

Culturally Competent Family Support RFP - Responses to Questions

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Project Design

Under “Project Description,” there is reference to training professionals so they can provide culturally competent services. Does that include Train the Trainers for our project or is that solely for agency and/or service providers?

This refers only to service providers. However, please note that the items under “Project Description” are only activities that TCDD recommends that organizations consider. They are not required.

Regarding the short range goal: May the organization serve 100 families throughout the year through multiple and ongoing trainings?

Yes, you may provide that training at multiple events.

We have two different programs that we would like to expand using the grant, and hiring an additional staff member would also help us build capacity. Do we need to choose, and if so, is there one approach that might be more relevant to the project TCDD envisions?

You may propose to include programs that are related to achieving the outcomes. You do not need to choose a single approach.

If awarded, we are planning on splitting up the work into four different areas of Texas. I would like to hire at least 3 Project Coordinators for those areas but I didn't see that position description listed?

Enter the relevant information about the positions in the Budget and Qualifications sections. A description of duties for Project Coordinator is not included in the instructions because the position is not required. Organizations are responsible for developing and providing position descriptions for each position, including the Project Coordinator. Position descriptions should be attached to your proposal.

We taught communication skills as a part of our original project. Do we continue to build on to and add to that?

You must decide what specific activities you will implement to reach the goal and outcomes of the project. You may continue to build on and expand the work of your previous project.

Can funding be used for an existing project or do we have to develop an entirely new project?

Yes, funding can be used for an existing project, if you are expanding it and if it meets the requirements described in the RFP. However, funds for these projects should not supplant any funding for current activities of your organization.

The Request for Proposals (RFP) states that organizations will be required to develop leaders. May these leaders be staff?

TCDD's interest is to expand the pool of leaders who will actively promote and increase the availability of culturally responsive services for people with developmental disabilities. TCDD expects that those leaders will be people with developmental disabilities and/or family members. If your staff members meet those requirements, the "leaders" referenced in the RFP may be staff.

Is an outside evaluator required?

No.

May we charge for conferences?

Yes, you may charge for conferences. However, you must ensure that people with developmental disabilities and family members of people with developmental disabilities are not prohibited from attending due to the cost of the conference.

The RFP requires that at least three families or individuals will be supported to become leaders. Must they be identified in the first year?

No, they do not have to be identified in the first year.

May we include people other than individuals with developmental disabilities and families in the required trainings? May providers be included?

You may include others, but the vast majority of people shall be individuals with developmental disabilities and families. You may provide information and training to more than the minimum number of people required in the RFP (100 people), and all of the people above the expected number may be providers. However, all activities must be necessary and relevant to the goal of your project and the RFP.

How does TCDD feel about grantees providing services?

TCDD generally does not provide funding for direct services, unless they are necessary to reach the goal of the project and the RFP. If people being served by your project need stipends for personal assistance services or respite in order to participate in the approved grant, this support may be paid for by the grant. However, TCDD will not pay for therapies or other similar services. Note: TCDD does not consider

training or technical assistance as a “service” and these are allowable when necessary to reach the goal of the project.

May we collaborate with other organizations?

Yes; TCDD encourages collaboration.

In writing our proposal, should we focus on year one?

Yes, focus on and provide details for year one, but briefly refer to expected activities in later years.

Since TCDD receives federal funding, does work outside of Texas count?

You may describe work outside of Texas to demonstrate your organizational qualifications; however, funds for this project may only be used for activities conducted in Texas.

The Project Description section of the RFP states we are to “design projects that meet the needs of the people you serve and also achieve the outcomes described in the ‘Expected Outcomes’ section.” What if these are not the same thing?

You are required to plan a project that will achieve the outcomes noted in the RFP. How you achieve those outcomes should depend on what the people you serve need in order to participate in activities that are necessary to achieve those outcomes.

Does the opportunity exist during the grant year to add additional counties for training?

Any changes to your project after the Notice of Grant Award (NGA) is signed will need prior written approval from TCDD grants staff.

Project Staff

May I serve as Executive and Project Director?

You may serve as Executive Director of your organization and be the Project Director for this project. However you may NOT be both the Authorizing Official who signs off on the grant and the Project Director. Someone in a position of authority must have oversight of the Project Director. Additionally, the Project Director’s salary must be within the salary range for Project Directors. TCDD will not pay the typical salary of an Executive Director if the person is serving in a Project Director’s role.

I am the President of our board, and as such the Authorizing Official. I will also be serving as the Project Director. Is it OK to sign as authorizing official or should the Vice President of the board sign?

You may NOT serve as both the Project Director and the Authorizing Official. The Vice President of the board or another official who will have oversight of the project must assume responsibility as the Authorizing Official and sign off on the project.

Do the FAA and/or CFO report directly to the Project Director, and who has final authority on how money is spent?

No, the CFO and the FAA do not generally report to the Project Director. How an organization organizes staff functions is determined by each organization, not by TCDD. Funds must be spent exactly as indicated in the approved budget, unless there is prior approval from TCDD grants staff.

Who are the persons that are authorized to sign on the checks? The Project Director, CFO, or FAA?

This will be discussed at the negotiation meeting if you receive the grant award.

Would an accountant have access to the TCDD RAR Documents as the CFO?

If the CFO is the FAA for the project, that individual would have access to RAR documents because they are responsible for completion of the documents. If the CFO is not the FAA, they most likely would not need to access the RAR documents. However, you are welcome to share the content of the RAR with the CFO. Grantees should maintain their own fiscal documentation for review by management and auditors (if necessary).

Budget, Financial Issues and Allowable Expenses

There is a statement that babysitting is not a typically allowed expense, but does that mean that is totally not allowed?

In an effort to make conference attendance easier for those with dependent care responsibilities, we have at times allowed funds to be used for childcare. It must be necessary and related to meeting the goals of the project and the RFP. This may include costs incurred by the organization hosting the conference so that they may provide locally available childcare. It may also include costs for temporary dependent care resulting directly from travel to conferences if it meets specified standards. If volunteers provide this service for you, you may count their time as match. This will be negotiated with TCDD grants staff if you receive the grant.

There is a statement that food expenses are not typically allowed, but does that mean that it is totally not allowed?

The only food expenses that are allowable are working lunches for meetings/trainings and actual expenses for approved travel up to limits for state employees.

What is the rate for per diem?

TCDD limits travel expenses for DD grants to the amounts allowed for state employees. Amounts allowed for meals and lodging (often referred to as “per diem rates”) vary based on the travel destination (city). The general rule is that larger metropolitan areas have daily expenses allowed for lodging and meals. For example, the daily amount allowed for in El Paso is \$51 per day for food, and the maximum amount for lodging is \$92 + tax. Maximum travel expense rates for this and other areas can be found here:

www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100120.

Can we use grant funds to pay for mileage for speakers for the conferences/mini-conferences?

Yes, if it is necessary and related to the grant goal.

Can we use grant funds to pay for mileage for parents to travel?

Yes, if it is necessary and related to achieving the goals of the project.

What is the rate for mileage?

The current mileage reimbursement rate is \$0.575 per mile. This can also be found at www.gsa.gov.

Can airline tickets and rental cars be paid for with grant funds?

Yes, airline tickets and rental cars can be included as travel expenses if they are necessary and related to the goals of the project, and are the cost-efficient method of travel.

May we count volunteer time as match, and if so, what is the rate for volunteer time?

Yes, volunteer time may be counted as match if it is related to achieving the goals of the project. In Texas the current volunteer rate is \$24.66 per hour. Accepted rates can be found here: www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time.

May we count Project Advisory Committee (PAC) member time as match, and if so, what is the rate for PAC member time?

Yes, PAC member time may be counted as match except for members who are reimbursed for that time from another source of federal funds. The PAC member matching rate is \$75 for a half-day meeting.

May funds be used to partially invest in a grant writer or do all funds have to be directly related to programmatic personnel only?

TCDD funds may not be used to invest in a grant writer. However, if your agency hires a grant writer using other non-federal funds or employs a volunteer grant writer to help you pay for activities related to the project, you may use that as match. If you use these funds for match, they may not also be used as match for other federal funds.

The Project Profile page of the Supplemental Forms asks if we will accept a partial award. What does this mean? Does this mean you might only award funds for one year?

In some cases, TCDD might decide to fund some proposed activities but not others, particularly if they are contrary to TCDD's positions or philosophy or if they are not related to achieving the goals of the project and RFP. Funding for years after the first year is determined at the time the continuation proposal is considered.

If we don't receive the funding amount we request, is there a way to negotiate?

Organizations approved for a partial award can appeal that decision and asked TCDD to reconsider. During an appeal process, TCDD may determine that information provided in the original application was misunderstood and overlooked by reviewers. You may also appeal a funding decision if you believe TCDD did not follow TCDD policies and procedures in reviewing your application. However, an appeal is

not an opportunity to provide new information that could have been included in the original application. Information about the appeal process is included in the DD Suite Guide and Grant Application Instructions. You may not request funding above that noted in the RFP.

Is there any occasion in which an organization could get an advance payment?

Organizations receiving this grant may ask for an advance for up to one month of expected expenses with each payment request if necessary in order to complete project activities. Activities funded with an advance payment must be in the approved project workplan and must be consistent with the goal of the project and purpose of the RFP.

I am completing the budget forms and there seem to be only 3 lines to fill in for hourly employees. I need to add several more positions. How can I do this?

Create a Word document that has the same information as that section of the budget form, complete it, turn it into a PDF, and add it to the supplemental packet. Be sure that you add in the salary information from that extra page in your final calculation.

Serving poverty counties only requires a match of 10% of the grant award. Does this mean that if we receive \$75,000, the match amount is \$7,500?

The required match amount is at least 10% of the total project cost (TCDD funds plus other costs). The match amount for these projects is provided on the first page of the RFP, located at the top. Please use the amount noted in the RFP or use the formula provided under Section B in the Grant Application Instructions.

On the attachment entitled “Texas Counties and Poverty Levels,” are counties in gray the poverty counties?

Yes.

Can the main address for the applying organizations office be in a non-poverty county but provide services only in the high poverty areas?

Yes. Also, if all services are provided in a poverty area you may use the lower 10% match rate.

What is the 14-digit State Comptroller vendor ID number? Is it our EIN?

The EIN is not the same as the Comptroller ID number. EINs are 9 digits long, and the Comptroller ID numbers are 14 digits long. If you do not know your number, you can search for it on the Comptroller’s website. Here’s a link to the search page: <https://mycpa.cpa.state.tx.us/coa/Index.htm>.

Completing and Submitting the Forms

How do we sign the required attachments?

Download the documents, sign them, scan them, and attach signed versions to your proposal when you submit it through DD Suite. You do not need to provide a hard copy with original signatures at this time.

When do we submit names for the Project Advisory Committee (PAC)?

You may either provide them with your proposal or after you are awarded the grant (if you receive the grant). PAC members must be approved by TCDD; do not promise anyone that they will be on your PAC.

Are the supplemental forms that need to be submitted within the proposal questions packet? The note: “These are for your information and reference only” on some of the attachments makes it seem like we don’t complete other forms? Or is there another form to enter financials and sign?

You do not have to complete the attached forms that are labeled "FOR INFORMATION ONLY" or "REQUIRED FOR CONTINUATION ONLY." However, you MUST complete and submit the Supplemental Forms Packet for New Proposals, and this must include signatures and budget.

Attachments

The RFP refers to documents that are attached to this RFP, including Potential Performance Measures.pdf and the GM-008 PAC Nomination Form.pdf. I cannot find these documents. Where are they located?

You do not need to complete (or even read) these two forms at this time. They are for continuations or information only. To find these and other attachments, do one of the following:

1. From the [DD Suite homepage](#), BEFORE you log in, click on the [link for the RFP](#) and scroll down to the bottom. You should see the links for the supporting documentation there in the section labeled “Supporting Documentation.”
2. From your dashboard, click on “Notices of Funds Available.” Then, from the next page, click on the “Details” link for the grant for which you are applying. That will take you to the RFP. If you scroll down to the bottom, you will see the links for the attachments.

Performance Measures

The RFP says we must report on the following performance measure “Number of people trained though the grant” & “Number of people who have needed services and supports because of the grant.” However, these are not within the drop down options on DD Suite for performance measures. Will these be in addition to the ones we select from the DD Suite drop down? If so, where should we include them?

The performance measures given in the RFP are examples of the types of things you might report on. They are stated in plain language because in the past there has been confusion about the wording of the measures provided by the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD). If you want to choose performance measures now, use the ones in the drop down boxes. The full list that AIDD gives us is found under the attachments section in DD Suite. You may wait until the negotiations process to choose performance measures if your grant is awarded.

Are there a preferred number of performance measures per objective?

There is no preferred number of performance measures. The number will depend on your project and the number of measures that are manageable for you to capture and report.

Miscellaneous

Federal grants frequently require a significant amount of data and summaries of research. Do we need to include that in our proposal?

Include enough data and other information to support the need for your project and the approach you plan to take. Data in excess of this is not required.

Is the project timeline and budget from November to November or November to August?

Do not be concerned with providing the dates of the project timeline right now. Simply plan for a 12-month year (for example, note what you will do in month 1, month 2, etc.). TCDD grants staff will negotiate the exact dates of the first year with you if you receive the grant.