



# Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council Funding Manual

**Contact Council staff if you have questions or need help understanding this manual.**

Updated September 2025

## **Application for Funding: Guidelines**

The Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council (Council) uses its Five-Year State Plan to decide which projects to fund. Each new project begins with a Solicitation of Proposals (SOP).

The SOP explains available funds and requirements. The Council sends SOPs to state agencies and private organizations on its mailing list.

Each SOP may have unique requirements, but the following apply to all proposals.

### **READING THE SOP**

#### **Goal**

The SOP provides a brief statement about the goal of the project. Visit our website at [www.laddc.org](http://www.laddc.org) to learn more about the Council's mission, values, and the federal law that governs DD Councils ([Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000](#))

#### **Project Purpose and Target Population**

This section of the SOP describes the scope of the project.

When writing your proposal, think carefully about the overall need for the project, the expected outcomes, and the SOP's requirements for the target population.

- If serving the entire state, explain how you will manage and coordinate across regions. For example, describe how partners in one part of the state will work with partners in other areas.
- If serving a local or regional area, explain why you chose that location.

#### **Funding Period**

Funding follows the federal fiscal year, October 1–September 30. Enter the correct dates in “Project Period” on the Application for Funding Cover Sheet. Use these dates in your project timeline.

#### **Funded Amount**

The Council will not consider proposals that request more than the funding amount listed in the SOP.

#### **Project Responsibilities**

This part of the SOP lists the main activities you must include in your proposal's work plan. Include all required activities listed in the SOP in your work plan.

## **Contractor Requirements**

Explain why your organization is qualified to complete the project.

## **Reply Procedure**

Follow all instructions in the SOP. Late proposals will not be considered.

If the SOP sets page limits, follow them. If not, use these general guidelines:

- Use size 12 Times New Roman or Arial
- Number all pages
- Use headings to separate sections.
- Send all attachments as a Word document or PDF.

## **1. APPLYING FOR FUNDING and WRITING THE PROPOSAL**

### **W-9 Tax Form**

Submit a completed [W-9 tax form](#) with your application packet. A link to this tax form is available at the end of this manual.

### **Board Resolution**

Include a [Board Resolution](#) or Ownership Disclosure showing you have authority to sign contracts. A sample is provided at the end of this manual.

Keep the W-9 and Board Resolution separate from the proposal, since the Council shares proposals publicly but not these documents.

### **Application for Funding Cover Sheet**

Complete the Application for Funding Cover Sheet linked at the end of this manual and include it with your application packet.

### **Project Summary**

Write a one-page summary that explains how your project activities will achieve the Council's expected outcomes.

In your summary:

- State goals and objectives that are realistic, achievable, and tied to project outcomes.
- Describe activities clearly and specifically.
- Show that your timeline allows enough time to meet goals and objectives.
- Demonstrate commitment to full inclusion, especially for people with the most significant support needs.

Include in the summary:

- The need for the project.
- The goals and objectives, and how you will meet them.
- A brief explanation of how you will evaluate the project.

Proposals that explain how the project will continue after Council funding ends receive preference.

### **Qualifications of Applicant**

Describe your organization, project director, and key staff. Include details that show:

- Experience with similar projects.
- Experience working with people with disabilities and their families.
- Unique qualifications or expertise of your organization and partners.
- Fiscal stability and capacity to manage contract funds.

Also, explain how people with disabilities and their families (or the target population) will participate in the project.

If partnering with other organizations, briefly describe their role.

### **Project Work Plan**

Organize your work plan into these parts:

- Statement of Need
- Goals and Objectives
- Outcomes
- Action Plan
- Timeline
- Evaluation Strategies
- Budget Details
- Letters of Support

Use clear headings for each part.

#### **Statement of Need**

Explain your project's purpose and describe how it addresses unmet needs of people with developmental disabilities.

- Provide a clear description of the needs. Cite research, publications, or survey results when possible.

- Describe short-term and long-term benefits. Explain if the project will have a lasting impact on advocacy, capacity building, or systems change (See definitions at the end of this manual).
- Show how the project will promote self-determination, independence, productivity, and community inclusion of people with developmental disabilities.
- Clearly identify the target population and the number of people who will benefit.
- Describe collaboration with people with developmental disabilities and project partners.

### Goals/Objectives

Define goals as results you want to achieve. Define objectives as the specific steps to reach each goal.

When writing goals and objectives:

- Address all expected outcomes listed in the SOP.
- Ensure goals and objectives lead to the project's expected outcomes.
- Make them clear, specific, and measurable.
- Include at least one goal and objective for project continuation after Council funding ends or replication by another organization.

### Outcomes

Expand on the expected outcomes listed in the SOP.

- Link outcomes directly to your goals and objectives.
- State outcomes clearly and make them measurable.

#### **Example:**

**Too general:** "Students with disabilities will have increased access to inclusive education options."

**Measurable:** "By the end of the project, 50 elementary students with disabilities will receive the supports necessary to transition to regular education classrooms."

### Action Plan

Build an action plan that clearly connects goals, objectives, outcomes, and evaluation strategies.

For each goal:

1. List the steps required to achieve the goal.
2. Put the steps in the order they will occur.
3. Assign responsibility for each step.
4. Describe how each step will be carried out.

Break activities into manageable phases. Include milestones to track progress. Assign responsibilities to team members to ensure accountability.

***Sample Action Plan Chart:***

Goals	Outcomes	Activities	Participants	Evaluation Strategies
Each school will adopt strategies that effectively support students with disabilities in inclusive settings and activities.	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	Results from pre and post tests taken by teachers and administrators

Timeline

Create a timeline that:

- Lists each key activity with start and end dates.
- Aligns activities with project goals and objectives.
- Allows enough time to complete tasks efficiently.
- Includes buffer time for delays.

***Sample Timeline Chart:***

Project activity	Oct. 2024	Nov.	Dec.	Jan. 2025	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	July	Aug.	Sept
Create Advisory Committee												
Develop Curriculum												
Implement Curriculum												
Meet with School Improvement Teams												

**Evaluation Strategies**

Include a clear evaluation plan in your proposal. Your plan must:

- Explain what information you will collect from participants.
- Specify the types of data to be collected and when.
- Show how the data will measure progress toward project outcomes.

Participant registration must include federally required demographic data (linked at the end of this manual). Use this data for federal reporting.

Design the plan to measure whether the project's outcomes are achieved and whether it addresses the needs described in the Statement of Need.

**Budget Details Form and Narrative**

Complete the budget details form (linked at the end of this manual). Include it in your application packet.

Write a budget narrative that:

- Explains why each expenditure is necessary.
- Provides clear justification for each budget category.
- Details how funds will be allocated and used throughout the project.

Show how the budget supports project goals and objectives. Be transparent and specific.

### **Letters of Support**

Include letters of support from individuals and organizations outside your own. These letters should:

- Show commitment to the project.
- Confirm match contributions or services promised.
- Letters of support strengthen your proposal by demonstrating collaboration and backing.

### **Council Responsibilities**

#### Grant Monitoring

Council staff monitor each grant to ensure contractors meet requirements and spend funds properly. Staff:

- Review reports and financial records.
- Check that expenses match the approved budget.
- Confirm required match contributions.
- Compare activities completed with the work plan.
- Provide technical assistance if needed.

Federal regulations require the Council to assess contractor risk. Each contractor receives a risk level:

- **High Risk:** Close monitoring, corrective action plans, and follow-up.
- **Moderate Risk:** Regular monitoring and oversight to reduce risk.
- **Low Risk:** Minimal oversight, generally low risk of waste, fraud, or noncompliance.

The risk level may change each year based on assessment results.

The Council uses different activities to monitor grants. Routine reviews include:

- Comparing activities completed to work plan timelines.
- Reviewing financial records to make sure:
  - expenses follow the approved budget and are reasonable and allowed;
  - required match contributions are met; and
  - spending is on track based on the work plan and budget timeline.
- Reviewing monthly and/or quarterly program performance reports.
- Reviewing annual required audit reports.



The Council uses multiple oversight methods, including reviews, phone calls, emails, meetings, financial reports, audit reports, memos, and trainings.

### Surveys/Evaluations

Contractors must:

- Collect federally required demographic data from all participants (see Resources).
- Provide each participant an evaluation created by the Council after trainings or events.
- Submit evaluation results to the Council when requested.

Your contract monitor will provide evaluations before project activities begin.

### **Contractor Responsibilities**

#### Documentation

Contractors must:

- Keep records of all grant activities and costs.
- Submit monthly and final reports.
- Show that project activities followed the work plan and SOP requirements.
- Maintain proper documentation for all direct costs (federal or match).

#### Materials

Contractors must:

- Submit all project materials (presentations, publications, articles) to Council staff for approval before distribution.
- Allow at least 10 days for review.
- Include the Council logo on all materials (PowerPoints, brochures, curricula, manuals, promotional items).
- Tag the Council's accounts on Facebook and X when posting project updates.
- Share information about the Council, LaCAN, and Partners in Policymaking® with all participants.

#### Sharing Information

Promote all project activities at least 5 days in advance. Choose methods appropriate to your project to reach people with disabilities, families, policymakers, and the public.

### Monthly Report

Contractors must submit reports by the 10th of each month (except June, when reports are due July 1). These reports describe the work they completed and the progress they made on the project work plan goals and objectives during the reporting period.

Reports must include:

- a. invoices
- b. sales receipts
- c. payroll stubs
- d. mileage logs (must follow the requirements in the [Louisiana State Travel Guide](#))
- e. activity reports
- f. evaluations, surveys, and other documentation of outcomes required by the Council
- g. success stories and pictures detailing the impact of the project on the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families participating in the project.

Invoices submitted more than 15 days after the billing period or end of the contract may result in one of the following:

- a. a deduction of 1% or \$100 per day, whichever is greater, from the final invoice, not exceeding the contract balance.
- b. Reduction of the current contract; or
- c. No longer entering into contracts with the contractor.

### Final Grant Report

Contractors must submit a Final Grant Report within 60 days after the project ends.

The report must:

- Summarize goals and objectives met.
- Explain unmet goals and lessons learned.
- Describe project impact and outcomes (positive and/or negative).
- Report any approved costs above the original budget.
- Detail sustainability plans after Council funding ends.
- Provide recommendations to the Council for future projects.
- Include a final expenditure report and an inventory of equipment/controlled assets.

### **Grant Budget**

The Council reimburses only allowable costs under federal and state regulations. Contractors must cover upfront costs and request reimbursement with documentation.

#### Salaries and Wages:

- Pay compensation with Council funds, match funds, or both.
- Keep timekeeping records for all staff working on the project.

#### Related Benefits:

- Include FICA, Medicare, leave, insurance, retirement, and unemployment.
- Base benefits on standard agency policies and legal requirements.

#### Travel:

- Include mileage, transportation, per diem, lodging, meals, registration fees.
- Follow the [Louisiana State Travel Guide](#).

#### Supplies:

- Include essential items such as office supplies.
- Follow federal rules for supplies and small equipment (< \$5,000 each).
- Keep records of all equipment and supplies purchased with Council funds.

Note: Supplies and equipment bought with federal funds are Council property.

#### Professional Services:

- Include services essential to the project that are not provided by staff.

Examples: speakers, consultants, CPAs.

#### Operating Service:

- Include utilities, equipment rental, maintenance, printing, copying, phone, and internet.

#### Indirect/Admin Costs:

- Allowable up to 8.7% of all direct federal expenses.
- Cannot duplicate expenses listed in other categories.

#### Match (Cost Sharing):

As part of the project budget, contractors must provide a match contribution each year. This is called cost sharing. Match is the share of the total program costs the contractor and/or its partners will contribute to accomplish the purposes of the grant.

Contractor must:

- Provide a 10% or 25% match based on project scope.
- Document all match expenses monthly.
- Treat match funds the same as federal funds.
- Provide written documentation of in-kind contributions.

If a contractor does not meet the required match by the end of the budget period, they must return the portion of the federal funds that were not matched to the Council. To help avoid this, contractors are encouraged to plan on matching more expenses than the minimum required.

### **Calculating Match Requirement**

- 25% match: federal funds  $\div$  3 = match required.
- 10% match: federal funds  $\div$  9 = match required.

### **Examples of Match Contributions**

- Agency staff who will provide project activities but whose services will not be charged to the project's budget.
- Eligible related benefits for administrative, clerical, contracted, and facilities personnel.
- Contracted consultants lending their expertise and time to the project.
- Indirect costs not charged to the project's budget.
- Costs for the use of existing equipment.
- Utilities and telephone expenses related to implementing the project but not included as line items in the project budget.
- Printing, copying, postage, and evaluation expenses related to implementing the project but not included in the project budget.
- Eligible supplies on hand from existing inventory.
- Equipment purchased by the organization with its own money and connected to the grant-funded project.
- Eligible grant-related travel for that the organization will pay for with its own funds.
- Grant funding from other sources used for the project. Federal funding cannot be used as a match.
- Agency general operating funds, or unrestricted funds used for the day-to-day operation of the organization.
- Funds donated by a local business to the organization to help offset the cost of training volunteers.
- Expertise donated by a local business to train the agency's volunteers.
- The value of space donated by other organizations for meetings, trainings, and other grant-related activities.

### Limitations and Provisions:

The Council will make payments to the contractor based on the work plan, as long as the contractor fully and satisfactorily completes the work. Contractors must agree to the following:

- Payments depend on the Council receiving federal funds.
- If funds are reduced or unavailable, the Council may reduce payments or end the grant.
- The Council is not liable for further payments in these cases.
- No state general funds are obligated.
- The Council is not responsible for costs covered by another source or not allowed under the grant.
- Payments are made only to contractors, not third parties.

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Advocacy** – Taking action to support or oppose something. Advocacy means speaking up for something you believe in to help make a change.

**Capacity Building** – Helping people, organizations, and communities develop the skills, knowledge, and resources they need to be more effective and successful.

**Systems Change** – Improving laws, policies, programs, services, and other things that affect people with developmental disabilities and their families.

### **RESOURCES**

1. [Application for Funding Coversheet](#)
2. [W-9 form](#)
  - a. [W-9 form instructions](#)
3. [Budget Form](#) (download)
  - a. [Budget Form Instructions](#)
4. [Sample Board Resolution](#)
5. [Louisiana State Travel Guidelines](#) (PPM-49)
6. [Demographic Data Collection](#)
  - a. [Required Demographic Data](#)
7. [SOP Checklist](#)

*This program is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$1,376,984.00.00 with 100% funding by ACL/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.*