**RFA 2023-2024.1.a I/DD Services Champion RFA**

**RFA Q&A**

1. **Do you have to be a nonprofit to apply?**

**Answer**: No, all non-profits, university, not-for-profit, for-profit, or government agency are eligible to apply for this RFA whether they are in state or out of state. All organizations not registered to do business in the State of North Carolina will need to complete the required paperwork with the NC Secretary of State’s office if awarded the contract. Information can be found at: <https://www.sosnc.gov/>

1. **Do you need to support individuals across the state, or can it just be regional?**

**Answer:** Yes, the intent of this award is to support individuals with I/DD and family members with lived experience across the state.

1. **Will only one grant be awarded?**

**Answer**: Yes. The intention is for NCCDD to select one awardee for the I/DD Services Champion RFA. Organizations can partner together to address the deliverables in the RFA, including through subcontracting, but only one application needs to be submitted from the lead agency. The Application Review Committee will make recommendations to the full Council in our May 2023 Council meeting.

1. **Can you still ask questions after the March 14th, 2023 Bidders’ Workshop?**

**Answer**: Yes. We will continue to receive questions about the I/DD Services Champion RFA until March 28th, 2023 at 5:00 ET at RFAinfo@nccdd.org. The Q&A from the Bidders’ Workshop will be posted on March 22nd, 2023 by 5:00 ET. Any questions received after March 22nd will be reviewed and the answer will be posted on our website by March 31st, 2023 by 5:00 pm ET.

1. **Is there any precedent with the DD Council where one could use this NCCDD grant to help satisfy some of the goals and objectives for another, separate NCCDD grant?**

**Answer**: No. Each grant award has its own goals, objectives, and deliverables. It is expected that the grantee will meet the demands of this grant for the federal funds that are allocated towards this effort separately from any other award.

1. **Regarding number of people w/ I/DD employed by the end of year three: Is the expectation that 75 to 100 people will remain employed? Is the expectation that 75 to 100 people will be hired?**

**Answer**: The intent of this RFA is to increase employment for individuals with I/DD and family members with lived experiences to become employed in leadership roles across the state. Data collection must be implemented to track how many people (the majority being individuals with I/DD) are employed and where. The total count at the end of the third year of the contract will include all individuals who were employed in leadership roles even if they were not able to maintain employment.

1. **Do all of the employment opportunities have to be long-term, sustainable leadership roles to be included in total numbers that will be reported in years 2 and 3 of this grant?**

**Answer:** All people with I/DD and family members with lived experiences who obtain employment in a paid leadership role through this initiative’s efforts can be included in the reporting and data collection for this grant.

1. **Is there any representative involved in this project or a formal way for the project lead to connect with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) to support project activities?**

**Answer**: No. There is no requirement to partner with NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (NC DVRS) to be a successful applicant for this RFA. If you wish to include a partnership with NC DVRS for the purposes of responding to this Request for Applications, NCDDD recommends for you to discuss with NC DVRS in advance of submitting your application or, alternatively, including efforts that the organization will engage in to partner with NC DVRS during Year(s) 1, 2, and/or 3. NCCDD staff will work, once the contract is awarded, to support the successful applicant to establish necessary relationships with NC DVRS to incorporate services and supports they provide, should those linkages be supportive and needed.

1. **How do you define employed Is part-time or hourly considered employed?**

**Answer**: For the purposes of this RFA, part-time, full-time, and hourly employment are considered employment as long as the employment is both competitive and integrated.

1. **What does the “leadership” in “leadership role” mean to the NCCDD?**

**Answer**: For the purposes of this RFA, the NCCDD defines leadership broadly as a paid role in the I/DD services system. These roles would include any competitive and integrated employment role where an individual with I/DD or their family member with lived experiences is assisting, mentoring, or impacting others with I/DD or are in roles that influence policy and systems change.

1. **Beyond *Care Extender*-type positions, are there any other positions that have been made accessible in state offices for adults with I/DD?**

**Answer**: There are many paid leadership positions across the state that include, but are not limited to, *Care Extender-*type positions. The successful applicant will collaborate with many agencies that can include, but are not limited to: care coordination organizations, schools, advocacy organizations, LME/MCOs, DMH/DD/SUS, and service providers. The successful applicant will also champion employment for individuals with I/DD and family members in the developmental disability systems that do not currently employ individuals with I/DD.

1. **Is the intended employment target for this RFA transition-aged youth? Is there a preferred type of employment that should be targeted? Are we to include only Care Extenders or is it also ok to target other types of work instead?**

**Answer:** The intended population for this RFA is not limited to just transition-aged youth. The intent of this RFA is to increase competitive, integrated employment among all individuals with I/DD and family members with lived experiences in leadership roles in the I/DD services system. See the answer to question 11 for more details about employment types to focus on for this initiative.

1. **Would NCCDD consider applications that align with the funding, but do not address all the required deliverables? Would NCCDD consider applications that address all the required deliverables, but exceed the Federal funding amount allocated for this RFA?**

**Answer:** All applications received by April 19th, 2023 by 5:00 ET will be reviewed by NCCDD staff to ensure the application follows the procedures outlined in the RFA and meets the intent of the RFA. Once reviewed internally, applications that are submitted timely and follow the procedures of the RFA will be forwarded to the Application Review Committee. The Application Review Committee will review each application meeting criteria and will be scored using the Application Review Scoring Sheet (Scoring Sheet is uploaded to the I/DD Services Champion RFA website). Each section will be scored as stated on the Application Scoring Form (see page 1 of 7). Specific to the budget and as outlined in the Application Scoring Form (see page 6 of 7 for exact language), applications will be scored based on 1) the level of detail included in the budget as well as the breakdown and justification of costs as explained within the narrative, 2) the reasonableness of the budget in relation to the proposed activities and outcomes, and 3) whether or not the total budget is sufficient to perform the activities and meet the identified outcomes as described in the scope of work.

1. **How many people with I/DD or family member-specific positions currently exist at the I/DD Service System? At NC DHHS?**

**Answer:** The intent of this RFA is to increase the number of people with I/DD and family members with lived experience employed in leadership roles in the I/DD service system. In addition to increasing the number of individuals with I/DD and family members hired, the intent of this RFA also includes championing the employment of people with I/DD and family members in leadership roles. The employment positions are not limited to people with I/DD or family member specific positions or positions at NC DHHS (see answers to questions #10 and #11, above). The current total number of I/DD and/or family member-specific positions is not known to NCCDD at the time of the release of this RFA, though the successful applicant will develop a plan in the first year of this grant of how they will accomplish the deliverables and objectives of this RFA.

1. **What is the average time to develop a new position and get it processed and approved by the State’s Human Resources Department?**

**Answer:**  The average time to develop a new position and get it processed and approved by the State’s Human Resources Department varies greatly by the type of position and the department where the position will be housed. <https://oshr.nc.gov/faqs/download>

1. **Please define “leadership”. Does the position need to be at a certain level within an organization chart? Does this leadership role need to be an employment position?**

**Answer:** Leadership has been defined in question 10. For the purposes of this RFA, positions do not have to be a certain level within an organization chart. The leadership role must be paid competitively in order to meet the intent of this RFA.

1. **Does NCCDD have an agreement with DVR so all potential employees can receive services immediately to help them navigate employment? What cost estimates does VR use to project employment closures for adults with I/DD?**

**Answer:** No. As stated in question 8, there is no requirement to partner with NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (NC DVRS) to be a successful applicant for this RFA. If you wish to include a partnership with NC DVRS for the purposes of responding to this Request for Applications, NCDDD recommends for you to discuss with NC DVRS in advance of submitting your application or, alternatively, including efforts that the organization will engage in to partner with NC DVRS during Year(s) 1, 2, and/or 3. If you chose to partner with NC DVRS, you can inquire about their cost estimates to project employment closures for adults with I/DD.

1. **If individuals have become employed and/or increased their employment status through previous Council initiatives held by the Grantee, can those numbers count towards the employment total?**

**Answer:** No. Individuals who have become employed or increased employment through previous Council initiatives cannot be counted towards objectives for this RFA.

1. **Does NCCDD have a partnering agreement with the Carolina Institute on Developmental Disabilities that would cover some of the services/expenses related to data collection?**

**Answer:** No, NCCDD does not, at the time of this RFA release, have a partnering agreement with the Carolina Institute on Developmental Disabilities of this nature**.** The successful applicant will be able to devise a plan and implement it that will include satisfaction surveys and data collection on employment for individuals with I/DD and family members with lived experience.

1. **What does “Expand self-advocates and families’ abilities to build the capacity within the community support system.” mean?**

**Answer: NOTE: This question relates to Deliverable #8 included in the RFA.**

The intent of this RFA is to increase employment for people with I/DD and family members with lived experience to obtain leadership roles in the I/DD services system. *Capacity,* as stated in Deliverable #8 relates to increasing such opportunities within the *community support system*. An example of a beneficial skill set for people with I/DD and family members with lived experience who will be in, or pursuing, paid leadership roles that may serve to build *capacity* - is to be able to help others navigate the system and support others and the system itself to think creatively about how to optimally utilize all the services in the community, paid and unpaid. The successful applicant will outline how they will assist the individuals and family members with expanding this or other skill set(s) as it relates to Deliverable #8.

1. **In Deliverable #2, it states, “Actively recruit and establish a network of self-advocates and family members with lived experiences who are connected to or interested obtaining paid leadership roles in the I/DD service system.” Can you clarify NCCDD’s expectations for a forum/network? Does this mean contributing to current and /or past efforts to establish and sustain a self-advocates leadership network? OR start a new effort? Does it require the 25-100 employees to be a part of this network?**

**Answer:** The NCCDD expects that all efforts in accomplishing the objectives and deliverables of this grant to be informed by self-advocates and family members with lived experiences for the duration of this grant. The successful applicant will be able to demonstrate how self-advocates and family members with lived experiences are able to contribute to the success of this initiative in an advisory role. Members of the network can be self-advocates or family members the successful applicant has worked with in the past as long as the individuals involved in this network are connected to or interested in obtaining paid leadership roles within the I/DD services system. The successful applicant will draft a proposal that details the projected makeup (e.g. size) of their network(s).