, family members of people with developmental disabilities, board-certified behavior analysts or board-certified associate behavior analysts, service providers, local authorities, and local medical providers. This applicant demonstrates an intention to include representation from all the types of groups required by the RFP in the network. They have quite a few partners already in place, and they addressed the need for cultural diversity, cultural competence and community involvement in the network.

Weakness: The proposal does not provide sufficient description of how self-advocates would be included in leadership roles. The applicant must assure that at least one person who has developmental disabilities has a leadership role.

Weakness: ETCIL will lend staff support. More specifics are needed about how other partners will contribute to the project, either through providing funds or in-kind resources. It is important that all partners “have a dog in the hunt.”

Note: It is highly likely that it will be difficult to include a BCBA or BCABA in the network, and this is a requirement. Funded applicants may need to progressively pursue different options for recruitment – such as approaching universities with Behavior Analysis programs and/or requesting assistance from the Texas Association for Behavior Analysis. Applicants may also need to be prepared to use funds to support the inclusion of a BCBA or BCABA.

Development of Strategic Plan

Strength: This applicant's proposal stands out because of their intention to use Asset Based Community Development (ABCD). ABCD is a good, comprehensive approach for this type of project, and is considered a best practice.

Weakness: There are no specific comments related to how people with disabilities or family members of people with disabilities will be supported in leadership roles. Additional information should be provided regarding this.

Cultural Competence

Strength: The applicant addressed the need for cultural diversity, cultural competence and community involvement (including faith-based partners) in the network. However, the proposal would have been stronger had it included more information about the rural population.

Strength: The applicant expressed an understanding of and commitment to the philosophy of "nothing about me without me," and intended to be very inclusive in their network. They plan to make a special effort to connect to the Latino population in their area.

Relevant Public Policy Issues

Note: This was identified as a weak area in all proposals. Understanding and addressing relevant public policy issues will be beneficial to creating sustainability. In addition, great change can be achieved by mobilizing communities to advocate for policy that supports the rights of individuals with developmental disabilities to live in communities, to practice self-determination, and to be fully integrated. The same is true regarding policy that provides support for families of people with developmental disabilities. Applicants who receive funding must be prepared to learn about relevant public policy and to work with families and individuals to develop a better understanding of policy-related barriers and solutions. Applicants may also wish to consider having a separate advisory group to offer technical assistance related to public policy.

Financial Information & Sustainability

Strength: The partner agencies have a strong history that suggests they will assist with sustainability.

Strength: The Asset Based Community Development model is a sustainable model.

Concern: The budget only includes \$3,000 for an Outside evaluator. This seems low, and the applicant needs to provide more information about what this would include.

Organizational Structure & Qualifications of Personnel

Strength: Good! There is a strong infrastructure and personnel appear qualified.

Other Comments

None.

Attachment 4

Applicant: Texas Tech University Burkhart Center for Autism Education and Research

Project Area: Potter, Carson, Oldham, Moore, Hutchinson, Hartley, Deaf Smith, Randall, Armstrong, Castro, Swisher, Briscoe, Floyd, Hale, Lamb, Hockley, Lubbock, Crosby, Garza, Lynn, and Terry

Project Director: DeAnn Lechtenberger, Ph.D.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
TCDD Funds:	\$74,996				
Match:	\$25,226				

Project Abstract: The West Texas Community Network (WTCN) is partnership between the Burkhart Center, High Point Village, and the HALI Project established to increase access to community- and strength-based supports and services for individuals with developmental disabilities (DD) and their families. WTCN will develop a strategic plan to encourage higher expectations for our family members with DD to live, work and play in more inclusive communities that value their contributions and unique gifts. This strategically planned network will improve the quality of life for not only those with DD, but also for all of us living in this region of Texas.

Overall Comments

Concern: It was not evident that family members or people with developmental disabilities were involved in development of this proposal. Additionally, it was not clear that the applicant had a commitment to self-determination.

Note: The applicant exceeded the 3 page limit on the narrative, and information beyond the three pages was redacted prior to the review panel’s review. The redacted section started in the middle of the cultural competence section and included the entirety of the applicant’s discussion of relevant public policy issues.

Network Development and Activity

Strength: The RFP requires that the Networks includes self-advocates, family members of people with developmental disabilities, board-certified behavior analysts or board-certified associate behavior analysts, service providers, local authorities, and local medical providers. Specific partners are mentioned in the proposal, and the network appears to include all the groups that need to be represented.

Concern: While the proposal offers many opportunities for network partners to participate, the proposal does not adequately describe the level of active participation that is expected from partners.

Note: It is highly likely that it will be difficult to include a BCBA or BCABA in the network, and this is a requirement. Funded applicants may need to progressively pursue different options for recruitment – such as approaching universities with Behavior Analysis programs and/or requesting assistance from the Texas Association for Behavior Analysis. Applicants may also need to be prepared to use funds to support the inclusion of a BCBA or BCABA.

Development of Strategic Plan

Strength: The proposal does include a discussion of the necessary components that will be included in the plan, such as behavior supports.

Concern: However, the proposal does not clearly demonstrate the intention to identify and build on strengths and assets, as opposed to focusing on needs.

Cultural Competence

Strength: The proposal addresses regional characteristics.

Concern: The proposal would benefit by including non-traditional community partnerships.

Note: A portion of the applicant's discussion of cultural competence was redacted as a result of the applicant exceeding the 3 page limit on the narrative.

Relevant Public Policy Issues

Unable to evaluate. The applicant's discussion of public policy issues was redacted due to the applicant having exceeded the 3 page limit on the narrative.

Note: This was identified as a weak area in all proposals. Understanding and addressing relevant public policy issues will be beneficial to creating sustainability. In addition, great change can be achieved by mobilizing communities to advocate for policy that supports the rights of individuals with developmental disabilities to live in communities, to practice self-determination, and to be fully integrated. The same is true regarding policy that provides support for families of people with developmental disabilities. Applicants who receive funding must be prepared to learn about relevant public policy and to work with families and individuals to develop a better understanding of policy-related barriers and solutions.

Financial Information & Sustainability

Concern: The application does not demonstrate financial buy-in from partners.

Organizational Structure & Qualifications of Personnel

Strength: Texas Tech University staff are highly qualified.

Concern: There is insufficient information provided about the staff with whom Texas Tech will contract.

Other Comments

None.

Attachment 5

Applicant: Volar Center for Independent Living (CIL)

Project Area: Anthony, Canutillo, Clint, El Paso, Fabens, Fort Bliss, Horizon, Montana Vista, San Elizario, Socorro, Tornillo, Vinton, and Westway

Project Director: Luis Enrique Chew

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
TCDD Funds:	\$75,000				
Match :	\$27,199				

Project Abstract: The proposed project will unite a diverse group of individuals and organizations to form a community support network. This network will systematically examine El Paso's disparate services and supports for all individuals with disabilities, birth to old age. They will be assisted by a strategic planning facilitator who will guide them to identify El Paso's strengths & needs; gaps in service; and propose & prioritize new services or targeted issues. At the end of the process, a document will be produced that will serve as a road map for increasing the capacity of DD-serving organizations to provide community-based services.

Overall Comments

Strength: El Paso is an area of high need and would benefit a great deal from assistance and support to develop the capacity of the local community to support people with developmental disabilities. The applicant recognizes this. The proposal addressed the reasons why it is desirable to develop a strategic plan and to identify strengths and needs in the targeted community. From that, an implementation plan will develop.

Concern: It is not clear if there is understanding that TCDD's goal is to develop full community inclusion rather than developing segregated services such as day habilitation. Day habilitation services may, at this time, be the only viable service that meets the needs of the families living in the area, but the network developed through this grant should be striving for greater community inclusion than that model offers.

Network Development and Activity

Strength: The proposal clearly indicates that the core group will provide in-kind resources.

Concern: The identified core group is rather small, and there is no mention of inviting other beneficial organizations to the table, such as self-advocate groups, the local authority, medical providers, or Disability Rights Texas (DRTx) as core members. DRTx is currently monitoring all State Supported Living Centers, including the one located in El Paso, and would likely have beneficial information.

Note: It is highly likely that it will be difficult to include a BCBA or BCABA in the network, and this is a requirement. Funded applicants may need to progressively pursue different options for recruitment – such as approaching universities with Behavior Analysis programs and/or requesting assistance from the Texas Association for Behavior Analysis. Applicants may also need to be prepared to use funds to support the inclusion of a BCBA or BCABA.

Development of Strategic Plan

Concern: The proposal does not identify leadership roles for individuals with developmental disabilities and family members. Additionally, the applicant intends to hire a consulting agency to facilitate the development of the strategic plan, but does not mention if the agency will be one with knowledge in person-centered/family-centered processes. This will be essential. If the agency does not, a partnership will need to be arranged with an organization that can assure that the development of the strategic plan is done in a manner that is person-centered.

Cultural Competence

Strength: The proposal addresses diversity of ethnicity, social and economic background. However, the applicant should also reach out to and include non-traditional partners in the development of their strategic plan. Having members of the community at the table should increase the likelihood that additional options for full community inclusion can be developed.

Relevant Public Policy Issues

Strength: Proposal notes that staff that will coordinate advocacy work and share information related to policy barriers and potential solutions. However, the applicant needs to assure that through this project they will be decreasing the need for individuals who have disabilities to have to be admitted to institutions to receive the services they need.

Note: Addressing relevant public policy issues was identified as a weak area in all proposals. Understanding and addressing relevant public policy issues will be beneficial to creating sustainability. In addition, great change can be achieved by mobilizing communities to advocate for policy that supports the rights of individuals with developmental disabilities to live in communities, to practice self-determination, and to be fully integrated. The same is true regarding policy that provides support for families of people with developmental disabilities. Applicants who receive funding must be prepared to learn about relevant public policy and to work with families and individuals to develop a better understanding of policy-related barriers and solutions.

Financial Information & Sustainability

Strength: Proposal showed a handful of agency “core members” with interest in continuation after funds are completed.

Concern: To be sustainable, the applicant or the network will need to identify other partners to help fund with sustainability.

Concern: The strategic planning facilitator is charging \$25,000 for 18 months. These fees should be broken down into hourly cost and time (in hours).

Organizational Structure & Qualifications of Personnel

Concern: It is important that the strategic planning consultant understand in self-determination, person and family-centered thinking and processes in order to guide the development of the strategic plan.

Other Comments

None.