Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council

GUIDELINES FOR FUNDING APPLICANTS

2011

The Council's mission is to advocate for and support people with developmental disabilities to exercise control over their lives and participate fully in the community.

The Council identifies priorities for funding based on the Five Year State Plan. When the Council chooses to fund a new initiative, a Solicitation of Proposals (SOP) is developed to advertise the availability of funds for a specific project. SOPs are disseminated to state agencies and private organizations on the Council's mailing list. Since SOPs are developed with a specific project in mind, some requirements may vary from one SOP to another. However, the following guidelines are relevant for all SOPs.

READING THE SOP

Goal
The SOP provides a brief statement of its intended purpose. Please visit our website at www.laddc.org to view the Council's mission and values as well as the federal law that governs DD Councils; the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (PL 106-402).

Funding Period
Be sure to include these dates for the "Project Period" on the Application for Funding Cover Sheet. Also, when writing the proposal, use these dates to prepare your Gantt Chart (the timeline of project activities).

Funded Amount
Proposals requesting a funding amount higher than the maximum amount specified in the SOP will not be considered.

Target Population
This section of the SOP will generally indicate the Council's expected scope of the project. For example, a SOP might state that the project will focus on students, parents, and professionals in one local school district. This means that a proposal could be written for any school district in the state. Occasionally, a SOP will specify that a project be developed in a particular parish or region of the state. A SOP could also specify a particular type of geographic setting, such as specifying that a project be designed for a rural area of the state. SOPs can also indicate that the project scope is statewide with a broad range of possible target populations.

When preparing your proposal, carefully consider the overall need and expected outcomes for the project along with the SOP's requirements for the target population. If the required scope of the project is statewide, give thought to how the project will be coordinated from one area of the state to another. It could be beneficial to include in your proposal an explanation of how project partners in one area of the state will coordinate efforts with partners in another area of the state. If the scope of your project is local or regional, it is advisable to provide in your proposal a rationale of how the location of your project was chosen.

August 30, 2011

Project Outcomes

This section of the SOP describes results and benefits the Council expects from the project. Your proposal should reflect these outcomes and clearly explain how project activities will accomplish these results and benefits. Proposals demonstrating how the project would be sustained subsequent to Council funding will be given preferred consideration.

Project Activities

This section of the SOP lists the major activities that you will need to include in the work plan of your proposal. It is important to make sure that your proposal addresses all of the activities listed in the SOP.

Qualifications of Contractor

Carefully consider this section of the SOP when describing your organization.

Project Selection and Review

This section of the SOP will usually identify a project liaison staff member who can be called if you have questions, the Council Committee that will review the application and when the Committee is expected to make a decision on the application.

Reply Procedure

Pay close attention to this section of the SOP. This section will include the deadline for the proposal and the number of copies required. Proposals submitted past the deadline will not be considered. Some SOPs will specify a limited number of pages for the proposal or a particular section of the proposal. It is very important to comply with these limitations. Most SOPs will not specify font type, size, spacing, or other format preferences for the proposal. Unless otherwise specified in the SOP you are responding to, these tips are suggested in formatting your proposal:

- Use a standard font type such as Times New Roman or Arial
- For most font types a font size of 12 will be appropriate for the body of your proposal (using larger type to offset headings is optional). Avoid using a font size smaller than 10.
- Print text on only one side of the page.
- Include page numbers.
- Use headings to distinguish different sections of the proposal.

**APPLYING FOR FUNDING
and
WRITING THE PROPOSAL**

Application for Funding Cover Sheet
This form is available on the Council's website. Complete the form and include it with your application packet.

Table of Contents
Include each section of the application and proposal with page numbers of each.

W-9 Tax Form
A completed W-9 tax form must be sent in your application packet.   A link to this tax form is available on the Council's website or you can visit the IRS website at: http://www.irs.ustreas.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf

Board Resolution
A Board Resolution or Disclosure of Ownership verifying the authority to enter into contracts must be sent in your application packet. A sample Board Resolution is available on the Council's website.

Project Summary
The Summary should be no more than one page in length. It should clearly and concisely summarize how the project activities will accomplish the Council's expected outcomes for the project. Components of the Summary may include: 1) the need for the project, 2) the goals and objectives to be met and methods to be used, and 3) a brief description of the evaluation process. Include a description of how the project would be sustained subsequent to Council funding will be given preferred consideration.

Qualifications of Applicant:
● This section of the work plan needs to include information about your organization and the Project Director and/or other staff who will directly participate in the project. This section should also provide information about how individuals with disabilities and family members of individuals with disabilities will participate in the project. If the project will partner with other organizations, provide a brief description of these organizations as well.
● Include information that demonstrates:
   o the organization's and project staff's previous experience with similar projects
   o the organization's and project staff's previous experience collaborating with individuals with disabilities and family members of individuals with disabilities

- o unique characteristics or experiences that distinguish your organization, your project staff and/or other project partners
- o the organization's fiscal stability and capability to manage contract dollars

Budget Form and Narrative
The budget form is available on the Council's website. Complete the form and include it with your application packet. Prepare a narrative to accompany the budget form that includes justification and details on each budget category.

Letters of Support
Include letters of support from individuals (outside of your organization) and other organizations who will participate in the project. If an individual or organization agreed to provide match or perform a service, include a letter of support stating this commitment.

Project Work Plan
The Project Work Plan is usually subdivided with headings to distinguish one subpart from another. Some typical components of a Work Plan include: Statement of Need, Goals/Objectives, Outcomes, Evaluation Strategies, Action Plan, Timeline, and Qualification of Applicant. The specific order of these components and heading titles may vary depending on how you choose to organize your proposal.

Statement of Need:
- Explain the purpose of the project and how it will meet the current unmet needs of individuals with developmental disabilities. Provide a brief but detailed description of the need(s) to be addressed by the project. Whenever possible, cite publications, research or survey results relevant to these needs.
- Describe both the short term and long term benefits of the project – will the project have a long term impact on advocacy, capacity building and/or systems change? Explain how the project will promote the self determination, independence, productivity, integration and inclusion of individuals with developmental disabilities in all facets of community life.
- Clearly identify the target population and include the number of individuals with developmental disabilities that will benefit from this project. Explain why this target population was chosen for the project. Describe any benefits the project will have for currently unserved or underserved populations (i.e., persons from minority ethnic backgrounds, persons living in rural or poverty areas, etc.)
- This section of the Work Plan may also be a good place to describe collaboration with individuals with developmental disabilities and other project partners.

Goals/Objectives:
- Often the terms "goal" and "objective" are used synonymously. However, "goal" generally refers to a statement of an expected outcome for the project and "objective" generally refers to a method or step in accomplishing that goal.

August 30, 2011

- The number of goals/objectives will vary depending on the complexity of your proposal. Be sure to address all of the expected outcomes listed in the SOP.
- Ensure that goals/objectives reflect the expected outcomes from the project and meet the overall need(s) to be addressed by the project.
- Ensure that goals/objectives are specific and clearly stated.
- Include a goal/objective to address continuation of the project after the funding period and/or replicability of the project by another organization.

Outcomes:
- The expected outcomes for your proposal should expand on the expected outcomes stated in the SOP. They should also reflect the goals/objectives that you develop for your proposal.
- Ensure that outcomes are specific and clearly stated. Outcomes must also be measurable.   Notice the difference between the 2 sample outcome statements below; the second sample is an example of a specific, clearly stated and measurable outcome:
  Sample Outcome 1: Students with disabilities will have increased access to inclusive education options.
  Sample Outcome 2: 50 elementary school students with disabilities will receive the supports necessary to transition to regular education classrooms by the end of the project.

Evaluation Strategies:
- Your proposal must include a plan for evaluating the progress and outcome of your project. A typical evaluation plan includes what information will be collected and who, when and how the information will be collected, analyzed, and reported
- Design your evaluation plan to serve as a tool for determining whether the outcome of the project actually meets the need(s) identified in your proposal's "Statement of Need".
- In addition to evaluating the tangible outcomes of your project, it will also be important to incorporate a "consumer satisfaction" strategy to gather and report information from members of the target population about their experience with the project.

Action Plan:
- The action plan describes how you plan to achieve the goals of the project.
- Consider the following steps in developing your action plan:
  1. Start with the first goal that you have identified for your proposal. What steps must you take in order to accomplish this goal?
  2. List each step in chronological order.
  3. Specify who will complete each step.
  4. Describe how the step will be completed.
  5. Repeat steps "1" through "4" for each of the remaining goals identified for your proposal.

August 30, 2011

- The action plan should clearly demonstrate the connection between the proposal's goals/objectives, outcomes and evaluation strategies. The sample chart below is one tool that may assist you in organizing the action plan:

Goals	Outcomes	Action Steps	Participants	Evaluation Strategies
1. Each school will adopt strategies that effectively support students with disabilities in inclusive settings and activities.	1. The number of students supported in inclusive settings and activities will increase by 20%.	1. Develop a curriculum to educate teachers and administrators on the principles and benefits of inclusive education.	Project Director; Advisory Committee (includes parents of students with DD)	1. Minutes from Advisory Committee meetings 2. Copy of curriculum
		2. Implement the curriculum to educate teachers and administrators	Project Director; Consultants	1. Results from pre and post tests taken by teachers and administrators

Timeline:
- Use a horizontal bar chart to demonstrate when major project activities will occur.
- A timeline of project activities is sometimes referred to as a Gantt chart. A Gantt chart is developed using a specific software program. If your organization does not have this software, there are many common software programs (i.e., Word, Excel) that can be used to prepare the timeline. The sample timeline below was created using Word:

Project Activity	Oct. 2010	Nov.	Dec.	Jan. 2011	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.
Create Advisory Committee	███											
Develop Curriculum		███	███	███								
Implement Curriculum				███	███							
Meet with School Improvement Teams			███	███	███	███	███	███				

August 30, 2011