



**Council Members**

- David Blose, Yukon
- Maggie Bond, Broken Arrow
- Mindee Brown, Edmond
- Jeromy Buchanan, OKC
- Sherri Coats, OKC
- Brett Cunningham, OKC
- Janie Fugitt, OKC
- Sharon Garrity, Guthrie
- Shelly Greenhaw, Edmond
- Michelle Kelley, OKC
- Lori Hauge, Sapulpa
- Blaine Murdock, Meeker
- Gina Richardson, OKC
- Beth Scrutchins, Shawnee
- Melissa Sublett, Tulsa
- Kodey Toney, Poteau
- Lori Weider, Stillwater
- Cynthia Wilkett, Tulsa
- Devin Williams, Lawton
- Valerie Williams, OKC


**DDCO Staff**


- Planning & Grants Director**  
Jennifer Robinson
- Administrative & Marketing Officer**  
Alissa Patterson
- Advocacy Training Coordinator**  
Dr. Bradley Mays
- Self-Advocacy Training Coordinator**  
Morgan Davis
- Executive Director**  
Jenifer Randle

**State Plan Committee Meeting Agenda**


Friday, November 22, 2024, 9:00 a.m.  
2400 N. Lincoln Blvd, Sequoyah Bldg., Room 513  
Oklahoma City, OK 73107

I.  **Welcome, Call to Order & Roll Call** – Michelle Kelley, State Plan Chair

II.  **Discussion and Possible Voting\***: Review Meeting minutes of March 15, 2024, September 27, 2024, and November 19, 2024 State Plan meeting.

III.  **Committee Discussion and Possible Voting\*** – Michelle Kelley

- a. Committee Review Funding Proposals
- b. Proposal Presentations (AutismOklahoma - LookOut, Best Buddies - expansion, Autism Foundation of Oklahoma/Down Syndrome Association of Oklahoma/Unity Forward Oklahoma - Inclusive Communication Conference, The ARC of Oklahoma - Oklahoma AIM)
- c. Committee Review of Presentations

IV.  **Committee discussion - Michelle Kelley** Discuss Listening Sessions proposed questions for information gathering for next 5-year state plan.

V.  **Other Business \***

VI.  **Announcements**

VII.  **Adjournment \***

*State Plan Committee Members: Michelle Kelley, Committee Chair, Shelley Greenhaw, Committee Vice Chair, RoseAnn Duplan, Wanda Felty, Janie Fugitt, Sharon Garrity, Lori Hauge, Gina Richardson*

**State Plan Committee Minutes**  
**Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma**

DATE: Friday, March 15 2024


TIME: 11:00 AM

PLACE: 2400 N. Lincoln Blvd, Sequoyah Bldg. Rm. 513, Oklahoma City,  
Oklahoma 73105

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*BE IT REMEMBERED that on Friday, March 15, 2024, at 11:10 a.m., the State Plan Committee met at 2400 N. Lincoln Blvd, Sequoyah Bldg. in Rm. 513, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105 per the Open Meetings Act.*

*NOTICE of the schedule for all regular and special meetings of the DDCO State Plan Committee for the calendar year 2023 have been given in writing to the Oklahoma Secretary of State and public notice and agenda having been posted on the Council's website at or before 12:00 pm on Thursday, March 14, 2024, per the Oklahoma Open Meetings Act, 25 O.S. Section 311.*

I.  **CALL TO ORDER:** Shelly Greenhaw called the meeting to order at 11:10 A.M.

II.  **ROLL CALL:**

Present:	Shelly Greenhaw	State Plan Committee Vice Chair
	Sharon Garrity	Council Chair
	RoseAnn Duplan	Designee for Melissa Sublett
	Wanda Felty	Designee for Dr. Valerie Williams


Online:

Absent:	Lori Hauge	Committee Member
	Janie Fugitt	ATO Chair
	Michelle Kelley	State Plan Committee Chair

Guests:	Sarah Soell
	Shae Tanis

Staff:	John Houston	Planning & Grants Director
	Bradley Mays	Advocacy Training Coordinator
	Morgan Davis	Self-Advocacy Training
	Alissa Patterson	Administrative Officer
	Jenifer Randle	Executive Director

*By roll call, having determined there were sufficient members to make a quorum, business was conducted.*

III.  **Review of the Minutes of the State Committee Meeting of January 5, 2023.**

 **DISCUSSION:** The minutes from January 4, 2024, were reviewed.

**ACTION:** Motion by Ms. Garrity and seconded by Ms. Felty to approve the January 4, 2024, State Plan Committee meeting minutes.


 **AYES:** Shelley Greenhaw, Wanda Felty, RoseAnn Duplan, Sharon Garrity

 **NAYS:** none

**MOTION:** Carried 

IV.  **Discussion and Possible Voting: Funding Proposals**

**A.** Funding proposals presentations:

1.  Mr. Houston introduced Ms. Tanis with the Black Feathers Podcast. Ms. Tanis presented a proposal with the Black Feathers Podcast for fiscal year 2025 to create a new six-part series of the podcast bringing in guests from Tribal Nations in Oklahoma to discuss issues facing Tribal citizens with ID/DD across the life span trajectory. To align with the goals of the Council, the episodes would parallel the Life Course life stages hosting a new episode focused on the experiences of Tribal members with disabilities and their families at each of the developmental stages The budget for this project is \$25,000.

The following is a draft outline of the podcast episodes:

Ep.1) early identification and accessing developmental pediatricians.

Ep.2) supporting culture and family in early development.

Ep.3) education and educational supports.


Ep.4) transition from of school to adult programs.

Ep.5) honoring tribal culture in adulthood.

Ep.6) honoring elders and aging caregivers.

- ? Ms. Greenhaw asked Ms. Tanis what would be actionable from the listeners once awareness is met and greater engagement. Ms. Tanis discusses importance of developing new supports and services that honor the culture and meet their needs.
- ? Mr. Houston asked does the focus on lived experience include family members and care givers. Ms. Tanis starts that the preference is to always start with the individuals but would also focus on the family collective to include elders as well.
- ? Ms. Fugitt asked how have these episodes been funded, Ms. Tanis responded saying that the State of the States has funded the episodes. This was initially funded as a special study but needs of additional funding came about as because special studies are intended to be funded for only a single year.




2.  Mr. Houston introduced **Ms. Soell with Inclusive Communications Conference**. Ms. Soell presented a funding request for fiscal year 2025 for DSACO, Beyond the Spectrum, and the Autism Foundation to collaborate host a one-day conference for educators, providers, and caregivers to discuss and educate others about communication in all forms on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

- ? Ms. Garrity asked Ms. Soell asked if they would be offering continued education for educators that attend, which Ms. Soell replied that they would be continuing this effort.
- ? Ms. Duplan asked that since no funding was available how were they planning on matching costs for catering, MS. Soell said that they are

looking in to event sponsors for that specific cost.

- ? Ms. Felty asked the question about cost of using the Leova app, Ms Soell discusses that an original quote of \$2,100 was for assistance for printable materials, but with using the app that price would then be \$2,199.
- ? Ms. Randle asked the question about using the app and who would be making sure that all documents are accessible, Ms. Soell said that Milena with Beyond the Spectrum would be taking care of that.
- ? Ms. Felty asked if there would keynote speakers or breakout sessions for this event, Ms. Soell responded that the goal is to have at least one keynote, but ultimately depends on proposals and how they come in.
- ? Ms. Greenhaw asked the question about how far the reach would be for this event, Ms. Soell stated that it would be open to everyone across the state as well as working with her counterparts in Tulsa.
- ? Ms. Greenhaw asked the question if this will be a recurring event, Ms. Soell responded with that there is hope that this can be recurring but will depend upon success of this first session.
- ? Ms. Garrity asked if there had been thoughts on possible vendors at this event, which Ms. Soell confirmed that there will vendors present for additional resources.

B.  Committee discussion & funding recommendations:


 **DISCUSSION:** Funding request for Black Feather pod cast from presenter Ms. Tanis.

**ACTION:** Ms. Duplan moved to approve funding request seconded by Ms. Felty.

 **AYES:** Shelley Greenhaw, Janie Fugitt, RoseAnn Duplan, Sharon Garrity


 **NAYS:** none

**MOTION:** Carried 

1.  **DISCUSSION:** Funding request from Inclusive Communications for the DSACO, Beyond the Spectrum, and the Autism Foundation to collaborate host a one-day conference for educators, providers, and caregivers on July 17th, 2024.

**ACTION:** Ms. Duplan moved to table the funding request until changes to the budget to include the match and volunteer hours. Motion seconded by Ms. Garrity.

 **AYES:** none

 **NAYS:** Shelley Greenhaw, Janie Fugitt, RoseAnn Duplan, Sharon Garrity

**MOTION:** Carried 

V.  **Other New Business**

VI.  **Announcements**

VII.  **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 pm

# Fiscal Year 2026 Funding Request

**Project/Activity:** Art Programming - LookOut

**Organization:** Autism Oklahoma (AO)

**Proposal Description (including duration):**

Using Year 2 requested Council funding, we want to continue to reach more artists through an outreach program called LookOut. LookOut will have a wide variety of activities for our expansion. AO will hold multiple submission events to find new interested artists and students. More gallery space will be utilized for our major art show and extensive exhibition opportunities are available within the 7725 Connect facility for this new expansion. We also want to continue the process to expand art programming into the Tulsa area. We are four months into Year 1 funding, and we have been working on partnerships within the Tulsa area. At this point we have initiated a partnership with Philbrook Museum of Art and have held one art experience workshop there that was attended by 25 participants in early October. We hope to continue this and are working on a class in partnership with BattleCreek Church located in Broken Arrow.

**Council Goal & Objective:** Goal 3, Objective 5

**Targeted Audience:** Our primary art education audience consists of persons on the autism spectrum or with DD who are either already an artist/filmmaker or would like to become an artist/filmmaker. Our art programming participants range in age from 10 to 50, and our filmmakers are age 18 and above. Our secondary audience is the public at large who enjoys art, empowering confidence, and appreciating artistic expression. AO annually assists approximately 50 participants with disabilities in their art programs. All AO staff and many board members identify as a part of the autism community as parents, family members, of a person on the spectrum.

**Funding requested for Fiscal Year 2026**

<b>Council</b>	<b>Match (in kind)</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>\$18,000</b>	<b>\$16,000</b>	<b>\$34,000</b>

**Prior Fiscal Year 2025**

<b>Council</b>	<b>Match (in kind)</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Q1 Total Spent</b>
<b>\$24,000</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$34,000</b>	<b>DDCO - \$6,996</b> <b>Match - \$2,550</b>

**State Plan Committee Minutes**  
**Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma**

DATE: Friday, September 27, 2024


TIME: 11:00 AM

PLACE: 2400 N. Lincoln Blvd, Sequoyah Bldg. Rm. 513, Oklahoma City,  
Oklahoma 73105

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*BE IT REMEMBERED that on Friday, September 27, 2024, at 11:00 a.m., the State Plan Committee met at 2400 N. Lincoln Blvd, Sequoyah Bldg. in Rm. 513, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105 per the Open Meetings Act.*

*NOTICE of the schedule for all regular and special meetings of the DDCO State Plan Committee for the calendar year 2024 have been given in writing to the Oklahoma Secretary of State and public notice and agenda having been posted on the Council's website at or before 12:00 pm on Thursday, September 27, 2024, per the Oklahoma Open Meetings Act, 25 O.S. Section 311.*

I.  **CALL TO ORDER:** Michelle Kelley called the meeting to order at 11:17 A.M.

II.  **ROLL CALL:**

Present:     Michelle Kelley     State Plan Committee Chair  
                  Janie Fugitt         ATO Chair  
                  RoseAnn Duplan     Designee for Melissa Sublett  
                  Wanda Felty         Designee for Dr. Valerie Williams

Online:       Gina Richardson     Committee Member  
                  Sharon Garrity       Council Chair

Absent:       Lori Hauge            Committee Member  
                  Shelley Greenhaw    Committee Member


Guests:



Staff: Jennifer Robinson Planning & Grants Director  
Bradley Mays Advocacy Training Coordinator  
Morgan Davis Self-Advocacy Training  
Alissa Patterson Administrative Officer, online  
Jennifer Randle Executive Director

*By roll call, having determined there were not sufficient members to make a quorum, so no business was conducted.*

Jennifer Robinson, the Council’s new Planning and Grants Director was welcomed to the team. Jennifer introduced herself for the team and then Committee Members introduced themselves.

III.  **Review of the Minutes of the State Committee Meeting of January 5, 2023.**

DISCUSSION: The minutes from March 15, 2024, were not provided as they are not complete.

IV.  **Discussion and Possible Voting: Funding Proposals**

Discussion with the Committee. Funding proposals for FY26 are due to the Council at the end of the month to allow review before sending to the committee. They discussed information they wanted on the Proposal Summary Pages including How many years has project been funded by the Council, Sustainability Plans, what the target population and location is for work, as well as information about total funding and match funding like the April Budget packet. Members asked if we could create a map that identifies counties that can receive 90% of Council funding, falling within the rural & poverty county guidelines.

V.  **Next 5-Year Plan Committee discussion a**

The committee had discussion about the upcoming work that would be done for the new State Plan to begin in the fall of 2026. The committee offered suggestions to check in with organizations who could help the Council with analyzing data received from listening sessions. These ideas for facilitators include: OKDHS Research and Innovations team, Meta Fund (Ed Long), UCEDD.

VI.  **Other New Business**

The Committee set dates to review funding proposals for FY26: November 19, 9:00-11:00 a.m.; November 22, 9:00-11:00 a.m.

The committee requested to receive proposals by Nov. 12 and with meeting order: first 30 minutes of meeting to allow for a review of proposals followed by a short overview from each funding requestor. After each overview, Committee Members will ask questions. After all requests have been heard, committee will review and determine if a vote to recommend to full council is needed.

VII.  **Announcements**

VIII.  **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:52 pm

**State Plan Committee Minutes**  
**Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma**

DATE: Tuesday, November 19, 2024


TIME: 9:00 AM

PLACE: 2400 N. Lincoln Blvd, Sequoyah Bldg. Rm. 513, Oklahoma City,  
Oklahoma 73105

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*BE IT REMEMBERED that on Tuesday, November 19, 2024, at 9:00 a.m., the State Plan Committee met at 2400 N. Lincoln Blvd, Sequoyah Bldg. in Rm. 513, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105 per the Open Meetings Act.*

*NOTICE of the schedule for all regular and special meetings of the DDCO State Plan Committee for the calendar year 2024 have been given in writing to the Oklahoma Secretary of State and public notice and agenda having been posted on the Council's website at or before 9:00 pm on Monday, November 18, 2024, per the Oklahoma Open Meetings Act, 25 O.S. Section 311.*

I.  **CALL TO ORDER:** Michelle Kelley called the meeting to order at 9:09 A.M.

II.  **ROLL CALL:**

Present: Michelle Kelley, RoseAnn Duplan, Gina Richardson, Sharon Garrity


Online: Wanda Felty

Absent: Janie Fugitt, Shelley Greenhaw, Lori Hauge

Staff: Jennifer Robinson, Morgan Davis, Alissa Patterson (online), Jenifer Randle

Guests: Wendy Morton, Tosha Robinson, Bria Schwartz, Kyle Britt of Autism Foundation Oklahoma, Seth Kastner of the Autism Center of Oklahoma, Kathryn Moore of the Autism Center of Oklahoma, Lisa Simmons of Sooner SUCCESS, Aietah Stephens of Sooner SUCCESS, Kodey Toney of the Pervasive Parenting Center, and Terry Yarbery of the Pervasive Parenting Center

*By roll call, it was determined there were not sufficient members to make a quorum.*

III.  **Review of the Minutes of the State Committee Meeting of January 5, 2023.**

DISCUSSION: The minutes from March 15, 2024, and September 27, 2024 were not reviewed due to no quorum.

IV.  **Discussion and Possible Voting: Funding Proposals**

The Committee took time to review funding requests for fiscal year 2026. Requests being reviewed today are currently in their 4<sup>th</sup> year of funding from the DD Council. Committee members requested a breakdown of all funding requests (including match amounts) for next State Plan meeting as well as past sustainability plans for current council projects for comparison. The Committee also requested the total amount to obligate (unobligated funds of 2024 and 2025 funds).

**a. Presentation from Autism Foundation of Oklahoma – LEAD:**

Mr. Kyle Britt presented the request for funding from the Autism Foundation of Oklahoma (AFO). Their initiative includes a two-module training series (LEAD) designed to address unemployment for those with autism, intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), training employers and organizations in hiring and supporting individuals with autism and I/DD. He previewed a job board site created this fiscal year, providing a wide selection of jobs to assist those with autism or I/DD. Mr. Britt reported they are on track to train 20 employers this year. AFO is working to reach more areas than just Oklahoma City and Tulsa, including rural areas. Mr. Britt stated there is a 3- and 6-month follow-up survey to make sure of retention with those that are hired. When asked about sustainability of the project if Council funding is not there, Mr. Britt responded the program is built on the funding provided from the Council to provide the much-needed training for

these businesses for continued success and mentioned the possibility of charging organizations for the training.

**b. Presentation from Autism Center of Oklahoma:**

Mr. Seth Kastner and Dr. Kathryn Moore requested funding to continue the training of others on early identification of autism as well as other developmental disabilities. This request also includes developmental monitoring, screening, and the training of people for diagnostic assessment. They added another purpose for the funding within this request, to provide targeted structured supports for families whose who have shown signs of any developmental delay while waiting for the evaluations to complete. They mentioned the Autism Center has another source of the funding which will support them in obtaining Ruby certification. Within their presentation, they included a logic model explaining the tiers in which support would be given to families in need. The question was raised about sustainability for the future to which they answered that sustainability is not dependent on one funding request as they have funding from multiple other organizations and is seen as sustainable for the foreseeable future.

**c. Presentation from Sooner SUCCESS:**

Ms. Aietah Stephens and Ms. Lisa Simmons from Sooner SUCCESS spoke on the current project with the Council that focuses on increasing access to respite and other support for families. Ms. Stephens states that with the funding received from the Council has been able to provide 4 respite retreats across Oklahoma. At these retreats it also of note the funds provided not only pay for the retreat, but also harbors connection for those attending. The provided details on the activities and services provided at these respite retreats. They also spoke about the Sibling Camp, which is for children with special needs and their siblings.

Moving forward Ms. Stephens and Ms. Simmons spoke about sustainability of their project, mentioning how they receive other funding for continued sustainability in the future. Ms. Stephens is committed to finding more

funding avenues and giving examples if additional funding from the DDCO cannot be granted in the future. Committee members requested seeing a new budget showing breakdowns of all staff costs and costs that are used for the individual families attending. Ms. Stephens discusses on needing to get their website updated as well as partnering with the DDCO for more social media activity.

**d. Presentation from Pervasive Parenting – Youth Expedition Summit:**

Mr. Kodey Toney and Ms. Terry Yarbery presented their request for funding for the 2025 Southeast Region youth Expedition. Included in the outcomes from the past year that Mr. Toney provided was the number of attendees over the last few years showing increase each year. This camp is now a 4-day, 3-night event that teaches self-advocacy, social skills, job skills and life skills. The Youth Expedition fashions a lot of the events off YLF. They named multiple partnerships that assist with this program for future sustainability. Mr. Toney mentioned the evolution of the program and how they would like to expand to Altus, McAlester, Vinita, and Woodward, Oklahoma. Mr. Toney mentioned they don't have a parent's resource panel anymore due to lack of participation. They now have a self-advocates panel and have seen more participation.

V.  **Discussion follow up on presentations:**

Committee members requested the breakdown of each request, what is the total amount for budgeting, and expressed concern for the continued sustainability of the requests.

VI.  **Other New Business**

VII.  **Announcements**

VIII.  **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 12:03 pm

# Fiscal Year 2026 Funding Request

**Project/Activity:** Art Programming - LookOut

**Organization:** Autism Oklahoma (AO)

**Proposal Description (including duration):**

Using Year 2 requested Council funding, we want to continue to reach more artists through an outreach program called LookOut. LookOut will have a wide variety of activities for our expansion. AO will hold multiple submission events to find new interested artists and students. More gallery space will be utilized for our major art show and extensive exhibition opportunities are available within the 7725 Connect facility for this new expansion. We also want to continue the process to expand art programming into the Tulsa area. We are four months into Year 1 funding, and we have been working on partnerships within the Tulsa area. At this point we have initiated a partnership with Philbrook Museum of Art and have held one art experience workshop there that was attended by 25 participants in early October. We hope to continue this and are working on a class in partnership with BattleCreek Church located in Broken Arrow.

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**Targeted Audience:** Our primary art education audience consists of persons on the autism spectrum or with DD who are either already an artist/filmmaker or would like to become an artist/filmmaker. Our art programming participants range in age from 10 to 50, and our filmmakers are age 18 and above. Our secondary audience is the public at large who enjoys art, empowering confidence, and appreciating artistic expression. AO annually assists approximately 50 participants with disabilities in their art programs. All AO staff and many board members identify as a part of the autism community as parents, family members, of a person on the spectrum.

**Funding requested for Fiscal Year 2026**

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
<b>\$18,000</b>	<b>\$16,000</b>	<b>\$34,000</b>

**Prior Fiscal Year 2025**

Council	Match (in kind)	Total	Q1 Total Spent
<b>\$24,000</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$34,000</b>	<b>DDCO - \$6,996</b> <b>Match - \$2,550</b>

# REQUIRED SUBMISSION DOCUMENTS

## UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL

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## APPLICATION FOR CONTRACT FUNDING

### **PART I – Contact Information**

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Full Legal Name of Organization: Oklahoma Family Center for Autism DBA AutismOklahoma.org

Mailing Address: 2801 NW 154th

City: Edmond      State: OK      Zip: 73013

Email: melinda@autismoklahoma.org

Phone: 405-831-5160      FAX: none

Website: www.autismoklahoma.org

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For DDCO Use Only:

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_



## AutismOklahoma Art Programming

B1

AutismOklahoma (AO) has been providing a variety of arts-focused programming for 10 years. Three ongoing art programs provide arts education: Invisible Layers Productions (ILP), Duets, and Swanky Art Camp/Periodic Art Classes, all located in Central Oklahoma. ILP is a filmmaking program that is individualized and helps participants reach their unique career goals in film and video. Duets is an art mentorship program where artists with disabilities are paired with neurotypical artists to produce an original piece of art to be displayed in Paseo Creativity Gallery during the month of April. Swanky Camp and periodic art classes are group art education experiences. A variety of artists receive and deliver our programming. We serve on average 35 artists on the spectrum or with developmental disabilities (DD) and 25 contract or volunteer neurotypical artists annually.

Art programming is important to us because it quickly becomes an effective process to engage persons with DD who would not otherwise be able to be part of a social experience! We have discovered that interest plus opportunity equals magic for our participants. Art is a wonderful way to communicate for our participants because there is no wrong answer, no wrong way to express an interest. And once the art is created, it becomes an object to be discussed, shared and showcased. We have had some rewarding opportunities to share our work with our community. In 2018, ILP created an animated short film *Even in Death* which won top awards at the deadCENTER, Bare Bones, and Eye Catcher film festivals in Oklahoma and at AutFest in Los Angeles. Our Duets program is in its fourth year was recently featured on PBS's Gallery America via OETA.

Using the requested Year 2 Council funding, we want to continue reaching more artists through an outreach program called LookOut. LookOut has a wide variety of activities for our expansion. AO will hold multiple submission events so as to find new interested artists and students. More gallery space will be utilized for our major art show and extensive exhibition opportunities are available within the 7725 Connect facility for this new expansion. We have started to research and start the process to expand art programming into the Tulsa area.

AO currently has over 10,000 followers in our existing social media groups. These groups have provided a way for us to announce available programming. We market our programming through our websites, press releases, print materials, extensive social media, art market, and art shows. Our media relationships include: Phil Inzinga, Dana Hertneky, Galen Culver, Tara Blume, Lucas Ross, Ali Meyer, Jeff Roberts, Malcolm Tubbs, Alyse Jones, Jayden Brannon, Brandy McDonnell, Robert Reid. We utilize the following outlets: WWLS The Sports Animal, KWTV, KFOR, KMGL Magic 104, KOKH, The Journal Record, KOCO, NewsOK, *The Oklahoman*, KOCO, OETA, NewsOn6, *Tulsa World*, and KTUL.

Our primary organizational website is AutismOklahoma.org, and we have an art market website, SpectrumMarket.org where high quality canvas reproductions of our artists' original works and their designs on t-shirts are available for viewing and some items are on sale to the public.

We provide intentional programming through our classes and through Art shows so the artists can display their work and videos/films designed and targeted to our population. We hold the Duets art Show throughout the month of April, with an opening artists reception on the first Friday in April. Additional shows/exhibits will be held at 7725 Connect. We have held premier public showings for two films, *Even in Death* and *The Girl and The Green Sword*. Duets and ILP both have been featured on KFOR's *Is This A Great State or What*, and front page extended features in *The Oklahoman*.

B2 yes

B3

In 2024, we have contracted with the following for the art program: Jonathan Koelsch, Lisa Robinson, Amy Decker, Dillion Griffiths, Vanessa Spellman, Chris Dowling, Dustin Collins, Emily Hale, Wes Gutekunst, Alyssa Hill, and Austin Taylor. Art volunteers for mentorship have included: Jennifer Cocoma Hustis, Clint Stone, Anna Welte, Kellie Merrick, Brittany Harris, Amanda Pendarvis Lacy, and Troy Scott. Board members (volunteers) also work on this program to support the art shows and include Dr. Beth DeGrace.

Staff who work with the art programming include: Melinda Lauffenburger (overall compliance and finance), Dee Blose (overall art facilitation), Sarah Lauffenburger (film program coordination and video production), Stacey Weddington (communications and print/web media), Maggie Inzinga (event support), and Crystal Frost (event support).

B4

The Oklahoma Family Center for Autism DBA AutismOklahoma.org believes that every person with autism is unique and important. Our organization's programs and services help individuals with autism reach their full potential, helps families to thrive, and helps local communities understand and embrace differences. We began in 2002 when two parents of newly diagnosed children sat in the library and asked "what do we do to help our kids?" After growing to serve more than 350 families, AutismOklahoma (AO) became a 501c3 organization to provide for additional support groups plus social clubs for persons on the spectrum across the state. **AutismOklahoma was founded by parents in Oklahoma to improve quality of life and create opportunities for our loved ones with autism.**

**Melinda Lauffenburger** received her Bachelor's and Master's degree in Business from Oklahoma State University. After managing and directing information systems departments for Hertz, Hewlett Packard, and Alltel Communications, Melinda transitioned to an entrepreneur and formed Trinity Management Group. For over 10 years, Trinity Management provided business consulting in areas of strategic planning, information systems, project, process, and product management primarily in service industry

organizations. In May 2002, Melinda and another parent started an autism parent support group in Edmond, after the Lauffenburger's oldest daughter, Joy, was diagnosed. Because of the great need for help in Oklahoma, the autism group has transformed and evolved and is now known as AutismOklahoma.org, where Melinda serves as Founder and Executive Director.

**Stacey Weddington** is a non-profit professional who has raised more than \$60 million during her career and is an active leader in the Oklahoma City community. Currently serving as Director of Community Impact for AutismOklahoma, she served as Director of Philanthropy at the Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum for 14 years. Weddington has lectured at conferences and on college campuses across the nation, inspiring others to become their best as nonprofit fundraising professionals. Weddington has always sought to serve organizations whose needs and missions align with her own passions and background. From children and adults with a variety of disabilities, those struggling to survive cancer, and battered women to those killed by a cowardly act of terrorism, Weddington has spent a lifetime speaking for those who may have no voice.

Her community activities include:

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- Member of Leadership Oklahoma City Class 30
  - Oklahoma Children's Theatre, board of directors
  - Casady School Alumni Association, board of directors
  - SOUL Foundation, board of directors
  - Sustaining Member of Junior League of Oklahoma City
  - Association of Fundraising Professionals, past president
  - Human Service Charities of America, past board member, audit chair
  - Recipient of Donor's Circle Award, Human Service Charities of America
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**Dee Blose** was formerly the Chairman of the Board of AutismOklahoma before coming on as staff. She has trained for the Oklahoma Autism Network, autism teacher registry, and is a former adjunct faculty at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. She is a graduate of the first class of Partners in Policymaking and a published author. She has been an advocate first for her son David, and then for others for the past 30 years. She loves to train others with her goal to always provide hope and energy. Dee is the former executive director of Youth & Family Services, and was there for 23 years and during that time raised over \$12 million dollars in new grant funding for the organization. Youth & Family Services and AutismOklahoma jointly started Bee's Knees and Camp Noggin programs. YFS specializes in services for children and youth, including foster care. She has a master's degree in education, a bachelors in accounting, and has been a CPA for 35 years. She has a strong history in non-profit finance and infrastructure development.

Our proposal will meet Goal 3: Community Awareness and Inclusion. People with developmental disabilities and their families will experience increased inclusion and integration so that they may fully participate in all aspects of the community. Objective 5 says, “By 2026, individuals with developmental disabilities will have greater opportunities for meaningful friendships and relationships, recreation activities and social inclusion in their communities. “ We will do this by providing art classes so that persons can develop art as recreation/hobby. We will provide showcase events (art shows, exhibitions, art events) in community inclusive environments such as Paseo Art and Creativity Center in April and throughout the building of 7725 Connect where approximately 3000 people are employed. We will make friends with many tenants in the building and socialize with them in the café area as well as a dedicated art hall that we have been asked to maintain by the landlord. We will connect artists with mentors for friendships and for ongoing relationships around art production.

We will also meet Objective 6, “The wider community will have an increased understanding about the benefits of having individuals with developmental disabilities participate in volunteer activities”. We will do this by maintaining the art hall in 7725 Connect throughout the year as a volunteer activity that benefits all of the employees within the building by beautifying their walking area and sharing with them about the success of our artists and our art program.

B6

Our primary art education audience consists of persons on the autism spectrum or with DD who are either already an artist/filmmaker, or would like to become an artist/filmmaker. Our art programming participants range in age from 10 to 50, and our filmmakers are age 18 and above. Our secondary audience is the public at large who enjoys art, empowering confidence, and appreciating artistic expression. AO annually assists approximately 50 participants with disabilities in the aforementioned art programs. All AO staff and many board members identify as a part of the autism community as parents, family members, or a person on the spectrum.

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While obviously our target group is related to autism, we would certainly welcome any artist with developmental disabilities to be a part of this program. Sharing resources and finding common ground is at the heart of assisting participants to have a “good life”. In the past we have had artists in our art program who use a wheelchair and also with Down Syndrome and other Developmental Disability types. We do not have a requirement to present documentation of any specific disability, we recruit for that on a “proclaimed” basis.

We know of no other art program in the area that targets persons on the spectrum. Also, our art programming is FREE to our participants. We help people with autism connect through their passions and reach their potential by providing these artistic opportunities to help them discover and recognize

talents.

#### B7 Expected Impact on Target audience

We provide a platform for parents, providers, professionals and community partners who have a heart to serve families affected by autism. Creating unique opportunities is our secret for Quality of life, for life! We use a holistic approach to create opportunities for families, children, teens and adults resulting in more happiness, joy and a higher quality of life, for life. We specifically utilize our art programming to showcase the amazing skills of our participants. This provides them with opportunities to share, communicate, and enjoy their new/current artistic skills. We hope that the participants use art as recreation/hobby outside of our classes so as the help them have a fulfilling life.

#### B8 Impact on all

We believe this project will help the community understand, embrace differences, and become a part of the solution. We believe this project will be a place to meet people with DD, to meet parents and get a perspective of our world. We believe this project will be a place for the community to share resources and create other partnership opportunities. This project will be respectful and will support outreach and “showcase” opportunities for persons with developmental disabilities. We will use our extensive media contacts to shout out the world about what we can do!

B9 no

B10 yes, we have researched this center and got inspired by their activities. We learned about this Center from the Oklahoma Arts Council. Earlier last year we had one of our artists submit their work to a contest they were having.



#### **At the Office of Accessibility and VSA, passionate about access to the arts for people with disabilities.**

To ensure the arts are accessible to all—from children to older adults— Kennedy Center performances and facilities are accessible to all audiences, and provide resources, programs, and opportunities for educators, cultural administrators, emerging and professional artists and performers with disabilities. They provide vibrant community-based arts and cultural programs and exciting opportunities for artists, teaching artists, and educators.

B11 It will build the capacity of our art program so that we can serve more artists.

B12 No, it will initially serve individuals within driving distance of OKC. We hope to continue expanding to Tulsa during the contract period.

## **PART IV – Performance Measures**

The DDCO is required to provide performance measure reports to evaluate the effectiveness of our activities. As a result, DDCO requires contractors to submit performance measure reports annually, at the request of Council staff. Please note that regardless of contract dates, **performance measures must be reported within the period of October 1 – September 30** that is inclusive of a contract period. Performance reports include actual counts and / or the collection of survey information, including baseline measures. As a required component of the application, indicate on the list below on the line to the left of the measure data you expect to collect during the proposed work of the contract. Not all measures are applicable. You may identify measures not applicable to this application as "N/A" in line to the left of the measure.

The Council reviews this information carefully. Proposers are strongly encouraged to consider data elements their proposals CAN collect and to *minimally* use "N/A."

These measures and their definitions are listed on the Council's website:  
<https://oklahoma.gov/ddco/about/state-plan.html>.

### **INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY ADVOCACY**

30 IFA 1.1 The number of people with developmental disabilities who participated in the contractor's project activities designed to increase their knowledge of how to take part in decisions that affect their lives, the lives of others, and or systems.

15 IFA 1.2 The number of family members who participated in the contractor's project activities designed to increase their knowledge of how to take part in decisions that affect the family, the lives of others, and or systems.

NA IFA 2.1 After participation in the contractor's project activities, the percentage of people with developmental disabilities who report increasing their advocacy because of Council work. This measure will require a baseline percentage and post-activity percentage.

NA IFA 2.2 After participation in the contractor's project activities, the percentage of family members who report increasing their advocacy because of contractor's work. This measure will require a baseline percentage and post-activity percentage.

75% IFA 2.2.1 The percentage of people who are better able to say what they want or say what services and supports they want or say what is important to them. Percentage derived from total number of people who received a service or support because of the contractor's activities. This measure will require a baseline percentage and post-activity percentage.

NA IFA 2.2.2 The percentage of people who are participating now in advocacy activities. Percentage derived from total number of people who received a service or support because of the contractor's activities. This measure will require a baseline percentage and post-activity percentage.

NA IFA 2.2.3 The percentage of people who are on cross disability coalitions, policy boards, advisory boards; governing bodies and/or serving in leadership positions. Percentage derived from total number of people who received a service or support because of the contractor's activities. This measure will require a baseline percentage and post-activity percentage. *Note: The names of these boards/organizations must be reported.*

90 IFA 3.1 The percentage of people with developmental disabilities satisfied with a project activity. Percentage derived from total number of people who received a service or support because of the contractor's activities.

90 IFA 3.2 The percentage of family members satisfied with a project activity. Percentage derived from total number of people who received a service or support because of the contractor's activities.

### SYSTEMS CHANGE

NA SC 1.1.1 The number of policy and or procedures created or changed.

NA SC 1.2.1 The number of statutes and or regulations created or changed.

3 SC 1.3.1 The number of promising practices created.

3 SC 1.3.2 The number of promising practices supported through Council activities.

NA SC 1.3.3 The number of best practices created.

NA SC 1.4.1 The number of people trained or educated through Council systemic change initiatives.

5 SC 1.5.1 The number of Council supported systems change activities with organizations actively involved.

30 SC 2.1 The number of Council efforts that led to the improvement of best or promising practices, policies, procedures, statute, or regulation changes.

30 SC 2.2 The number of Council efforts that were implemented to transform fragmented approaches into a coordinated and effective system that assures individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design of and have access to needed community services, individualized supports, and other forms of assistance that promote self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life.

NA SC 2.1.1 The number of policy, procedure, statute, or regulation changes improved as a result of systems change.

NA SC 2.1.2 The number of policy, procedure, statute, or regulation changes implemented.

3 SC 2.1.3 The number of promising and/or best practices improved by systems change activities.



3 SC 2.1.4 The number of promising and/or best practices that were implemented.

### **DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

The Council's federal funders also require demographic information about the people who participated in the activities funded by the Council. This information should be collected from persons who implement the activity; any advisory committee members involved in the activity; participants in any conference, training or similar event; and any "service" or "support" recipients. Data will be collected in the areas of Race/Ethnicity, Gender, Disability Experience, and Geography. Following is the EXACT format required by the Council and its federal funders:

#### **RACE/ETHNICITY:**

White, alone  
Black or African American alone  
American Indian or Alaskan Native alone  
Hispanic/Latino  
Asian alone  
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander  
alone  
Two or more races  
Race Unknown

#### **GENDER:**

Female  
Male  
Other

#### **DISABILITY EXPERIENCE:**

Individual with a Developmental Disability  
Family Member of an Individual with a  
Developmental Disability  
Other

#### **GEOGRAPHY:**

Urban  
Rural

#### **SEXUAL ORIENTATION:**

Lesbian or gay  
Straight, that is, not gay or lesbian  
Bisexual  
Two-Spirit  
Uses a different term  
Don't know  
Prefers not to answer

#### **GENDER IDENTITY (What sex were you assigned at birth):**

Female  
Male  
Don't know  
Prefer not to answer

#### **CURRENT GENDER:**

Female  
Male  
Transgender  
Two-Spirit  
Uses a different term  
Don't know  
Prefer not to answer

For projects / activities expected to continue indefinitely, sustainability plans must be included. Typically, DDCO will fund an activity for a maximum of five years. Include a detailed plan and timeframe for the project to become sustainable, including projected budgets, identified partners, annual funding goals for each year, or other such indicators that a project or activity will continue. Sustainability is not solely focused on financial support.

For example, a project to train teachers on positive IEP strategies result in a policy change within a school district or a change in teacher certification requirements. This sustainability proves systems change.

Proposals for activities such as studies that would not continue past a project period do not require sustainability plans.

**Logic Model (Required for contracts in excess of \$5,000)**

A logic model is a tool used by DDCO to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. An example is included, or you may use one of the many formats found by Googling "logic model."

Are you a registered vendor with the State of Oklahoma in the OMES Supplier Portal: Yes  No

If the Council approves funding, you will be required to be a registered vendor. You can learn more about becoming a vendor online: <https://oklahoma.gov/omes/services/purchasing/supplier-portal/supplier-and-payee-training.html>.

**Legal Entity**

Is the proposed vendor applicant an IRS Registered corporation?

Yes  No

If yes, which type: 501c3

Is the proposed vendor a government entity:

Yes  No  If yes, provide form of government and name of entity:

\_\_\_\_\_

Is the proposed vendor a Tribal Nation:

Yes  No  If yes, name Tribe(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Is the proposed vendor a sole proprietor: Yes  No

Is the proposed vendor a registered partnership: Yes  No

Social Security or FEI Number: 26-0807671

Authorized Signer

Name of individual with contract signatory authority:

Melinda Lauttenburger

Title: Executive Director

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: Melinda@autismoklahoma.org

Primary Contact

Name of individual to contact regarding contract performance & operations:

Same

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Notices

Name of individual to send legal notices:

Same

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Finance Contact

Name of individual responsible for finance and accounting:

Same

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please ensure your proposal is complete. Incomplete proposals will not be forwarded for consideration.

Applicants will be notified by email within 10 business days of a decision per the specific timeframes in General Information.

If you have questions or need assistance, contact us through email at [John.Houston@okdhs.org](mailto:John.Houston@okdhs.org).

**Submit application and all required information by email to:**

**[John.Houston@okdhs.org](mailto:John.Houston@okdhs.org)**

## **Statement on Relationship with DD Council**

David Blose is a graduate of YLF and a council member. David is a graduate of last year's Partners in Policymaking class. David participates in art programming at AutismOklahoma (AO) and is a member of Bee's Knees, which is under the AO umbrella of art programming.

Dee Blose is a former member of the Council. She is a graduate of Partners in Policymaking, Class 1. She has administered prior Council grants/contracts. First when she was the Executive Director at Youth & Family Services, Inc. And in 2019, a small grant to AutismOklahoma to hold a transition training event. She is the mother of David Blose. She is over the AO art programming, but none of her time will be billed for this contract. Her staff costs will be considered for the match for this project.

Executive Director, Melinda Lauffenburger will be the primary AO contact for this proposal. She will be overseeing contracting and finance requirements.

## PART II – Contract Limitations & Conflict of Interest

The Oklahoma Office of Management and Enterprise Services has established policy for the purchase of goods or services by a state agency. A contract with DDCO represents such a purchase. As part of the Council's compliance with the Central Purchasing Act, staff must ensure no collusion or conflict of interest exists between the Council and any individual or organization entering into a contract. Entities of State Government are exempt from the Central Purchasing Act.

Please read below, check appropriate boxes, then sign and return the page with your packet.

**A1** I am submitting this proposal on behalf of an entity of State Government.

Yes  No

If "Yes," this form needs only to be signed at bottom of the page, if "No" continue to A2.

**A2** I understand and agree that submission of this proposal on behalf of myself as an individual, or on behalf of an organization of which I am a part that is NOT an entity of State Government, creates the following restrictions for proposals more than \$5,000:

- Prohibits persons, whether as individuals or as an affiliate or an organization, from participating in the development of a competitively bid contract, including, but not be limited to, writing a scope of work or developing a project outline.
- Causes myself and my organization to be ineligible to respond to any resulting ITB, RFP, or other competitive purchasing methodology defined in the Central Purchasing Act.

I understand and agree to the restrictions as outlined in A2 above: Yes


**A3** Do you, or does your organization, have personal, professional, or financial relationship with any members or staff of the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma? This disclosure does not necessarily create a real or perceived conflict of interest, but disclosure of such relationships is required.

Yes  No

If "Yes", please attach a separate page detailing the relationship(s).

*See attached*

**A4** Under penalty of perjury, I attest the above representations are complete and correct.

  
Signature of Applicant  
Melinda Lou Lancaster  
Printed Name

10/28/2024  
Date

## **Statement of Work**

### **AutismOklahoma Art Programming**

This project will enhance and expand AutismOklahoma's existing art programming.

AutismOklahoma (AO) has been providing a variety of arts-focused programming for 10 years. Three ongoing art programs provide arts education: Invisible Layers Productions (ILP), Duets, and Swanky Art Camp/Periodic Art Classes, all located in Central Oklahoma. ILP is a filmmaking program that is individualized and helps participants reach their unique career goals in film and video. Duets is an art mentorship program where artists with disabilities are paired with neurotypical artists to produce an original piece of art to be displayed in Paseo Creativity Gallery during the month of April. Swanky Camp and periodic art classes are group art education experiences. A variety of artists receive and deliver our programming. We serve on average 35 artists on the spectrum or with developmental disabilities (DD) and 25 contract or volunteer neurotypical artists annually.

Using Year 2 requested Council funding, we want to continue to reach more artists through an outreach program called LookOut. LookOut will have a wide variety of activities for our expansion. AO will hold multiple submission events so as to find new interested artists and students. More gallery space will be utilized for our major art show and extensive exhibition opportunities are available within the 7725 Connect facility for this new expansion. We also want to continue the process to expand art programming into the Tulsa area. We are four months into Year 1 funding and we have been working on partnerships within the Tulsa area. At this point we have initiated a partnership with Philbrook Museum of Art and have held one art experience workshop there that was attended by 25 participants in early October. We hope to continue this and are working on a class in partnership with BattleCreek Church located in Broken Arrow.

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## **Sustainability Statement**

### **AutismOklahoma Art Programming**

The funding for this project will set up additional art programming that will have lasting impact. Art programming will be sustained by AO through ongoing donation support and the use of volunteers.

AO has a long history of utilizing a volunteer structure. On average, we utilize over 600 volunteers annually to support our programming. We have multiple partnerships with Churches who regularly provide volunteers to support our programming. We have a long history of recruiting parent volunteers to help with our groups. We will adapt our training to help our volunteers to support the art participants and art showcase events.

AO has an annual budget that averages approximately \$500,000. The majority of which is from private funding. AO holds several large fund raising/outreach events each year.

We would like to request three year declining funding for this project, in order to demonstrate that we are on the road to sustainability. In year 1, we requested \$24,000. Our second year request is \$18,000 and we would anticipate our third year proposal to be approximately \$10,000.







# Fiscal Year 2026 Funding Request

**Project/Activity:** BB Expansion Project

**Organization:** Best Buddies

**Proposal Description (including duration):**

The Best Buddies Expansion Project will establish five new Best Buddies chapters at elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and colleges in the Tulsa area; recruit and engage 100 student volunteer members; deliver 20 inclusive group activities; and train five student and five faculty leaders. The project will engage a minimum of 25 students with IDD, at least five of whom will serve in a leadership role in their chapter.

**Council Goal & Objective:** Goal 3, Objective 5

**Targeted Audience:** Schools in the Tulsa area

**Funding requested for Fiscal Year 2026**

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$14,546</b>	<b>\$39,538</b>

**Prior Fiscal Year 2025**

Council	Match (in kind)	Total	Q1 Total Spent
<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$8,333</b>	<b>\$33,333</b>	<b>DDCO \$4,055.70</b> <b>Match \$2,482.98</b>

[View results](#)

Respondent

17

Anonymous

26:17

Time to complete

### Part 1 - Contact Information

1. **Organization Name \***

Best Buddies International, Inc.

2. **Organization Address \***

Mailing address please: Street number and street name.

6110 E 51st Place

3. **Organization City \***

Tulsa

4. **Organization State \***

Oklahoma

5. **Organization Zip \***

74135

6. **Organization Email \***

Email address we can contact you.

Emilyhunt@bestbuddies.org

7. **Organization Phone number \***

Please remember your area code.

407-716-0899

### 8. Organization Website

Your website.

### Our State Plan Goals

To qualify for funding, projects must meet the goals in the 5 Year DDCO State Plan. The state plan is available for review <https://oklahoma.gov/ddco/about/state-plan.html>.

### 9. State Plan Goal \*

Select the goal your project will be addressing.

- Goal 1: Advocacy and Self-Advocacy Skills Improvement Individuals with developmental disabilities and their families will be skilled and empowered advocates and leaders in individual and systems change advocacy.
- Goal 2: Good Lives Across the Lifespan Individuals with developmental disabilities, their families and caregivers will have increased access to quality, long-term, individualized supports and services across the lifespan in the home and community of their choice.
- Goal 3: Community Awareness and Inclusion People with developmental disabilities and their families will experience increased inclusion and integration so that they may fully participate in all aspects of the community.

### Part 2 - Disclosure of Potential Conflict of Interest

The State of Oklahoma prohibits persons and organizations from participating in the development of a competitive contract where they may receive an actual or perceived benefit. The following questions assist us in making this determination.

### 10. Any relationships to the organization? \*

Do you, or your organization, have any personal, professional or financial relationships to the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma? This disclosure does not necessarily create a real or perceived conflict of interest, but disclosure of such relationships is required.

- Yes
- No

### Your activity proposal:

The DDCO thoughtfully reviews complete and materially accurate submissions at the committee level. The information provided in Part III will assist committee members in understanding your application and any expectations for DDCO.

**11. Proposal. \***

Provide a written overview of your proposal (750 words or fewer).

Best Buddies is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development, and inclusive living for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Best Buddies provides youth with IDD the opportunity to have a friend and to be one, thereby learning how to interact with peers successfully. The goal of the Best Buddies Expansion Project is to expand upon our FY25 project and continue to address and reduce the barriers that prevent social interactions between individuals with IDD and their typical peers in five additional Tulsa-area schools including elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and colleges.

Best Buddies will extend its impact by launching additional school-based chapters, fostering one-to-one friendships, providing leadership training, and delivering inclusive activities year-round. These initiatives will benefit students with and without IDD, promoting positive, inclusive environments in schools. As Best Buddies participants interact with classmates, family members, coaches, and neighbors, they make their larger communities more inclusive of those with intellectual disabilities.

Best Buddies school-based chapters function as school clubs that conduct activities on campus and in their community. To deliver the project, Best Buddies will partner with administrators, special education professionals, and general education teachers at Tulsa area schools and school districts to identify and recruit student volunteers as members. Participating schools agree to provide a time and space for the chapter to hold meetings and conduct activities. Although chapter activities regularly take place on campus, students who are paired in one-to-one friendships are encouraged to spend time together off-campus in the community or at each other's homes. Best Buddies pairs students in one-to-one friendships based on factors like common interests, preferences, transportation and scheduling needs, and compatibility. By participating in a one-to-one friendship, students agree to communicate with each other at least once a week and spend time together in person twice per month throughout the academic year.

Each Best Buddies chapter enlists an inclusive officer corps made up of students with and without disabilities to lead the chapter. Additionally, each chapter enlists the support of a volunteer faculty advisor who serves as a liaison between the chapter and school administration. Student officers and faculty leaders receive multiple individual and group training opportunities delivered by Best Buddies staff throughout the year. These trainings provide opportunities for chapter leaders to identify milestones to be achieved, plan inclusive activities to be delivered, learn best practices for creating and supporting one-to-one friendships between students with and without IDD, and ensure chapter sustainability. Once trained, student and faculty leaders can return to their chapter and implement what they have learned. Best Buddies staff support chapters throughout the year with additional training as needed, free access to online tools and resources, and the use of a secure, cloud-based chapter management database. In the spring semester, Best Buddies staff support the successful transition of chapter leadership by identifying new student officers to lead their chapter in the next school year and engaging them in summer and fall training opportunities.

The Best Buddies Expansion Project will establish five new Best Buddies chapters at elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and colleges in the Tulsa area; recruit and engage 100 student volunteer members; deliver 20 inclusive group activities; and train five student and five faculty leaders. The project will engage a minimum of 25 students with IDD, at least five of whom will serve in a leadership role in their chapter.

**12. Have you completed a needs assessment? \***

Yes

No

**13. Who will do the work? \***

Provide a list of all people and organizations proposed to work on the project.

Grant McCarty, Director, Mission Advancement, Best Buddies International, Inc.  
Melanie Pleasant, Lead Program Manager, Best Buddies International, Inc.

**14. Experiences & qualifications: \***

Describe the experience and qualifications of the persons and or organization proposed to provide goods and services associated with the proposal.

Founded in 1989, Best Buddies has 35 years of experience delivering community-based inclusion programs for people with IDD. Best Buddies has supported programs in Oklahoma since the founding of our oldest chapter at Oklahoma City University in 2017. Since we established our Oklahoma state office in 2020, we have grown to support chapters at fourteen elementary, middle, and high schools, and colleges in the counties of Cleveland, Oklahoma, Payne, and Tulsa. The 111 participants in our programs positively impact the lives of 1,110 people in Oklahoma. Support from the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma would allow Best Buddies to establish five new school-based chapters and serve an additional 100 participants.

This project will be delivered by Director, Mission Advancement Grant McCarty, and Lead Program Manager Melanie Pleasant. Grant McCarty joined Best Buddies in 2021 as Director, Mission Advancement and has played a critical role in the establishment of Best Buddies in Oklahoma. Grant has 11 years of experience in building community networks, overseeing projects, and managing budgets. Grant holds a Bachelor's in business administration with a specialization in marketing from the University of Tulsa. Grant will support the project by generating broad community support and providing guidance and supervision.

Melanie Pleasant joined Best Buddies in 2023 as Lead Program Manager. Melaine is a graduate of the Heartland Bible College with a degree in Youth Ministry.

15. **DDCO Goals:** \*

Tell us how this proposal will help DDCO meet the goals in its 5-Year State Plan found at <https://oklahoma.gov/ddco/about/state-plan.html>.

The Best Buddies Expansion Project will assist the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma with meeting Goal 3: Community Awareness and Inclusion by providing opportunities for students with IDD and their families to experience increased inclusion and integration so that they may fully participate in all aspects of the community. As a result of the project, individuals with IDD at Tulsa area schools, and their families, will become part of the social fabric of their communities.

The project will support Goal 3, Objective 1 by engaging Best Buddies members without disabilities in training and programming that educates them about IDD. Through participating in the program, students without disabilities gain experience communicating and interacting with their disabled peers and become role models for other students as they promote inclusion at their school. Students with disabilities also develop critical social and communication skills which better prepare them to meaningfully socialize with their peers.

The proposal will support Goal 3, Objective 4 by creating more inclusive school environments, conducting activities that remove the physical barriers that segregate students with IDD from their typical peers, and supporting the development of meaningful relationships between students with IDD and their peers. Participation in Best Buddies provides an opportunity for students with and without IDD to view each other as unique, authentic individuals. As a result of these activities, an increased number of students with IDD will receive individualized support and services in inclusive and integrated settings that will allow them to fully participate in all aspects of the community.

Best Buddies will assist the Council in reaching Goal 3, Objective 5 by directly providing greater opportunities for individuals with IDD to have meaningful friendships and relationships, recreational activities, and social inclusion at their school and in their communities.

Through their experience, Best Buddies participants without IDD gain enhanced knowledge and awareness of people with IDD as active, contributing members of their school and community. While the project will allow students both with and without IDD to gain skills that prepare them for college or careers, students without disabilities will likely become the hiring managers of tomorrow. By understanding the unique contributions of people with disabilities, this next generation of hiring managers will ultimately recognize the value of including individuals with IDD as friends and co-workers. Ultimately, the project will assist the Council with meeting Goal 3, Objective 6: Employers, community leaders, family members, and the wider community will have an increased understanding of the benefits of having individuals with IDD participate in the workforce and volunteer activities.

16. **Targeted population:**

\*

Define the benefitting population targeted by describing the age, region, familial status, learning or support needs, type of disability.

The target population for the project includes 100 elementary school, middle school, high school, and college students with and without IDD, aged approximately 11 to 22 years, in the greater Tulsa area. We expect that the project will serve a minimum of 25 students with IDD.

17. **Impact on targeted audience:**

\*

Describe the impact on the target audience?

The Best Buddies Expansion Project will impact the target audience by affording the opportunity for students with disabilities and their typical peers to have meaningful social interactions. As a result, students with IDD will gain critical communication and social skills that help them become college and career-ready. Through their new friendships, students with IDD will also expand their social circles beyond family members and paid professionals, allowing for enhanced inclusion in the community.

Through Best Buddies, typical peers become more confident interacting with students with IDD and become role models for other students in the general school population. The enriching experience of these real relationships teaches typical peers that students with IDD have many strengths and abilities, that they belong in communities and workplaces, and that community inclusion for people with IDD should be normalized. This critical outcome would not be possible without involving people with IDD in our project.

Each year, Best Buddies distributes an annual survey to stakeholders to gauge participant satisfaction and community impact. In response to Best Buddies' 2023 Annual Survey, 92 percent of respondents with IDD/ 89 percent with no IDD were satisfied or very satisfied; 84 percent with IDD and 95 percent with no IDD would recommend participation in the program to others, and 72 percent of respondents reported that Best Buddies has made their school and community more inclusive.

18. **Impact for people with DD:**

\*

Describe the impact this proposal will be for people with developmental disabilities?

The Best Buddies Expansion Project will create opportunities for greater access to community-based inclusion, subsequently providing an environment that will help a person with IDD develop vital social skills needed for the successful transition of students with IDD into post- secondary education and the workforce. Best Buddies provides youth with IDD the opportunity to have a friend and to be one, thereby learning how to successfully interact with peers. Best Buddies is a life-changing experience for a person with IDD. For these young people, developing friendships is critical to a successful transition out of school and into the working world and community life. As a result of participation in our programs, youth with IDD gain social and leadership skills that lead to their increased sense of self-worth, employability, and independence.

**19. Duplication or expansion:**

\*

Is the proposal a duplication or expansion of work already being done in Oklahoma or elsewhere? If yes, describe what is being duplicated and what makes this project unique or different.

The project is an expansion of work already being done in Oklahoma. Best Buddies currently supports 111 members with and without IDD in fourteen school-based chapters. The Best Buddies Expansion Project will allow Best Buddies to replicate our model to establish chapters at five additional schools in the greater Tulsa area and engage an additional 100 participants, including 25 participants with IDD. Additionally, the project will train five student leaders and five faculty advisors, and deliver 20 inclusive group activities

**20. Best Practices:**

\*

Will the proposed project use current best practices in the field of developmental disabilities? If yes, explain what they are and how they will be incorporated. Please cite source material.

Best Buddies programs address the negative outcomes that studies have identified as a result of loneliness among youth with IDD. In children with IDD, the potential consequences of loneliness on mental health (depression and anxiety), learning, and development (both socio-emotional and behavioral) could be long-lasting into adulthood. (Kwan, Gitimoghaddam, and Collet, 2020) While teachers can make informal attempts to increase peer-to-peer interactions through learning groups, structured programs demonstrate the highest rates of success. (Copeland et al., 2004) The Best Buddies Expansion Project will reduce social barriers by fostering meaningful friendships and social connections between students with IDD and their typical peers. Our programs help to create accepting school climates that decrease the impact of restrictive environments, which can place youth with IDD at a higher risk for victimization (Rose, Swearer & Spillage, 2011).

Best Buddies has been identified as a Peer-Mediated Instruction & Intervention evidence-based practice that supports inclusion. (Steinbrenner et al, 2020) Expanding Best Buddies programs to reach new schools is a time-tested and cost-effective way to connect students with and without IDD in meaningful, positive social relationships. An independent evaluation concluded that adolescents with IDD involved in one-to-one friendships through Best Buddies showed "lower frequencies of peer victimization, better adaptive behavior, higher levels of self-esteem, and fewer psychological symptoms" than those not matched in the program. In addition, the same evaluation concluded that "'Best Buddy' relationships were similar to friendships with best friends, with additional levels of support, nurturing and 'scaffolding' in skill development" (Prinstein and Aikins, 2005). The Center for Evaluation and Policy at Indiana University cited Best Buddies as an "exemplary model" in promoting non-disabled student interaction with students with disabilities in a 2008 report.

**21. Systems change impact: \***

*"Systems change" can help improve a problem and change the way we support people with disabilities in Oklahoma. System change may include sharing information to change thinking, implementing best practice models, and/or improving skills for individuals and families to better say what they want and need.* When the work is complete, how will it have provided systems change to programs or services for people with developmental disabilities?

Once the project is complete, five Oklahoma elementary, middle, and high schools and area colleges will have joined Best Buddies' global volunteer movement to provide opportunities for inclusion for people with IDD through friendship and leadership development. The project will enhance the capacity of Tulsa area schools to address and reduce the physical and social barriers that prevent social interactions between students with IDD and their typical peers. The individuals impacted through the project will be more prepared to promote inclusion in their schools, communities, and workplaces.

**22. Where implemented:**

\*

Will the proposal be implemented or offered statewide? If no, define the counties and cities served and the rationale for why these locations were selected.

There is tremendous potential for Best Buddies program expansion throughout the state. However, since Best Buddies' staff and state office are located in the Tulsa area, they have generated significant support from the local Tulsa community. In the first quarter of our FY25 funding, we have expanded to four new schools and are in the process of opening other new chapters in the area. This expansion project will be strategic in growing our partnership with Union Public Schools as well as local community support for our programs.

**Performance Measures**

The DDCO is required to provide performance measure reports to evaluate the effectiveness of our activities. As a result, DDCO requires contracted vendors to submit performance measure reports prior to receiving final payment. Performance reports include actual counts and / or the collection of survey information. As a required component of the application, provide projected data for the following performance measures. (Not all measures are applicable. You may identify measures not applicable to this application as "N/A to this activity") All contractors will be required to collect baseline data to evaluate outcomes.

**SC** = **S**ystem **C**hange

**IA** = **I**ndividual and family **A**dvocacy



23. **IA1.1**

The number of **people with developmental disabilities who participated in Council supported activities** designed to increase their knowledge of how to take part in decisions that affect their lives, the lives of others, and or systems.

The value must be a number

24. **IA 1.2**

The number of **family members who participated in Council supported activities** designed to increase their knowledge of how to take part in decisions that affect the family, the lives of others, and or systems.

The value must be a number

25. **IA 1.3**

The number of **other individuals who participated in Council supported activities** designed to increase their knowledge.

The value must be a number

26. **IA 2.1**

After participation in Council supported activities, the **percent of people with developmental disabilities who report increasing their advocacy** as a result of Council work.

The value must be a number

27. **IA 2.2**

After participation in Council supported activities, the **percent of family members who report increasing their advocacy** as a result of Council work.

The value must be a number

28. **IA 2.2.1**

The **percent of people** who are better able to say what they want or say what services and supports they want or say what is important to them.

The value must be a number

29. **IA 2.2.2**

The **percent of people** who are participating now in advocacy activities.

The value must be a number

30. **IA 2.2.3**

The **percent of people** who are on cross disability coalitions, policy boards, advisory boards, governing bodies and/or serving in leadership positions.

The value must be a number

31. **IA 3.1**

The **percent of people with developmental disabilities satisfied** with a project activity.

The value must be a number

32. **IA 3.2**

The **percent of family members satisfied** with a project activity.

The value must be a number

33. **SC 1.1.1**

The number of policy and or procedures created or changed.

The value must be a number

34. **SC 1.2.1**

The number of statutes and or regulations created or changed.

The value must be a number

35. **SC 1.3.1**

The number of promising practices created.

The value must be a number

36. **SC 1.3.2**

The number of promising practices supported through Council activities.

The value must be a number

37. **SC 1.3.3**

The number of best practices created.

The value must be a number

38. **SC 1.4.1**

The number of people trained or educated through Council systemic change initiatives.

The value must be a number

39. **SC 1.5.1**

The number Council supported systems change activities with organizations actively involved.

The value must be a number

40. **SC 2.1**

The number of efforts that led to the improvement of best or promising practices, policies, procedures, statute, or regulation changes.

The value must be a number

41. **SC 2.1.1**

The number of policy, procedure, statute, or regulation changes improved as a result of systems change.

The value must be a number

42. **SC 2.1.2**

The number of policy, procedure, statute, or regulation changes implemented.

The value must be a number

43. **SC 2.1.3**

The number of promising and/or best practices improved by systems change activities.

The value must be a number

44. **SC 2.1.4**

The number of promising and/or best practices that were implemented.

The value must be a number

**45. SC 2.2**

The number of efforts that were implemented to transform fragmented approaches into a coordinated and effective system that assures individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design of and have access to needed community services, individualized supports, and other forms of assistance that promote self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life.

The value must be a number

## Additional Requirements for funding

**46. FINANCIAL INFORMATION \***

Include a detailed revenue and expenditure budget, in a proper accounting format, detailing the total costs and revenues of the proposal.

Identify the amount requested from the Council within the context of the budget. The Council requires a match of 25%. Explain the source of this match.

Identify projected funding sources not currently in place. Provide a narrative explaining each category of expenditure and source or revenue associated with the project. Revenue sources include but are not limited to conference registration fees, third party grants, booth rentals, in-kind contributions, etc.

If space does not permit the details necessary, please email to [Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org](mailto:Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org) and include the Project Name in the subject line.

**47. STATEMENT OF WORK: \***

Provide a proposed statement of work for the contractual requirements detailing the goods and services you will provide in exchange for DDCO funding.

**48. Sustainability Plan:**

Typically, DDCO will fund an activity for a maximum of five (5) years. Projects continuing for more than five years are expected to be self-sustaining by the end of the contract period. Include a detailed plan and timeframe for the project to become self-sustainable, including projected budgets, identified partners, and annual funding goals for each year. (This is required for recurring requests).

**49. Logic Model:**

A logic model is a tool used by DDCO to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. An example is included, or you may use one of the many formats found by Googling "logic model." This is required for contracts in excess of \$5,000.

Inputs: Available inputs for the project include existing funding and staff; community support; a replicable, cost-effective program model; promotional materials; trainings, tools, and resources for program delivery; and school-provided resources such as student volunteers with and without IDD, faculty members to serve as chapter advisors, and a designated time and place on campus for chapters to hold meetings.

Activities: Best Buddies staff will utilize available inputs to conduct outreach to schools, deliver training for student and faculty leaders assist with identifying and recruiting student members, select an inclusive corps of student officers, help chapter leaders create and support one-to-one friendships, plan and deliver inclusive group activities on- and off- campus throughout the year, and generate broad community support for the project to create a path for future program expansion. Outputs: Through participation in project activities, five students and five faculty advisors will attend leadership training delivered by Best Buddies staff; 75 students without disabilities and 25 students with disabilities will submit member applications and attend chapter events; and Best Buddies members will plan and attend a total of 20 inclusive group activities.

Outcomes: As a result of the project, five students and 5 faculty advisors will be prepared to lead inclusion programs at their school by planning and delivering inclusive group activities, holding chapter meetings, and creating one-to-one friendships through their chapters. A minimum of 25 students with IDD will have enhanced social networks and increased opportunities to improve social and communication skills by interacting with typical peers, better preparing them for college or careers. The 75 students without disabilities will experience a positive change in their attitudes toward people with IDD. Long-term outcomes of project activities will include increased understanding among participants of the value and benefits of community inclusion and more inclusive school communities.

**50. Are you a registered vendor with the State of Oklahoma? \***

<https://oklahoma.gov/omes/divisions/central-purchasing/suppliers-and-payees/supplier-portal.html>

Yes

No

**51. Are you registered as an IRS 501(c)3 organization? \***

Is the proposed vendor applicant an IRS Registered 501(c)3:

Yes

No

**52. Are you a Government entity? \***

Is the proposed vendor a Government entity:

Yes

No

**53. Are you a Tribal Organization? \***

Is the proposed vendor a tribal nation:

Yes

No

54. **Is the proposed vendor the sole proprietor? \***

Yes

No

55. **Is the proposed vendor a registered partnership? \***

Yes

No

56. **Is the proposed vendor a registered corporation? \***

Yes

No

57. **ID Number \***

Social Security Number, FEI Number, or OMES Supplier ID

52-1614576 OMES Supplier ID 0000590798

### Contact information

58. **Signatory authority \***

Name of individual with contract signatory authority / title / Phone number / email address

Anthony Shriver/ Founder, Chairman & CEO/ 305.374.2233/akshriver@bestbuddies.org

59. **Primary Contact: \***

Name of individual to contact regarding contract performance & operations / Title / Phone number / E-mail address

Emily Hunt/Director, Expansion and Mission Advancement/407-716-0899/emilyhunt@bestbuddies.org

60. **Legal Notices: \***

Name of individual to send legal notices / Title / Phone number / E-mail Address

Tiffany Taylor/Compliance Manager/305.374.2233/ tiffanytaylor@bestbuddies.org

61. **Finance Contact:** \*

Name of individual responsible for finance and accounting / title / phone number / e-mail address

Lori Penaloza/Senior Vice President, Finance and Operations/305.374.2233/ LoriPenaloza@bestbuddies.org

# Grant McCarty

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6919 E 91<sup>st</sup> St N Owasso, OK 74055 • (918) 508-8476 • grantmccarty@bestbuddies.org

## Professional Summary

I have had several unique opportunities to serve in different roles and capacities. Throughout my professional career, servanthood has been an area that I take great pride and responsibility. From my time overseas building relationships, managing unique and often challenging projects, assisting in real estate transactions, and helping launch Best Buddies in Oklahoma, I have always put an emphasis on servanthood and the role it plays in interacting with clients, coworkers, employers, and everyone in between. Empathy and compassion are two of my biggest strengths and I try and implement these things in all areas of my life.

## Skills

- Leadership Development
- Project planning and development
- Invoice and payment processing
- Fundraising
- Reporting
- Timeline management
- Multi-site operations
- Advanced problem solving
- Strategic planning
- Project estimation and bidding
- Logistics management
- Budgeting

## Work History

### **Director of Mission Advancement 9/2021 to Current**

#### **Best Buddies Oklahoma**

- Developed and implemented comprehensive statewide strategy for securing sustainable funding
- Assumed overall operational management responsibility for all fundraising activities statewide, including foundation and corporate giving, individual giving, major gifts, special events, annual giving, and alumni/parent relations
- Developed and implemented major fundraising events to meet revenue goals.
- Researched grant opportunities and cultivated relationships with local funders.
- Created a strong presence for Best Buddies in the local area through public speaking, community involvement, public service announcements, social media, special events, news releases, and other media initiatives.



## **Real Estate Agent, 04/2019**

### **Mcgraw Realtors – Tulsa, OK**

- Reviewed market research data and changes sales plans accordingly
- Accompanied buyers and sellers to home inspections and appraisals
- Negotiated, facilitated and managed real estate transactions
- Negotiated final sales prices with home sellers
- Advised buyers through steps of purchasing new house in the Tulsa area
- Earned a spot in the top 10% of Tulsa realtors with over 100 transactions and \$40,000,000 in sales
- Worked closely with clients to get appropriate loans, inspections and credit reports

## **Project Manager, 04/2016 to 04/2019**

### **Voice Of the Martyrs – Owasso, OK**

- Manage over 200 projects with over a \$3 million dollar budget
- Lead overseas staff in implementing a timeline and strategy for each country
- Travel overseas 7 times a year to check on projects and report on status
- Collaborate with other employees to problem solve
- Collect and record expenses and documentation for project implementation
- Interview and photograph ongoing projects while overseas
- Give bi-annual reports to the board of directors

## **Field Staff, 05/2013 to 03/2016**

### **Student Mobilization – New Delhi, India**

- Establish and build impactful relationships with young professionals
- Develop young professionals in a holistic way, including teamwork, initiative, leadership, and faith
- Manage and maintain a 100+ person financial investment team
- Train and onboard new staffers in adjusting to life in India
- Create and implement a development track for our team of 12

## Education

**BBA: Marketing**

**The University of Tulsa - Tulsa, OK**

# MELANIE PLEASANT

## SALES MANAGER

### CONTACT

918-644-9800

melaniepleasant@gmail.com

Bixby, Oklahoma

### SKILLS

Clear and effective communication

Attention to detail

Customer Service

Event Planning

### EDUCATION

Youth Ministry

Heartland Baptist Bible College

2003-2006

Focused on teens and christian education

### PROFILE

Committed customer service professional with over 8 years of hands-on experience delivering exceptional support to diverse clientele. Proven track record of consistently meeting and exceeding customer expectations in the event industry. Dedicated to upholding the highest standards of service excellence and understanding of customer service best practices. Looking to leverage my extensive experience and passion for client satisfaction as the Lead Program Manager with Best Buddies.

### WORK EXPERIENCE

#### Sales Manager

Party Pro Rents 2022 - present

- Managing the event specialists for the leading party rental company in Oklahoma and overseeing a team of 6 individuals.
- Cultivate and maintain relationships with clients and industry partners to ensure satisfaction as well as repeat business.
- Collaborate closely with large scale events such as, the Tulsa State Fair, American Cancer Society, Susan G Komen Walk, Tulsa Tough and Oktoberfest.
- Assist in smaller scale events such as weddings, birthdays, retirement parties, corporate holiday parties etc.
- Constantly providing ongoing training and mentorship to the event specialist team which has resulted in revenue growth year over year.
- Stay on top of industry trends and changes to ensure our company has the best products available for our clients to rent for their events.
- Manage all purchasing for Party Pro which Involves close interaction with multiple departments to ensure inventory is up to date which in turn benefits client interaction.

#### Event Specialist

Party Pro Rents 2015-2020

- Worked closely with clients to understand their vision and budget constraints which allowed for a large amount of repeat clients.
- Attended trade shows, wedding shows, event rental conferences to ensure our company stayed up to date and in front of our clients.
- Coordinated with event planners and venues to ensure all logistical aspects were seamless and allowed for a memorable experience for the clients.
- Developed close relationships with large corporations, caterers, restaurants, and venues within the Tulsa Metro.
- Managed site inspections prior to events to perform risk assessments and address any possible hindrances for events.
- Produced 2D & 3D layouts for clients and worked within constraints of venues and client desires to ensure satisfaction.

**Personnel (\$20,177 total project cost/\$17,034 in Council funding):**

- **Director, Mission Advancement (DMA):** 12% of their time supporting this project. Responsible for providing project management, supervision, and fiscal oversight.
- **Lead Program Manager (LPM):** 20% of their time supporting this project. Lead efforts in outreach to five new chapters and support communication amongst chapters once established. Once established, responsible for training all identified chapter leaders of those five new chapters.

**Fringe (\$2,555 total project cost/\$0 in Council funding):**

- The Fringe Benefits line was calculated at 15% of the total salaries of the staff on this project. Benefits include FICA, medical and dental insurance, unemployment insurance, and workers' compensation.

**Operations (\$10,714 total project cost/\$7,966 in Council funding) includes:**

- **Travel** (\$1,152 total project costs/ \$1,152 in Council funding): Staff travel to support chapters/participants in the field. FTE on project calculated at 300 miles/month @ \$0.50/mile. \$288 per FTE for flight to Best Buddies International Leadership conference.
- **Volunteer Training & Management** (\$6,234 total/\$3,494 in Council funding): Expenses includes Leadership Conference for five students to attend Leadership Conference in Bloomington, Indiana at \$1,000/attendee and \$1200 per FTE on project. Student Leadership conference fees include a \$400 registration fee and approximately \$600 avg flight cost. Includes costs for local trainings, Local Leadership Training Day and Back to Best Buddies, at \$425/each. Costs for these trainings include venue fee, training materials, certificates, and meals for student leaders.
- **Community Engagement** (\$250 total/\$250 in Council funding) Includes fees associated with public awareness and the cost of- promotional materials such as stickers, brochures, flyers, and program ads to participate in community awareness initiatives.
- **Office Operations** (\$320 total/ \$320 in Council funding) Percentage of telecommunications costs, which includes portion of monthly cell phone reimbursement for designated project staff. Includes portion of technology costs to support new chapter communications.

- **Chapter Grants** (\$2,500 total/ \$2,500 in Council funding): \$500 for five new chapters to utilize as an advisor stipend and/or provide chapter materials and resources for chapter activities. Chapter resources and materials could include adaptive equipment, entry and admission fees to community events, games, puzzles, sensory friendly activities, arts and crafts, transportation costs, etc.
- **Supplies & Materials** (\$250 total project costs/\$250 in Council funding) Includes expenses associated with materials needed to recruit five new chapters and help support chapter operations (recruitment materials, consumable office supplies, folders, brochures, etc.)

**Indirect Costs (\$3,030 total/\$0 in Council funding)**

- Calculated at 10% of total program costs. These funds are used by Best Buddies International to oversee the administrative and training needs in each local market. This includes, but is not limited to Human Resources including payroll, benefit plans and administration, recruitment, legal services, IT, Finance and Accounting including financial statements, audit services, billing, AP and AR, Marketing/PR/National Branding, graphic design, websites, training and staff development, volunteer training conferences, and program development and evaluation.

**Match (\$8,333 total):**

- Best Buddies will match 25% of the project cost (\$8,333) through special event revenue. Oklahoma hosts two annual fundraisers, Friendship Walk and Champion of the Year gala. These events are standardized nationally with training, materials and various staff resources available to our teams to support successful implementation. We have found continual success establishing sustainable fundraising strategies through these event models. Our peer-to-peer fundraising models successfully leverage and build our volunteer support. As our programs increasingly engage participants, parents, professionals, school staff and community members in our mission, these individuals become our biggest supporters and fundraiser.

**Chapters Supported**

- Best Buddies is well poised to support five new school-based chapters in the Tulsa area. Best Buddies will conduct outreach to identify five potential schools for expansion in Sand Springs Public Schools, Collinsville Public Schools and Union School District.

**Best Buddies in Oklahoma  
Best Buddies Expansion Project  
Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma**

Summary of Expenses		DDCO Request	Other funding	Total Project costs
<b>Staff/Volunteer Time</b>				
Director, Mission Advancement	(12% time on project)	\$ 8,034	\$ -	\$ 8,034
Program Manager	(20% time on project)	\$ 9,000	\$ -	\$ 9,000
Benefits @ 15%		\$ -	\$ 2,555	\$ 2,555
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$ 17,034</b>	<b>\$ 2,555</b>	<b>\$ 19,589</b>
<b>Program Operations</b>				
Site Visits/Travel		\$ 1,152		\$ 1,152
Volunteer Training & Management		\$ 3,494	\$ 2,748	\$ 6,234
Community Engagement		\$ 250		\$ 250
Office Operations		\$ 320		\$ 320
Chapter Grants		\$ 2,500		\$ 2,500
Supplies & Materials		\$ 250		\$ 250
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$ 7,966</b>	<b>\$ 2,748</b>	<b>\$ 10,706</b>
Indirect Costs (10% of total program costs)		\$ -	\$ 9,243	\$ 9,243
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>\$ 25,000</b>	<b>\$ 14,546</b>	<b>\$39,538</b>



# Fiscal Year 2026 Funding Request

**Project/Activity:** Inclusive Communication Conference, Bridging the Gaps: Inclusive Strategies for Students with Intellectual/ Developmental Disabilities

**Organizations:** Autism Foundation of Oklahoma (requesting organization), Down Syndrome Association of Central Oklahoma, Unity Forward Oklahoma

**Proposal Description (including duration):**

The Inclusive Communication Conference provides a unique opportunity to learn from leading experts about innovative communication methods and the latest technology designed to support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In addition to enhancing communication outcomes for individuals with Down syndrome, autism, and other developmental disabilities, the conference will address behavioral challenges often faced by these students in schools.

**Council Goal & Objective:** Goal 3

Targeted Audience: Families of individuals with Down syndrome, autism, and other developmental disabilities. Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), Behavioral Therapist, Occupational Therapists and special education professionals, paraprofessionals, school administrators and teachers. Healthcare providers (e.g., doctors, nurses) who work with people with developmental disabilities. Employers and business owners are interested in making workplaces more inclusive. Community organizations focused on developmental disabilities.

**Funding requested for Fiscal Year 2026**

<b>Council</b>	<b>Match (in kind)</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$32,125</b>	<b>\$52,125</b>

**Prior Fiscal Year 2025**

<b>Council</b>	<b>Match (in kind)</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total Spent</b>
<b>\$10,240</b>	<b>\$6,250</b>	<b>\$16,490</b>	<b>\$10,240</b>

[View results](#)

Respondent

18

Anonymous

17:30

Time to complete

### Part 1 - Contact Information

1. **Organization Name \***

Autism Foundation of Oklahoma (requesting organization) Down Syndrome Association of Central Oklahoma Unity Forward Oklahoma

2. **Organization Address \***

Mailing address please: Street number and street name.

6608 N Western Ave #428

3. **Organization City \***

Oklahoma City

4. **Organization State \***

OK

5. **Organization Zip \***

73118

6. **Organization Email \***

Email address we can contact you.

escott@autismfoundationok.org

7. **Organization Phone number \***

Please remember your area code.

405-237-8390



### 8. Organization Website

Your website.

https://www.autismfoundationok.org/ https://dsaco.org/

### Our State Plan Goals

To qualify for funding, projects must meet the goals in the 5 Year DDCO State Plan. The state plan is available for review <https://oklahoma.gov/ddco/about/state-plan.html>.

### 9. State Plan Goal \*

Select the goal your project will be addressing.

- Goal 1: Advocacy and Self-Advocacy Skills Improvement Individuals with developmental disabilities and their families will be skilled and empowered advocates and leaders in individual and systems change advocacy.
- Goal 2: Good Lives Across the Lifespan Individuals with developmental disabilities, their families and caregivers will have increased access to quality, long-term, individualized supports and services across the lifespan in the home and community of their choice.
- Goal 3: Community Awareness and Inclusion People with developmental disabilities and their families will experience increased inclusion and integration so that they may fully participate in all aspects of the community.

### Part 2 - Disclosure of Potential Conflict of Interest

The State of Oklahoma prohibits persons and organizations from participating in the development of a competitive contract where they may receive an actual or perceived benefit. The following questions assist us in making this determination.

### 10. Any relationships to the organization? \*

Do you, or your organization, have any personal, professional or financial relationships to the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma? This disclosure does not necessarily create a real or perceived conflict of interest, but disclosure of such relationships is required.

- Yes
- No

### Your activity proposal:

The DDCO thoughtfully reviews complete and materially accurate submissions at the committee level. The information provided in Part III will assist committee members in understanding your application and any expectations for DDCO.

**11. Proposal. \***

Provide a written overview of your proposal (750 words or fewer).

Bridging the Gaps: Inclusive Strategies for Students with Intellectual/ Developmental Disabilities

The Inclusive Communication Conference provides a unique opportunity to learn from leading experts about innovative communication methods and the latest technology designed to support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In addition to enhancing communication outcomes for individuals with Down syndrome, autism, and other developmental disabilities, the conference will address behavioral challenges often faced by these students in schools. Attendees will learn effective classroom management strategies that create safe, inclusive environments where students can communicate and thrive.

Conference Objectives:

Awareness and Education: Increase understanding of the unique communication challenges faced by individuals with Down syndrome and autism.

Skills and Strategies: Provide practical tools and training on inclusive communication techniques for use at home, school, work, and in healthcare settings.

Collaboration and Advocacy: Create opportunities for cross-organizational learning and networking to advocate for inclusive practices in the broader community.

Conference Structure:

Keynote Sessions -Inclusive Communication: Bridging Gaps Across Abilities- Experts on communication development in individuals with developmental disabilities.

Technology and Communication: Tools for Independence - A panel featuring developers of AAC devices and apps, discussing how technology can empower individuals.

Breakout Workshops Examples:

Speech and Language Therapy Best Practices: Explore strategies for supporting communication and managing behavioral challenges when working with children and adults with Down syndrome, autism, and other developmental disabilities.

Communication and Behavior in Schools: Learn how to create inclusive educational environments that support communication and address behavioral challenges, ensuring all students can thrive academically and socially.

Navigating Healthcare Communication: Improving patient-provider communication for individuals with complex needs.

Workplace Inclusion: Training for employers on fostering an inclusive work environment for employees with developmental disabilities.

Parent and Caregiver Support: Practical strategies for managing behavior and supporting communication development at home for children and adults with Down syndrome and autism.

Self-Advocate Panel: My Voice, My Story: Hear from individuals with Down syndrome and autism as they share their communication journeys, behavioral growth, and the impact of inclusive practices on their lives.

AAC Devices Demo: Engage with an interactive station showcasing communication devices and tools for individuals with limited verbal communication, including behavior management strategies to enhance their use.

Resource Fair:

Booths from local and national organizations offering services, resources, and technology solutions for individuals with disabilities.

Measurable Outcomes:

Gather participant surveys and feedback to assess knowledge gained, satisfaction, and areas for future improvement.

Monitor the number of participants who integrate AAC devices, inclusive communication strategies, and behavior management techniques into their daily interactions at home, school, or work, and assess their impact on improving communication and reducing behavioral challenges.

Measure the success of partnerships between schools, businesses, and healthcare providers in adopting inclusive communication practices.

Long-Term Goals and Follow-up:

Ongoing Training and Resources: After the conference, create a resource library with recorded sessions, handouts, and toolkits for continued learning.

Regional Networks: Establish local networks of parents, educators, and professionals who can continue to share the best practices and provide support.

**12. Have you completed a needs assessment? \*** Yes No**13. Who will do the work? \***

Provide a list of all people and organizations proposed to work on the project.

The conference is co-hosted by the Down Syndrome Association of Central Oklahoma, Unity Forward, and the Autism Foundation of Oklahoma with the following staff members working consistently on the planning and implementation:

Sarah Soell, Executive Director, DSACO

Rylee Cole, Program Coordinator, DSACO

Malayna Hasmanis, Unity Forward, Executive Director

Emily Scott, Executive Director, AFO

Carley Marissa Dummitt, AFO, Marketing and Community Outreach Program Officer

Jennifer Winfrey, AFO, Grants Manager

**14. Experiences & qualifications: \***

Describe the experience and qualifications of the persons and or organization proposed to provide goods and services associated with the proposal.

Sarah Soell, Executive Director, DSACO

Sarah Soell is the Executive Director for the Down Syndrome Association of Central Oklahoma. She has been a member of DSACO since 2006. As a parent of a child with Down syndrome, she has volunteered with the organization in numerous activities, having served on the festival and 5K Committee, serving as co-chair for two years. Prior to accepting the role as executive director, she was president of the board for DSACO. A graduate of Oklahoma State University, she earned her bachelor's degree in Hotel Management and her master's degree in hospitality administration with a specialization in meeting planning.

Rylee Cole, Program Coordinator, DSACO

Rylee Cole became the Program Assistant for the Down Syndrome Association of Central Oklahoma in 2021. She has been a member of DSACO since 2004 when her sister was born with Down syndrome. Since then, she has loved being a sibling and continuously advocated for the inclusion and acceptance of all. Rylee graduated from Oklahoma State University in 2017 where she received her bachelor's degree in Entrepreneurship with a minor in Marketing. Before DSACO, she was a Marketing Specialist at Oklahoma State University where she coordinated events, marketing campaigns, and conducted various administrative duties.

Malayna Hasmanis, Unity Forward, Executive Director

Malayna Hasmanis is the Founder and Executive Director of Unity Forward Oklahoma (UFO), dedicated to fostering collaboration, equity, and inclusion throughout the state. Her passion for empowering youth and dismantling systemic barriers faced by individuals with disabilities stems from her experiences as a sibling of two individuals with disabilities; she witnessed firsthand the disparities in education and support systems for her sister, who has Down syndrome, and her brother, who has autism. Holding degrees in special education, leadership, and public policy, Malayna teaches at Southern Nazarene University in the graduate program, focusing on best practices for inclusion, while also educating adults who are incarcerated through Langston University's Second Chance Pell Program. As an autistic adult diagnosed later in life, she is committed to eliminating barriers and creating access to resources for all Oklahomans.

Emily Scott, Executive Director, AFO

Emily Scott is a graduate and postgraduate of the University of Oklahoma and has an MS in Nonprofit Management from Louisiana State University. She is a Certified Nonprofit Professional (CNP) through the National Nonprofit Leadership Alliance and a Certified Autism Specialist (CAS) through the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards. Emily has nearly two decades of nonprofit experience in grassroots advocacy and executive leadership roles. She is also the parent of three neurodiverse adult children.

Carley Marissa Dummitt, Marketing and Community Outreach Program Officer

Carley Marissa Dummitt is an autistic Floridian turned Okie with a BAS in Public Policy and Administration. She creates, manages, and maintains all of AFO's marketing, PR, and social media initiatives. Carley also hosts and produces AFO's Unmasking Autism podcast and is currently spearheading the filming of our first documentary 'Surviving the Spectrum'. Carley was recently named a finalist for KFOR's 2024 Remarkable Women in Oklahoma Award.

Jennifer Winfrey, AFO, Grants Manager

Jennifer Winfrey is a Certified Grants Management Specialist with expertise in federal grants and state contracts. She has an MBA and over 18 years of experience in nonprofit accounting and grant management. Jennifer serves as AFO's financial consultant and will be responsible for billing and fund appropriation.

**15. DDCO Goals: \***

Tell us how this proposal will help DDCO meet the goals in its 5-Year State Plan found at <https://oklahoma.gov/ddco/about/state-plan.html>.

The event is designed for families, service providers, educators, administrators, professionals, and self-advocates. Therefore, it will help DDCO reach all 3 goals in its 5-Year State Plan.

**16. Targeted population:**

\*

Define the benefitting population targeted by describing the age, region, familial status, learning or support needs, type of disability.

Families of individuals with Down syndrome, autism, and other developmental disabilities.

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs), Behavioral Therapist, Occupational Therapists and special education professionals, paraprofessionals, school administrators and teachers

Healthcare providers (e.g., doctors, nurses) who work with people with developmental disabilities.

Employers and business owners are interested in making workplaces more inclusive.

Community organizations focused on developmental disabilities.

**17. Impact on targeted audience:**

\*

Describe the impact on the target audience?

This Inclusive Communication Conference will provide a platform to share innovative ideas and practical strategies, emphasizing the strong correlation between communication challenges and behavioral outcomes in individuals with Down syndrome, autism, and other developmental disabilities. By raising awareness of these unique communication needs, the conference aims to promote inclusive practices that not only improve communication but also help address and manage behavioral challenges, fostering a more supportive and effective environment for individuals across educational, healthcare, and community settings.

**18. Impact for people with DD:**

\*

Describe the impact this proposal will be for people with developmental disabilities?

1. Empowerment and Self-Advocacy By including individuals with IDD as speakers and active participants, the conference sends a clear message that their perspectives are valued. This helps to build confidence in communication skills, fostering a sense of agency and independence. 2. Improved Communication Access By offering accessible formats such as plain language, assistive technology (like AAC devices), and alternative communication methods, the conference ensures that attendees with IDD can understand and contribute to discussions on an equal footing with others. 3. Greater Inclusion and Participation The conference can actively include people with IDD in various roles—participants, presenters, panelists, or volunteers—giving them opportunities to showcase their skills and talents. This promotes community integration and breaks down stereotypes about the capabilities of people with IDD. 4. Networking and Social Connections Social events, group workshops, and interactive sessions can be designed to encourage collaboration and connection between attendees, creating a more inclusive community for individuals with IDD. 5. Increased Public Awareness and Understanding Presenting on topics like accessible communication, cultural competency, and the rights of people with IDD helps spread awareness. This may lead to more inclusive practices in businesses, schools, healthcare, and other community settings where communication barriers exist. 6. Access to New Tools and Resources Exhibitions, demonstrations, and workshops can introduce individuals with IDD and their families to assistive technology or communication aids they may not have encountered before. Learning how to use these tools can enhance their ability to express themselves and interact more confidently. 7. Education for Families and Caregivers Providing sessions that focus on the role of caregivers in supporting communication, offering tips and tools for augmentative communication, and demonstrating inclusive communication strategies ensures that those who support individuals with IDD are equipped to do so effectively. 8. Long-Term Advocacy and Policy Influence Sessions can highlight current advocacy efforts, policy initiatives, and best practices that affect people with IDD. The inclusion of policymakers and influencers in the audience or as speakers can help translate conference outcomes into concrete changes at the organizational or governmental level. 9. Reduction of Communication Barriers in Society By demonstrating the effectiveness of accessible communication practices, the conference can influence attendees—including educators, employers, healthcare providers, and policymakers—to adopt these practices in their respective fields. This can lead to more inclusive environments for people with IDD in everyday life. 10. Promoting a Sense of Belonging Creating an environment where every person, regardless of their communication abilities, is able to participate equally can enhance self-esteem and social inclusion for individuals with IDD.

**19. Duplication or expansion:**

\*

Is the proposal a duplication or expansion of work already being done in Oklahoma or elsewhere? If yes, describe what is being duplicated and what makes this project unique or different.

This proposal is for a 2nd annual conference due to the success of the first year.

**20. Best Practices:**

\*

Will the proposed project use current best practices in the field of developmental disabilities? If yes, explain what they are and how they will be incorporated. Please cite source material.

Best Practice: Focus on the individual's preferences and needs when developing communication methods. Use plain language, and augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) tools, and ensure all presentations are accessible to individuals with varying communication abilities.

Incorporation: The conference can ensure that all materials are presented in plain language. Additionally, interpreters (for sign language) and AAC systems can be used during sessions to cater to attendees who use different modes of communication.

Source: Person-centered communication is a widely recognized approach in the disability field, recommended by entities like the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

**21. Systems change impact: \***

*"Systems change" can help improve a problem and change the way we support people with disabilities in Oklahoma. System change may include sharing information to change thinking, implementing best practice models, and/or improving skills for individuals and families to better say what they want and need. When the work is complete, how will it have provided systems change to programs or services for people with developmental disabilities?*

## 1. Empowerment and Self-Advocacy

Impact: The conference can empower people with IDD by giving them the tools and opportunities to communicate effectively and advocate for themselves. Workshops or panels led by self-advocates can highlight the importance of their voices in decision-making processes.

## 2. Improved Communication Access

Impact: People with IDD often face barriers to communication, whether it's due to inaccessible materials, complex language, or a lack of understanding from others. The conference can showcase inclusive communication strategies that enhance their ability to engage with others.

## 3. Greater Inclusion and Participation

Impact: The conference can serve as a model for inclusive participation, showing that individuals with IDD can fully engage in professional or social events when accommodations are made.

## 4. Networking and Social Connections

Impact: Many individuals with IDD face isolation due to communication challenges. The conference can provide a space for social interaction and networking, where people with IDD can build relationships and connect with others who share similar experiences or goals.

## 5. Increased Public Awareness and Understanding

Impact: Through presentations and educational sessions, the conference can increase public understanding of the communication needs and preferences of people with IDD, contributing to reduced stigma and greater societal inclusion.

## 6. Access to New Tools and Resources

Impact: Attendees with IDD will gain exposure to new communication tools, techniques, and technologies that can improve their daily lives—whether in education, employment, or social settings.

## 7. Education for Families and Caregivers

Impact: Families, caregivers, and support staff often play a critical role in helping people with IDD communicate effectively. By educating these groups on inclusive communication strategies, the conference can indirectly improve the communication environment for individuals with IDD.

## 8. Long-Term Advocacy and Policy Influence

Impact: By raising awareness of inclusive communication needs, the conference can contribute to long-term advocacy efforts aimed at improving policies and practices that affect people with IDD.

## 9. Reduction of Communication Barriers in Society

Impact: One of the major barriers for people with IDD is that many communication systems in society are not designed with their needs in mind. The conference can set a precedent for more inclusive approaches in schools, workplaces, and public services.

## 10. Promoting a Sense of Belonging

Impact: Feeling included and respected is key to a sense of belonging. By ensuring that communication is tailored to the needs of people with IDD, the conference can help them feel that their presence and contributions are valued.

22. **Where implemented:**

\*

Will the proposal be implemented or offered statewide? If no, define the counties and cities served and the rationale for why these locations were selected.

This is a statewide conference.

**Performance Measures**

The DDCO is required to provide performance measure reports to evaluate the effectiveness of our activities. As a result, DDCO requires contracted vendors to submit performance measure reports prior to receiving final payment. Performance reports include actual counts and / or the collection of survey information. As a required component of the application, provide projected data for the following performance measures. (Not all measures are applicable. You may identify measures not applicable to this application as "N/A to this activity") All contractors will be required to collect baseline data to evaluate outcomes.

**SC** = **S**ystem **C**hange

**IA** = **I**ndividual and family **A**dvocacy

23. **IA1.1**

The number of **people with developmental disabilities who participated in Council supported activities** designed to increase their knowledge of how to take part in decisions that affect their lives, the lives of others, and or systems.

50

The value must be a number

24. **IA 1.2**

The number of **family members who participated in Council supported activities** designed to increase their knowledge of how to take part in decisions that affect the family, the lives of others, and or systems.

100

The value must be a number

25. **IA 1.3**

The number of **other individuals who participated in Council supported activities** designed to increase their knowledge.

150

The value must be a number

26. **IA 2.1**

After participation in Council supported activities, the **percent of people with developmental disabilities who report increasing their advocacy** as a result of Council work.

100

The value must be a number

27. **IA 2.2**

After participation in Council supported activities, the **percent of family members who report increasing their advocacy** as a result of Council work.

100

The value must be a number

28. **IA 2.2.1**

The **percent of people** who are better able to say what they want or say what services and supports they want or say what is important to them.

The value must be a number

29. **IA 2.2.2**

The **percent of people** who are participating now in advocacy activities.

The value must be a number

30. **IA 2.2.3**

The **percent of people** who are on cross disability coalitions, policy boards, advisory boards, governing bodies and/or serving in leadership positions.

The value must be a number

31. **IA 3.1**

The **percent of people with developmental disabilities satisfied** with a project activity.

The value must be a number

32. **IA 3.2**

The **percent of family members satisfied** with a project activity.

The value must be a number

33. **SC 1.1.1**

The number of policy and or procedures created or changed.

The value must be a number

34. **SC 1.2.1**

The number of statutes and or regulations created or changed.

The value must be a number

35. **SC 1.3.1**

The number of promising practices created.

The value must be a number

36. **SC 1.3.2**

The number of promising practices supported through Council activities.

The value must be a number

37. **SC 1.3.3**

The number of best practices created.

The value must be a number

38. **SC 1.4.1**

The number of people trained or educated through Council systemic change initiatives.

The value must be a number

39. **SC 1.5.1**

The number Council supported systems change activities with organizations actively involved.

The value must be a number

40. **SC 2.1**

The number of efforts that led to the improvement of best or promising practices, policies, procedures, statute, or regulation changes.

The value must be a number

41. **SC 2.1.1**

The number of policy, procedure, statute, or regulation changes improved as a result of systems change.

The value must be a number

42. **SC 2.1.2**

The number of policy, procedure, statute, or regulation changes implemented.

The value must be a number



43. **SC 2.1.3**

The number of promising and/or best practices improved by systems change activities.

The value must be a number

44. **SC 2.1.4**

The number of promising and/or best practices that were implemented.

The value must be a number

45. **SC 2.2**

The number of efforts that were implemented to transform fragmented approaches into a coordinated and effective system that assures individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design of and have access to needed community services, individualized supports, and other forms of assistance that promote self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life.

The value must be a number

**Additional Requirements for funding**

**46. FINANCIAL INFORMATION \***

Include a detailed revenue and expenditure budget, in a proper accounting format, detailing the total costs and revenues of the proposal.

Identify the amount requested from the Council within the context of the budget. The Council requires a match of 25%. Explain the source of this match.

Identify projected funding sources not currently in place. Provide a narrative explaining each category of expenditure and source or revenue associated with the project. Revenue sources include but are not limited to conference registration fees, third party grants, booth rentals, in-kind contributions, etc.

If space does not permit the details necessary, please email to [Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org](mailto:Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org) and include the Project Name in the subject line.

On behalf of the three planning partners, the Autism Foundation of Oklahoma respectfully requests funding in the amount of \$20,000 from the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma.

Matching funds will be provided through sponsorships, vendor booth fees, and non-federal grants.

Inclusive Communication Conference:

Requested: \$10,000 Match: \$0 Total: \$10,000

Keynote and speakers: The conference will include 1 keynote speaker and up to 10 other paid speakers plus travel.

Requested: \$6,000 Match: \$0 Total: \$6,000

Venue: Venue costs include room rental, tables, stage and other meeting space.

Requested: \$00 Match: \$10,000 Total: \$10,000

Catering: Meals and afternoon break refreshments. Approximately \$30/participant.

Requested: \$1,500 Match: \$500 Total: \$2,000

Caregivers: Stipends or gift cards of at least \$100, will be provided to caregivers traveling from outside the metro Oklahoma City area.

Requested: \$00 Match: \$7,000 Total: \$7,000

Staffing and Travel: Stipends will be provided to conference staff and mileage reimbursement for staff and volunteers.

Requested: \$2,500 Match: \$14,625 Total: \$17,125

Other Conference Costs: Other funds are requested for printing, interpreter services, public relations, resource materials for participants, photography and/or video, and supplies.

Total Requested: \$20,000

Total Match: \$32,125

Total Project: \$52,125

**47. STATEMENT OF WORK: \***

Provide a proposed statement of work for the contractual requirements detailing the goods and services you will provide in exchange for DDCO funding.

The Inclusive Communication Conference is designed to deliver immense value by offering a variety of services and resources to a broad range of stakeholders, including educators, service providers, self-advocates, and families. Through a combination of expert-led whole-group sessions and targeted breakout trainings, participants will gain practical tools and strategies to enhance communication and educational outcomes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including Down syndrome and autism. These trainings not only address cutting-edge communication technologies but also focus on effective behavioral strategies, helping educators and service providers create inclusive and supportive environments where students can thrive throughout their school years and build a foundation for long-term success and quality of life.

The conference will also feature a diverse array of vendors, providing attendees with access to intersectional and wraparound services that are crucial for supporting individuals with disabilities holistically. By incorporating perspectives from self-advocates, families, educators, and service providers, the conference ensures that all viewpoints are represented, making the content highly relevant and impactful. Furthermore, the event fosters cross-sector collaboration by offering networking opportunities that strengthen partnerships and drive innovation in the field.

**48. Sustainability Plan:**

Typically, DDCO will fund an activity for a maximum of five (5) years. Projects continuing for more than five years are expected to be self-sustaining by the end of the contract period. Include a detailed plan and timeframe for the project to become self-sustainable, including projected budgets, identified partners, and annual funding goals for each year. (This is required for recurring requests).

We understand that DDCO typically funds activities for a maximum of five years, and we are committed to ensuring our projects become self-sustaining by the end of the contract period. To achieve this, we will focus on expanding our funding pipelines by identifying and engaging potential sponsors that align with our mission and creating tailored sponsorship packages that highlight the impact of our programs. Additionally, we plan to expand partnerships with stakeholders who will benefit from the conference, allowing them to invest in our initiatives by sponsoring their attendees. This approach not only enhances participation but also fosters a sense of shared investment in the conference's success. Our team will cultivate relationships with sponsors by providing regular updates on program progress and impact, encouraging continued support. We will establish specific annual funding goals, detailing how contributions will be allocated to ensure transparency and accountability, while collaborating with local organizations and stakeholders to leverage resources and enhance visibility. As we approach the five-year mark, we will implement a comprehensive transition plan to diversify funding sources and develop community engagement strategies. By expanding our sponsorships and fostering community partnerships, we are confident in our ability to build a robust funding framework that supports our initiatives well beyond the initial funding period.

**49. Logic Model:**

A logic model is a tool used by DDCO to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. An example is included, or you may use one of the many formats found by Googling "logic model." This is required for contracts in excess of \$5,000.

## Inputs:

Funding, facilities, and technology resources to host the conference.

Expertise of educators, service providers, self-advocates, and families.

Participation of vendors providing wraparound services and resources.

## Activities:

Conduct whole-group expert-led sessions and focused breakout trainings.

Offer hands-on demonstrations of communication technologies and behavioral strategies.

Provide networking opportunities to encourage cross-sector collaboration.

## Outputs:

Deliver training sessions, vendor exhibits, and networking events.

Distribution of practical tools and resources to enhance communication strategies.

Engagement of diverse stakeholders in active discussions and networking.

## Outcomes:

Improved knowledge and skills among participants to support inclusive communication.

Strengthened partnerships and networks among educators, advocates, and service providers.

Increased access to resources for creating inclusive, supportive environments.

## Impacts:

Enhanced educational outcomes and quality of life for individuals with disabilities.

Greater adoption of inclusive practices and technologies in educational settings.

Long-term improvement in collaboration across sectors supporting individuals with disabilities.

**50. Are you a registered vendor with the State of Oklahoma? \***

<https://oklahoma.gov/omes/divisions/central-purchasing/suppliers-and-payees/supplier-portal.html>

Yes

No

**51. Are you registered as an IRS 501(c)3 organization? \***

Is the proposed vendor applicant an IRS Registered 501(c)3:

- Yes
- No

**52. Are you a Government entity? \***

Is the proposed vendor a Government entity:

- Yes
- No

**53. Are you a Tribal Organization? \***

Is the proposed vendor a tribal nation:

- Yes
- No

**54. Is the proposed vendor the sole proprietor? \***

- Yes
- No

**55. Is the proposed vendor a registered partnership? \***

- Yes
- No

**56. Is the proposed vendor a registered corporation? \***

- Yes
- No

**57. ID Number \***

Social Security Number, FEI Number, or OMES Supplier ID

## Contact information

58. **Signatory authority** \*

Name of individual with contract signatory authority / title / Phone number / email address

Emily Scott

59. **Primary Contact:** \*

Name of individual to contact regarding contract performance & operations / Title / Phone number / E-mail address

Emily Scott

60. **Legal Notices:** \*

Name of individual to send legal notices / Title / Phone number / E-mail Address

Emily Scott

61. **Finance Contact:** \*

Name of individual responsible for finance and accounting / title / phone number / e-mail address

Jennifer Winfrey

## Budget Justification

The Autism Foundation of Oklahoma respectfully requests funding in the amount of **\$20,000** from the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma. Matching funds will be provided through sponsorships, vendor booth fees, and non-federal grants.

### **Inclusive Communication Conference**

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***Requested: \$6,000***                      ***Match: \$0***                      ***Total: \$6,000***

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***Requested: \$00***                      ***Match: \$7,000***                      ***Total: \$7,000***

Staffing and Travel: Stipends will be provided to conference staff and mileage reimbursement for staff and volunteers.

***Requested: \$2,500***                      ***Match: \$14,625***                      ***Total: \$17,125***

Other Conference Costs: Other funds are requested for printing, interpreter services, public relations, resource materials for participants, photography and/or video, and supplies.

***Total Requested: \$20,000***

***Total Match: \$32,125***

***Total Project: \$52,125***

***Inclusive Communication Conference***

**July 2025**

	<b>Request</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Project Income</b>			
DDCO Request	20,000		20,000
Grants & Contracts		10,000	10,000
Vendor Booths		2,125	2,125
Sponsorships		20,000	20,000
<b>Total Project Income</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>32,125</b>	<b>52,125</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Keynote	5,000	-	5,000
Other Speakers	5,000	-	5,000
Facility Rental	6,000	-	6,000
Meals & Refreshments	-	10,000	10,000
Stipends/Giftcards-Caregiver Travel	1,500	500	2,000
Staffing and Travel	-	7,000	7,000
Interpretors	1,500	-	1,500
Printing	1,000	2,500	3,500
Public Relations		1,500	1,500
Resource Materials		6,000	6,000
Photography/Video	-	3,500	3,500
Supplies and other	-	1,125	1,125
<b>Total Program Costs</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>32,125</b>	<b>52,125</b>
<b>Net Revenue over Expenses</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>





# Fiscal Year 2026 Funding Request

**Project/Activity:** OK-AIM Program

**Organization:** The Arc of Oklahoma

## **Proposal Description (including duration):**

The OK-AIM program recruits, trains, and manages a diverse group of independent third-party surveyors, including self-advocates, to conduct comprehensive quality-of-life surveys for individuals with IDD in DDS-funded homes. These surveys assess residents' living conditions to ensure services meet high standards and their personal and social needs are met.

Quality-of-life monitoring is crucial for individuals with IDD, as it helps identify areas needing improvement and facilitates the development of personalized support plans that enhance outcomes. Effective QoL assessments ensure that individuals with IDD enjoy a high quality of life. Historically, OK-AIM surveyors have volunteered their time and expertise.

To further enhance the value of this service and support our volunteers, particularly self-advocates, we have introduced a new program component: compensating surveyors \$150 for each of the 400 surveys conducted per year. This change recognizes the critical role surveyors play in monitoring and improving living conditions for individuals with IDD. The Arc of Oklahoma requests \$25,000 from the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma to support this expense.

**Project Goals and Objectives:** The primary goal is to ensure that individuals with IDD in DDS-funded homes receive high-quality care and support. This initiative aims to: -Ensure individuals with IDD have their personal and social needs met through thorough and consistent quality-of-life surveys. -Provide opportunities for at least 15 self-advocates to contribute meaningfully as surveyors, fostering empowerment and inclusion. -Conduct 400 quality-of-life surveys annually across Oklahoma to monitor and improve living conditions of individuals with IDD.

The Arc will leverage its network of self-advocates and partnerships with groups like People First chapters to recruit surveyors. Preference will be given to self-advocates. All surveyors will undergo a rigorous training program approved by the DHS Oklahomans Quality Services Committee (OQSC). Each surveyor will be compensated \$150 per completed survey. This covers time, travel, and related expenses. With 400 surveys planned annually, the total cost of surveyor compensation will be \$60,000. Funding at \$25,000 will support this expense, expanding the program's scope and positive impact, particularly for self-advocate surveyors. The OK-AIM Coordinator, Stacey Figueroa, will oversee the scheduling, management, and quality assurance of the surveys. A comprehensive database will be maintained to track survey data, ensuring accurate and timely reporting. Quarterly and annual reports will be prepared and submitted to the DHS, detailing survey findings and overall program impact. Upon identifying concerns through the surveys, OK-AIM staff will address, report, and resolve these issues. This promotes a continuous improvement process that directly benefits the residents. The Arc will regularly review and assess the program's impact, making necessary adjustments to improve

efficiency and effectiveness. The OK-AIM Program is a critical enhancement to our ongoing efforts to ensure a high quality of life for individuals with IDD in Oklahoma. By compensating our dedicated surveyors, we can attract and retain the best talent, ensuring continued excellence in our monitoring efforts. The requested \$25,000 from the DDCO will be instrumental in achieving these goals, ultimately contributing to the well-being and empowerment of individuals with IDD across the state.

**Council Goal & Objective:** Goal 2, Objective 1

**Targeted Audience:**

The OK-AIM program serves adults with developmental disabilities (DD) who qualify for Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS) in Oklahoma and who live in homes supported by DDS-funded residential providers. These individuals reside in various state-funded residential settings and require ongoing support and monitoring to ensure a high quality of life.

**Funding requested for Fiscal Year 2026**

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>

[View results](#)

Respondent

15

Anonymous

48:26

Time to complete

### Part 1 - Contact Information

1. What is today's date?

7/12/2024



2. Full Legal Name \*

The Arc Of Oklahoma Inc

3. Mailing Address \*

2516 East 71st Street, Ste A

4. City \*

Tulsa

5. State \*

OK

6. Zip \*

74136

7. Email \*

lisakelly@thearcok.org

8. Phone number \*

918-978-8087

9. Website

www.thearcok.org

### State Plan Goals

To qualify for funding, projects must meet the goals in the 5 Year DDCO State Plan. The state plan is available for review <https://oklahoma.gov/ddco/about/state-plan.html>.

10. Select the goal your project will be addressing. \*

- Goal 1: Advocacy and Self-Advocacy Skills Improvement Individuals with developmental disabilities and their families will be skilled and empowered advocates and leaders in individual and systems change advocacy.
- Goal 2: Good Lives Across the Lifespan Individuals with developmental disabilities, their families and caregivers will have increased access to quality, long-term, individualized supports and services across the lifespan in the home and community of their choice.
- Goal 3: Community Awareness and Inclusion People with developmental disabilities and their families will experience increased inclusion and integration so that they may fully participate in all aspects of the community.

### Part 2 - Disclosure of Potential Conflict of Interest

The State of Oklahoma prohibits persons and organizations from participating in the development of a competitive contract (See page 2) where they may receive an actual or perceived benefit. The following questions assist us in making this determination.

11. Does this application specify a person or organization that will complete any part of the work described within the proposal or application ? \*

- Yes
- No

12. Do you have any personal, professional or financial relationships with the organizations listed in 9 above ? \*

- Yes
- No

13. If you answered yes to either question 11 or 12 above, please explain in detail. Identify names and relationships as necessary.

N/A

## Proposal

The DDCO thoughtfully reviews complete and materially accurate submissions at the committee level. The information provided in Part III will assist committee members in understanding your application and any expectations for DDCO.

### 14. Provide a written overview of the proposal. \*

Since 1952, The Arc of Oklahoma has enhanced the quality of life for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families through education, empowerment, support, and advocacy. As the Oklahoma chapter of The Arc of the US, the nation's largest advocacy organization for people with disabilities, we promote access, equity, and inclusion for individuals with IDD.

The OK-AIM program recruits, trains, and manages a diverse group of independent third-party surveyors, including self-advocates, to conduct comprehensive quality-of-life surveys for individuals with IDD in DDS-funded homes. These surveys assess residents' living conditions to ensure services meet high standards and their personal and social needs are met.

#### Funding Request:

Quality-of-life monitoring is crucial for individuals with IDD, as it helps identify areas needing improvement and facilitates the development of personalized support plans that enhance outcomes. Effective QoL assessments ensure that individuals with IDD enjoy a high quality of life. Historically, OK-AIM surveyors have volunteered their time and expertise. To further enhance the value of this service and support our volunteers, particularly self-advocates, we have introduced a new program component: compensating surveyors \$150 for each of the 400 surveys conducted per year. This change recognizes the critical role surveyors play in monitoring and improving living conditions for individuals with IDD. The Arc of Oklahoma requests \$25,000 from the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma to support this expense.

#### Project Goals and Objectives:

The primary goal is to ensure that individuals with IDD in DDS-funded homes receive high-quality care and support. This initiative aims to:

- Ensure individuals with IDD have their personal and social needs met through thorough and consistent quality-of-life surveys.
- Provide opportunities for at least 15 self-advocates to contribute meaningfully as surveyors, fostering empowerment and inclusion.
- Conduct 400 quality-of-life surveys annually across Oklahoma to monitor and improve living conditions of individuals with IDD.

The Arc will leverage its network of self-advocates and partnerships with groups like People First chapters to recruit surveyors. Preference will be given to self-advocates. All surveyors will undergo a rigorous training program approved by the DHS Oklahomans Quality Services Committee (OQSC).

Each surveyor will be compensated \$150 per completed survey. This covers time, travel, and related expenses. With 400 surveys planned annually, the total cost of surveyor compensation will be \$60,000. Funding at \$25,000 will support this expense, expanding the program's scope and positive impact, particularly for self-advocate surveyors.

The OK-AIM Coordinator, Stacey Figueroa, will oversee the scheduling, management, and quality assurance of the surveys. A comprehensive database will be maintained to track survey data, ensuring accurate and timely reporting. Quarterly and annual reports will be prepared and submitted to the DHS, detailing survey findings and overall program impact.

Upon identifying concerns through the surveys, OK-AIM staff will address, report, and resolve these issues. This promotes a continuous improvement process that directly benefits the residents.

The Arc will regularly review and assess the program's impact, making necessary adjustments to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

The OK-AIM Program is a critical enhancement to our ongoing efforts to ensure a high quality of life for individuals with IDD in Oklahoma. By compensating our dedicated surveyors, we can attract and retain the best talent, ensuring continued excellence in our monitoring efforts. The requested \$25,000 from the DDCO will be instrumental in achieving these goals, ultimately contributing to the well-being and empowerment of individuals with IDD across the state.

15. Has a needs assessment been completed? If no, why not?

No formal needs assessment has been completed specifically for the OK-AIM program. However, the need for this program is well-documented and mandated by federal and state regulations, which outline the necessity for continuous monitoring and quality assurance for individuals with developmental disabilities (IDD) living in state-funded residential settings.

The Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS) requires that residential settings for individuals with developmental disabilities be regularly monitored to ensure they meet the standards set for quality of life, safety, and service provision. This requirement stems from both state and federal mandates that aim to protect vulnerable populations from neglect and abuse and ensure their rights and well-being are upheld. According to the Oklahoma Administrative Code and Oklahoma Statutes, DDS is tasked with providing oversight and quality assurance for residential services funded by the state. The Community Waiver, for example, includes provisions for regular assessments and monitoring to address the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities, ensuring they receive appropriate care and support based on a person-centered planning approach.

Research consistently shows that individuals with developmental disabilities are at a higher risk of abuse, neglect, and inadequate care, especially those living in residential facilities without regular oversight. A study by the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities highlights the importance of independent monitoring to identify and address issues that affect the quality of life for these individuals. Regular monitoring and reporting, as conducted by programs like OK-AIM, are critical to maintaining high standards of care and providing an additional layer of protection and advocacy for residents.

Moreover, the OK-AIM program actively addresses issues identified by surveyors during their visits. Each year, the program documents and tracks problems reported by surveyors, ensuring that they are resolved to protect the living conditions and well-being of residents. This diligent follow-up process is crucial in maintaining the safety and quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities in these settings.

While a separate needs assessment specific to the OK-AIM program has not been conducted, the established regulatory requirements and the documented risks faced by individuals with developmental disabilities living in residential settings strongly justify the existence and continuation of the OK-AIM program. This program's activities align with both state and federal mandates and address a clearly recognized need for oversight and quality assurance in these environments.

Sources:

Oklahoma Department of Human Services. Developmental Disabilities Services. Retrieved from Oklahoma.gov

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Nursing Home Quality Initiative. Retrieved from CMS.gov

National Disability Rights Network. (2012). Abuse and Neglect of People with Disabilities. Retrieved from NDRN.org

National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities. Monitoring and Advocacy Programs. Retrieved from NACDD.org

16. Provide a list of all people and organizations proposed to work on the project. \*

Lead Organization: The Arc of Oklahoma

Key Staff:

Stacey Figueroa, OK-AIM Program Coordinator

Leila Reines, Program Specialist

Lisa Kelly, Chief Executive Officer

Dena Drabek, Vice President of External Relations

17. Describe the experience and qualifications of the persons and or organization proposed to provide goods and services associated with the proposal. \*

The Arc of Oklahoma: The Arc of Oklahoma has extensive experience managing the OK-AIM program since 1991. The organization has consistently contracted with OKDHS Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS) to recruit, develop, and train independent, third-party volunteers/surveyors to conduct annual surveys for 400 clients living in DDS-funded homes. These efforts ensure that individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) maintain a high quality of life. Since the inception of OK-AIM, The Arc has secured volunteer monitors for over 12,000 OK-AIM visits and has provided significant training and oversight on the programmatic purpose of this residential monitoring and advocacy program.

Stacey Figueroa, OK-AIM Program Coordinator: Stacey Figueroa has served as the OK-AIM Program Coordinator at The Arc of Oklahoma since 2017. She brings extensive expertise in program management, having developed and coordinated successful initiatives, set goals and objectives, and analyzed program outcomes. Stacey's experience in human resources includes training and developing teams, handling payroll, evaluating performances, developing incentive programs, and setting wage scales. Her qualifications are further supported by numerous trainings, including End of Life training, Job Coach/PC training, MANDT training, Prader-Willi training, Money Follows the Person training, Effective Facilitation training, Advantage CM training at CQI University, and Wellness Recovery and Action Planning training/facilitation. Stacey attended Oklahoma State University, UCT, as a candidate for a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology.

Leila Reines, Program Specialist: Leila Reines serves as the Program Specialist for the Residential Monitoring Program (OK-AIM) at The Arc of Oklahoma. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Biological Sciences from Cornell University. Before joining The Arc, Leila was a Teach for America 2021 Corps Member and served as an elementary and high school educator with Tulsa Public Schools and Tulsa Honor Academy. Her professional background includes a strong focus on equity and accessibility in health, wellness, and education.

Lisa Kelly, Chief Executive Officer: Lisa Kelly has been the Chief Executive Officer of The Arc of Oklahoma for four years. She brings over twenty years of experience in the nonprofit sector, with a decade specifically focused on intellectual and developmental disabilities at the state level. Her previous roles include Regional Director for Oklahoma Family Network, where she connected individuals with special health care needs and disabilities to advocacy resources, and Associate Director for Ability Resources, which strives to maximize independence for individuals with disabilities. Before leading The Arc, Lisa served as Director of Development for Mental Health Association Oklahoma for six years. In this role, she oversaw the fundraising department, responsible for securing 25% of the Association's annual \$18 million budget through grants, individual gifts, and special events. Lisa holds both a Master's and a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Finance. She is a graduate of Leadership Tulsa Class 51 and Oklahoma Partners in Policymaking.

Dena Drabek, Vice President of External Relations: Dena Drabek's role encompasses advocacy, public policy, and public relations. Before joining The Arc, Dena was the Chief Operating Officer for Oklahoma Watch, a statewide investigative news organization. She holds degrees in journalism and administrative leadership from OU, where she graduated Phi Beta Kappa and with distinction. Dena began her career as a television news reporter and has served in various influential roles, including press secretary for former Lieutenant Governor and Congresswoman Mary Fallin, media relations for the Chickasaw Nation, and VP of Communications for the YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City.

18. Describe how the proposal will help DDCO meet the goals in the 5 Year DDCO State Plan found at [www.okddc.ok.gov](http://www.okddc.ok.gov) \*

Goal 2: Good Lives Across the Lifespan Individuals with developmental disabilities, their families, and caregivers will have increased access to quality, long-term, individualized supports and services across the lifespan in the home and community of their choice.

Objective 1: Training and Education The OK-AIM program trains volunteers, including self-advocates, to conduct quality-of-life surveys in DDS-funded homes. This aligns with the objective of training Oklahomans with developmental disabilities, their families, and professionals on person-centered thinking principles. The training provided to surveyors equips them with skills and knowledge that support the principles of person-centered thinking and the Supporting Families Community of Practice, directly contributing to this objective.

Objective 2: Knowledge and Understanding of Resources By conducting thorough and consistent quality-of-life surveys, the OK-AIM program increases the knowledge and understanding of resources, services, and supports available to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. The data collected from these surveys helps identify areas needing improvement and facilitates the dissemination of information about available supports, thereby allowing individuals to live their best lives.

Objective 3: Family and Caregiver Preparation The program also impacts families and caregivers by identifying and addressing issues early. The surveys conducted by OK-AIM provide valuable feedback that helps families and caregivers understand the tools, resources, and support systems available, aiding in the preparation for transitions across the lifespan.

Objective 4: Independent Living and Life Skills Through the involvement of self-advocates as surveyors, the OK-AIM program provides opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities to develop independent living and life skills. This hands-on experience in conducting surveys and engaging with the community empowers self-advocates to lead self-directed and self-determined lives.

Objective 5: Planning for Future Care Needs The insights gained from the surveys help families and caregivers plan and prepare for future care needs when they may no longer be able to provide care. The OK-AIM program's follow-up on identified concerns ensures that individuals with developmental disabilities have ongoing access to necessary supports and resources, thereby aiding in long-term planning.

Expected Goal Outcomes The OK-AIM program supports the expected outcomes by promoting the regular use of person-centered thinking principles and encouraging collaboration among individuals with developmental disabilities, their families, and their communities. This ensures that all Oklahomans are able to live their best lives and accomplish their personal goals.

By aligning with these objectives, the OK-AIM program helps the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma (DDCO) achieve its goal of increasing access to quality, individualized supports and services, ultimately contributing to better lives for individuals with developmental disabilities across the lifespan.

19. Define the benefitting population targeted by describing the age, region, familial status, learning or support needs, type of disability.

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The OK-AIM program serves adults with developmental disabilities (DD) who qualify for Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS) in Oklahoma and who live in homes supported by DDS-funded residential providers. These individuals reside in various state-funded residential settings and require ongoing support and monitoring to ensure a high quality of life.

The sample of 400 residents surveyed annually by the OK-AIM program is selected by the state of Oklahoma. The state determines which individuals will be part of this representative sample, ensuring that the surveys cover a broad and relevant cross-section of the population residing in state-funded residential homes.

Characteristics of the Benefitting Population:

- Age: Adults aged 18 and older.
- Region: Various DDS-funded residential settings across Oklahoma, ensuring a wide geographic reach.
- Familial Status: Individuals may have varying familial statuses, including those without local family members to advocate for their well-being. This highlights the importance of the OK-AIM program in providing independent monitoring and advocacy.
- Learning or Support Needs: Beneficiaries have significant learning and support needs due to their developmental disabilities. The program focuses on individualized supports tailored to each person's unique requirements.
- Type of Disability: The program serves individuals with developmental disabilities, which may include conditions such as autism, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, and other related developmental or intellectual disorders or disabilities.

Types of Residential Homes Served:

- Agency Companion: Individuals share a home and living expenses with a companion selected based on their needs and compatibility. The companion is a contract employee with DDS, and the Residential Agency provides supportive and respite care.
- Assisted Living: Individuals live in their own homes or apartments, with minimal staff support. They may have roommates and receive services such as transportation for shopping, bill paying, banking, and medical appointments.
- Daily Living Supports (DLS): Provided by agencies contracting with DDS, this service includes hands-on assistance, supervision, or support in daily activities like eating, bathing, and dressing. DLS is limited to eight hours per day, often combined to provide 24-hour care.
- Group Homes: These homes offer 24-hour supervision and involve residents in daily activities to help them become more self-sufficient. The homes are owned or leased by the residential agency, not by the residents.
- Specialized Foster Care: This setting allows individuals in DDS care to live in a family home with trained foster parents who meet their needs. Foster parents are compensated by DDS.
- Supported Living: Primarily for individuals who have exited the Hissom Memorial Center, this service offers a range of individualized support and habilitation services.
- Alternative Group Homes: These settings serve individuals with behavioral or emotional challenges in addition to intellectual disabilities, requiring extensive supervision and assistance.
- Other: Includes special funding circumstances and unique residential arrangements.

The OK-AIM program ensures that these individuals receive consistent, high-quality care and support. By conducting regular quality-of-life surveys, the program identifies and addresses issues that impact the residents' well-being, thereby promoting their independence and integration within the community. The program also empowers self-advocates by involving them as surveyors, enhancing their skills and knowledge in advocating for the rights of people with developmental disabilities. The detailed monitoring and reporting provided by the OK-AIM program play a crucial role in maintaining and improving the quality of life for adults with developmental disabilities in Oklahoma, ensuring they have access to the necessary supports and services to live fulfilling lives.

20. Describe the impact on the target audience ?

\*

The OK-AIM program significantly impacts the individuals directly involved in the program, including adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) residing in DDS-funded homes and the self-advocates who serve as surveyors. The program enhances their quality of life, promotes empowerment, and fosters community integration.

Quality of Life Improvement:

**Thorough Assessments:** The annual quality-of-life surveys conducted by well-trained and empathetic surveyors ensure that residents' living conditions and support needs are thoroughly evaluated. These assessments identify critical issues that need addressing, leading to timely and effective interventions that enhance the residents' overall well-being.

**Personalized Care:** The data collected from these surveys help tailor individualized supports and services for each resident. This personalized approach ensures that the unique needs of each individual are met, promoting their health, safety, and happiness.

Empowerment of Self-Advocates:

**Active Participation and Skill Development:** By involving self-advocates as surveyors, the program empowers individuals with IDD by providing them with valuable skills and knowledge. This involvement enhances their awareness of their own rights and the rights of others, promoting a deeper understanding of advocacy and civil rights.

**Employment and Self-Esteem:** The program provides self-advocates with paid employment opportunities, which enhances their self-esteem and sense of purpose. These roles help build self-confidence and leadership skills, enabling self-advocates to participate more actively in their communities and advocate for themselves and others more effectively.

Community Integration:

**Promoting Inclusivity:** The OK-AIM program fosters inclusive practices by integrating neurodivergent and neurotypical individuals in volunteer roles. This approach promotes understanding, cooperation, and mutual respect within the community, contributing to a more inclusive society.

**Raising Awareness:** Through the surveys and regular interactions with residents, the program raises awareness about the needs and rights of individuals with IDD. This awareness helps create a more informed and supportive community, essential for the inclusion and well-being of people with IDD.



## 21. Describe the impact on people with disabilities ?

\*

The OK-AIM program has a broader systemic impact on people with disabilities by ensuring that high-quality care and support are consistently provided, promoting empowerment and advocacy, and fostering community inclusion. 1. Systemic Quality of Life Enhancement | Regular Monitoring and Reporting: The program's annual quality-of-life surveys and detailed reporting play a crucial role in maintaining and improving the quality of life for adults with IDD. These assessments provide essential data that can inform policy decisions and improve care standards across the state. Improving Care Standards: By identifying and addressing issues in DDS-funded homes, the program helps improve the overall standards of care for individuals with IDD. This leads to a systemic enhancement of care practices and living conditions. 2. Empowerment and Advocacy | Building a Culture of Self-Advocacy: The involvement of self-advocates in the program as surveyors promotes a culture of self-advocacy within the community. These individuals gain valuable experience and skills that enable them to advocate for their rights and the rights of others more effectively, contributing to a stronger and more vocal advocacy community. Influencing Policy and Practice: The insights and data gathered from the program can influence public policy and practice, leading to better support systems and resources for individuals with IDD. This systemic impact ensures that the needs and rights of people with disabilities are better represented and addressed at various levels. 3. Community and Social Inclusion | Promoting Inclusive Communities: The program's emphasis on inclusivity fosters a more inclusive society. By integrating neurodivergent and neurotypical individuals in volunteer roles, the program promotes understanding, cooperation, and mutual respect, contributing to a more supportive and inclusive community environment. Raising Awareness and Reducing Stigma: The program raises awareness about the needs and rights of individuals with IDD, helping to reduce stigma and promote acceptance within the broader community. This increased awareness leads to more supportive and inclusive community practices and attitudes. By addressing both the immediate needs of individuals with IDD and contributing to broader systemic changes, the OK-AIM program makes a substantial positive impact on the lives of people with disabilities in Oklahoma.

## 22. Is the proposal a duplication or expansion of work already being done in Oklahoma or elsewhere ? If yes, describe what is being duplicated and what makes this project unique or different.

\*

The OK-AIM program is expanding to enhance its impact by introducing paid surveyors. The Arc of Oklahoma administers the OK-AIM program through a state contract with the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS), which mandates quality-of-life surveys for 400 residents in DDS-funded homes each year. This year, the program budget expanded by \$60,000 to compensate surveyors \$150 per survey. As this cost is not covered by the state contract, additional funding sources are required for sustainability.

Historically, the OK-AIM program relied on volunteer surveyors. Paying surveyors acknowledges their crucial role and helps attract and retain skilled individuals, including self-advocates. This ensures high-quality, consistent assessments and provides meaningful employment opportunities, empowering them with valuable skills and experiences.

This expansion uniquely emphasizes involving self-advocates as paid surveyors, promoting their self-determination and enriching the program's impact. By adding this component, the OK-AIM program not only improves the quality of life for residents but also positively impacts the lives of the surveyors by fostering their empowerment and community integration.

Paying surveyors fosters greater community integration and raises awareness about the needs and rights of individuals with IDD. This expansion not only improves residents' immediate quality of life but also contributes to broader systemic changes that promote inclusivity and support for people with IDD across Oklahoma.

## 23. Will the proposed project use current best practices in the field of developmental disabilities ? If yes, explain what they are and how they will be incorporated. Please cite source material.

\*

Yes, the proposed OK-AIM project will use current best practices in the field of developmental disabilities. These best practices are grounded in evidence-based approaches that enhance the quality of life, support empowerment, and ensure comprehensive, person-centered care for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

**Person-Centered Practices:** The OK-AIM program incorporates person-centered planning and practices, which are fundamental to the field of developmental disabilities. This approach ensures that services and supports are tailored to the unique needs and preferences of each individual, promoting their autonomy and inclusion in the community (American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD), "Person-Centered Practices," 2023).

**Evidence-Based Assessments:** Conducting quality-of-life surveys aligns with best practices by using structured and validated assessment tools. These tools help identify the needs and preferences of individuals with IDD, ensuring that they receive appropriate and effective support. The assessments also provide data that can be used to monitor and improve service quality over time (National Core Indicators (NCI), "Quality of Life Survey," 2023).

**Involvement of Self-Advocates:** The program uniquely involves self-advocates as paid surveyors, which is consistent with best practices promoting empowerment and self-determination. This involvement not only enhances the quality of the surveys but also provides meaningful employment opportunities, skill development, and a sense of purpose for self-advocates (Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE), "Self-Advocacy and Employment," 2023).

**Comprehensive Training and Support:** The program includes comprehensive training for surveyors to ensure they are well-equipped to conduct quality-of-life assessments effectively. This training encompasses understanding the rights of individuals with IDD, effective communication strategies, and ethical considerations, which are all key components of best practices in the field (AAIDD, "Training for Direct Support Professionals," 2023).

**Community Integration and Advocacy:** By fostering community integration and raising awareness about the rights and needs of individuals with IDD, the OK-AIM program adheres to best practices that emphasize inclusivity and advocacy. This approach helps create a more supportive and understanding community environment for individuals with IDD (The Arc, "Community Integration and Advocacy," 2023).

Incorporating these best practices ensures that the OK-AIM program not only meets the current standards in the field of developmental disabilities but also enhances its effectiveness and impact on the lives of individuals with IDD. This comprehensive approach aligns with the latest research and recommendations from leading organizations and experts in the field.

24. When the work is complete, how will it have provided systems change to programs or services for people with developmental disabilities? \*

Upon completion, the OK-AIM program will significantly enhance systems and services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) through improved quality assurance, empowerment of self-advocates, and greater community integration. The inclusion of paid surveyors, particularly self-advocates, establishes a reliable and sustainable system for conducting quality-of-life assessments. This ensures consistent, high-quality monitoring and evaluation of services in DDS-funded homes, leading to continuous improvements in care standards.

Involving self-advocates as paid surveyors creates meaningful employment opportunities and fosters a culture of empowerment and self-determination. This systemic shift encourages other programs to adopt similar practices, promoting greater inclusion and recognizing the abilities of self-advocates. Research shows that self-advocacy enhances leadership skills, self-confidence, and participation in policy-making, leading to better outcomes for individuals with IDD.

The comprehensive data collected from the surveys will inform improvements in service delivery, providing evidence-based insights into the needs and preferences of individuals with IDD. While direct policy influence may not be immediate, the collected data can indirectly shape better practices and policies over time. By raising awareness about the rights and needs of individuals with IDD among caregivers, service providers, and the broader community, the OK-AIM program fosters a more inclusive and supportive environment. This increased awareness supports advocacy and systemic change, aligning with best practices in community integration and support for people with IDD.

In summary, the OK-AIM program will drive substantial systems change by enhancing quality assurance processes, empowering self-advocates, informing improvements in service delivery, increasing awareness and advocacy, and establishing a sustainable model for quality monitoring. These changes will collectively improve programs and services for individuals with IDD, ensuring they receive high-quality, person-centered care and support.

25. Will the proposal be implemented or offered statewide? If no, define the counties and cities served and the rationale for why these locations were selected.

Yes, the proposal will be implemented statewide, serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in DDS-funded homes across all counties in Oklahoma.

### Performance Measures

The DDCO is required to provide performance measure reports to evaluate the effectiveness of our activities. As a result, DDCO requires contracted vendors to submit performance measure reports prior to receiving final payment. Performance reports include actual counts and / or the collection of survey information. As a required component of the application, provide projected data for the following performance measures. (Not all measures are applicable. You may identify measures not applicable to this application as "N/A to this activity") All contractors will be required to collect baseline data to evaluate outcomes.

26. INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY ADVOCACY: The number of people with developmental disabilities who participated in Council supported activities designed to increase their knowledge of how to take part in decisions that affect their lives, the lives of others, and or systems.

15

The value must be a number

27. INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY ADVOCACY: The number of family members who participated in Council supported activities designed to increase their knowledge of how to take part in decisions that affect the family, the lives of others, and or systems.

0

The value must be a number

28. INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY ADVOCACY: After participation in Council supported activities, the percent of people with developmental disabilities who report increasing their advocacy as a result of Council work.

90

The value must be a number

29. INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY ADVOCACY: After participation in Council supported activities, the percent of family members who report increasing their advocacy as a result of Council work.

0

The value must be a number

30. INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY ADVOCACY: The percent of people who are better able to say what they want or say what services and supports they want or say what is important to them.

85

The value must be a number

31. INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY ADVOCACY: The percent of people who are participating now in advocacy activities.

100

The value must be a number

32. INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY ADVOCACY: The percent of people who are on cross disability coalitions, policy boards, advisory boards, governing bodies and/or serving in leadership positions.

0

The value must be a number

33. INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY ADVOCACY: The percent of people with developmental disabilities satisfied with a project activity.

95

The value must be a number

34. INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY ADVOCACY: The percent of family members satisfied with a project activity.

0

The value must be a number

35. SYSTEMS CHANGE: The number of policy and or procedures created or changed.

0

The value must be a number

36. SYSTEMS CHANGE: The number of statutes and or regulations created or changed.

0

The value must be a number

37. SYSTEMS CHANGE: The number of promising practices created.

0

The value must be a number

38. SYSTEMS CHANGE: The number of promising practices supported through Council activities.

The value must be a number

39. SYSTEMS CHANGE: The number of best practices created.

The value must be a number

40. SYSTEMS CHANGE: The number of people trained or educated through Council systemic change initiatives.

The value must be a number

41. SYSTEMS CHANGE: The number Council supported systems change activities with organizations actively involved.

The value must be a number

42. SYSTEMS CHANGE: The number of Council efforts that led to the improvement of best or promising practices, policies, procedures, statute, or regulation changes.

The value must be a number

43. SYSTEMS CHANGE: The number of Council efforts that were implemented to transform fragmented approaches into a coordinated and effective system that assures individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design of and have access to needed community services, individualized supports, and other forms of assistance that promote self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life.

The value must be a number

44. SYSTEMS CHANGE: The number of policy, procedure, statute, or regulation changes improved as a result of systems change.

The value must be a number

45. SYSTEMS CHANGE: The number of policy, procedure, statute, or regulation changes implemented.

The value must be a number

46. SYSTEMS CHANGE: The number of promising and/or best practices improved by systems change activities.

The value must be a number

47. SYSTEMS CHANGE: The number of promising and/or best practices that were implemented.

0

The value must be a number

### Additional Requirements for funding

48. FINACIAL INFORMATION: Include a detailed revenue and expenditure budget, in a proper accounting format, detailing the total costs and revenues of the proposal.

Identify the amount requested from DDCO within the context of the budget.

DDCO requires a match of 25%. Specify the source of this match.

Identify projected funding sources not currently in place.

Provide a narrative explaining each category of expenditure and source or revenue associated with the project. Revenue sources include but are not limited to conference registration fees, third party grants, booth rentals, in-kind contributions, etc.

If space does not permit the details necessary, please email to [John.Houston@okdhs.org](mailto:John.Houston@okdhs.org) and include the Project Name in the subject line. \*

Please see email to John Houston with subject line, "OK-AIM Program Budget Details."

49. STATEMENT OF WORK: Provide a proposed statement of work for the contractual requirements detailing the goods and services you will provide in exchange for DDCO funding. \*

The Arc of Oklahoma aims to enhance its efforts to improve the quality of life for individuals with IDD in DDS-funded residential settings through the OK-AIM program. This involves recruiting, training, and compensating independent surveyors, prioritizing self-advocates, and conducting annual quality-of-life surveys for 400 residents.

**Surveyor Recruitment and Training**

The Arc of Oklahoma will recruit surveyors via its statewide network of self-advocates and partnerships with post-secondary educational programs for adults with disabilities. Surveyors will complete a mandatory one-day training session approved by the DDS Oklahomans Quality Services Committee, covering the values, procedures, and tools necessary for OK-AIM monitoring.

**Survey Management**

The OK-AIM Program Coordinator will schedule and coordinate survey visits, ensuring comprehensive coverage across Oklahoma. Surveys will evaluate 27 items in four categories: Personal and Social Needs, Personal Growth, Staff Behavior and Training, and Physical Setting. Each item will be rated as Exceptional, Good, Needs Improvement, or Unacceptable.

**Survey Concerns and Resolutions**

OK-AIM records and tracks all problems identified by surveyors that could negatively impact the quality of life of individuals served. These issues are reported to DDS case managers for resolution and tracked for follow-up, ensuring effective problem resolution.

**Evaluation and Feedback**

Surveyors will leave an evaluation form at each home visited, to be completed by the individuals and/or staff about the timing, respectfulness, and clarity of the visit, as well as open-ended questions for additional comments.

**Data Management and Reporting**

Survey data will be recorded using a monitoring instrument and maintained in the OK-AIM database, allowing easy retrieval by DDS upon request. The OK-AIM Program Coordinator will prepare quarterly and annual reports summarizing survey results, highlighting areas of high performance and areas needing improvement. Reports will be submitted quarterly by the 15th of January, April, July, and October, and annually by January 1st.

**Financial Management**

Surveyors will be compensated \$150 per completed survey. Invoices for these payments will be submitted to OKDHS at the rate of \$500 per survey, ensuring fair compensation and program sustainability. Woodrum, Tate & Associates will manage the financial aspects of the program, including budget oversight, invoice processing, and compliance with financial regulations.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

Stacey Figueroa, OK-AIM Program Coordinator: Manages the overall OK-AIM program, including planning, coordinating, and implementing program activities. Oversees recruitment, training, and development of surveyors. Schedules and coordinates survey visits, ensuring comprehensive coverage. Ensures accurate data collection and management, produces narratives from visits, tracks and reports issues, and prepares quarterly and annual reports.

Leila Reines, Program Specialist: Assists the Program Coordinator with various administrative and operational tasks. Helps in coordinating surveyor activities, scheduling visits, and ensuring surveyors have the necessary resources. Supports training and development of surveyors, ensuring they are well-prepared. Engages with community stakeholders and recruits self-advocates as surveyors.

Lisa Kelly, Chief Executive Officer: Provides overall leadership and strategic direction for The Arc of Oklahoma and the OK-AIM program. Oversees resource allocation, leads fundraising efforts, and advocates for the program at state and national levels. Ensures organizational compliance with all relevant regulations and standards

Dena Drabek, Vice President of External Relations: Develops and implements marketing strategies to raise awareness about the OK-AIM program. Manages public relations efforts, leads advocacy initiatives, and engages in public policy discussions. Builds and maintains stakeholder relationships.

50. Sustainability Plan (Required for recurring requests).

Typically, DDCO will fund an activity for a maximum of five (5) years. Projects continuing for more than five years are expected to be self-sustaining by the end of the contract period. Include a detailed plan and timeframe for the project to become self-sustainable, including projected budgets, identified partners, and annual funding goals for each year.

The OK-AIM program, administered by The Arc of Oklahoma, primarily operates through a state contract with the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS), which funds most program activities. However, the \$60,000 annual cost for compensating surveyors (\$150 per survey for 400 surveys) requires additional funding. To ensure sustainability over the next five years, we have developed a comprehensive financial strategy.

We will secure diversified funding through grants from foundations such as the DDCO, individual and corporate donations, and special fundraising events. Each year, we aim to raise \$60,000 specifically for surveyor compensation. In the first year, our focus will be on applying for multiple grants and building relationships with potential funders. By year two, we plan to increase individual donations and corporate sponsorships through targeted campaigns. Years three and four will involve expanding our fundraising events and strengthening community partnerships. By year five, we expect to have established a stable funding stream from these diversified sources.

Our projected annual funding goals are as follows:

Year 1: \$60,000 from grants

Year 2: \$30,000 from grants, \$15,000 from individual donations, \$15,000 from corporate sponsorships

Year 3: \$20,000 from grants, \$20,000 from individual donations, \$20,000 from fundraising events

Year 4: \$15,000 from grants, \$25,000 from individual donations, \$20,000 from fundraising events

Year 5: \$10,000 from grants, \$25,000 from individual donations, \$25,000 from fundraising events

Our Board of Directors and dedicated staff will oversee these efforts, ensuring proactive resource allocation and financial management. Through these comprehensive strategies, we are confident in achieving self-sustainability for the OK-AIM program by the end of the five-year contract period, thus continuing to support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Oklahoma.

51. Logic Model (Required for contracts in excess of \$5,000)

A logic model is a tool used by DDCO to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. An example is included, or you may use one of the many formats found by Googling "logic model."

OK-AIM Program Logic Model

Inputs:

- Funding from the Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council (DDCO) and additional fundraising efforts.
- Staff expertise including Program Coordinator, Program Specialist, Operations and Volunteer Manager, and Accountant.
- A statewide network of self-advocates and collaboration with self-advocacy groups like People First and other programs facilitated by The Arc of Oklahoma.
- Training resources and materials approved by the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS).

Activities:

- Recruit, train, and manage a diverse pool of independent surveyors, giving preference to self-advocates.
- Conduct annual quality-of-life surveys for 400 DDS recipients living in various DDS-funded residential settings.
- Pay surveyors \$150 per survey to ensure the retention of skilled surveyors and provide meaningful opportunities to self-advocates.
- Document and track all client interactions and survey outcomes.
- Compile and submit monthly, quarterly, and annual reports to OKDHS, detailing survey findings and areas of concern.

Outputs:

- Number of surveys conducted annually: 400.
- Minimum number of self-advocates trained and compensated as surveyors: 15.
- Number of reports submitted to OKDHS annually: 12 monthly reports, 4 quarterly reports, 1 annual report.
- Number of issues identified and resolved through follow-up actions.

Outcomes:

Short-term: Improved accuracy and comprehensiveness of quality-of-life assessments due to the engagement of well-trained surveyors. Increased opportunities and skill development for self-advocates.

Medium-term: Enhanced quality of life for DDS recipients as issues identified during surveys are addressed and resolved. Empowerment of self-advocates through meaningful compensated roles and advocacy activities.

Long-term: Systemic improvement in the quality of care in DDS-funded residential settings across Oklahoma. Sustainable integration of self-advocates into the program, fostering broader community inclusion and support for individuals with IDD.

Impact:

The program will ensure continuous monitoring and advocacy for the quality of life of individuals with developmental disabilities in Oklahoma. By involving self-advocates as paid surveyors, the program not only enriches the lives of the surveyors through compensated roles but also enhances the quality of the data collected, leading to better-informed policy and practice improvements within DDS-supported residential services.

52. Are you a registered vendor with the State of Oklahoma: \*

Yes

No

53. Is the proposed vendor applicant an IRS Registered 501(c)3: \*

Yes

No

54. Is the proposed vendor a Government entity: \*

Yes

No

55. If yes, in question 52, provide form of government and name of entity

N/A

56. Is the proposed vendor a tribal nation: \*

Yes

No

57. If yes in Question 53, list tribe.

N/A

58. Is the proposed vendor a sole proprietor: \*

Yes

No

59. Is the proposed vendor a registered partnership? \*

Yes

No

60. Is the proposed vendor a registered corporation? \*

Yes

No

61. Social Security or FEI Number: \*

730749376

The value must be a number

Contact information



62. Name of individual with contract signatory authority / title / Phone number / email address \*

Lisa Kelly, Chief Executive Officer  
lisakelly@thearcok.org  
918-978-8087

63. Primary Contact: Name of individual to contact regarding contract performance & operations / Title / Phone number / E-mail address \*

Lisa Kelly, Chief Executive Officer  
lisakelly@thearcok.org  
918-978-8087

64. Legal Notices: Name of individual to send legal notices / Title / Phone number / E-mail Address \*

Lisa Kelly, Chief Executive Officer  
lisakelly@thearcok.org  
918-978-8087

65. Finance Contact: Name of individual responsible for finance and accounting / title / phone number / e-mail address \*

Woodrum, Tate & Associates, Third Party Accountant  
Contact: Lisa Kelly, Chief Executive Officer  
lisakelly@thearcok.org  
918-978-8087

## **Budget Narrative for OK-AIM Program The Arc of Oklahoma**

### **Revenue:**

**State Contract (\$200,000)** The primary funding source for the OK-AIM program is a state contract with the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS). This contract covers a significant portion of the program's operational costs, including personnel, professional fees, and program operations.

**DD Council Request (\$25,000)** We are requesting \$25,000 from the DD Council to support the payment of volunteer surveyors. This funding is essential to maintain the program's sustainability and ensure the high-quality execution of surveys.

**Matching Funds (\$81,931)** Matching funds are secured through various non-federal organizational general operating funds, totaling \$81,931 (27% of total program cost). This exceeds the 25% match requirement set by the DD Council.

### **Expenses:**

#### **Personnel (\$142,357)**

- **Program Coordinator (\$46,509):** 100% of time on the program, responsible for overall management, surveyor recruitment and training, data collection, quality assurance, and reporting.
- **Program Specialist (\$33,280):** 80% of time on the program, assists with administrative tasks, surveyor coordination, training, and community engagement.
- **Chief Executive Officer (\$25,000):** 25% of time on the program, provides leadership, resource allocation, and fundraising.
- **VP of External Relations (\$19,000):** 20% of time on the program, handles marketing, public relations, advocacy, and community outreach.
- **Benefits (\$18,568):** Calculated at 15% of the total salaries.

**Monitor Stipends (\$60,000) – DD Council Proposed Use of Funds.** Stipends are paid to surveyors at a rate of \$150 per completed survey. 400 surveys are completed annually. This ensures we attract and retain qualified surveyors, including self-advocates.

#### **Program Operations (\$76,671)**

- **Professional Fees (\$49,873):** Includes costs for accounting and audit services provided by Woodrum, Tate & Associates, as well as third party fundraising services. These services ensure financial accountability and compliance with all relevant regulations.
- **Office Operations (\$15,655):** Covers occupancy, utilities, office supplies, and HR expenses.
- **Technology (\$3,492):** Includes OK AIM database management and related technology costs.

- **Telecommunications (\$3,082):** Phone and internet services to support program operations.
- **Travel (\$1,887):** Staff mileage and travel expenses for professional development and training.
- **Monitor Training & Management (\$2,682):** Printed materials for monitor trainings, meeting space reservations, food and related supplies.

**Project Expenses:**

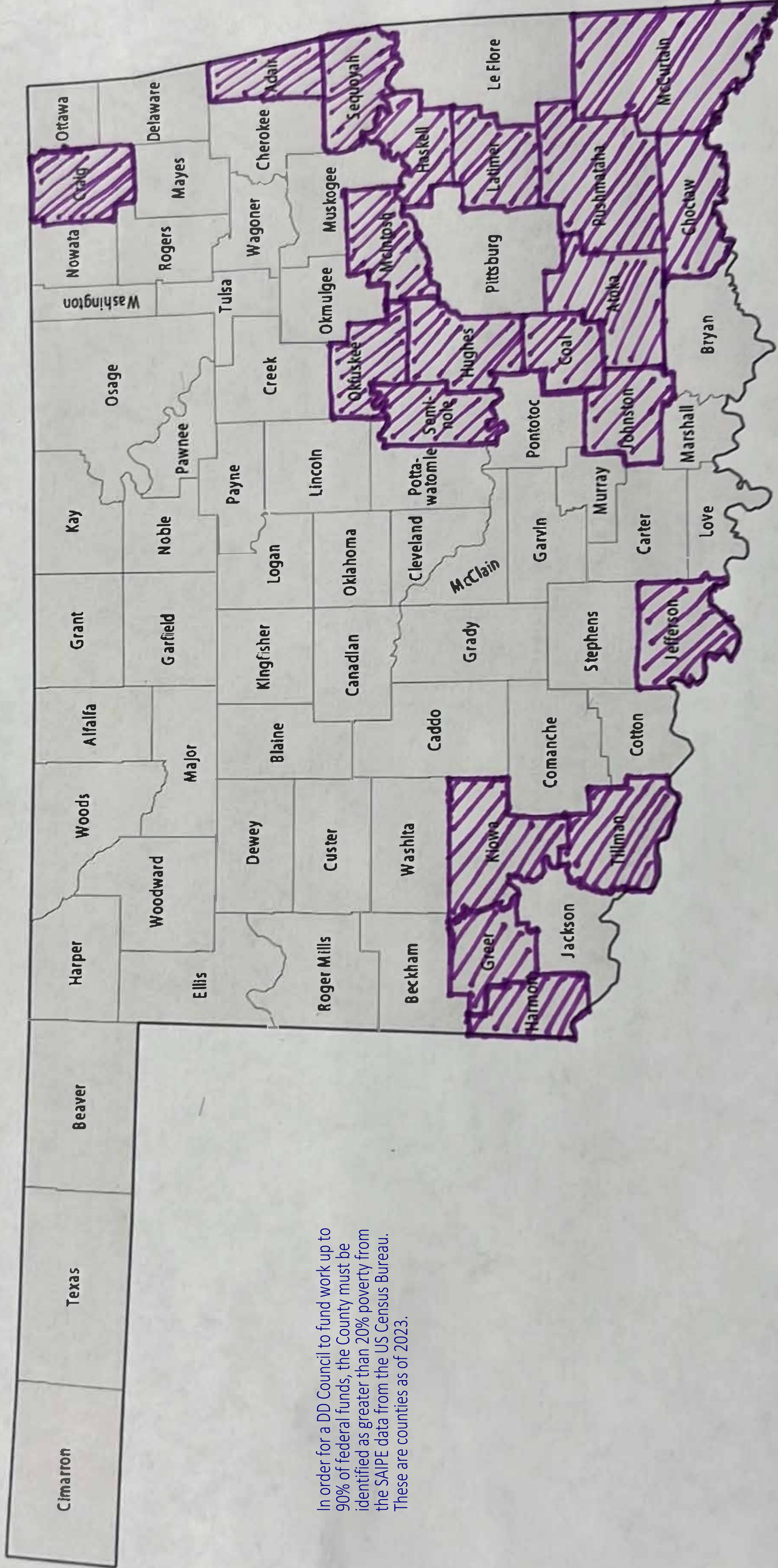
**Indirect Costs (\$27,903)** Calculated at 10% of total program costs.

**Projected Funding Sources:** The OK-AIM program is continuously seeking additional funding sources to ensure long-term sustainability. Potential sources include grants from private foundations, donations from individuals and corporations, and fundraising events. We are also exploring partnerships with community organizations to secure in-kind contributions and expand our network of support.

**Total Budget: \$306,931** The detailed budget provided includes all anticipated revenues and expenditures for the OK-AIM program, ensuring transparency and accountability in the use of funds. This comprehensive financial plan will enable the program to continue its critical work in monitoring and improving the quality of life for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Oklahoma.

**The Arc of Oklahoma**  
**Oklahoma Advocates In Monitoring Program Budget | DD Council of Oklahoma Proposal**

Expenses		DD Council Request	OKDHS State Contract	Non-Federal Matching Funds	Total Project Costs
<b>Staff/Volunteer Time</b>					
Program Coordinator	(100% time on program)	\$ -	\$ 46,509	\$ -	\$ 46,509
Program Specialist	(80% of time on program)	\$ -	\$ 33,280	\$ -	\$ 33,280
Chief Executive Officer	(25% of time on program)	\$ -	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ 25,000
VP External Relations	(20% of time on program)	\$ -	\$ 19,000	\$ -	\$ 19,000
Fringe Benefits	Calculated at 15% of total salary	\$ -	\$ 18,568	\$ -	\$ 18,568
Monitor Stipends	\$150 per survey visit x 400 per year	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ 35,000	\$ 60,000
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$ 25,000</b>	<b>\$ 142,357</b>	<b>\$ 35,000</b>	<b>\$ 202,357</b>
<b>Program Operations</b>					
Professional Fees	Accounting, audit, fundraising	\$ -	\$ 36,807	\$ 13,066	\$ 49,873
Office Operations	Occupancy, utilities, office supplies, HR	\$ -	\$ 9,693	\$ 5,962	\$ 15,655
Technology	Database	\$ -	\$ 3,492	\$ -	\$ 3,492
Telecommunications	Phone, internet	\$ -	\$ 3,082	\$ -	\$ 3,082
Travel	Staff mileage, trainings	\$ -	\$ 1,887	\$ -	\$ 1,887
Monitor Training & Management	Training materials, meeting space, meeting supplies	\$ -	\$ 2,682	\$ -	\$ 2,682
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 57,643</b>	<b>\$ 19,028</b>	<b>\$ 76,671</b>
<b>Project Expenses</b>		<b>\$ 25,000</b>	<b>\$ 200,000</b>	<b>\$ 54,028</b>	<b>\$ 279,028</b>
<i>Indirect Costs</i>	<i>(10% of total program costs)</i>			\$ 27,903	
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>\$ 25,000</b>	<b>\$ 200,000</b>	<b>\$ 81,931</b>	<b>\$ 306,931</b>
		8%	65%	27%	
		DD Council Request	OKDHS State Contract	Non-Federal Matching Funds	



In order for a DD Council to fund work up to 90% of federal funds, the County must be identified as greater than 20% poverty from the SAIFE data from the US Census Bureau. These are counties as of 2023.

Year	Name	Number in Poverty	90% Confidence Interval	Percent in Poverty	90% Confidence Interval
2022	Harmon County	617	466 to 768	26.1	19.7 to 32.5
2022	Seminole County	5672	4,973 to 6,371	25	21.9 to 28.1
2022	Choctaw County	3451	2,895 to 4,007	24.4	20.5 to 28.3
2022	Okfuskee County	2395	1,900 to 2,890	23.8	18.9 to 28.7
2022	Coal County	1221	972 to 1,470	23.3	18.5 to 28.1
2022	Greer County	1062	790 to 1,334	22.8	17.0 to 28.6
2022	Hughes County	2649	2,012 to 3,286	22.8	17.3 to 28.3
2022	Kiowa County	1872	1,520 to 2,224	22.8	18.5 to 27.1
2022	Pushmataha County	2344	1,892 to 2,796	22.1	17.8 to 26.4
2022	Jefferson County	1132	871 to 1,393	21.3	16.4 to 26.2
2022	Sequoyah County	8282	7,135 to 9,429	21.2	18.3 to 24.1
2022	Tillman County	1446	1,125 to 1,767	21.1	16.4 to 25.8
2022	McCurtain County	6395	5,073 to 7,717	20.9	16.6 to 25.2
2022	McIntosh County	4013	3,303 to 4,723	20.9	17.2 to 24.6
2022	Johnston County	2080	1,669 to 2,491	20.8	16.7 to 24.9
2022	Adair County	4014	3,255 to 4,773	20.7	16.8 to 24.6
2022	Latimer County	1930	1,493 to 2,367	20.7	16.0 to 25.4
2022	Craig County	2740	2,241 to 3,239	20.6	16.8 to 24.4
2022	Haskell County	2372	1,908 to 2,836	20.5	16.5 to 24.5
2022	Atoka County	2523	2,028 to 3,018	20	16.1 to 23.9

Organization	Project	Request
Autism Foundation of Oklahoma	LEAD Employer Training	\$ 125,000.00
AutismOK	LookOut - art program	\$ 18,000.00
Best Buddies	Expansion	\$ 25,000.00
AFO/DSACO/Unity	Inclusive Communication Conference	\$ 20,000.00
Oklahoma Autism Center	ADOS - Early Access	\$ 135,570.00
Sooner Success	Caregiver Retreats/Sibling Camp	\$ 108,502.00
Pervasive Parenting Center	Youth Expedition Summit	\$ 24,500.00
The Arc of Oklahoma	OK AIM - paying surveyors	\$ 25,000.00
Bridges Foundation	Self-Advocacy Curriculum	?
	<b>Total of requests</b>	<b>\$ 481,572.00</b>

**Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma - Federal Grant Reconciliation**  
For the Period Ended September 30, 2024

	FFY23	FFY24	FFY25	Total
Grant Award	\$ 915,094.00	\$ 914,702.00	\$ -	\$ 1,829,796.00
Expenditures				
Prior Year Expenditures	\$ 222,270.26	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 222,270.26
EOM July 2023	24,062.70	-	-	24,062.70
EOM August 2023	44,038.00	-	-	44,038.00
EOM September 2023	30,951.33	-	-	30,951.33
EOM October 2023	-	32,675.25	-	32,675.25
EOM November 2023	-	36,505.13	-	36,505.13
EOM December 2023	-	29,633.03	-	29,633.03
Adjust for Reconciliation	27,635.15	(0.01)	-	27,635.14
EOM January 2024	728.84	39,697.50	-	40,426.34
EOM February 2024	7,678.00	31,788.38	-	39,466.38
EOM March 2024	55,404.00	42,242.81	-	97,646.81
EOM April 2024	72,300.00	33,693.75	-	105,993.75
EOM May 2024	65,127.00	28,826.62	-	93,953.62
EOM June 2024	51,572.99	24,897.51	-	76,470.50
EOM July 2024	93,790.24	27,502.14	-	121,292.38
EOM August 2024	58,623.00	42,127.75	-	100,750.75
EOM September 2024	77,401.76	26,480.99	-	103,882.75
EOM October 2024	-	-	-	-
EOM November 2024	-	-	-	-
EOM December 2024	-	-	-	-
EOM January 2025	-	-	-	-
EOM February 2025	-	-	-	-
EOM March 2025	-	-	-	-
EOM April 2025	-	-	-	-
EOM May 2025	-	-	-	-
EOM June 2025	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditures	\$ 609,313.01	\$ 396,070.85	\$ -	\$ 1,005,383.86

<b>Grant Balance</b>	<b>\$ 83,510.73</b>	<b>\$ 518,631.15</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 602,141.88</b>
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\*® Denotes Reconciled with OKDHS Finance CARE UNIT



## DD Council Listening Session Questions

### Original questions:

1. What are the key supports and services currently available that have positively impacted people with developmental disabilities and their families in your community?
2. What services or supports do you believe are missing or insufficient for people with developmental disabilities in your community?
3. Can you describe any barriers that you or your family have faced in accessing opportunities or services due to a developmental disability?
4. What are the most significant challenges related to health and wellness for people with developmental disabilities in your community?
5. How can local organizations or councils better advocate for and support inclusive environments for people with developmental disabilities?
6. In your opinion, what changes or improvements would most help your community in creating an inclusive and supportive environment for people with developmental disabilities?
7. What successful strategies or program models have you seen that effectively promote inclusion and improve the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities?
8. If you could create a program to support people with developmental disabilities, what would it include and why?

### Revised questions:

1. What supports or services have helped you or your family?
2. What supports or services do you or your family still need? What is missing?
3. What obstacles or challenges do you or your family face in accessing opportunities or services?
4. What health and wellness challenges do people with developmental disabilities face?
5. What needs to change to provide a more inclusive, supportive environment for people with developmental disabilities?
6. What programs or approaches work well to promote inclusion and improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities?
7. If you could make any change or create any program to help people with developmental disabilities, what would it be?