

**Fiscal Year FY27
Funding Requests**

FY 27 PROPOSALS

Council funding

Autism Foundation of Oklahoma	\$ 25,000.00
AutismOklahoma	\$ 15,000.00
Best Buddies	\$ 25,000.00
Har-Ber Village	\$ 25,000.00
Oklahoma Autism Center	\$ 135,532.00
VGM Visual Storytelling	\$ 25,000.00
Zarrow Center	\$ 101,602.00

Presentation on December 12th:

Sooner SUCCESS	\$ 103,253.00
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GRAND TOTAL:

\$455,387.00

Job Readiness and Family Empowerment Program

Autism Foundation of Oklahoma

Fiscal Year FY27 Funding Request

Project/Activity: Job Readiness and Family Empowerment Program

Organization: Autism Foundation of Oklahoma

Proposal Description: The Autism Foundation of Oklahoma (AFO) seeks funding to expand its Job Readiness and Family Empowerment Program, providing youth and young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) essential workplace skills. The program teaches soft skills—communication, relationship-building, appropriate attire, financial literacy, self-advocacy—and supports executive functioning, while also equipping parents and caregivers to reinforce these skills and advocate for inclusive employment. By bridging gaps in existing transition services, this initiative fosters workforce representation, independence, and greater public recognition of the value of individuals with I/DD.

Many youth with I/DD are excluded from state-supported transition services due to eligibility requirements, leaving families without affordable options and perpetuating unemployment and social invisibility. AFO addresses these barriers through accessible, flexible workshops offered in person and online: four sessions for youth focused on job readiness and executive functioning, and four sessions for parents and caregivers emphasizing advocacy, skill reinforcement, and peer networking. The program targets populations in the Oklahoma City and Tulsa metro areas, including rural communities where specialized services are scarce.

Expected outcomes include measurable improvements in youth confidence, workplace readiness, and executive functioning, as well as enhanced caregiver knowledge and advocacy skills. By increasing the visibility and representation of individuals with I/DD in workplaces and communities, the program aims to shift public perceptions, reduce stigma, and promote inclusive employment opportunities. Success will be tracked through pre- and post-surveys, attendance, completion data, and participant feedback, ensuring accountability and demonstrating broader impact on equity, access, and inclusion across Oklahoma.

Council Goal & Objective: Representation and Public Attitudes

Targeted Audience: This project serves youth and young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), ages 14–26, along with their parents and caregivers who support workplace readiness and advocacy. Focused on the Oklahoma City and Tulsa metro areas, including rural communities, it targets families who often lack access to affordable transition and job readiness programs.

Funding requested for Fiscal Year FY27

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$25,000	\$8,334	\$33,334

6. **General Timelines:**

Funding decisions can take time for the Council to discuss. Please allow time for feedback on your proposal and possible revision of your proposal or providing more information. We want to be a partner and are happy to work with you as you complete an application. Please ask questions. If approved for funding, contract dates depend on when the proposal was received, length of review by Council committee, and contract negotiations.

For a proposal requesting funding for a full year, contracts will typically follow the state fiscal year: July 1 through June 30.

Proposals received are evaluated by a Council Committee, and if approved, a recommendation is made to the full Council for a decision. If approved by the full Council, we will make every effort for contracts to be effective as early as possible, typically by July 1. Applicants will be notified by email within 5 business days of the full Council's decision.

IMPORTANT: Do not begin work until a fully executed contract and purchase order (PO) is in hand. Per Oklahoma Statute, no funding can or will be reimbursed for any goods or service prior to the effective date of a contract.

If you have any questions, email our Planning & Grants Director, Jennifer Robinson: Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org.

Part 1 - Contact Information

7. **Organization Name ***

8. **Organization Address ***

Mailing address please: Street number, Street name, City, State, 9-digit Zip Code

9. **Contact Info ***

Name, email address **and** phone number of the person completing this application.

10. **Website**

Organization's Website

Our State Plan Goals

To qualify for funding, projects must meet the goals in the 5-Year Council State Plan. The state plan is available for review <https://oklahoma.gov/ddco/about/state-plan.html>. The new state plan for 2027-2031 is in the process of being developed.

11. State Plan Goal *

As of August 2025, the Council is in the process of reviewing input from publicly held listening sessions and information about current services and systems in Oklahoma. Goals have not been established for our next 5 Year State Plan (2027-2031), however proposals submitted should fall within one of our themes we have identified.

- Access to Services
- Inclusive Education
- Caregiver Support
- Representation and Public Attitudes
- Advocacy and Self-Advocacy

Representation and Public Attitudes

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 purpose of this policy is to ensure a fair and impartial procurement process. The questions that follow are designed to help the state determine if such a conflict exists.

12. 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

13. Identify names and relationships

If you answered yes to "Any relationships to the organization?" please explain in detail. Identify names and relationships, as necessary.

Part 3 - Your activity proposal:

14. Proposal. *

Provide a written overview of your proposal (up to 4000 characters). A good overview should cover the key components of your proposal. This includes:

- **Introduction:** A brief summary of your project's purpose.
- **Problem Statement:** The issue your project aims to address.
- **Proposed Solution:** A clear description of your methodology and how your project will solve the problem.
- **Expected Outcomes:** The anticipated results or impact of your work.
- **Evaluation:** How the work will be measured.
- **Relevance:** How your project aligns with the council's goals and funding priorities.

The Autism Foundation of Oklahoma (AFO) seeks support to expand job readiness programming for youth and young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). The initiative develops essential soft skills: communication, relationship-building, appropriate workplace attire, financial literacy, executive functioning, and self-advocacy, while equipping parents and caregivers to reinforce these skills and support their children's transition to adulthood. By bridging this gap, the project fosters greater workforce representation for individuals with I/DD and promotes public understanding of their value in the community.

Problem Statement

Many youth with I/DD are excluded from state-supported transition services because they do not meet eligibility requirements, leaving families without affordable options. This gap perpetuates cycles of unemployment and social invisibility, reinforcing stereotypes about individuals with I/DD.

Key Barriers:

Limited access: Specialized transition and workplace readiness supports are often financially or geographically out of reach.

Soft skill gaps: Schools rarely teach interpersonal communication, workplace etiquette, financial literacy, or self-advocacy.

Executive functioning challenges: Time management, planning, and organization skills—essential for workplace success—often go unaddressed.

Public perception: Limited employment visibility reinforces undervaluation of individuals with I/DD in civic and economic life.

Proposed Solution

AFO will implement an accessible, two-part model that provides workforce preparation directly to youth and indirectly through empowered families.

Job Readiness Workshops for Youth (4 sessions)

Soft Skills Curriculum: Focused on communication, relationships, financial basics, appropriate dress, and self-advocacy.

Executive Functioning Support: Training in planning, organization, and adaptive problem-solving.

Flexible Delivery: Sessions offered in person and virtually, with recorded modules for accessibility across Oklahoma.

Parent and Caregiver Workshops (4 sessions)

Education and Advocacy: Tools for families to reinforce soft skills and advocate for inclusive employment.

Peer Networks: Connecting families navigating similar challenges.

Practical Strategies: Cost-free methods and community-based resources for fostering independence.

Together, these workshops ensure participants build both the skills and support systems needed to succeed in employment and adulthood.

Expected Outcomes

Youth: Improved confidence and measurable gains in soft skills and executive functioning, preparing them for meaningful employment.

Families: Increased ability to support transition planning, stronger advocacy networks, and greater awareness of community resources.

Communities: Enhanced visibility of individuals with I/DD in the workforce, promoting more inclusive public attitudes.

Evaluation

Success will be measured using both quantitative and qualitative methods:

Pre- and post-surveys tracking growth in confidence, workplace readiness, and executive functioning.

Parent surveys assessing knowledge, confidence, and advocacy skills.

Attendance and completion data across all sessions.

Relevance

This project directly supports the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma’s (DDCO) goal of improving representation and public attitudes toward individuals with I/DD. By serving those excluded from other systems and addressing affordability and access barriers, AFO ensures equitable preparation for the workforce.

By empowering youth to develop visible workplace competencies and families to reinforce these skills, the initiative promotes inclusion, independence, and recognition of neurodiverse individuals as valued members of Oklahoma’s communities. The project embodies DDCO’s mission to advance equity, access, and inclusion, while closing a systemic gap that prevents many from realizing their potential in the workforce and society.

15. Have you completed a needs assessment? *

Yes

No

16. Who will do the work? *

Please list all people and organizations that will be working on the project, and describe their experience and qualifications to provide the proposed goods and services.

The Director of Programs will lead implementation, coordinating all project activities and enlisting AFO staff according to their areas of expertise. Each staff member will contribute to the development and delivery of program components aligned with their specialty, ensuring content is accurate, relevant, and accessible.

A Training Specialist, who is both a professional educator and a parent of an autistic child, will take primary responsibility for the family empowerment workshops. This perspective ensures that the parent component is both evidence-based and grounded in lived experience.

The Executive Director will provide organizational oversight, ensuring that the project remains aligned with AFO’s mission, meets grant requirements, and upholds accountability to both participants and funders.

Together, this leadership structure ensures the project has both professional expertise and authentic community perspective, maximizing its potential for meaningful impact.

17. Targeted population:

*

Tell us more about who you are targeting to improve outcomes for? Describe the age, region, familial status, learning or support needs, and type of disability.

This project is designed to improve outcomes for youth and young adults with I/DD and their families.

Age Range:

- Youth and young adults preparing for transition to adulthood and employment (ages 14–26).
- Parents and caregivers of these individuals, who play a key role in reinforcing workplace readiness and advocating for inclusive opportunities.

Geographic Focus:

- The Oklahoma City metro and Tulsa metro areas (including local rural communities), where large populations of individuals with I/DD live, go to school, and seek employment.
- Outreach will extend to surrounding rural communities, where access to specialized services is especially limited, and families often experience additional barriers to support.

Familial Status:

- Families of youth with I/DD, particularly those navigating transition without access to paid services.
- Many of these families experience financial stressors that prevent them from enrolling their children in private transition or job readiness programs.

Learning and Support Needs:

- Participants may have a wide range of support needs, including challenges with executive functioning (planning, organization, time management, self-regulation).
- Many require explicit instruction in soft skills such as communication, relationship-building, hygiene expectations and dressing appropriately for the workplace, financial literacy, and self-advocacy.
- Programming will be designed with accessibility in mind, offering flexible delivery formats to meet the needs of both higher-support and more independent learners.

Type of Disability:

- Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

By intentionally targeting this group, we aim to address an existing gap in Oklahoma's service landscape: individuals with I/DD who are highly capable of employment and community engagement but lack equitable access to preparation, support, and representation.

18. Impact:

*

Please describe the anticipated impact of your proposal by addressing the following three components:

- Goals for the targeted population?
 - What are the specific, measurable goals you hope to achieve for the individuals directly served by this project?
- Broader implications for people with developmental disabilities:
 - Beyond the direct participants, how will this project create a broader, positive impact for the population of people with developmental disabilities as a whole?
- Measurable outcomes:
 - What specific, quantifiable metrics will you use to track your success and demonstrate the project's effectiveness?

The Job Readiness and Family Empowerment Program aim to strengthen the skills, confidence, and inclusion of youth and young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) across the Oklahoma City and Tulsa metro areas, including surrounding rural communities. Our goal for the targeted population is to equip participants with practical workplace soft skills, such as communication, relationship-building, appropriate dress, financial literacy, and self-advocacy, while improving executive functioning skills, such as organization and time management. We also aim to empower families to reinforce these skills at home and advocate for their child's success in the workplace. Specifically, we anticipate that at least 80% of youth participants will demonstrate measurable improvement in self-confidence and workplace readiness, and 75% of caregivers will report increased knowledge of transition supports and advocacy strategies.

The broader implications of this project extend beyond direct participants by promoting the visibility and representation of individuals with I/DD within their communities. As these young adults develop and display job readiness skills, they model capability and potential for inclusion in employment and civic life, helping to shift public attitudes and reduce stigma surrounding disability. Families and community partners will gain greater awareness of how to support equitable access to employment and independence for all individuals with I/DD, not only those who qualify for existing services.

To ensure accountability, we will track measurable outcomes through pre- and post-program surveys assessing growth in soft skills, executive functioning, and family empowerment; attendance and completion data; and participant feedback from both youth and caregivers. We will also collect qualitative stories that demonstrate confidence gains, advocacy success, and community inclusion. These data points will collectively demonstrate the program's effectiveness in increasing readiness, representation, and positive public attitudes toward individuals with developmental disabilities across Oklahoma.

19. Duplication or expansion:

*

Does this proposal duplicate or expand upon any existing work in Oklahoma or elsewhere? The Council cannot supplant funding to continue existing work unless the proposal is to expand on the work and enhances what is being done.

If your proposal duplicates or expands upon existing work, please describe the existing work and explain what makes your project unique and innovative. Be specific about how this approach and expected outcomes differ from and add value to what is already being done.

No.

20. Best Practices:

*

Will your proposed project use current evidence-based best practices in the field of developmental disabilities? Identify the specific practices you will use, explain how you will incorporate them into your project, and cite your sources. Citations should include a mix of professional literature, research studies, and respected organizations or programs.

This project incorporates nationally recognized best practices, including self-determination training (Wehmeyer et al., 2012), family engagement in transition planning (NTACT, 2021), and soft skills development based on ODEP's Soft Skills to Pay the Bills curriculum. By delivering programming in inclusive, community-based settings (ICI, 2018) and offering flexible access options (OSEP, 2020), the Autism Foundation of Oklahoma ensures that its approach aligns with evidence-based strategies proven to improve employment and independence outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Wehmeyer, M. L., Shogren, K. A., & Abery, B. H. (2012). Self-Determination and Transition Planning. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 44(5), 45–53.

→ Supports self-determination and self-advocacy training as evidence-based practices that improve postsecondary and employment outcomes for individuals with I/DD.

National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT). (2021). *Family Engagement Toolkit*. University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

→ Highlights family engagement as a key predictor of successful youth transition outcomes and provides best practices for empowering families in transition planning.

U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP). (2014). *Soft Skills to Pay the Bills: Mastering Soft Skills for Workplace Success*. Washington, DC.

→ Establishes the importance of teaching soft skills (communication, teamwork, problem-solving, professionalism) to prepare youth with disabilities for employment.

Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI). (2018). *Promoting Community-Based Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities*. University of Massachusetts Boston.

→ Recommends community-based, inclusive approaches as best practice for increasing visibility, independence, and representation of individuals with disabilities in the workforce.

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.

How will your proposed project lead to **lasting systems change** for people with developmental disabilities? Please provide a detailed explanation of how your project's outcomes will shift thinking, improve practices, or empower individuals and families within the state's service system.

This project will contribute to lasting systems change by addressing a critical gap in Oklahoma's transition and employment readiness supports for individuals with developmental disabilities. By developing and piloting an accessible, replicable model for soft skills and executive functioning training, AFO will demonstrate that meaningful job readiness education can be delivered in community-based settings, empowering families and local partners to play an active role in supporting successful transitions to adulthood. As participants gain confidence and visibility in employment and civic life, their achievements will challenge assumptions about the capabilities of individuals with developmental disabilities and expand inclusive practices across schools, workplaces, and service systems. Parents and caregivers will emerge as informed advocates equipped to navigate and influence systems, creating a ripple effect that extends beyond individual families. Over time, the project's outcomes will inform broader practice by showing the importance of affordable, accessible, and family-centered approaches to workforce preparation; ultimately shifting both thinking and practices toward a more inclusive and equitable support network for all Oklahomans with developmental disabilities.

22. **Where implemented:**

*

Will the proposed project be implemented or offered statewide? If no, please define the specific counties and cities you will serve and provide the rationale for their selection.

The Job Readiness and Family Empowerment Program will be implemented across the Oklahoma City and Tulsa metro areas, with intentional outreach to surrounding rural communities.

Performance Measures

The Council is required to submit performance reports to evaluate the effectiveness of all Council activities to our Federal partners. We require all contracted vendors to submit performance measure data prior to final payment. As a required component of your application, please provide **projected data** for the following performance measures. All contractors must collect **baseline data** to evaluate the project's outcomes. If you have questions about these projected and baseline numbers, please reach out to us.

Note: Not all measures may be applicable to your proposal. If a measure does not apply, please enter zero.

- **IA** = Individual and family Advocacy
- **SC** = System Change

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.

35

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.

30

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.

65

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 *

Proposal Budget:

- Include a detailed revenue and expenditure budget, detailing the total costs and revenues of the proposal.
- Identify the amount requested from the Council within the context of the budget.
- Identify the amount of the required 25% funding match for your project's total budget. You also need to explain where this matching funding will come from. Sources for the match can include non-federal funding, donated services or items, discounted services or items, and volunteer time. If you need help calculating the value of volunteer time, you can contact Jennifer. Match funding helps the Council understand all partners who are helping with the project.
- 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 your budget** to Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org and include the Project Name in the subject line.

Detailed Budget

July 1, 2026 – June 31, 2027

The Autism Foundation of Oklahoma respectfully requests funding in the amount of \$25,000 from the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma. Non-federal funds for a total of \$8,334 will be provided by the Autism Foundation of Oklahoma as matching for the purpose of this proposed project.

Personnel

Requested: \$10,459 Match: \$5,160 Total: \$15,619

Executive Director, Emily Scott

.00 FTE Requested, .05 FTE Match with fundraising funds

The Executive Director oversees all aspects of the Autism Foundation of Oklahoma. Ms. Scott will support the program by building community partnerships and reviewing and program deliverables.

Director of Programs, Taylor Knooihuizen

.05 FTE Requested, .00 FTE Match with foundation grant funds

The Director of Programs will oversee all aspects of program administration. Mrs. Knooihuizen will oversee personnel, budget management, ensure time sensitive deadlines and projections are met and meet with team members to guide program activities and plan for needs.

Program Officer, Kyle Britt

.10 FTE Requested, .00 FTE Match with foundation grant funds

The Program Officer will provide day-to-day management of the project. Mr. Britt will ensure collaboration and coordination with partners, will meet with team members to plan training sessions and activities, and provide training and technical assistance to participating places of employment. The Program Officer will report to the Director of Programs.

Fringe Benefits

Requested: \$3,318 Match: \$1,549 Total: \$4,687

Funds are requested at the rate of 30% of salary. The Autism Foundation of Oklahoma's fringe benefit package includes payroll taxes, workers compensation, health insurance allowance and paid leave benefits such as annual leave and holidays.

Contractual

Requested: \$1,200 Match: \$00 Total: \$1,200

Grant Management Specialist, Jennifer Winfrey

Jennifer Winfrey is a Certified Grants Management Specialist with expertise in federal grants and state contracts. She will handle expense tracking, budget monitoring, and finance reporting. Jennifer Winfrey will advise project staff on following 2 CFR 200, Uniform Guidance, and ensure compliance.

Other

Requested: \$5,242 Match: \$1,625 Total: \$6,867

Other funds are requested for training materials, including printing, resource guides, and materials. \$2,750. Funds marketing the project activities and upcoming trainings through digital and print. \$2,492. AFO will provide 25 sensory kits to families. Each kit has a fair market value of \$65/each. \$1,625.

Travel

Requested: \$1,700 Match: \$00 Total: \$1,700

In-state travel is required to meet project objectives set forth in the work plan. Mileage and per diem will be reimbursed using the prevailing federal GSA rate. Other costs may include parking and local toll charges.

Indirect Costs

Requested: \$3,261 Match: \$00 Total: \$3,261

The indirect cost is based on the Office of Management and Budget Guidance of the approved de minimis rate of 15% of modified total direct costs, excludes lease.

47. STATEMENT OF WORK (SoW): *

Provide a proposed statement of work for the contractual requirements. This should include a detailed description of the work to be done, project milestones, deliverables to the Council, and other details important to the work that you will provide in exchange for Council funding. [ProjectManager.com](https://www.projectmanager.com) has some good information for you to develop your statement of work: <https://www.projectmanager.com/blog/statement-work-definition-examples>.

Statement of Work (SOW)

Project Title: Job Readiness and Family Empowerment Program

Organization: Autism Foundation of Oklahoma (AFO)

Funding Source: Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma (DDCO)

Project Period: 12 months

1. Project Overview

AFO will implement a comprehensive Job Readiness and Family Empowerment Program to increase representation and inclusion of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in the Oklahoma City and Tulsa metro areas, including outreach to nearby rural communities.

The project focuses on preparing youth and young adults with I/DD for the workplace through soft skills training (communication, relationships, appropriate dress, financial literacy, and advocacy) and executive functioning skill-building (organization, planning, and time management). Simultaneously, parents and caregivers will receive empowerment training to reinforce these skills at home, advocate for inclusion, and connect with community resources.

2. Scope of Work and Activities

A. Program Development (Months 1–2)

- Develop youth curriculum materials focused on soft skills and executive functioning.
- Create family workshop content emphasizing advocacy, transition planning, and at-home reinforcement.
- Identify accessible delivery formats (in-person, virtual, and hybrid) to reach both metro and rural participants.
- Develop marketing materials and outreach strategies to recruit participants.
- Purchase training materials, sensory kits, and supplies.

Deliverables:

- Finalized youth and family workshop curricula.
- Marketing and outreach plan.
- DDCO Reporting
- Procurement of 25 sensory kits and all necessary materials.

B. Program Implementation (Months 3–10)

- Conduct 4–6 youth workshops in Oklahoma City and Tulsa metro areas.
- Conduct 4–6 parent/caregiver workshops aligned with youth programming.
- Provide virtual access to programming for rural communities.
- Distribute sensory kits and printed resource guides to 25 participating families.
- Conduct ongoing recruitment and engagement through community partners, schools, and local networks.

Deliverables:

- Documentation of workshops conducted (attendance sheets, agendas, photos).
- Distribution logs for sensory kits and materials.
- DDCO Reporting

C. Evaluation and Reporting (Months 11–12)

- Administer pre- and post-program surveys to measure participant growth in soft skills, executive functioning, and advocacy knowledge.
- Gather qualitative feedback through focus groups and interviews with families.
- Compile attendance data and track workshop completion rates.
- Analyze all data and prepare a final evaluation report summarizing program outcomes, successes, and lessons learned.

Deliverables:

- Final evaluation report including quantitative and qualitative data.
- Financial report documenting expenditures.
- All supporting materials (curriculum, surveys, outreach tools).

3. Project Milestones

Month Milestone Deliverable

- 1–2 Curriculum development, materials purchased, marketing launched Curricula, outreach plan, sensory kits prepared
- 3–6 Workshops delivered in OKC metro Attendance and session reports

6–9 Workshops delivered in Tulsa metro and rural areas Session summaries, distribution logs

10–11 Evaluation surveys and data collection Survey results, preliminary outcomes

12 Final evaluation and reporting to DDCO Final report, financial documentation

4. Staffing and Responsibilities

- Director of Programs: Project lead; manages curriculum development, staff coordination, and reporting.
- Training Specialist: Leads parent empowerment workshops; integrates lived experience and best practices.
- AFO Staff Specialists: Contribute to curriculum and support delivery based on their professional expertise.
- Executive Director: Provides organizational oversight, ensures compliance with grant requirements, and approves deliverables.

5. Deliverables to the Council

- Completed youth and parent curriculum materials.
- Mid-year progress report.
- Final

48. Sustainability Plan: *

It is the Council's hope that funded projects will have a lasting impact on the community and achieve financial sustainability after the Council's funding is complete. The Council's funding is intended as a catalyst to help new work become self-sustaining. To assure the Council of this long-term vision, all applicants must submit a detailed Financial Sustainability Plan. Financial sustainability is defined as maintaining services to the community through a diversified funding model. **Important Note:** *The Council can approve funding for an activity for a maximum of five (5) years. However, our funding is not guaranteed, so applications for Council funding must be submitted annually.* The Council expects all funded work to be self-sustaining by the end of the contract period. Your Financial Sustainability Plan should include, but is not limited to, the following components for each year of your proposed project:

- Annual Funding Goals: Clear, measurable funding targets for each year of the project.
- Projected Budgets: A multi-year budget forecast that demonstrates decreasing reliance on Council funding.
- Identified Partners: A list of specific organizations or entities with whom you will partner, along with a description of their role in your sustainability plan. Please also include any documented commitment of resources they are able to provide.
- Timeline: A clear timeline for all sustainability activities (e.g., "Year 2: Apply for three new grants," "Year 3: Implement a pilot fee-for-service program").

AFO is committed to ensuring this project continues beyond the initial one-year funding period. Initial funding will provide the necessary foundation to develop a sustainable program model that can be supported through diversified funding, community partnerships, and integration into existing organizational activities.

Throughout the project, AFO will continue to seek out and apply for additional funding. Within the first six months, we will submit at least 2 two grant proposals to establish ongoing funding streams for future program delivery. We will also identify ways to incorporate the workshop into our existing Transition & Employment programs to reduce the need for new funding each year. Additional support will be targeted through private foundations, corporate partners, and community donors whose priorities align with our mission.

The Council's one-year investment will allow us to develop, pilot, evaluate, and refine our workshops while collecting valuable information on its impact to strengthen future proposals. By the end of the first year, the curriculum, materials, and processes will be fully developed and ready for ongoing implementation without reliance on new start-up funding.

49. Outreach and Awareness Plan of the Work: *

Too often people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, and others are not aware of resources available in Oklahoma. Please provide a marketing and outreach plan to bring awareness about the work being proposed. Your plan should address the following:

- **Target Audience:** Clearly identify the specific groups within the intellectual and developmental disability community you aim to reach (e.g., specific age ranges, individuals in rural vs. urban areas, diverse cultural communities).
- **Marketing Channels:** Describe the specific marketing channels you will use (e.g., social media, community events, partnerships, print materials) and how you will use them effectively to reach your target audiences.
- **Partnerships:** Explain how you will collaborate with other organizations, advocacy groups, or community leaders to expand the reach of your message.
- **Accessibility and Language:** Detail your strategy for ensuring your outreach is accessible and inclusive. Please discuss your plan for language translations, including which languages you will prioritize and how you will ensure cultural appropriateness.
- **Measurement:** Describe how you will measure the success and impact of your marketing and outreach efforts.

Outreach efforts will be statewide, with an emphasis on Oklahoma's more densely populated metro areas, Tulsa and Oklahoma City, while at the same time ensuring equitable access for families located in the more rural areas of the state. Our outreach strategy combines social media, community engagement, and partnerships. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn will feature accessible content for both young adults and families. Project staff will present at statewide and regional conferences to promote the workshops and build professional connections. Outreach will also occur through schools, advocacy groups, and disability service providers, supported by flyers, newsletters, and digital materials distributed through partner networks and community programs.

We will collaborate with community partners such as the Oklahoma Center for Nonprofits, state agencies, and educational institutions to host and promote events that reflect the needs of both individuals and families. Accessibility and inclusion will guide all outreach activities. Materials will use clear, plain language and meet ADA standards for accessibility. Core materials will be translated into Spanish with assistance from bilingual professionals to ensure cultural relevance.

Success will be measured by the number of families and individuals reached, geographic diversity of participants, and partner engagement. Workshop registrations and follow-up inquiries will be used to assess impact and guide ongoing improvement.

50. Logic Model:

To help the Council and your organization effectively evaluate the program's success, a logic model is a required component for all contracts in excess of \$5,000. A logic model is a simple visual tool that illustrates the connection between your project's resources (inputs), what you plan to do (activities), the immediate results of your work (outputs), and the changes you hope to achieve (outcomes). For a helpful guide to developing a clear and effective logic model, please refer to this resource from The Compass: <https://thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guide/how-develop-logic-model-0>

Inputs Activities Outputs Short-Term Outcomes (0–12 months) Intermediate Outcomes (1–2 years) Long-Term Outcomes (2+ years)

• DDCO grant funding (\$33,334) • Director of Programs and AFO staff expertise • Training Specialist (autism parent) • Executive Director oversight • Partner schools & community centers • Training materials, sensory kits, and marketing resources • Develop youth curriculum focused on soft skills (communication, relationships, dressing, financial literacy, advocacy) and executive functioning • Develop and deliver parent/caregiver workshops on advocacy, reinforcement of skills, and access to community supports • Conduct workshops in OKC, Tulsa, and rural areas • Distribute 25 sensory kits and resource guides • Collect pre/post surveys and participant feedback • 4–6 youth workshop sessions conducted • 4–6 parent/caregiver sessions conducted • 25 families receive sensory kits and materials • ~50 youth and 50 parents participate • Data collected from all sessions • Increased participant knowledge of workplace soft skills and executive functioning • Increased parent confidence in supporting employment readiness • Improved family understanding of community resources and advocacy tools • Youth demonstrate measurable progress in workplace readiness, communication, and self-advocacy • Families actively reinforce skills and support transition goals • Stronger family networks and partnerships with community organizations • Increased representation of individuals with I/DD in employment and civic spaces • Improved public attitudes toward the value and contributions of individuals with I/DD • Sustained, equitable access to job readiness programming statewide

58. Registered partnership? *

Is the proposed vendor a registered partnership?

Yes

No

59. Registered corporation? *

Is the proposed vendor a registered corporation?

Yes

No

60. ID Number *

Social Security Number, FEI Number, or OMES Supplier ID

27-2940151

Contact information

61. Signing authority *

Name of individual with contract signing authority, title, Phone number, email address

Emily Scott
Executive Director
Escott@autismfoundationok.org
(405) 434-5507

62. Primary Contact: *

Name of individual(s) to contact regarding contract performance & operations, title, Phone number, email address

Taylor Knooihuizen
Director of Programs
taylork@autismfoudnationok.org
(918)720-2752

63. Finance Contact: *

Name of individual(s) responsible for finance and accounting, title, Phone number, email address

Jennifer Winfrey
Finance Director
jwinfrey@autismfoundationok.org
(405) 208-2160

64. Legal Notices: *

Name of individual(s) to send legal notices, title, Phone number, email address

Emily Scott
Executive Director
Escott@autismfoundationok.org
(405) 434-5507

Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma

July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027

	Request	Match	Total
Project Income			
DDCO Request	25,000	-	25,000
Non-Federal Grants		8,334	8,334
Total Project Income	25,000	8,334	33,334
			-
Expenses			-
Salary			-
Executive Director (0%, 5%)	-	5,160	5,160
Director of Programs (5%, 0%)	4,088	-	4,088
Program Officer (10%, 0%)	6,371	-	6,371
Resource Coordinator (0%, 0%)	-	-	-
Total Salary	10,459	5,160	15,619
			-
Fringe (30%)	3,138	1,549	4,687
			-
Contractual			-
Grants Management Specialist	1,200	-	1,200
Total Contractual	1,200	-	1,200
			-
Other			-
Sensory Kit (\$65/each)	-	1,625	1,625
Training Materials	2,750	-	2,750
Marketing	2,492	-	2,492
Total Other	5,242	1,625	6,867
			-
Travel (in-state)	1,700	-	1,700
			-
Total Direct Costs	21,739	8,334	30,073
Indirect Costs (15% MTDC)	3,261	-	3,261
Total Program Costs	25,000	8,334	33,334
			-
Net Revenue over Expenses	-	-	-
Match Percentage		25%	

LookOut Art Program

AutismOklahoma

Fiscal Year FY27 Funding Request

Project/Activity: LookOut Program

Organization: AutismOklahoma

Proposal Description: This proposal seeks funding to expand an inclusive, community-based art program serving individuals of all ages with developmental disabilities. The program integrates adaptive art classes, artist mentorship, and public exhibitions to provide participants with structured opportunities for creative expression, skill development, and social connection. Classes will be led by trained instructors using accessible materials, while mentorship pairs participants with local artists for individualized guidance, portfolio development, and encouragement. Public exhibitions and community events will showcase participants' artwork, increase visibility, and promote inclusion within the broader community.

Planned activities include outreach to 25 new artist participants, three submission events to recruit emerging artists, and the addition of four new art classes in the Tulsa area. At least one major exhibition will highlight the collaborative work of participants and mentors, providing a platform for public engagement and recognition. These program components are designed to strengthen participants' creative abilities, confidence, and sense of belonging, while simultaneously fostering public awareness of the talents of individuals with developmental disabilities.

Expected outcomes include improved self-expression, fine motor and communication skills, social connectedness, and portfolio development that could lead to vocational or entrepreneurial opportunities. For the community, the program will enhance appreciation of diverse artistic abilities, reduce stigma, and expand inclusion in cultural events. Program evaluation will track attendance, mentorship hours, portfolio development, pre- and post-surveys, and community feedback to measure impact and inform ongoing program growth. This expansion represents a strategic opportunity to increase access to lifelong art programming and further embed inclusive practices within the local arts ecosystem.

Council Goal & Objective: Access to Services

Targeted Audience: Our primary audience includes individuals with autism or other developmental disabilities, aged 10 to 50, who are either practicing or aspiring artists and filmmakers, with filmmakers aged 18 and above. While focused on autism, the program is inclusive of all artists with developmental disabilities, emphasizing shared resources, community connection, and opportunities for participants to realize their creative potential.

Funding requested for Fiscal Year FY27

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$15,000	\$19,000	\$34,000

Prior Fiscal Year FY26

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$18,000	\$16,000	\$34,000

Prior Fiscal Year FY25

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$24,000	\$10,000	\$34,000

6. **General Timelines:**

Funding decisions can take time for the Council to discuss. Please allow time for feedback on your proposal and possible revision of your proposal or providing more information. We want to be a partner and are happy to work with you as you complete an application. Please ask questions. If approved for funding, contract dates depend on when the proposal was received, length of review by Council committee, and contract negotiations.

For a proposal requesting funding for a full year, contracts will typically follow the state fiscal year: July 1 through June 30.

Proposals received are evaluated by a Council Committee, and if approved, a recommendation is made to the full Council for a decision. If approved by the full Council, we will make every effort for contracts to be effective as early as possible, typically by July 1. Applicants will be notified by email within 5 business days of the full Council's decision.

IMPORTANT: Do not begin work until a fully executed contract and purchase order (PO) is in hand. Per Oklahoma Statute, no funding can or will be reimbursed for any goods or service prior to the effective date of a contract.

If you have any questions, email our Planning & Grants Director, Jennifer Robinson: Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org.

ok

Part 1 - Contact Information

7. **Organization Name ***

AutismOklahoma.org

8. **Organization Address ***

Mailing address please: Street number, Street name, City, State, 9-digit Zip Code

7725 W Reno Ave; Suite 321 Oklahoma City, OK 73127

9. **Contact Info ***

Name, email address **and** phone number of the person completing this application.

Dee Blose

10. **Website**

Organization's Website

autismoklahoma.org

Our State Plan Goals

To qualify for funding, projects must meet the goals in the 5-Year Council State Plan. The state plan is available for review <https://oklahoma.gov/ddco/about/state-plan.html>. The new state plan for 2027-2031 is in the process of being developed.

11. State Plan Goal *

As of August 2025, the Council is in the process of reviewing input from publicly held listening sessions and information about current services and systems in Oklahoma. Goals have not been established for our next 5 Year State Plan (2027-2031), however proposals submitted should fall within one of our themes we have identified.

- Access to Services
- Inclusive Education
- Caregiver Support
- Representation and Public Attitudes
- Advocacy and Self-Advocacy

All goals of the LookOut program will align with the Council's State Plan. We will specifically promote more access to services for persons with developmental disabilities DD (specifically inclusive recreation, art, filmmaking, and showcase events plus community participation in social spaces), positive representation of persons with DD, supporting public attitudes of competency and DD creativity, and advocacy for inclusion in art and cultural opportunities including media and filmmaking. 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. "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 1000 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.

"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.

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 purpose of this policy is to ensure a fair and impartial procurement process. The questions that follow are designed to help the state determine if such a conflict exists.

12. 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

13. Identify names and relationships

If you answered yes to "**Any relationships to the organization?**" please explain in detail. Identify names and relationships, as necessary.

Statement on Relationship with DD Council

David Blose is a graduate of YLF and a council member. David was in a past 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 has been the overall manager of the Lookout Program for the past 15 months. 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 if allowed
Executive Director, Kelly Fry will be the legal AO contact for this proposal. She will be overseeing contracting and finance requirements.

Part 3 - Your activity proposal:

The Council's committee carefully reviews all complete and accurate applications. The information you provide in Part III will help our members understand your proposed work and how it aligns with the Council's funding priorities and expectations.

Problem Statement

Individuals with developmental disabilities, including autism, face significant barriers to creative participation in their communities. While some access to art exists in public education, these opportunities typically end when individuals graduate or age out of school-based programs. Adults with developmental disabilities often lose the structure, mentorship, and social connection that artmaking provides.

Community art programs are rarely equipped with the training or resources to include participants with diverse abilities. This results in isolation, underdeveloped talents, and a lack of representation of people with developmental disabilities in community arts spaces. The absence of accessible, lifelong art opportunities prevents these individuals from realizing their creative potential and denies the broader community the opportunity to experience and celebrate their unique artistic voices.

Proposed Solution

Lookout will create an inclusive, community-based art program open to individuals of all ages with developmental disabilities. The program will consist of three integrated components:

1. Art Classes:

Regular, adaptive art classes led by trained instructors who understand sensory and communication differences. Lessons will include painting, drawing, sculpture, and mixed media, using accessible materials and individualized supports.

2. Art Mentorship:

A mentorship initiative pairing participants with local artists and volunteers who can provide individualized guidance, encouragement, and support in developing personal artistic styles and portfolios.

3. Art Exhibitions and Community Events:

Participants' artwork will be showcased in galleries, libraries, and community venues. These exhibitions will celebrate participants' creativity, promote inclusion, and build public awareness of the abilities of people with developmental disabilities. Together, these elements provide both a safe, nurturing space for creativity and a platform to connect participants with the broader community through shared artistic expression.

Expected Outcomes

For Participants:

- Increased self-expression, confidence, and emotional well-being.
- Enhanced fine motor, communication, and problem-solving skills.
- Strengthened social connections and sense of belonging.
- Development of portfolios that can lead to vocational or entrepreneurial art opportunities.

For the Community:

- Greater public appreciation of the abilities and creativity of individuals with developmental disabilities.
- Reduced stigma and increased inclusion in community arts and events.
- Stronger community connections and enriched cultural diversity.

Evaluation Plan

Program success will be measured through both quantitative and qualitative methods:

- Attendance and Participation: Tracking number of classes, participants, and mentorship hours.
- Pre- and Post-Surveys: Measuring changes in self-confidence, social engagement, and perceived inclusion.
- Portfolio Reviews: Assessing participants' creative growth and skill development.
- Community Feedback: Collecting input from exhibition visitors, mentors, and partners about inclusion and impact.
- Annual Summary: Compiling data and testimonials into a report to evaluate progress and inform future program improvements.

System Change

Lookout promotes meaningful system change by addressing the lack of inclusive arts programming beyond the school system. It creates a continuum of lifelong creative opportunities, connecting education, community arts, and disability services. By training instructors, volunteers, and local artists, the program builds capacity within the arts sector to serve people with developmental disabilities more effectively.

15. Have you completed a needs assessment? *

Yes

No

16. Needs assessment:

If you have completed a needs assessment, please provide a summary below. Your response should include:

- A brief description of the methodology used (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups).
- The key findings that support the need for your proposed project.
- The population included in your assessment.
- An explanation of how this assessment directly informs your proposal.

Needs are collected through request for information, connections and services through our website (continuous open submission process), open ended questions in our client groups, and during staff meetings where we review all consumer requests. We get multiple service and information requests about our art programming a month. All requests and information submitted are reviewed by staff, and will include a personal followup and linkup to either our services, or appropriate services through our community resources and partnerships. AO also reviews statewide needs assessments of related organizations who invest significant resources in more formal assessments, to make sure what we are offering complements other services and reduces duplication of services. We are open to collaboration regarding assessment since most of our partners serve overlapping populations and it is important that we all maximize data collection for some shared purposes.

17. Who will do the work? *

Please list all people and organizations that will be working on the project, and describe their experience and qualifications to provide the proposed goods and services.

In 2024/25, we contracted with the following for the art program: Jonathan Koelsch, Lisa Robinson, Amy Decker, Dillion Griffiths, Vanessa Spellman, Dustin Collins, Emily Hale, Wes Gutekunst, BC Summers, Parker Marton, SquareHoles LLC (OKC and Tulsa areas), Meradith Bland (Tulsa), Monica Musgrove (Tulsa), Kinsley Flynt, and Austin Taylor. Art volunteers for mentorship have included: Jennifer Cocoma Hustis, Clint Stone, Anna Welte, Kellie Merrick, Brittany Harris, Kalise Kriewall, Jane Lawson, Manu Contreras, Angel Peck, and Tamra Bray. 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: Kelly Fry (overall compliance and finance), Dee Blose (overall art facilitation), Sarah Lauffenburger (film program coordination and video production), Adi McCasland (communications and print/web media), Maggie Inzinga (event support), and Crystal Frost (event support).

Kelly Dyer Fry, Executive Director

Kelly Dyer Fry retired early 2021 after a 26-year career with The Oklahoman. While at The Oklahoman, Fry served in several capacities. She started as features editor in 1994 and became managing editor and later general manager of The Oklahoman's digital efforts. She led the team that launched NewsOK which started as a converged website for The Oklahoman and KWTV News 9. Fry was promoted to vice president of multimedia, vice president of news, editor and ultimately editor and publisher. In 2019 Gannett purchased The Oklahoman and Fry was promoted to regional editor for Gannett's Sunbelt region of Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico and Colorado. She is a member of the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame and has been honored for her work with addiction and mental illness within her community. Her passion for mental health, addiction, homelessness and justice reform continued at Mental Health Association Oklahoma where she served as director of communications.

Fry was named Executive Director of Autism Oklahoma in 2025.

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.

Sarah Lauffenburger Director of Media and Communications

Growing up with a sibling on the spectrum, Sarah has been involved with AutismOklahoma at various capacities for her entire life and is passionate about giving back to the community that gave so much to her. Her greatest pleasure is co-leading Invisible Layers Productions, a program of AutismOklahoma that empowers talented filmmakers on the spectrum to collaborate and create videos as a team. Leveraging her Bachelor's degree in Mass Communications Professional Media, she serves as a catalyst for members of the autism community to share their voices through her filmmaking, writing, storytelling, photography, and more.

18. Targeted population:

*

Tell us more about who you are targeting to improve outcomes for? Describe the age, region, familial status, learning or support needs, and type of disability.

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.

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.

19. Impact:

*

Please describe the anticipated impact of your proposal by addressing the following three components:

- Goals for the targeted population?
 - What are the specific, measurable goals you hope to achieve for the individuals directly served by this project?
- Broader implications for people with developmental disabilities:
 - Beyond the direct participants, how will this project create a broader, positive impact for the population of people with developmental disabilities as a whole?
- Measurable outcomes:
 - What specific, quantifiable metrics will you use to track your success and demonstrate the project's effectiveness?

The goal of the LookOut Art Program activity is to increase and expand art programming in Oklahoma by: finding new art participants, developing mentor relationships for participants, participants learning new artistic skills, increasing the hope families have for the future of their children, and showcasing artwork through art exhibitions.

Contractor will reach out to 25 new artist participants with developmental disabilities to participate in LookOut.

Contractor will hold 3 submission events to find new interested artists and students.

Contractor will host at least one major art show for identified artists and mentors.

Contractor will continue the process to expand art programming into the Tulsa area through four additional art classes.

20. Duplication or expansion:

*

Does this proposal duplicate or expand upon any existing work in Oklahoma or elsewhere? The Council cannot supplant funding to continue existing work unless the proposal is to expand on the work and enhances what is being done.

If your proposal duplicates or expands upon existing work, please describe the existing work and explain what makes your project unique and innovative. Be specific about how this approach and expected outcomes differ from and add value to what is already being done.

We know of no similar program in Oklahoma.

21. Best Practices:

*

Will your proposed project use current evidence-based best practices in the field of developmental disabilities? Identify the specific practices you will use, explain how you will incorporate them into your project, and cite your sources. Citations should include a mix of professional literature, research studies, and respected organizations or programs.

Art & Performance Visual Arts Programs

A scoping review of programs in community/ambulatory settings (ages ~6–18) found that visual & performing arts-based programs (e.g. drawing, music, theater) can yield positive psychosocial outcomes: improvements in emotional, social, behavioral, cognitive, or communicative functioning. (PubMed)

Art Interventions for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

A scoping review (2000-2020) analysed quantitative studies of art/music/theater interventions for children with ASD and found improvements in social interaction skills, process/performance skills, and client factors such as body functions. Effects were observed in both group and individual sessions; multiple sessions yielded more substantial improvements. (PubMed)

Mentoring for Youth with Disabilities

The National Mentoring Resource Center conducted a model/population review (youth ≤25 with disabilities) that found mentoring can improve outcomes in social-emotional development, academic progress, identity, and self-efficacy. Key conditions include quality of mentor-mentee relationship, training, and structured support. (National Mentoring Resource Center)

Mentoring in Arts for Autistic Professionals

A pilot randomized controlled trial of a 10-week mentoring program for autistic performing arts professionals showed positive effects on occupational self-efficacy; mentors who shared identity with mentees (being also autistic) were especially valued. (SpringerLink)

Studies emphasize that multiple sessions over time (rather than single one-off workshops) are necessary in creative arts to produce meaningful change (for social skills, process skills).

Group and Individual Format: Both formats seem useful; group sessions help social interaction, peer learning; individual sessions can allow more tailored instruction or dealing with individual needs. (PubMed)

22. 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.

How will your proposed project lead to **lasting systems change** for people with developmental disabilities? Please provide a detailed explanation of how your project's outcomes will shift thinking, improve practices, or empower individuals and families within the state's service system.

System Change

This Art program promotes meaningful system change by addressing structural gaps and reshaping how communities include individuals with developmental disabilities in the arts. Currently, most inclusive art opportunities end when individuals exit public education, leaving few options for creative engagement or continued growth. AutismOklahoma establishes a continuum of inclusive arts access that bridges education, community, and adulthood—demonstrating how the arts can be integrated into lifelong learning and inclusion systems.

Through training and mentorship, the program builds community capacity by equipping local artists, volunteers, and educators with skills to adapt instruction and environments for people with diverse abilities. This knowledge transfer creates a replicable model for inclusive arts practice that can be sustained across community organizations.

Public exhibitions and collaborative events shift community perceptions, reframing disability as diversity and promoting visibility and belonging for all participants. As the program generates data and evaluation outcomes on participant growth, well-being, and community engagement, it will contribute to the broader evidence base demonstrating the value of inclusive arts.

Ultimately, Lookout promotes a systemic shift toward inclusion, collaboration, and accessibility within the arts, education, and human services sectors—moving from isolated efforts to a coordinated, community-wide approach that celebrates and supports the creative contributions of people with developmental disabilities.

23. Where implemented:

*

Will the proposed project be implemented or offered statewide? If no, please define the specific counties and cities you will serve and provide the rationale for their selection.

Using an online art submission process on the AO webpage, any artists in OK will be able to submit their art for exhibition in this program. In person classes are mostly in OKC metro area, but classes have also been held in Tulsa, and recently a couple of our artists traveled to Ardmore to exhibit and promote art and our programming. Also, we distribute our outreach cards with information at all our events which include multiple opportunities where folks from around the state will attend (for example, annual statewide AO walks, OK State Fair).

Performance Measures

The Council is required to submit performance reports to evaluate the effectiveness of all Council activities to our Federal partners. We require all contracted vendors to submit performance measure data prior to final payment. As a required component of your application, please provide **projected data** for the following performance measures. All contractors must collect **baseline data** to evaluate the project's outcomes. If you have questions about these projected and baseline numbers, please reach out to us.

Note: Not all measures may be applicable to your proposal. If a measure does not apply, please enter zero.

- **IA** = Individual and family **A**dvocacy
- **SC** = System **C**hange

24. IA1.1

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

The value must be a number

25. 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

26. 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

27. **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

28. **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

29. **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

30. **IA 2.2.2**

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

The value must be a number

31. **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

32. **IA 3.1**

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

The value must be a number

33. **IA 3.2**

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

The value must be a number

34. **SC 1.1.1**

The number of policy and or procedures created or changed.

The value must be a number

35. **SC 1.2.1**

The number of statutes and or regulations created or changed.

The value must be a number

36. **SC 1.3.1**

The number of promising practices created.

The value must be a number

37. **SC 1.3.2**

The number of promising practices supported through Council activities.

The value must be a number

38. **SC 1.3.3**

The number of best practices created.

The value must be a number

39. **SC 1.4.1**

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

The value must be a number

40. **SC 1.5.1**

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

The value must be a number

41. **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

42. **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

43. **SC 2.1.2**

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

The value must be a number

44. **SC 2.1.3**

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

The value must be a number

45. **SC 2.1.4**

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

The value must be a number

46. **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

47. **FINANCIAL INFORMATION *****Proposal Budget:**

- Include a detailed revenue and expenditure budget, detailing the total costs and revenues of the proposal.
- Identify the amount requested from the Council within the context of the budget.
- **The Council funding cannot exceed 75% of your budget.** For example, if your budget is \$10,000, our funding can be up to \$7,500. Your 25% match would be a minimum of \$2,500. **Start with your budget** and calculate the 75/25 split. *If you believe you are located in/providing services in a Poverty County, please note that, or contact us. For Poverty Counties the split is 90/10.
- Identify the amount of the required 25% funding match for your project's total budget. You also need to explain where this matching funding will come from. **Sources for the match funding** can include non-federal funding, monies from fundraisers or donations/sponsorships, monies from your organization for salary/fringe, donated services or items, discounted services or items, and volunteer time. (*paid employees of a non-profit organization cannot volunteer to provide the same type of services to their non-profit organization that they are employed to provide) If you need help calculating the value of volunteer time, you can contact Jennifer. Match funding helps the Council understand all partners who are helping with the project.
- 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 your budget** to Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org and include the Project Name in the subject line.

48. **STATEMENT OF WORK (SoW): ***

Provide a proposed statement of work for the contractual requirements. This should include a detailed description of the work to be done, project milestones, deliverables to the Council, and other details important to the work that you will provide in exchange for Council funding. [ProjectManager.com](https://www.projectmanager.com) has some good information for you to develop your statement of work: <https://www.projectmanager.com/blog/statement-work-definition-examples>.

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. 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 50 artists on the spectrum or with developmental disabilities (DD) and 25 contract or volunteer neurotypical artists annually.

Using third year requested Council funding, we want to reach more artists through an outreach program called LookOut. LookOut will have a wide variety of activities. AO will hold multiple outreach and submission events so as to find new interested artists and students. AO will manage an online submissions process so as to reach any artist throughout the State of Oklahoma. Artists submissions will not be limited to only persons with autism, but will be open to anyone with a developmental disability. More gallery space will be utilized for our major art show and extensive exhibition opportunities are available within the 7725 Connect facility.

All goals of the LookOut program will align with the Council's State Plan. We will specifically promote more access to services (specifically inclusive recreation, art/filmmaking, and community participation), positive representation of persons with DD, supporting public attitudes of competency and DD creativity, and advocacy for inclusion in art opportunities including media and filmmaking.

49. **Sustainability Plan: ***

It is the Council's hope that funded projects will have a lasting impact on the community and achieve financial sustainability after the Council's funding is complete. The Council's funding is intended as a catalyst to help new work become self-sustaining. To assure the Council of this long-term vision, all applicants must submit a detailed Financial Sustainability Plan. Financial sustainability is defined as maintaining services to the community through a diversified funding model. **Important Note:** *The Council can approve funding for an activity for a maximum of five (5) years. However, our funding is not guaranteed, so applications for Council funding must be submitted annually.* The Council expects all funded work to be self-sustaining by the end of the contract period. Your Financial Sustainability Plan should include, but is not limited to, the following components for each year of your proposed project:

- Annual Funding Goals: Clear, measurable funding targets for each year of the project.
- Projected Budgets: A multi-year budget forecast that demonstrates decreasing reliance on Council funding.
- Identified Partners: A list of specific organizations or entities with whom you will partner, along with a description of their role in your sustainability plan. Please also include any documented commitment of resources they are able to provide.
- Timeline: A clear timeline for all sustainability activities (e.g., "Year 2: Apply for three new grants," "Year 3: Implement a pilot fee-for-service program").

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 have requested declining funding for this project, in order to demonstrate that we are on the road to sustainability. We had first year funding of \$24,000, second year of \$18,000 and our third year proposal is \$15,000.

50. **Outreach and Awareness Plan of the Work:** *

Too often people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, and others are not aware of resources available in Oklahoma. Please provide a marketing and outreach plan to bring awareness about the work being proposed. Your plan should address the following:

- Target Audience: Clearly identify the specific groups within the intellectual and developmental disability community you aim to reach (e.g., specific age ranges, individuals in rural vs. urban areas, diverse cultural communities).
- Marketing Channels: Describe the specific marketing channels you will use (e.g., social media, community events, partnerships, print materials) and how you will use them effectively to reach your target audiences.
- Partnerships: Explain how you will collaborate with other organizations, advocacy groups, or community leaders to expand the reach of your message.
- Accessibility and Language: Detail your strategy for ensuring your outreach is accessible and inclusive. Please discuss your plan for language translations, including which languages you will prioritize and how you will ensure cultural appropriateness.
- Measurement: Describe how you will measure the success and impact of your marketing and outreach efforts.

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, KWTU, 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.

Executive Director Kelly Fry, former managing editor of the Daily Oklahoman has significant media connections, and regularly goes on TV interviews, and submits editorials to the Daily Oklahoman! We can count on her to get the word out!

51. **Logic Model:**

To help the Council and your organization effectively evaluate the program's success, a logic model is a required component for all contracts in excess of \$5,000. A logic model is a simple visual tool that illustrates the connection between your project's resources (inputs), what you plan to do (activities), the immediate results of your work (outputs), and the changes you hope to achieve (outcomes). For a helpful guide to developing a clear and effective logic model, please refer to this resource from The Compass: <https://thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guide/how-develop-logic-model-0>

model will be emailed

52. **Registered Vendor?** *

Are you a registered vendor with the State of Oklahoma? All contractors must be registered in the State Supplier Portal. You can do this online: <https://oklahoma.gov/omes/divisions/central-purchasing/suppliers-and-payees/supplier-portal.html>

- Yes
- No

59. **Registered partnership? ***

Is the proposed vendor a registered partnership?

Yes

No

60. **Registered corporation? ***

Is the proposed vendor a registered corporation?

Yes

No

61. **ID Number ***

Social Security Number, FEI Number, or OMES Supplier ID

OMES Supplier ID 0000362416

Contact information

62. **Signing authority ***

Name of individual with contract signing authority, title, Phone number, email address

Kelly Fry, kelly@autismoklahoma.org

63. **Primary Contact: ***

Name of individual(s) to contact regarding contract performance & operations, title, Phone number, email address

Dee Blose, dee@autismoklahoma.org, 4056404598

64. **Finance Contact: ***

Name of individual(s) responsible for finance and accounting, title, Phone number, email address

Dee Blose, dee@autismoklahoma.org, 4056404598

65. **Legal Notices: ***

Name of individual(s) to send legal notices, title, Phone number, email address

Dee Blose, dee@autismoklahoma.org, 4056404598

Project Title: AutismOklahoma Art Programming				
Project Revenue Budget				
Art Sales	\$	4,000		
General AO Donations from Sponsorships and Individual Donations	\$	15,000		
DD Council Funding	\$	15,000		
Total Revenue	\$	34,000		
		DD Council Funding	Match Funding	Project Total
Project Expense Budget				
Art Contractors (200 hours at \$50/hour)	\$	4,000		\$ 4,000
Teach classes				
Support mentor relationships				
Develop print materials				
Facilitate art showcase events				
Website Development (contract webmaster)	\$	-		\$ -
Expand and update website for LookOut programming \$25/hour				
Program Expansion				
Travel and Mileage	\$	-		\$ -
Marketing/Communications Plan - Staff Adi McCasland	\$	1,900	\$ -	\$ 1,900
Art Program Administration - Staff Dee Blose			\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000
Video Production and iLP instruction - Staff Sarah Lauffenburger	\$	5,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 8,000
Procurment of Contractors and Work Performance to Objectives - Staff Kelly Fry	\$	1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,000
Event Support - Staff Crystal Frost and Maggie Inzinga	\$	1,800	\$ -	\$ 1,800
Printing	\$	500		\$ 500
Fees for Software usage	\$	800		\$ 800
Total	\$	15,000	\$ 19,000	\$ 34,000

Logic Model

Program: AutismOklahoma – Art Programming

Situation: Individuals with Developmental Disabilities need increased opportunities to develop recreation skills, specifically artistic expression, that will allow them to live their best lives.

Goals	Inputs		Impact		
	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes Short Term	Outcomes Long Term
<p>Increase and expand AutismOklahoma art programming</p> <p>Find new art participants</p> <p>Artists participate in mentor relationships</p> <p>Artists participate in art classes</p> <p>Persons with developmental disabilities learn new artistic skills</p> <p>Families feel hope for the future</p> <p>AO supports partnerships with service providers, schools, and community friends</p> <p>Person's with DD have a place to "showcase" their talents through art shows and artistic exhibition events/locations</p>	<p>Persons with developmental disabilities</p> <p>Art studio</p> <p>Art supplies</p> <p>Digital supplies</p> <p>AO resources and funding</p> <p>Research and best practices</p> <p>Community services</p> <p>Community partners</p>	<p>Find new artists through new LookOut program</p> <p>Find new art participants through social media and marketing</p> <p>Develop plan to expand programming to the Tulsa area</p> <p>Contract with appropriate art teachers and staff</p> <p>Arrange proper facilitation for mentorships</p> <p>Recruit community artists to mentor/coach participants</p> <p>Recruit and provide training to volunteers</p> <p>Ongoing evaluation of art programming, with corrections as needed</p>	<p>Beautiful art to be shared with the world</p> <p>Art instruction</p> <p>Recreation/hobbies based on interest building</p> <p>Calendar of events</p> <p>Announcement forum</p> <p>Mentor/coaching structure</p> <p>Fully supplied art studio</p> <p>Printed materials that celebrate the art</p> <p>Art webpage</p> <p>Art shows</p>	<p>Persons with developmental disabilities will have more skills to use for recreation and for communication</p> <p>Artists find others who can relate</p> <p>AO can increase and expand successful art programming</p> <p>Families locate resources</p> <p>Families are supported to celebrate their person</p> <p>Persons with DD are encouraged and start to engage on art platform</p>	<p>Individuals can advocate for what is important to them through their art</p> <p>Good Life/ Quality of Life for our persons with DD and their family</p> <p>Community is supportive of persons with DD</p>

Best Buddies Program Growth Initiative

Best Buddies in Oklahoma

Fiscal Year FY27 Funding Request

Project/Activity: Best Buddies Program Growth Initiative

Organization: Best Buddies in Oklahoma

Proposal Description: In the coming year, the Best Buddies Program Growth Initiative will focus on expanding its reach and deepening its impact across Oklahoma City schools. Building on the success of the 2025 Expansion Project, the initiative will establish five new school chapters, recruit and engage at least 100 students, and conduct 20 group activities that promote inclusion and friendship between youth with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). These new chapters will create opportunities for at least 25 students with IDD, including five in leadership roles, to build friendships, develop confidence, and strengthen essential communication and social skills.

Each new chapter will function as a student-led club supported by trained faculty advisors and guided by Best Buddies staff. Student and faculty leaders will participate in multiple training sessions focused on fostering one-to-one friendships, planning inclusive activities, and ensuring chapter sustainability. Throughout the year, Best Buddies staff will provide continued mentorship, online resources, and leadership transition support to ensure that chapters remain active and thriving beyond their first year.

Through these efforts, Best Buddies aims to cultivate inclusive school communities that prepare students with IDD for success in college, employment, and independent living. The organization will measure success through participation numbers, leadership development milestones, and participant feedback—building on survey results showing strong satisfaction and positive school climate impacts. Ultimately, this year’s initiative will strengthen the foundation for long-term inclusion and friendship in schools and communities across Oklahoma.

Council Goal & Objective: Representation and Public Attitudes

Targeted Audience: The target population for the project includes elementary school, middle school, and high school students with and without IDD, aged approximately 11 to 18 years, in the greater Oklahoma City area. We expect that the project will serve a minimum of 100 students with and without IDD.

Funding requested for Fiscal Year FY27

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$25,000	\$8,334	\$33,334

Prior Fiscal Year FY26

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$25,000	\$8,333	\$33,333

Prior Fiscal Year FY25

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$25,000	\$8,333	\$33,333

6. **General Timelines:**

Funding decisions can take time for the Council to discuss. Please allow time for feedback on your proposal and possible revision of your proposal or providing more information. We want to be a partner and are happy to work with you as you complete an application. Please ask questions. If approved for funding, contract dates depend on when the proposal was received, length of review by Council committee, and contract negotiations.

For a proposal requesting funding for a full year, contracts will typically follow the state fiscal year: July 1 through June 30.

Proposals received are evaluated by a Council Committee, and if approved, a recommendation is made to the full Council for a decision. If approved by the full Council, we will make every effort for contracts to be effective as early as possible, typically by July 1. Applicants will be notified by email within 5 business days of the full Council's decision.

IMPORTANT: Do not begin work until a fully executed contract and purchase order (PO) is in hand. Per Oklahoma Statute, no funding can or will be reimbursed for any goods or service prior to the effective date of a contract.

If you have any questions, email our Planning & Grants Director, Jennifer Robinson: Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org.

Confirmed

Part 1 - Contact Information

7. **Organization Name ***

Best Buddies in Oklahoma

8. **Organization Address ***

Mailing address please: Street number, Street name, City, State, 9-digit Zip Code

6110 E 51st Place, Tulsa, OK 74135

9. **Contact Info ***

Name, email address **and** phone number of the person completing this application.

Milli Protheroe, milliprotheroe@bestbuddies.org 610-223-0441

10. **Website**

Organization's Website

www.bestbuddies.org/oklahoma

Our State Plan Goals

To qualify for funding, projects must meet the goals in the 5-Year Council State Plan. The state plan is available for review <https://oklahoma.gov/ddco/about/state-plan.html>. The new state plan for 2027-2031 is in the process of being developed.

11. **State Plan Goal** *

As of August 2025, the Council is in the process of reviewing input from publicly held listening sessions and information about current services and systems in Oklahoma. Goals have not been established for our next 5 Year State Plan (2027-2031), however proposals submitted should fall within one of our themes we have identified.

- Access to Services
- Inclusive Education
- Caregiver Support
- Representation and Public Attitudes
- Advocacy and Self-Advocacy

Representation and Public Attitudes

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 purpose of this policy is to ensure a fair and impartial procurement process. The questions that follow are designed to help the state determine if such a conflict exists.

12. **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

13. **Identify names and relationships**

If you answered yes to "**Any relationships to the organization?**" please explain in detail. Identify names and relationships, as necessary.

n/a

Part 3 - Your activity proposal:

The Council's committee carefully reviews all complete and accurate applications. The information you provide in Part III will help our members understand your proposed work and how it aligns with the Council's funding priorities and expectations.

14. **Proposal.** *

Provide a written overview of your proposal (up to 4000 characters). A good overview should cover the key components of your proposal. This includes:

- **Introduction:** A brief summary of your project's purpose.
- **Problem Statement:** The issue your project aims to address.
- **Proposed Solution:** A clear description of your methodology and how your project will solve the problem.
- **Expected Outcomes:** The anticipated results or impact of your work.
- **Evaluation:** How the work will be measured.
- **Relevance:** How your project aligns with the council's goals and funding priorities.

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 independent 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.

Best Buddies fosters friendships between youth with and without IDD, allowing students with disabilities and typical peers to have meaningful social interactions. In addition, typical peers will learn that students with disabilities have many strengths and abilities, and therefore understand their contributions to schools, communities, and the workplace.

In 2025, the Best Buddies Expansion Project, funded by DDCO, expanded its reach by establishing chapters in five middle and high schools, serving 42 students with IDD and 86 students without IDD. Through this project, Best Buddies will benefit additional students and establish five new chapters; recruit and engage 100 student participants; deliver 20 group activities; and train five student and faculty leaders. The project will engage a minimum of 25 students with IDD, at least five of whom will serve in a leadership role.

Best Buddies has met with administrators and faculty at the following schools in Oklahoma City: Adelaide Lee Elementary, Arthur Elementary, Buchanan Elementary, Capitol Hill High School, and Putnam City High.

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 and teachers in the Oklahoma City area schools 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. 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 integrated student officer corps and the support of a volunteer faculty advisor who serves as a liaison between the chapter and school administration. Student officers with and without IDD, 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 plan activities, 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.

Best Buddies will extend its impact by launching additional chapters, fostering one-to-one friendships, providing leadership training, and delivering activities year-round. These initiatives will benefit students with and without IDD, promoting positive environments in schools.

15. Have you completed a needs assessment? * Yes No**16. Who will do the work? ***

Please list all people and organizations that will be working on the project, and describe their experience and qualifications to provide the proposed goods and services.

Founded in 1989, Best Buddies has 36 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 17 elementary, middle, and high schools, and colleges in the counties of Cleveland, Oklahoma, Payne, and Tulsa. The 171 participants in our programs positively impact the lives of 1,700 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 with and without IDD.

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 12 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. In addition, Melanie Pleasant will provide support as Lead Program Manager. Melanie joined Best Buddies in 2023 and is a graduate of Heartland Bible College with a degree in Youth Ministry. Melanie has been assisting our school-based chapters since she joined our organization.

17. Targeted population:

*

Tell us more about who you are targeting to improve outcomes for? Describe the age, region, familial status, learning or support needs, and type of disability.

The target population for the project includes elementary school, middle school, and high school students with and without IDD, aged approximately 11 to 18 years, in the greater Oklahoma City area. We expect that the project will serve a minimum of 100 students with and without IDD.

18. Impact:

*

Please describe the anticipated impact of your proposal by addressing the following three components:

- Goals for the targeted population?
 - What are the specific, measurable goals you hope to achieve for the individuals directly served by this project?
- Broader implications for people with developmental disabilities:
 - Beyond the direct participants, how will this project create a broader, positive impact for the population of people with developmental disabilities as a whole?
- Measurable outcomes:
 - What specific, quantifiable metrics will you use to track your success and demonstrate the project's effectiveness?

The Best Buddies Program Growth Initiative will impact students by fostering meaningful social connections between youth with and without IDD. Through these relationships, students with IDD gain essential communication and social skills that prepare them for college, careers, and active community life.

By forming genuine friendships, students with IDD broaden their social circles beyond family members and paid professionals and become more engaged members of their schools and communities. Best Buddies gives them the opportunity to both have a friend and be one by developing confidence and interpersonal skills that support lifelong success.

At the same time, students without IDD grow more comfortable interacting with peers who have disabilities and often serve as role models for others. These authentic relationships help all students recognize the many strengths and talents of people with IDD and encourage a school culture where everyone feels they belong.

Participation in Best Buddies is life-changing for youth with IDD. The friendships they build through the program support a successful transition from school to employment and independent living. As they develop social and leadership skills, their confidence, employability, and sense of self-worth grow stronger.

Ultimately, the Best Buddies Program Growth Initiative will expand opportunities for students with IDD to connect with peers, strengthen community ties, and develop the skills needed for success in higher education, the workforce, and beyond.

Each year, Best Buddies distributes an annual survey to stakeholders to gauge participant satisfaction and community impact. In response to Best Buddies' 2024 Annual Survey, 82 percent of respondents with IDD/ 90 percent with no IDD were satisfied or very satisfied; 93 percent with IDD and 95 percent with no IDD would recommend participation in the program to others, and 70 percent of respondents reported that Best Buddies has made their school and community more welcoming.

19. Duplication or expansion:

*

Does this proposal duplicate or expand upon any existing work in Oklahoma or elsewhere? The Council cannot supplant funding to continue existing work unless the proposal is to expand on the work and enhances what is being done.

If your proposal duplicates or expands upon existing work, please describe the existing work and explain what makes your project unique and innovative. Be specific about how this approach and expected outcomes differ from and add value to what is already being done.

The project is an expansion of work already being done in Oklahoma. Best Buddies currently supports 171 members with and without IDD in 17 school-based chapters. The Best Buddies Program Growth Initiative will allow Best Buddies to replicate our model to establish chapters at five additional schools in the greater Oklahoma City 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 group activities.

20. **Best Practices:**

*

Will your proposed project use current evidence-based best practices in the field of developmental disabilities? Identify the specific practices you will use, explain how you will incorporate them into your project, and cite your sources. Citations should include a mix of professional literature, research studies, and respected organizations or programs.

Best Buddies programs address the negative outcomes that studies have identified as a result of loneliness among youth with IDD. In children with IDD, 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 Program Growth Initiative 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.

How will your proposed project lead to **lasting systems change** for people with developmental disabilities? Please provide a detailed explanation of how your project's outcomes will shift thinking, improve practices, or empower individuals and families within the state's service system.

Once the project is complete, five Oklahoma City area middle and high school chapters will have been created to provide friendship and opportunities for people with IDD. The project will enhance the capacity of Oklahoma City area schools to address and reduce the physical and social barriers that prevent social interactions between students with IDD and their typical peers.

22. **Where implemented:**

*

Will the proposed project be implemented or offered statewide? If no, please define the specific counties and cities you will serve and provide the rationale for their selection.

There is tremendous potential for the Best Buddies program expansion throughout the state. Best Buddies staff have been active in the Oklahoma City area, and they have generated significant interest from the local community. In the first quarter of our FY26 funding, we have had several meetings with schools interested in bringing Best Buddies to their campuses.

Performance Measures

The Council is required to submit performance reports to evaluate the effectiveness of all Council activities to our Federal partners. We require all contracted vendors to submit performance measure data prior to final payment. As a required component of your application, please provide **projected data** for the following performance measures. All contractors must collect **baseline data** to evaluate the project's outcomes. If you have questions about these projected and baseline numbers, please reach out to us.

Note: Not all measures may be applicable to your proposal. If a measure does not apply, please enter zero.

- **IA** = Individual and family **A**dvocacy
- **SC** = System **C**hange

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 ***Proposal Budget:**

- Include a detailed revenue and expenditure budget, detailing the total costs and revenues of the proposal.
- Identify the amount requested from the Council within the context of the budget.
- Identify the amount of the required 25% funding match for your project's total budget. You also need to explain where this matching funding will come from. Sources for the match can include non-federal funding, donated services or items, discounted services or items, and volunteer time. If you need help calculating the value of volunteer time, you can contact Jennifer. Match funding helps the Council understand all partners who are helping with the project.
- 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 your budget** to Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org and include the Project Name in the subject line.

Sending via email, thank you

47. STATEMENT OF WORK (SoW): *

Provide a proposed statement of work for the contractual requirements. This should include a detailed description of the work to be done, project milestones, deliverables to the Council, and other details important to the work that you will provide in exchange for Council funding. ProjectManager.com has some good information for you to develop your statement of work: <https://www.projectmanager.com/blog/statement-work-definition-examples>.

The Best Buddies Program Growth Initiative will establish school-based programs at five middle and high schools and engage a total of 100 students, including 25 students with IDD, deliver 20 group activities, and conduct leadership training to five student leaders and five faculty members who will serve as chapter advisors.

48. Sustainability Plan: *

It is the Council's hope that funded projects will have a lasting impact on the community and achieve financial sustainability after the Council's funding is complete. The Council's funding is intended as a catalyst to help new work become self-sustaining. To assure the Council of this long-term vision, all applicants must submit a detailed Financial Sustainability Plan. Financial sustainability is defined as maintaining services to the community through a diversified funding model. **Important Note:** *The Council can approve funding for an activity for a maximum of five (5) years. However, our funding is not guaranteed, so applications for Council funding must be submitted annually.* The Council expects all funded work to be self-sustaining by the end of the contract period. Your Financial Sustainability Plan should include, but is not limited to, the following components for each year of your proposed project:

- Annual Funding Goals: Clear, measurable funding targets for each year of the project.
- Projected Budgets: A multi-year budget forecast that demonstrates decreasing reliance on Council funding.
- Identified Partners: A list of specific organizations or entities with whom you will partner, along with a description of their role in your sustainability plan. Please also include any documented commitment of resources they are able to provide.
- Timeline: A clear timeline for all sustainability activities (e.g., "Year 2: Apply for three new grants," "Year 3: Implement a pilot fee-for-service program").

Once funding from the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma ends, Best Buddies will continue to train, manage, and support the 17 total chapters in the state. Collaborators, like volunteer faculty and student leadership teams, will not need to take on additional responsibilities to maintain the project after the grant period. Based on organizational experience expanding to new markets, we will utilize the newly established programs and increased awareness of our mission to gather broad community support that will help sustain service delivery. As the number of chapters increases, so will the efficiency of local staff as they facilitate connections among student leaders and identify and replicate strategies for success. Best Buddies provides an online reference site for student and teacher leaders, as well as conference calls and webinars, which can be accessed by chapter leaders at any time.

• Best Buddies staff work tirelessly to grow and diversify our funding sources to sustain and expand our programs. We expect the project to become self-sustaining within two years through a combination of special event revenue, private foundation revenue, individual donations, and any available federal, state, or municipal grants. Once contract funds end, we are poised to sustain this local project and continue expanding in the state by raising \$25,000 per year through special events, foundation support, other government grants, and support from individual and corporate donors.

49. Outreach and Awareness Plan of the Work: *

Too often people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, and others are not aware of resources available in Oklahoma. Please provide a marketing and outreach plan to bring awareness about the work being proposed. Your plan should address the following:

- **Target Audience:** Clearly identify the specific groups within the intellectual and developmental disability community you aim to reach (e.g., specific age ranges, individuals in rural vs. urban areas, diverse cultural communities).
- **Marketing Channels:** Describe the specific marketing channels you will use (e.g., social media, community events, partnerships, print materials) and how you will use them effectively to reach your target audiences.
- **Partnerships:** Explain how you will collaborate with other organizations, advocacy groups, or community leaders to expand the reach of your message.
- **Accessibility and Language:** Detail your strategy for ensuring your outreach is accessible and inclusive. Please discuss your plan for language translations, including which languages you will prioritize and how you will ensure cultural appropriateness.
- **Measurement:** Describe how you will measure the success and impact of your marketing and outreach efforts.

• The target population for the project includes middle school and high school students with and without IDD, aged approximately 11 to 18 years, in the greater Oklahoma City area. We expect that the project will serve a minimum of 100 students with and without IDD.

• **Marketing Channels:** Best Buddies Oklahoma engages communities through the following social media platforms: the BBOK Facebook page and Best Buddies OK Instagram account. In addition to social media engagement, further awareness is raised about programmatic opportunities and impact through a monthly newsletter to chapter leaders and a quarterly newsletter to statewide constituents, as well as through direct outreach and local media promotions for state events such as the Friendship Walk and Champion of the Year gala. BBOK staff also participate in community-based tabling events to promote program opportunities and recruit participants.

• **Partnerships:** Best Buddies Oklahoma currently partners with community organizations such as Terra Verde Discovery School, Union RedHawks R.I.S.E., and Stillwater Group Homes to engage participants in integrated program opportunities. In addition to these partners, Best Buddies Oklahoma offers Ambassador Training opportunities throughout the year to engage community members with and without disabilities in public speaking and leadership learning so that they can serve as advocates for our mission in their community.

• **Accessibility and Language:** Best Buddies Oklahoma follows best practices set by our national programs team, ensuring that accessibility standards are met for communications and materials offered to participants and community members. Materials are translated by a third-party agency coordinated at the national level with language options including: Chinese, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, English, French, Japanese, Portuguese, and Spanish. Additional translations can be provided upon request.

• **Measurement:** Success for these efforts will be measured by evaluating participation rates within Best Buddies Oklahoma programs and events and reviewing survey feedback to monitor the quality of the experience and communications being offered to participants. Program data is reviewed every month through our BB360 platform to assess impact and growth.

50. **Logic Model:**

To help the Council and your organization effectively evaluate the program's success, a logic model is a required component for all contracts in excess of \$5,000. A logic model is a simple visual tool that illustrates the connection between your project's resources (inputs), what you plan to do (activities), the immediate results of your work (outputs), and the changes you hope to achieve (outcomes). For a helpful guide to developing a clear and effective logic model, please refer to this resource from The Compass: <https://thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guide/how-develop-logic-model-0>

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 a corps of student officers, help chapter leaders create and support one-to-one friendships, plan and deliver 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 group activities.

Outcomes: As a result of the project, five students and 5 faculty advisors will be prepared to lead programs at their school by planning and delivering 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 peers without IDD, better preparing them for college or careers. The 75 students without IDD will experience a positive change in their attitudes toward people with IDD. Long-term outcomes of project activities will include increased understanding among participants about the value and benefits of more welcoming school and community environments.

51. **Registered Vendor? ***

Are you a registered vendor with the State of Oklahoma? All contractors must be registered in the State Supplier Portal. You can do this online: <https://oklahoma.gov/omes/divisions/central-purchasing/suppliers-and-payees/supplier-portal.html>

Yes

No

52. **IRS 501(c)3? ***

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

Yes

No

58. Registered partnership? *

Is the proposed vendor a registered partnership?

 Yes No**59. Registered corporation? ***

Is the proposed vendor a registered corporation?

 Yes No**60. ID Number ***

Social Security Number, FEI Number, or OMES Supplier ID

52-1614576 OMES Supplier ID 0000590798

Contact information

61. Signing authority *

Name of individual with contract signing authority, title, Phone number, email address

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

62. Primary Contact: *

Name of individual(s) to contact regarding contract performance & operations, title, Phone number, email address

Milli Protheroe/Director, Expansion and Mission Advancement. milliprotheroe@bestbuddies.org 610-223-0441

63. Finance Contact: *

Name of individual(s) responsible for finance and accounting, title, Phone number, email address

Robert Vargas/Senior VP of Finance and Operations/305.374.2233/RobertVargas@bestbuddies.org

64. Legal Notices: *

Name of individual(s) to send legal notices, title, Phone number, email address

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

**Best Buddies Oklahoma
Oklahoma New Friendship Chapter Project - OK DD Council**

Summary of Expenses		OKDDC Request	Other funding	Total Project costs
Staff/Volunteer Time				
Director, Mission Advancement	(12% time on project)	\$ 8,034	\$ 241	\$ 8,275
Program Manager	(20% time on project)	\$ 9,000	\$ 270	\$ 9,270
Benefits @ 15%		\$ -	\$ 2,632	\$ 2,632
Subtotal		\$ 17,034	\$ 3,143	\$ 20,177
Program Operations				
Site Visits/Travel		\$ 1,152		\$ 1,152
Volunteer Training & Management		\$ 3,494	\$ 2,748	\$ 6,242
Community Engagement		\$ 250		\$ 250
Office Operations		\$ 320		\$ 320
Chapter Grants		\$ 2,500		\$ 2,500
Supplies & Materials		\$ 250		\$ 250
Subtotal		\$ 7,966	\$ 2,748	\$ 10,714
Indirect Costs (10% of total program costs)		\$ -	\$ 3,089	\$ 3,089
Total Expenses		\$ 25,000	\$ 8,980	\$ 33,980

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 (\$2,632 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 @ \$0.55/mile.
- **Volunteer Training & Management** (\$6,242 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 (\$3,089 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 (\$8,980 total):

- Best Buddies in Oklahoma will match 26% of the project cost (\$8,980) through special event revenue. Best Buddies in Oklahoma hosts two annual fundraisers, the Best Buddies Friendship Walk and the 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, as 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 fundraisers.

Chapters Supported

- Best Buddies in Oklahoma continues to be well poised to support five new school-based chapters in the Oklahoma City area. Best Buddies will conduct outreach to identify five potential schools for expansion within Oklahoma City Public School District, Norman Public School District and Putnam City School District.

Retreat Room

Har-Ber Village

Fiscal Year FY27 Funding Request

Project/Activity: Retreat Room

Organization: Har-Ber Village

Proposal Description: Har-Ber Village Museum seeks funding to create a sensory-friendly Retreat Room—a quiet, calming space where visitors, especially neurodivergent and trauma-affected youth, can regulate and rejoin activities with confidence. Located at the heart of the Village, the Retreat Room will feature soft lighting, acoustic treatments, fidgets, noise-reducing headphones, and nature elements to promote calm and inclusion. The project will also include youth co-design workshops, trauma-informed staff training, and clear wayfinding to ensure the space is welcoming, sustainable, and responsive to visitor needs. This initiative directly addresses increasing reports of sensory overload during school and public visits, ensuring equitable access to informal education for individuals with developmental disabilities.

The project’s first year will focus on design, implementation, and evaluation. Within 12 months, Har-Ber Village will launch the Retreat Room, integrate sensory kits and visual schedules across school programs, and train all staff and volunteers in inclusive, trauma-informed guest care. Additional outreach components—such as resource days and family navigation materials—will connect caregivers to SoonerStart, DDS, and tribal services. Measurable goals include a 20% reduction in early departures due to sensory overload, a 20% increase in teacher confidence when including students with developmental disabilities, and over 150 families receiving navigation assistance.

Beyond serving local visitors, this project will create a replicable model for rural museums seeking to improve accessibility and inclusion. Documented best practices, such as sensory kit contents, staff scripts, and operational workflows, will be shared through a free “Sensory-Ready Venue Starter” guide. By normalizing sensory supports and connecting families to services, Har-Ber Village will strengthen community participation, shift public attitudes toward inclusion, and help every visitor—especially those with developmental disabilities—feel seen, supported, and welcome.

Council Goal & Objective:

Targeted Audience: Visitors with developmental disabilities—especially autistic youth and those with sensory processing differences—plus their caregivers and teachers during school visits and public hours at Har-Ber Village.

Funding requested for Fiscal Year FY27

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$25,000	\$3,000	\$28,000

6. **General Timelines:**

Funding decisions can take time for the Council to discuss. Please allow time for feedback on your proposal and possible revision of your proposal or providing more information. We want to be a partner and are happy to work with you as you complete an application. Please ask questions. If approved for funding, contract dates depend on when the proposal was received, length of review by Council committee, and contract negotiations.

For a proposal requesting funding for a full year, contracts will typically follow the state fiscal year: July 1 through June 30.

Proposals received are evaluated by a Council Committee, and if approved, a recommendation is made to the full Council for a decision. If approved by the full Council, we will make every effort for contracts to be effective as early as possible, typically by July 1. Applicants will be notified by email within 5 business days of the full Council's decision.

IMPORTANT: Do not begin work until a fully executed contract and purchase order (PO) is in hand. Per Oklahoma Statute, no funding can or will be reimbursed for any goods or service prior to the effective date of a contract.

If you have any questions, email our Planning & Grants Director, Jennifer Robinson: Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org.

Yes

Part 1 - Contact Information

7. **Organization Name ***

Har-Ber Village

8. **Organization Address ***

Mailing address please: Street number, Street name, City, State, 9-digit Zip Code

4404 W 20th Street, Grove, OK 74344

9. **Contact Info ***

Name, email address **and** phone number of the person completing this application.

Jeff McSweeney, mayor@har-bervillage.com, 309-678-6541

10. **Website**

Organization's Website

https://www.har-bervillage.com

Our State Plan Goals

11. State Plan Goal *

As of August 2025, the Council is in the process of reviewing input from publicly held listening sessions and information about current services and systems in Oklahoma. Goals have not been established for our next 5 Year State Plan (2027-2031), however proposals submitted should fall within one of our themes we have identified.

- Access to Services
- Inclusive Education
- Caregiver Support
- Representation and Public Attitudes
- Advocacy and Self-Advocacy

DDCO Alignment Overview (as of Aug 2025)

The Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma (DDCO) is finalizing its 2027–2031 State Plan, guided by five themes: Access to Services, Inclusive Education, Caregiver Support, Representation & Public Attitudes, and Advocacy & Self-Advocacy.

The State Plan Committee recommends projects to the full Council. Proposals aligning with these priorities—and grounded in local partnerships or listening session input—are most competitive.

1. Access to Services

Project: Grand Lake Disability Navigation Pop-Ups at Har-Ber Village

- What: Host multi-agency resource days (DDS, SoonerStart, DRS/VR, tribal services, behavioral health, assistive tech).
- Why: Brings service navigation to a trusted, community venue; reduces rural barriers.
- Outputs: 200 visitors; 120 screened; 80 assisted applications/referrals.
- Outcomes: 60% complete a referral within 60 days; 40% report improved knowledge.
- DDCO Tie: Access & systems navigation priority, rural/frontier focus.

2. Inclusive Education

Project: Living History for All—Sensory-Friendly School Days

- What: Sensory-aware field trips with visual schedules, quiet room, adaptive tour pacing, captioned videos, tactile exhibits.
- Outputs: 1,500 students, 120 teachers; all trips include sensory option.
- Outcomes: +20% teacher rating of inclusion; –20% early departures; toolkit shared with 10 schools.
- DDCO Tie: Supports Inclusive Education through individualized, accessible learning.

3. Caregiver Support

Project: Caregiver Evenings at the Village

- What: After-hours respite and micro-clinics (benefits, stress/self-care, sibling support, AT demos).
- Outputs: 100 caregivers; 4 events; 30 one-on-one sessions.
- Outcomes: 70% report reduced stress; 50% complete a benefits/respite action within 30 days.
- DDCO Tie: Aligns with Council's Caregiver Support priority.

4. Representation & Public Attitudes

Project: Nothing About Us Without Us—Interpretation Fellows

- What: Fellowships for self-advocates to co-create exhibit labels, accessibility signage, and short videos; host public programs.
- Outputs: 4–6 fellows; co-authored exhibits; community talks.
- Outcomes: 1,000+ visitors; 60% positive attitude shift; toolkit shared with 5 regional museums.
- DDCO Tie: Advances disability representation and community inclusion.

5. Advocacy & Self-Advocacy

Project: Trailblazers: Self-Advocacy in Action

- What: Peer-led workshops (rights, IEP transitions, public speaking) ending with an elected officials showcase.
- Outputs: 60 participants; 8 peer trainers; 1 showcase event.
- Outcomes: 75% increase in advocacy confidence; 30 give public comment or contact policymakers.
- DDCO Tie: Builds leadership and civic participation.

Supporting Infrastructure: "Stillwater Cabin" Sensory-Friendly Hub

Har-Ber Village, in partnership with Square Holes, will develop a sensory-friendly Stillwater Cabin equipped with visual schedules, sound-reduction tools, and inclusive wayfinding—advancing Community Awareness and Inclusion priorities. Features include:

- Calming space with adjustable light/sound, varied seating.
- Enhanced wayfinding (color-coded maps, icons, QR audio).
- Physical access upgrades and replicable inclusion protocols.
- Pre-visit toolkits with social stories and "what to expect" guides.
- Staff/volunteer inclusion briefs for consistent guest support.

These measures ensure predictable, sensory-aware experiences that reduce anxiety, promote equitable participation, and model inclusion for museums statewide.

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 purpose of this policy is to ensure a fair and impartial procurement process. The questions that follow are designed to help the state determine if such a conflict exists.

12. 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

13. Identify names and relationships

If you answered yes to "Any relationships to the organization?" please explain in detail. Identify names and relationships, as necessary.

N/A

Part 3 - Your activity proposal:

The Council's committee carefully reviews all complete and accurate applications. The information you provide in Part III will help our members understand your proposed work and how it aligns with the Council's funding priorities and expectations.

14. Proposal. *

Provide a written overview of your proposal (up to 4000 characters). A good overview should cover the key components of your proposal. This includes:

- **Introduction:** A brief summary of your project's purpose.
- **Problem Statement:** The issue your project aims to address.
- **Proposed Solution:** A clear description of your methodology and how your project will solve the problem.
- **Expected Outcomes:** The anticipated results or impact of your work.
- **Evaluation:** How the work will be measured.
- **Relevance:** How your project aligns with the council's goals and funding priorities.

Introduction

Har-Ber Village Museum will create a small, sensory-friendly Retreat Room—a quiet, calming space where visitors experiencing sensory overload can pause, regulate, and rejoin their visit with confidence. Set near the heart of the Village, the room will blend evidence-based design with the tranquility of our lakeside setting. Youth co-design, trauma-informed staff training, and clear use guidelines will ensure it remains safe, welcoming, and sustainable.

Problem Statement

Teachers, caregivers, and staff report increasing youth anxiety, sensory overload, and stress behaviors during school visits and large events. Crowds, noise, and unfamiliar settings especially challenge neurodivergent and trauma-affected youth, leading some to leave early or disengage—limiting equitable access to informal education and inclusion for those with developmental disabilities.

Proposed Solution

Har-Ber Village will design and pilot a Retreat Room based on universal and sensory-friendly design principles:

- Calming environment: Dimmable lights, neutral colors, sound panels, HEPA purifier, clear sightlines (capacity 4–6).
- Comfort tools: Soft seating, weighted lap pads, fidgets, noise-reducing headphones, timers, hydration station.
- Nature connection: Window or video feed to Grand Lake; brief “mindful nature” audio from site.
- Access & safety: Drop-in use (10–20 min), posted rules, radio link to desk, ADA layout.
- Youth co-design: Local youth help select furnishings, signage, and tools through stipended advisory workshops.
- Staff readiness: All staff/volunteers complete trauma-informed guest care training (de-escalation, inclusive communication).
- Wayfinding: Gentle signage (“Need a reset? Quiet room this way”), social stories, and website FAQs.
- Program integration: Teachers may schedule breaks; during large events, a volunteer “Calm Captain” monitors capacity and replenishes supplies.

Expected Outcomes

- Increased participation and inclusion for youth with developmental disabilities.
- Improved visitor comfort and satisfaction; families more likely to return.
- Fewer early departures and behavior incidents.
- Scalable model for other small museums.
- Youth empowerment through visible input and leadership.

Evaluation Plan

A mixed-methods evaluation will measure:

- Usage & flow: Anonymous logs (time, group type, length of stay).
 - Visit completion: Teacher feedback comparing pre/post data.
 - Satisfaction: Short QR surveys on comfort, ease of finding, and usefulness.
 - Operations: Incident log trends, staff feedback, supply use.
 - Equity reach: Non-identifying data by group type (school, homeschool, tribal, public).
- Findings summarized in mid-year and year-end reports for continuous improvement.

Relevance to Council Priorities

- Youth well-being & mental health: A stigma-free coping space for overwhelmed or neurodivergent visitors.
- Access & equity: Reduces sensory barriers for inclusive participation.
- Authentic partnerships: Youth, schools, homeschool, and tribal networks engaged in design.
- Sustainability: Durable furnishings, volunteer support, and training integrated in onboarding.
- Cultural vitality: Keeping more students engaged strengthens learning and community connection.

Timeline

- Months 1–2: Youth workshops, furnishings installed, staff training.
- Month 3: Soft launch with school groups; refine use.

- Months 4–12: Full operation, evaluation, and reporting.

Budget Summary

Furnishings and acoustic panels, sensory kits and replacements, signage/wayfinding, training facilitation, youth stipends, and coordination.

Conclusion

Har-Ber Village’s serene setting and living-history mission make it a natural place for calm, reflection, and learning. With support from the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma, the Retreat Room will transform moments of overwhelm into restorative pauses—helping every young visitor stay, learn, and belong.

15. **Have you completed a needs assessment? ***

Yes

No

16. Who will do the work? *

Please list all people and organizations that will be working on the project, and describe their experience and qualifications to provide the proposed goods and services.

Beth Varner & Dave Turnbull – Square Holes – consulting
Alex Wartski, Har-Ber Village Curator
Abby Engles, Har-Ber Village Programming
Linda Foster – Administration, Social Work Degree with minor in family relations and child development
Har-Ber Village Maintenance Staff
Contractors

To inform the development of Har-Ber Village's sensory-friendly initiatives, Square Holes will conduct a comprehensive needs assessment focusing on accessibility and inclusion for neurodivergent individuals and those with sensory processing differences. The assessment will include semi-structured interviews with museum staff and volunteers to understand current practices, challenges, and opportunities related to accessibility. A community survey will be distributed to current and potential visitors, including neurodivergent individuals, families, educators, and local service providers, to gather insight into community needs, barriers to participation, and desired supports.

In addition, Square Holes will complete a detailed sensory and accessibility audit of the museum grounds and facilities, assessing environmental factors such as lighting, noise, temperature, humidity, and tactile opportunities. The audit will identify both affordances and constraints within the existing environment and provide recommendations for modifications that enhance comfort and accessibility. This work will also include an evaluation of wayfinding, signage, and pre-visit materials to identify strategies that reduce cognitive load and support individuals with executive functioning challenges. Physical accessibility of the grounds and buildings will be reviewed to ensure alignment with ADA standards and to promote full participation in Har-Ber Village's programs.

Findings from this assessment will directly inform the design of the quiet space, the development of pre-visit and on-site resources, and the creation of inclusive programming. The results will also contribute to a replicable framework that can guide other small and rural museums in Oklahoma seeking to improve sensory accessibility and inclusion in their own communities.

About Square Holes

Square Holes is a consulting organization led by David Turnbull, PhD, OTR/L, and Beth Varner, M.Ed., NCSP. Together, they bring expertise in occupational therapy, neurodiversity research, education, and non-profit leadership to help cultural institutions and community spaces become more accessible and welcoming for neurodivergent individuals and those with sensory or cognitive differences. David is an occupational therapist, autism researcher, and neurodivergent individual with lived experience of sensory processing challenges, which informs his practical and empathetic approach to accessibility and inclusion. Beth is a school psychologist, educator, and advocate with a background in non-profit management and extensive experience supporting inclusive practices within arts and cultural organizations. Through environmental audits, staff training, and collaborative planning, Square Holes helps organizations move beyond compliance toward meaningful inclusion. Their work has supported accessibility initiatives in museums, art centers, and public events across Oklahoma and beyond, emphasizing practical, evidence-based strategies that can be scaled and shared among community institutions.

17. Targeted population:

*

Tell us more about who you are targeting to improve outcomes for? Describe the age, region, familial status, learning or support needs, and type of disability.

Delaware County, OK — Developmental Disabilities Snapshot Community Profile

Population ~41,017 (ACS 2019–2023); median age 47—older than OK and U.S., suggesting higher disability prevalence. Poverty rate 21% (vs. 15.3% OK; 12.4% U.S.).

Disability Prevalence

Oklahoma: ~17.5% of residents report a disability. Delaware County (ACS S1810, 2023 pop. 40,606):

- Hearing: 2,987 (73 under 18)
- Vision: 1,916 (149 under 18)
- Cognitive: 3,245 (469 under 18)
- Ambulatory: 4,047 (7 under 18)
- Self-care: 1,136 (37 under 18)
- Independent living: 2,964

Overall, 21.8% report one or more disabilities.

Early Intervention & Schools

- SoonerStart (Birth–3): State-run Part C early intervention program.
- PK–12 Special Education (Part B): Grove-area districts report 464 students with IEPs (FY 2024).

Adult Services & Waivers

- OKDHS Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS): Waiver wait cut from ~13 years to ~1 year; transition to active services typically 6–9 months.
- DDS offers an online portal for waitlist updates.

Local & Regional Providers

- GRAND Mental Health: Now operates a 24/7 Crisis Assessment Center in Jay (since April 2025).
- Cherokee Nation Health Services: Provides PT/OT/Speech and Vocational Rehabilitation within the reservation area.
- Oklahoma DRS: Maintains a statewide Disability Resource Guide for family referrals.

Common Gaps in Rural Counties

- Care coordination: Families need navigation support across SoonerStart → school → DDS.
- Provider shortages: OT/PT/SLP, behavioral health, respite, and transportation access.
- Transition to adulthood: Limited employment and day-program options.
- Crisis response: GRAND's 24/7 model enables sensory-aware, co-occurring crisis protocols.

Action Opportunities for Har-Ber Village & Partners

1. Family Navigator Sheet – Create a referral guide with SoonerStart, DDS, GRAND, Cherokee Nation VR, OSDE Child-Find links/QR codes for your website and admissions area.
2. Host Resource Days – Invite SoonerStart, DDS, DRS/VR, SPED leads, and Cherokee Nation VR for family engagement and follow-up collection.
3. Sensory-Friendly Programming – Add quiet room, visual schedules, and staff training; track engagement via QR feedback.
4. Grant Data & Outcomes
 - o Outputs: Families referred, sensory sessions held.
 - o Short-term: ≥70% of families report improved service knowledge; ≥50% complete referrals.
 - o Intermediate: +10–15% DDS application completions and timely Part C→B transitions (using OSDE data).

Sensory Overload Perspective - Context

Population 40,606; poverty 21%.

Estimated Prevalence (for planning):

- Sensory processing challenges: 5–16.5% (~2,000–6,700 residents).
- Autism (children): 3.2% of 8-year-olds (~3 per 100 school-age visitors).
- Sound sensitivity: 9–15% (~3,700–6,200 residents).

Planning Ratios (per 100 visitors)

- 5–15 may benefit from sensory-friendly spaces.

- 3 school-age visitors likely autistic with sensory needs.
- 9–15 may be sound-sensitive (e.g., reenactments, loud events).

18. Impact:

*

Please describe the anticipated impact of your proposal by addressing the following three components:

- Goals for the targeted population?
 - What are the specific, measurable goals you hope to achieve for the individuals directly served by this project?
- Broader implications for people with developmental disabilities:
 - Beyond the direct participants, how will this project create a broader, positive impact for the population of people with developmental disabilities as a whole?
- Measurable outcomes:
 - What specific, quantifiable metrics will you use to track your success and demonstrate the project's effectiveness?

Anticipated Impact

1) Goals for the Target Population

Target group: Visitors with developmental disabilities—especially autistic youth and those with sensory processing differences—plus their caregivers and teachers during school visits and public hours at Har-Ber Village.

Year 1 measurable goals:

Participation & retention

- Reduce early departures or sensory-overload withdrawals by 20% from baseline.
- Maintain 95% sensory kit availability for checkout during all open hours and school days.

Inclusive learning

- Offer a sensory-friendly pathway (visual schedules, quiet routes, seating choices, retreat room) to 100% of school groups.
- Increase teacher confidence in including students with DD by 20 percentage points (pre/post).

Caregiver support & navigation

- Provide 150+ brief navigator assists (SoonerStart, DDS, VR, tribal services) through events and resource days.

2) Broader Implications for People with DD

- Replicable model: Documenting sensory kit contents, staff scripts, and checkout workflows will produce a free one-page "Sensory-Ready Venue Starter" to help other rural museums and parks adopt inclusive tools.
- Changing public attitudes: Trained interpreters and signage normalize sensory supports, fostering empathy and aligning with DDCO's Representation & Public Attitudes theme.
- Systems connection: On-site navigation and warm handoffs to DDS, SoonerStart, DRS/VR, and tribal services improve Access to Services, especially for families hesitant to approach clinical systems.
- Caregiver resilience: Predictable supports—quiet room, sensory kits, posted noise alerts—reduce stress and encourage community participation, supporting Caregiver Support.
- Youth voice: Short feedback prompts and periodic teen co-design sessions embed Self-Advocacy and ensure lived experience shapes future improvements.

3) Measurable Outcomes

Access & experience

- Sensory kit availability: $\geq 95\%$ of open hours; monthly checkout count.
- Quiet room use: # of visits, median regulation time, $\geq 70\%$ return to activities.
- Incident reduction: Fewer early departures vs. baseline (target -20%).

Inclusive education

- Coverage: 100% school days include sensory-friendly option.
- Teacher confidence: +1.0 point on 5-point scale ($\sim +20\%$).
- Student engagement: +15% in hands-on completion among DD students.

Caregiver support & navigation

- Navigator assists: Count of brief referrals logged.
- Caregiver clarity: $\geq 70\%$ report clear next steps post-visit.

Attitudes & replication

- Public perception: $\geq 60\%$ agree that "accommodations improved everyone's experience."
- Replication: Track downloads and adoption of Sensory-Ready Venue Starter.

Data & tracking

Front-desk logs (kit use), QR microsurveys (visitors, caregivers, teachers), interpreter checklists, incident logs, and a simple CRM spreadsheet for referrals and follow-up.

Project elevator pitch:

"By adding a sensory kit checkout, quiet-room workflow, sensory-friendly school days, and on-site navigation, Har-Ber Village will reduce overload-related departures, expand inclusion, and share a replicable model for rural cultural venues."

19. Duplication or expansion:

*

Does this proposal duplicate or expand upon any existing work in Oklahoma or elsewhere? The Council cannot supplant funding to continue existing work unless the proposal is to expand on the work and enhances what is being done.

If your proposal duplicates or expands upon existing work, please describe the existing work and explain what makes your project unique and innovative. Be specific about how this approach and expected outcomes differ from and add value to what is already being done.

It expands on related efforts in Oklahoma and nationally. Around the state, some museums, libraries, and attractions offer sensory-friendly hours or provide sensory kits. Nationally, a few large institutions maintain generic "quiet rooms." However, Har-Ber Village does not currently have a dedicated retreat space, and there is no model we know of in rural, outdoor living-history settings that integrates nature, youth co-design, and trauma-informed practice into a single, measurable program. This project therefore adds new capacity rather than supplanting funds for ongoing work.

What exists now (context):

- Time-bound sensory-friendly hours that reduce stimuli but don't offer a staffed refuge during regular operations.
- Sensory bags or ad-hoc "calm corners" that are portable but inconsistent and unmonitored.
- Occasional quiet rooms in large urban museums with limited adaptation for outdoor, historic-site conditions.

What makes our project unique and innovative:

1. Living-history + nature integration: A purpose-built, low-stimulus room situated within a 44-acre outdoor campus of cabins and wooded trails, pairing calming design with nature-based regulation.
2. Youth co-design: Two workshops shape furnishings, signage, and sensory kits; a stipended Youth Advisory Group reviews prototypes—moving beyond "for youth" to "with youth."
3. Trauma-informed operations: All frontline staff/volunteers complete a concise de-escalation and respectful-language mini-training; a volunteer "Calm Captain" monitors capacity on peak days (Pioneer Days, Santa's Village).
4. Equity for rural visitors: Many sensory-access models are urban; our approach pilots an equitable rural solution where services are scarce and travel burdens are higher.
5. Embedded wayfinding and pre-visit supports: Gentle, dignity-affirming signs ("Need a reset? This way."), a one-page social story for schools/caregivers, and website FAQs—tools that reduce anxiety before and during visits.
6. Measured outcomes and a shareable toolkit: We will track anonymous usage, visit completion, incident reductions, and satisfaction (QR micro-surveys), then publish a brief how-to toolkit other Oklahoma sites can adopt (materials list, floor plan, staffing script, training outline).
7. Program integration, not a standalone room: Teachers can schedule "reset breaks" during field trips; the space supports, rather than replaces, hands-on learning—improving time-on-task across the entire visit.

How this approach and outcomes add value:

- Moves beyond episodic sensory hours to an always-available, staffed resource.
- Tailors design to an outdoor, historic campus, not a conventional gallery floor.
- Centers youth voice in both design and operations.
- Establishes clear metrics (completion rates, incident logs, satisfaction) to demonstrate impact and guide replication.
- Produces a low-cost, portable model suitable for other small or rural Oklahoma attractions—advancing the Council's priorities for independence, inclusion, and sustainable, community-centered access.

In short, this is not a duplication of existing services. It is a targeted expansion that fills a gap—creating a replicable, rural living-history model that meaningfully increases access and successful participation for young Oklahomans with developmental disabilities and their families.

20. Best Practices:

*

Will your proposed project use current evidence-based best practices in the field of developmental disabilities? Identify the specific practices you will use, explain how you will incorporate them into your project, and cite your sources. Citations should include a mix of professional literature, research studies, and respected organizations or programs.

Evidence-Based Practices

The Retreat Room integrates evidence-based, disability-informed practices grounded in trauma-informed care, universal design (UDL), sensory-friendly environments, visual supports, co-design, and continuous evaluation.

1) Universal Design & UDL

Practice: Anticipate variability and remove barriers upfront through multiple means of access, representation, and engagement.
Application: Layout includes wide turning radii, uncluttered zones, icon-based signs, plain-language guidance, and options for visual, audio, and tactile cues. Exhibit instructions follow UDL checkpoints for self-regulation and persistence.
Sources: CAST UDL Guidelines; Smithsonian & NEA museum accessibility frameworks.

2) Sensory-Friendly Environmental Modification

Practice: Adjust light, sound, and sensory input to support participation of visitors with IDD or autism.
Application: Dimmable lighting, sound-absorbing panels, neutral palette, small-group capacity, and sensory tools (headphones, fidgets, weighted lap pads, timers).
Sources: American Journal of Occupational Therapy reviews and position statements on sensory-based environmental design.

3) Visual Supports & Social Narratives

Practice: Use visual schedules and short “what to expect” stories to reduce uncertainty and improve participation.
Application: Pre-visit social stories, simple visual schedules, and on-site timers.
Sources: Kokina & Kern (2010) meta-analysis on Social Stories; systematic reviews on visual supports in autism interventions.

4) Trauma-Informed, Dignity-First Operations

Practice: Apply SAMHSA’s trauma-informed framework—safety, trust, empowerment, and cultural sensitivity.
Application: Mini-trainings for all staff/volunteers on calm communication, de-escalation, and choice-making; posted, predictable room guidelines; consent-based “reset” time limits (10–20 minutes).
Sources: SAMHSA concept paper; National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) systems guidance.

5) Participatory Co-Design

Practice: Engage youth, caregivers, and tribal partners in design and testing to ensure authentic inclusion.
Application: Two youth workshops, a stipended advisory group, and iterative pilot feedback during peak events.
Sources: American Alliance of Museums case studies; Smithsonian co-design accessibility toolkits.

6) Accessibility & Compliance

Practice: Meet or exceed ADA/Section 504 for space, routes, signage, and events.
Application: ADA-compliant routes, fixtures, and communication access for all major events.
Sources: U.S. Access Board ADA Standards; ADA National Network; NEA Design for Accessibility handbook.

7) Staff Training & Continuous Evaluation

Practice: Regular staff development and iterative evaluation improve accessibility quality and fidelity.
Application: Onboarding and refresher micro-trainings, plus mixed-methods evaluation (usage logs, surveys, incident reduction). Findings shared via a brief “how-to” guide for peers.
Sources: American Alliance of Museums accessibility literature; CAST UDL implementation principles.

8) Sensory-Inclusive Programming Benchmarking

Practice: Align with proven sensory inclusion frameworks that embed staff training, tools, and storytelling.
Application: Policy and materials modeled on successful programs like KultureCity, adapted for rural living-history settings.

Summary:

The Retreat Room operationalizes the best of UDL, sensory-friendly design, trauma-informed practice, co-design, and continuous evaluation—transforming Har-Ber Village into a model for inclusion where youth with developmental disabilities can regulate, remain, and fully participate in learning.

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.

How will your proposed project lead to **lasting systems change** for people with developmental disabilities? Please provide a detailed explanation of how your project's outcomes will shift thinking, improve practices, or empower individuals and families within the state's service system.

Systems Change & Sustainability

The Har-Ber Village Retreat Room catalyzes durable systems change—shifting mindsets, improving practices, and empowering families and institutions across Oklahoma's visitor-serving ecosystem.

1) Shift Thinking: From "Special Accommodation" to Standard Practice

- Normalize inclusion: Sensory regulation and trauma-informed care become routine guest services, not limited "sensory hours." Signage ("Need a reset? This way.") and SOPs model access as dignity-driven.
- Evidence + story: We'll share data (usage, retention, satisfaction) in a two-page brief and short video showing measurable gains from small environmental changes.
- Demonstration site: Host peer site visits for museums, libraries, and tribal centers to observe operations and take home implementation guides.

2) Improve Practices: A Replicable Rural Model

A free Rural Sensory-Inclusive Visitor Toolkit will help any Oklahoma site adopt best practices:

- Facilities: Floor plan, specs, capacity limits, cleaning and safety protocols.
- People: 2-hour trauma-informed mini-training, refresher micro-modules, quick de-escalation cards.
- Programs: Templates for school trip "reset breaks" and volunteer management during peak events.
- Policies: Website and ticket language with ADA/UDL crosswalks.
- Procurement: Cost-effective sensory tool and furniture sourcing list.

3) Empower Individuals & Families

- Pre-visit social stories & FAQs: Reduce uncertainty and promote confident participation.
- Communication tools: "I need..." cards, visual timers, and AAC boards model self-advocacy.
- Youth leadership: Advisory group co-designs signage and materials, inspiring replication.
- Family workshops: Practical training on reading sensory maps and requesting accommodations in community settings.

4) Build Statewide Capacity

- Train-the-trainer: Equip practitioners to deliver the mini-training locally.
- Resource distribution: Publish toolkit, templates, and policy language on a public landing page; share via statewide arts, education, and disability networks.
- Technical assistance: Provide office hours for sites creating sensory-inclusive spaces.

5) Sustainability: Embed, Don't Bolt On

- Institutionalization: The Retreat Room becomes a standing facility feature; training added to onboarding; metrics appear in annual reports.
- Affordable adoption: Toolkit favors low-cost, replaceable materials—scalable for small rural sites.

6) Evaluation of Systems Change

Beyond on-site outcomes, we'll measure:

- Reach & adoption: # of sites that download, attend visits, or implement tools.
- Capacity built: # trained and % reporting greater confidence after three months.
- Family empowerment: Pre/post comfort and knowledge survey gains.
- Equity lens: Rural and tribal representation in trainings and adoption.

• Policy change: # of sites adding accommodation language or embedding training.

Why It Lasts

This project reframes inclusion as standard practice, equips organizations with replicable tools, and strengthens family and youth self-advocacy. By transforming one living-history museum into a statewide demonstration hub, it creates lasting, scalable improvement in how Oklahoma welcomes and supports people with developmental disabilities.

22. Where implemented:

*

Will the proposed project be implemented or offered statewide? If no, please define the specific counties and cities you will serve and provide the rationale for their selection.

Will this be statewide?

Direct service (the Retreat Room) — No.

Capacity-building (toolkit, webinars, train-the-trainer) — Yes, statewide.

Primary direct-service area (NE Oklahoma):

- Counties: Delaware (home county), Ottawa, Craig, Mayes, Cherokee.
- Representative cities/communities: Grove, Jay, Bernice, Ketchum, Langley, Disney (Delaware/Mayes); Vinita (Craig); Miami, Afton, Fairland (Ottawa); Pryor (Mayes); Tahlequah (Cherokee).

Rationale for this service area

1. Proximity & access: These counties are within normal field-trip and family travel distance to Har-Ber Village, enabling frequent use during school programs and peak public events without excessive transportation burdens.
2. Documented demand: Our visitor base, partner schools, homeschool networks, and regional tourism data show consistent attendance from this five-county radius; concentrating on it maximizes utilization in year one.
3. Equity gap in rural settings: Sensory-friendly, trauma-informed supports are less available at small, rural cultural sites; a dedicated Retreat Room at a living-history museum fills a local gap and demonstrates an affordable model for peers.
4. Community alignment: The area includes multiple tribal communities and partners; co-design with local/tribal youth ensures cultural relevance and improves uptake by families who already visit the Village.
5. Operational feasibility: Focusing staffing, training, and maintenance within a defined radius keeps costs manageable and ensures quality during the pilot year, while we gather outcome data to guide scaling.

Statewide components (available to all Oklahoma counties):

- An open-license toolkit (floor plan, materials list, policies/scripts, training outline, evaluation templates).
- Regular virtual workshops and office hours for museums, libraries, parks, schools, and tribal cultural centers anywhere in Oklahoma.
- Site visits at Har-Ber Village for organizations to observe operations and take-home implementation checklists.
- A train-the-trainer pathway to seed mini-trainings in other regions, prioritizing rural and tribal-serving organizations.

Summary

Direct services will concentrate on Delaware, Ottawa, Craig, Mayes, and Cherokee Counties—where need, partnerships, and feasibility are strongest—while our tools, training, and technical assistance are offered statewide to catalyze broader systems change across Oklahoma.

Performance Measures

The Council is required to submit performance reports to evaluate the effectiveness of all Council activities to our Federal partners. We require all contracted vendors to submit performance measure data prior to final payment. As a required component of your application, please provide **projected data** for the following performance measures. All contractors must collect **baseline data** to evaluate the project's outcomes. If you have questions about these projected and baseline numbers, please reach out to us.

Note: Not all measures may be applicable to your proposal. If a measure does not apply, please enter zero.

- **IA** = Individual and family **A**dvocacy
- **SC** = System **C**hange

23. **IA 1.1**

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** *

Proposal Budget:

- Include a detailed revenue and expenditure budget, detailing the total costs and revenues of the proposal.
- Identify the amount requested from the Council within the context of the budget.
- Identify the amount of the required 25% funding match for your project's total budget. You also need to explain where this matching funding will come from. Sources for the match can include non-federal funding, donated services or items, discounted services or items, and volunteer time. If you need help calculating the value of volunteer time, you can contact Jennifer. Match funding helps the Council understand all partners who are helping with the project.
- 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 your budget** to Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org and include the Project Name in the subject line.

Developmental Disabilities Council
 Unsolicited Application for Funding
 Estimated Budget

Year 1 Year 2 Year 3 Year 4

Income

Council \$25,000. \$7,000 \$6,000 \$5,000
 Local Sponsors \$750 \$500 \$500 \$500
 Individual Gifts \$500 \$500 \$500
 Program Fees \$500
 Corporate Sponsors \$250 \$500 \$500
 Mini-grants \$500 \$500 \$500
 Professional Devel Fees \$500 \$500
 In-kind \$1,000 \$1,000 \$1,000 \$500
 Total Income \$27,500. \$10,000 \$9,000 \$8,000

Expenses

Contractor/Consulting \$4,000 \$1,000 \$1,000 \$475
 Room Reimagining \$10,000
 Sensory Kits & refresh \$2,500 \$500 \$500 \$500
 Wayfinding Signs \$1,000
 Communications \$500 \$1,500 \$1,000 \$1,000
 Printing \$500 \$500 \$500 \$500
 Internal Training \$5,000 \$2,500 \$2,000 \$1,525
 External Training \$4,000 \$4,000 \$4,000 \$4,000
 Total Expenses \$27,500 \$10,000 \$9,000 \$8,000

Tapered Ask: Har-Ber Village plans to apply for support in subsequent years, but the program is not solely dependent on those funds to execute the goals. Other funding will be secured, or we will find other ways to complete external outreach/training.

Excess: Any excess funds in previous years will be applied to subsequent years.

Fees: Program and professional development fees use an estimated value, sponsors and external clients will underwrite shortcomings.

47. STATEMENT OF WORK (SoW): *

Provide a proposed statement of work for the contractual requirements. This should include a detailed description of the work to be done, project milestones, deliverables to the Council, and other details important to the work that you will provide in exchange for Council funding. [ProjectManager.com](https://www.projectmanager.com) has some good information for you to develop your statement of work: <https://www.projectmanager.com/blog/statement-work-definition-examples>.

Project Summary & Purpose

Har-Ber Village will implement and evaluate a sensory-ready model for rural museums to improve accessibility for visitors with developmental disabilities. The project expands access to services, inclusive education, and caregiver support through on-site sensory tools, navigation events, and a statewide toolkit.

Primary DDCO Themes: Access to Services; Inclusive Education

Secondary Themes: Caregiver Support; Representation & Advocacy

Scope of Work (12 Months)**Design & Readiness (Months 1–2)**

- Convene advisory panel (self-advocates, caregivers, educators).
- Build 4–8 sensory kits with check-out logs and cleaning protocols.
- Develop signage, visual schedules, and “What to Expect” webpage.
- Train staff/volunteers in trauma-informed and sensory-friendly practices.

Implementation (Months 3–10)

- Host sensory-friendly school days and manage quiet-room use.
- Maintain ≥95% kit availability; log checkouts and incidents.
- Hold quarterly Access to Services pop-ups with DDS, SoonerStart, VR, tribal and behavioral health partners.
- Engage Interpretation Fellows (self-advocates) to co-create labels, videos, and short programs.

Evaluation & Sharing (Months 3–12)

- Track usage, referrals, early departures, and teacher confidence.
- Quarterly CQI reviews; adjust and document learnings.
- Publish and pilot the Sensory-Ready Venue Starter Toolkit; host virtual share-out and record three case stories.

Key Milestones

- Months 1–2: Kickoff, panel, kits, training, signage, website.
- Month 3: Soft launch.
- Months 4–5: Full operation, 1st CQI review.
- Month 6: Interim progress brief.
- Months 7–8: Fellows programs, 2nd CQI, Case Story #1.
- Months 9–10: Toolkit draft, pilot, Case Story #2.
- Months 11–12: Webinar, Case Story #3, final report.

Deliverables

1. Workplan & evaluation matrix.
2. Readiness package (kits, signage, training).
3. Quarterly briefs with KPI dashboard.
4. Pop-up reports (attendance, referrals).
5. Fellows bundle (stipends, co-authored content).
6. Toolkit v1.0 + webinar.
7. Final report & data workbook.

Performance Metrics (KPIs)

- Kit availability ≥95%; 70% of users return to activities.
- Early departures ↓20%; 100% school days sensory-ready.
- Teacher confidence +1 point (5-pt scale).
- ≥150 navigation assists; ≥50% referral completion.
- ≥60% visitors agree inclusion improved experience.
- Toolkit downloads and replication tracked.

Roles & Responsibilities

- Har-Ber Village: Project management, data, training, toolkit, reporting.
- DDCO: Oversight, technical assistance, statewide dissemination.

Data, Accessibility & Risk

Aggregate-only reporting; consent-based micro-surveys.

All materials ADA-compliant, plain-language, and accessible PDFs.

Mitigation: backup partners, cross-trained staff, weekly data checks.

Branding & Acceptance

All materials and events acknowledge DDCO funding. Deliverables accepted upon written DDCO confirmation of completeness, format, KPI data, and revisions.

48. Sustainability Plan: *

It is the Council's hope that funded projects will have a lasting impact on the community and achieve financial sustainability after the Council's funding is complete. The Council's funding is intended as a catalyst to help new work become self-sustaining. To assure the Council of this long-term vision, all applicants must submit a detailed Financial Sustainability Plan. Financial sustainability is defined as maintaining services to the community through a diversified funding model. **Important Note:** *The Council can approve funding for an activity for a maximum of five (5) years. However, our funding is not guaranteed, so applications for Council funding must be submitted annually.* The Council expects all funded work to be self-sustaining by the end of the contract period. Your Financial Sustainability Plan should include, but is not limited to, the following components for each year of your proposed project:

- Annual Funding Goals: Clear, measurable funding targets for each year of the project.
- Projected Budgets: A multi-year budget forecast that demonstrates decreasing reliance on Council funding.
- Identified Partners: A list of specific organizations or entities with whom you will partner, along with a description of their role in your sustainability plan. Please also include any documented commitment of resources they are able to provide.
- Timeline: A clear timeline for all sustainability activities (e.g., "Year 2: Apply for three new grants," "Year 3: Implement a pilot fee-for-service program").

Financial Sustainability Plan (Years 1–4)

Objective: Launch and sustain inclusive, sensory-supported living-history programs—on-site and statewide—becoming self-funded after Council seed support.

Council Request: \$25,000 (Year 1 catalyst).

Total Year 1 Cost: \$31,250 (\$25,000 Council + \$6,250 match).

Ongoing Need: ~\$8–10K/year for materials, outreach, training, and evaluation, covered through diversified revenue.

Annual Funding Goals

Year 1 – Launch (\$27.5K): Council \$25K; sponsors \$1K; gifts/memberships \$500; in-kind \$1K.

Year 2 – Stabilize (\$10K): Council \$7K; program fees \$1K; sponsors \$500; small grants \$500; gifts/memberships \$500; earned add-ons \$500.

Year 3 – Grow (\$9K): Council \$6K; fees \$1K; sponsors \$500; grants \$500; gifts \$500; add-ons \$500.

Year 4 – Sustain (\$8K): Council \$5K; fees \$1K; sponsors \$500; grants \$500; gifts \$500; add-ons \$500.

Budget Overview

- Year 1: Outfitting sensory kits/stations, curriculum design, evaluation setup, and launch.
- Years 2–4: Program delivery, training, materials refresh, and evaluation.

Core Partners

- Schools (Grove, Jay, Colcord, Kansas, Oaks-Mission): Field trips, cost-share, PD access.
- Libraries & Community Centers: Host outreach events.
- Health & Inclusion Partners (AFO, OT clinics): Training, sensory supply mini-grants.
- Civic/Business Partners: Sponsorships, volunteers, print/media support.
- Veterans/DAR/VFW & historical groups: Co-host content days.
- Higher Ed/CTE programs: Interns for evaluation and media.
- In-kind: Volunteer docents, signage printing, PSAs.

Timeline & Milestones

Year 1 (Launch):

- Q1–2: Outfit kits/stations, finalize UDL lesson plans, pilot visits & PD, baseline metrics.
- Q3: Sponsor drive, membership appeal, approve fee schedule.
- Q4: Publish Impact Brief; renew sponsors, schedule next cycle.

Year 2 (Stabilize):

- Adopt fee-for-service model; apply for mini-grants; launch "Education Champion" membership; add teacher ambassadors.

Year 3 (Grow):

- Expand PD institutes, ticketed workshops, and quiet hours; offer multi-year sponsorship bundles.

Year 4 (Sustain):

- Replace worn materials via sinking fund; renew sponsors; external evaluation snapshot.

Key Metrics

- Bookings & Reach: # school visits, students, outreach events.
- Revenue Mix: % earned increases yearly.
- Access/Quality: Teacher inclusion ratings; kit checkout rates.
- Efficiency: Cost per participant decreases.
- Retention: School and sponsor renewals.
- Replication: # of organizations adopting model.

Risk & Contingencies

- Demand risk: Sliding-scale slots, bundled return passes.
- Cost inflation: Annual price/sponsor review, shared services.
- Staffing: Cross-train volunteers, maintain sub pool.

Bottom Line

Council's one-time \$25,000 investment launches a self-sustaining, inclusive education model. By Year 2, diversified income (fees, sponsors, small grants, memberships) maintains operations; by Years 3–4, the program is fully sustained—expanding equitable, sensory-inclusive access across Oklahoma.

49. Outreach and Awareness Plan of the Work: *

Too often people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, and others are not aware of resources available in Oklahoma. Please provide a marketing and outreach plan to bring awareness about the work being proposed. Your plan should address the following:

- **Target Audience:** Clearly identify the specific groups within the intellectual and developmental disability community you aim to reach (e.g., specific age ranges, individuals in rural vs. urban areas, diverse cultural communities).
- **Marketing Channels:** Describe the specific marketing channels you will use (e.g., social media, community events, partnerships, print materials) and how you will use them effectively to reach your target audiences.
- **Partnerships:** Explain how you will collaborate with other organizations, advocacy groups, or community leaders to expand the reach of your message.
- **Accessibility and Language:** Detail your strategy for ensuring your outreach is accessible and inclusive. Please discuss your plan for language translations, including which languages you will prioritize and how you will ensure cultural appropriateness.
- **Measurement:** Describe how you will measure the success and impact of your marketing and outreach efforts.

Target Audience**Primary:**

- Youth and young adults with IDD (ages ~10–24) experiencing sensory overload or anxiety.
 - Parents, caregivers (including foster/kinship), grandparents, and family advocates.
 - Educators, paras, transition coordinators, homeschool networks, and youth leaders.
 - Rural families in NE Oklahoma (Delaware, Ottawa, Craig, Mayes, Cherokee Counties) and tribal communities.
 - Clinicians, therapists (OT/PT/SLP, behavioral health), and DDS case managers.
- Result: A cross-age, cross-cultural model benefiting the full community.

Secondary:

- Museums, libraries, parks, tribal centers, tourism partners, and higher-ed programs statewide.

Marketing Channels**1) Partner & Community Networks**

- Schools: Backpack flyers, e-notes (Peachjar), teacher packets, SPED listservs, IEP/transition-night presentations.
- DDS/VR & SoonerSuccess: One-pagers + social story PDFs for family updates.
- Clinics & Health Depts: Waiting-room posters (QRs), provider emails.
- Tribal Partners: Newsletters, youth centers, community health sessions.

2) Social & Digital

- Facebook/Instagram posts and reels (captioned, alt text, PascalCase hashtags); targeted by county/interests.
- Accessible landing page (WCAG 2.1 AA): hours, map, FAQs, "What to Expect" story, downloads.

3) Print & On-Site

- High-contrast rack cards at libraries, clinics, and Har-Ber's front desk.
- Friendly directional signage: "Need a reset? Quiet room this way."

4) Media & Events

- Resource fairs, Oklahoma Museums Association/library conferences.
- Quarterly webinars (captioned/transcribed) archived online.

Partnerships

- Disability Orgs: The Arc of OK, Autism OK, OK Family Network, SoonerSuccess, OK Autism Center, Special Olympics OK.
 - State Systems: DDS, Voc Rehab, SoonerStart.
 - Education/Library: District SPED leads, CareerTech, library systems.
 - Tribal: Youth, education, and behavioral-health programs (advisory co-review).
 - Tourism/Civic: Chambers, Visit Grove/Grand Lake, Green Country Tourism.
- MOUs or email agreements define co-branding, post frequency, flyer placement, and web/calendar inclusion. Each partner gets a unique QR/URL for tracking.

Accessibility & Language

- Plain language (≤6th grade), large print; WCAG 2.1 AA web design; alt text, captions, transcripts, ASL welcome video.
- Social story with photos/icons, printable "I need..." cards; tribal youth review for cultural clarity.

- Multiple access paths: phone, mail, and web.

Measurement

Baseline: Month 1 intercept survey (awareness, usage = 0).

KPIs (monthly, quarterly summary):

- Reach: 10+ partner orgs sharing; impressions, email/web metrics, press/PSA pickups.
- Engagement: Toolkit downloads, webinar attendance, family/provider inquiries.
- Conversion/Equity: Room use logs; "How heard" via QR or desk tally; zip/language/tribal tracking.
- Outcomes: Fewer early departures, higher satisfaction, more completed visits.

Continuous Improvement:

- Quarterly A/B message testing, partner huddles, and annual Outreach Snapshot for statewide replication.

Timeline (Year 1)

- Months 1–2: Build landing page, translations, print kits, MOUs, PSAs, schedule webinars.
- Month 3: Launch through partners, schools, clinics; kickoff webinar + social ads.
- Months 4–12: Monthly content, 6+ events, quarterly webinars, quarterly briefs.

Summary:

This plan uses trusted local networks, accessible messaging, and measurable partner engagement to ensure families and self-advocates learn about—and benefit from—the Retreat Room, while equipping peer organizations statewide to replicate the model.

50. **Logic Model:**

To help the Council and your organization effectively evaluate the program's success, a logic model is a required component for all contracts in excess of \$5,000. A logic model is a simple visual tool that illustrates the connection between your project's resources (inputs), what you plan to do (activities), the immediate results of your work (outputs), and the changes you hope to achieve (outcomes). For a helpful guide to developing a clear and effective logic model, please refer to this resource from The Compass: <https://thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guide/how-develop-logic-model-0>

Shared via e-mail with Jennifer Robinson on October 16, 2025.

51. **Registered Vendor? ***

Are you a registered vendor with the State of Oklahoma? All contractors must be registered in the State Supplier Portal. You can do this online: <https://oklahoma.gov/omes/divisions/central-purchasing/suppliers-and-payees/supplier-portal.html>

Yes

No

52. **IRS 501(c)3? ***

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

Yes

No

58. **Registered partnership? ***

Is the proposed vendor a registered partnership?

Yes

No

59. **Registered corporation? ***

Is the proposed vendor a registered corporation?

Yes

No

60. **ID Number ***

Social Security Number, FEI Number, or OMES Supplier ID

71-0541295

Contact information

61. **Signing authority ***

Name of individual with contract signing authority, title, Phone number, email address

Nicole Reynolds, Executive Director, 918-786-6446 - events@har-bervillage.com

62. **Primary Contact: ***

Name of individual(s) to contact regarding contract performance & operations, title, Phone number, email address

Linda Foster, Administrator, 918-786-6446 - admin@har-bervillage.com

63. **Finance Contact: ***

Name of individual(s) responsible for finance and accounting, title, Phone number, email address

Ashley Temple, Accountant, 918-253-2233 - ashleytemple.reliable@gmail.com

64. **Legal Notices: ***

Name of individual(s) to send legal notices, title, Phone number, email address

Linda Foster, Administrator, 918-786-6446 - admin@har-bervillage.com

Developmental Disabilities Council

Unsolicited Application for Funding

Revised October 16, 2025 at 4:19 pm

Estimated Budget

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Income				
Council	\$25,000	\$7,000	\$6,000	\$5,000
Local Sponsors	\$750	\$500	\$500	\$500
Individual Gifts	\$500	\$500		\$500
Program Fees				\$500
Corporate Sponsors	\$750	\$500	\$500	
Mini-grants		\$500	\$500	\$500
Professional Devel Fees			\$500	\$500
In-kind	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$500
Total Income	\$28,000	\$10,000	\$9,000	\$8,000

Expenses				
Contractor/Consulting	\$4,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$475
Room Reimagining	\$10,000			
Sensory Kits & refresh	\$2,500	\$500	\$500	\$500
Wayfinding Signs	\$1,000			
Communications	\$500	\$1,500	\$1,000	\$1,000
Printing	\$1,000	\$500	\$500	\$500
Internal Training	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$2,000	\$1,525
External Training	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
Total Expenses	\$28,000	\$10,000	\$9,000	\$8,000

Tapered Ask: Har-Ber Village plans to apply for support in subsequent years, but the program is not solely dependent on those funds to execute the goals. Other funding will be secured, or we will find other ways to complete external outreach/training.

Excess: Any excess funds in previous years will be applied to subsequent years.

Fees: Program and professional development fees use an estimated value, sponsors and external clients will underwrite shortcomings.

HARBOR VILLAGE

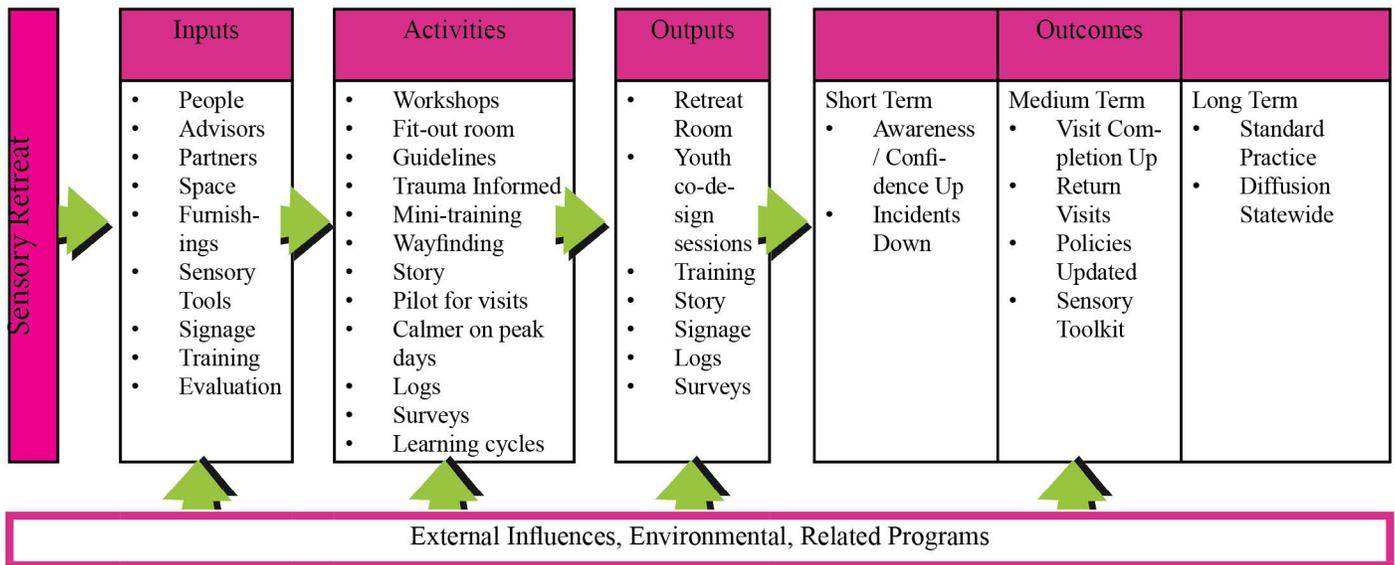
EST. 1968

LOGIC MODEL FOR SENSORY-FRIENDLY RETREAT ROOM

Built based on The Compass for SBC framework (Inputs -> Activities -> Outputs -> Outcomes)

PROBLEM / NEED & GOAL / PURPOSE

Need: Some youth experience sensory overload during visits, causing early departures and limiting equitable access.
 Goal: Provide a quiet, dignified space and supports so visitors can regulate, remain on site, and participate fully.



ASSUMPTIONS AND EXTERNAL FACTORS

Assumption: Calm, low-stimulus environments + visual supports help regulation; trained staff can de-escalate respectfully; youth co-design improves fit; affordable models replicate at rural sites.

External Factors / Risks: Visitor volume/seasonality; staffing/volunteers; supply/lead times; building constraints; expectations & occasional misuse requiring enforcement.

DDCO Performance Measures

Measure	Target	Notes	Timeline / Owner
SC 1.1.1 Policies/Procedures		Accessibility statement; Retreat Room SOP; event addendum	
SC 1.3.1 Promising Practice		Sensory response; nursing/quiet space; trail prompts	
SC 13.3 Best Practices		Front-desk sensory kits; training; designated spaces	
SC 1.4.1 People Trained		Staff/volunteers + train-the-trainer	

Training Early Care and Education Providers

Oklahoma Autism Center – Early Access

Fiscal Year FY27 Funding Request

Project/Activity: Training Early Care and Education Providers

Organization: Oklahoma Autism Center – Early Access

Proposal Description: This project expands the Oklahoma Autism Center’s ongoing efforts to strengthen early identification, family support, and inclusion for young children with developmental differences. Building on existing success, the initiative will increase access to evidence-based training for early care and education providers using a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) model. The training series will equip providers to create inclusive classrooms, respond effectively to behavioral and sensory needs, and partner with families to ensure every child, especially those under age five, has access to high-quality early learning opportunities. New activities will extend professional development to additional early care facilities, including Head Start and Early Head Start programs, with tailored in-person and virtual options to reach rural and underserved communities statewide.

The program includes three progressive levels of training and consultation. Level 1 provides universal training on inclusive practices, developmental monitoring, and positive behavior supports; Level 2 offers targeted workshops based on provider self-assessment and identified classroom needs; and Level 3 delivers individualized consultation for providers serving children with developmental delays or disabilities. Together, these levels build community capacity, enhance provider confidence, and improve family partnerships. Outcomes from initial pilots demonstrate strong effectiveness: knowledge of inclusion strategies increased from 36% to 75%, and confidence using positive behavior supports rose from 36% to 69%. The expanded project will build on these results to further reduce early childhood expulsions and promote positive developmental trajectories.

Evaluation will measure changes in provider knowledge, confidence, and implementation of inclusive strategies, as well as observable improvements in children’s participation and classroom outcomes. The project aligns directly with the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma’s goals for access to services, inclusive education, and system change. By embedding developmental monitoring, screening, and inclusion practices into early childhood systems, this initiative creates sustainable improvements in how communities identify, support, and include children with developmental differences—ensuring every child belongs and thrives from the start.

Council Goal & Objective: Access to Services, Inclusive Education

Targeted Audience: Level 1 trainings on autism, developmental monitoring, screening, and positive behavior supports will serve providers working with children from birth to age 18, with emphasis on those caring for children under five. Levels 2 and 3 will provide targeted coaching and consultation to early care providers and families, expanding access statewide—especially in rural and underserved areas—to strengthen early identification, inclusion, and support.

Funding requested for Fiscal Year FY27

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$135,532	\$45,305	\$180,837

Prior Fiscal Year _____

Council	Match (in kind)	Total

Prior Fiscal Year _____

Council	Match (in kind)	Total

Prior Fiscal Year _____

Council	Match (in kind)	Total

Prior Fiscal Year _____

Council	Match (in kind)	Total

6. **General Timelines:**

Funding decisions can take time for the Council to discuss. Please allow time for feedback on your proposal and possible revision of your proposal or providing more information. We want to be a partner and are happy to work with you as you complete an application. Please ask questions. If approved for funding, contract dates depend on when the proposal was received, length of review by Council committee, and contract negotiations.

For a proposal requesting funding for a full year, contracts will typically follow the state fiscal year: July 1 through June 30.

Proposals received are evaluated by a Council Committee, and if approved, a recommendation is made to the full Council for a decision. If approved by the full Council, we will make every effort for contracts to be effective as early as possible, typically by July 1. Applicants will be notified by email within 5 business days of the full Council's decision.

IMPORTANT: Do not begin work until a fully executed contract and purchase order (PO) is in hand. Per Oklahoma Statute, no funding can or will be reimbursed for any goods or service prior to the effective date of a contract.

If you have any questions, email our Planning & Grants Director, Jennifer Robinson: Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org.

Part 1 - Contact Information

7. **Organization Name ***

8. **Organization Address ***

Mailing address please: Street number, Street name, City, State, 9-digit Zip Code

9. **Contact Info ***

Name, email address **and** phone number of the person completing this application.

10. **Website**

Organization's Website

Our State Plan Goals

To qualify for funding, projects must meet the goals in the 5-Year Council State Plan. The state plan is available for review <https://oklahoma.gov/ddco/about/state-plan.html>. The new state plan for 2027-2031 is in the process of being developed.

11. State Plan Goal *

As of August 2025, the Council is in the process of reviewing input from publicly held listening sessions and information about current services and systems in Oklahoma. Goals have not been established for our next 5 Year State Plan (2027-2031), however proposals submitted should fall within one of our themes we have identified.

- Access to Services
- Inclusive Education
- Caregiver Support
- Representation and Public Attitudes
- Advocacy and Self-Advocacy

Access to Services
Inclusive Education

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 purpose of this policy is to ensure a fair and impartial procurement process. The questions that follow are designed to help the state determine if such a conflict exists.

12. 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

13. Identify names and relationships

If you answered yes to "Any relationships to the organization?" please explain in detail. Identify names and relationships, as necessary.

Team members on the proposed contract currently work on an active project under a previous contract with the DDCO. This proposal is a renewal/expansion of said previous contract.

Part 3 - Your activity proposal:

The Council's committee carefully reviews all complete and accurate applications. The information you provide in Part III will help our members understand your proposed work and how it aligns with the Council's funding priorities and expectations.

14. Proposal. *

Provide a written overview of your proposal (up to 4000 characters). A good overview should cover the key components of your proposal. This includes:

- **Introduction:** A brief summary of your project's purpose.
- **Problem Statement:** The issue your project aims to address.
- **Proposed Solution:** A clear description of your methodology and how your project will solve the problem.
- **Expected Outcomes:** The anticipated results or impact of your work.
- **Evaluation:** How the work will be measured.
- **Relevance:** How your project aligns with the council's goals and funding priorities.

INTRODUCTION: Our project will expand our sustained work to increase early identification and family support by training early care providers in evidence-based practices that foster inclusive classroom environments and positive outcomes for young children with developmental differences. The purpose of this project is to increase access to critical early learning opportunities that promote timely supports and positively impact life trajectories of children with developmental delays or disabilities.

Problem Statement: Young children experiencing delays are more likely to face school removal as compared to typically developing peers. For instance, children with autism are 10 times more likely to be permanently excluded from childcare. Excluding children from early care and education deprives access to linguistically and socially enriching environments and can adversely impact caregivers financially and emotionally. Even when formal removal has not occurred, caregivers often report feeling their child is unwelcome in early care settings or that staff are unequipped to meet their child's needs.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: This project will build community capacity to include children with developmental differences in early care and education settings using the multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) framework. Trainings will be tailored to the needs of early care settings. Level 1 includes training on inclusive classroom practices to address the needs of all children, including those experiencing developmental delays. Level 2 incorporates provider self-assessment to identify classroom strengths and needs, followed by small-group workshops to provide hands-on practice. Level 3 includes in-depth consultation for individual providers and the children in their care, with support to enhance family partnerships, coaching in positive behavior supports, and improvements to the learning environment and materials.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: Refer to the logic model for detailed expected outcomes. For new project activities focused on early care and education, the Oklahoma Autism Center is currently piloting training with two childcare centers, and 91% of participants rated the training as very or extremely relevant. Their self-ratings reflect significant increases in knowledge and confidence with inclusive practices. For instance, the percentage of early care providers rating themselves as very or extremely knowledgeable of strategies to include children with developmental differences increased from 36% to 75%. Participant confidence in using positive behavior supports grew substantially, with the percentage rating themselves as very or extremely confident increasing from 36% to 69%. In this project, we expect to extend and improve upon these results to build capacity for including young children with developmental differences in early care settings.

EVALUATION: New project goals will be evaluated based on participant changes in knowledge and impact on practices (e.g., changes made to practice, confidence using inclusive classroom strategies). In addition, we will examine individual child/classroom outcomes (e.g., what next steps occurred after consultation). Finally, we will evaluate new project goals based on how many early care centers/staff received each level of the training. We will also continue tracking total families and community members served through our existing Early Access trainings and services.

RELEVANCE: By expanding training and support for early care providers, this project will build capacity to include children with developmental differences in early care and education settings. This increases young children's access to critical early learning opportunities with their peers, which can significantly and positively impact developmental outcomes and future quality of life. In this manner, the Belonging Project directly aligns with the council's goals of promoting access to services and inclusive education.

15. Have you completed a needs assessment? * Yes No**16. Needs assessment:**

If you have completed a needs assessment, please provide a summary below. Your response should include:

- A brief description of the methodology used (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups).
- The key findings that support the need for your proposed project.
- The population included in your assessment.
- An explanation of how this assessment directly informs your proposal.

Although we have not completed a formal needs assessment, we have collected preliminary input from 34 participants in a pilot training delivered across rural and urban childcare settings. Out of a field of several pertinent topics, this early care provider sample indicated the need for providing additional training and coaching regarding 1) tools for supporting classroom transitions, 2) strategies to increase child communication, and 3) using positive reinforcement to promote child interest and engagement in learning. This feedback is useful to inform training topics that will be particularly relevant for early educators.

17. Who will do the work? *

Please list all people and organizations that will be working on the project, and describe their experience and qualifications to provide the proposed goods and services.

Juliana Vanderburg, PhD, Psychologist and Autism Specialist, has extensive experience in assessment, screening, and intervention across the lifespan for autism and other developmental differences. In her role as a clinical psychologist, she engages in direct clinical work with children with autism ages 0-18 and their families. She is an assistant professor at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, with a strong background in research, especially with regard to autism and other developmental differences. She has led and published research projects focused on autism across the lifespan. She has presented training, research, and workshops related to autism and other developmental differences at national and international conferences.

Bonnie McBride, Ph.D. is a professor in Pediatrics at the OU Health Campus. She has worked in the field of neurodevelopmental disabilities for the past 25 years focusing on promoting and supporting inclusive community-based early intervention services through research and training. She regularly provides training on inclusive classroom practices, early identification, autism characteristics, and reducing challenging behaviors. She is Oklahoma's Ambassador for the CDC's Learn the Signs. Act Early. program that promotes developmental monitoring, screening, and entrance into early intervention as soon as possible.

Kathryn Moore, PhD, Project Consultant, is a licensed psychologist, nationally certified school psychologist, and assistant professor in the School Psychology program at Oklahoma State University. She recently served as a clinician and faculty member at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center and continues to collaborate with the Oklahoma Autism Center, where she co-leads professional development initiatives for educators and early care professionals. Her areas of expertise include autism identification and evidence-based practices to support children with developmental differences in their schools and communities.

Seth Kastner, BS, Outreach and Project Evaluation Coordinator, has extensive experience in early intervention, early identification, and assessment for autism and other developmental delays. He has written and presented training and workshops for families and various professionals and has coordinated research and reporting related activities for many projects.

Gina Bryan, MSW, Financial and Contract Support Coordinator, brings over six years of experience in budget oversight and contract administration to the Oklahoma Autism Center. In her role, she has been instrumental in managing financial operations, ensuring compliance with funding requirements, and streamlining contract processes to support programmatic goals. In addition to her financial expertise, Gina holds a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) credential, which enhances her ability to contribute meaningfully to clinical and training initiatives.

Andrea Quillen is an Early Childhood Educator and Teaching Coach whose 25-year focus has been on training and program implementation around inclusivity to create safe and welcoming learning environments. She is equally experienced and passionate about facilitating positive experiences and outcomes for children and for the adults that serve them. She is also the Outreach Coordinator for the Oklahoma Autism Center, conducting community outreach and professional networking in a variety of settings.

Twana Ross, Early Childhood Specialist, is a childcare owner and operator with extensive experience working with children with developmental disabilities both in her own childcare home as well as at the Oklahoma Autism Center's Early Foundations early intervention program.

Margaret Bergant, Project Facilitator, has experience writing and implementing federal and non-profit grants. She has expertise in collaboration and in project management, including collecting and analyzing data used for reporting progress toward outcomes in various projects and grants.

18. Targeted population:

*

Tell us more about who you are targeting to improve outcomes for? Describe the age, region, familial status, learning or support needs, and type of disability.

The universal, Level 1 trainings about autism, developmental monitoring, screening, and positive behavior supports will be offered to a wide range of providers, with a goal of benefitting children from birth to age 18, and with an emphasis on training early care providers who serve children under the age of 5 with developmental differences and their families. The Level 2 and 3 trainings associated with new project activities will directly benefit children ages 0-5 in early care and education settings and their families. Ideally, all regions of the state will benefit, with an emphasis placed on rural and underserved/historically marginalized populations. In addition to in-person professional development events, virtual training and consultation options will be available to increase reach to providers across Oklahoma. Our sustained work to increase early identification and family support will continue to impact the broader community, including children, families, and providers, as summarized within our logic model.

19. Impact:

*

Please describe the anticipated impact of your proposal by addressing the following three components:

- Goals for the targeted population?
 - What are the specific, measurable goals you hope to achieve for the individuals directly served by this project?
- Broader implications for people with developmental disabilities:
 - Beyond the direct participants, how will this project create a broader, positive impact for the population of people with developmental disabilities as a whole?
- Measurable outcomes:
 - What specific, quantifiable metrics will you use to track your success and demonstrate the project's effectiveness?

Goals for the Targeted Population:

Goals for early care and education providers include increased knowledge, comfort, and confidence in working with children with developmental differences within those settings. In particular, we will retrospectively assess whether providers grow in their knowledge of strategies for more effectively including children with developmental differences, as well as knowledge of how to match classroom supports to individual needs. We will assess provider comfort level and self-efficacy in their abilities to collaborate with families and navigate sometimes-difficult conversations about their child's development. Finally, we will assess the confidence of providers in better understanding the underlying communication beneath challenging behaviors, their abilities to adapt classroom environments and routines to meet individual learner needs, and their abilities to effectively use positive behavior supports to address challenging classroom behaviors. The goal is that providers will increase in all of these areas following each level of the training.

Broader Implications for People with Developmental Disabilities:

Research has shown that suspensions or expulsions from early childcare settings can negatively impact development by reducing access to positive peer models, as well as predict negative outcomes later in life, such as increased conflict with teachers, a greater number of challenging behaviors, and increased school drop-out rates. By promoting early intervention in the form of inclusion in these settings, the project aims to decrease the likelihood of suspensions or expulsions for children with developmental differences, thereby promoting a more positive trajectory for the future. Broader implications include decreased stigma around developmental differences as more children with developmental delays or disabilities are successfully included in preschool and K-12 settings. For instance, as children with developmental differences display fewer challenging behaviors, peers and teachers may be more likely to regard them in a positive manner, promoting greater understanding and inclusion for people with developmental disabilities as a whole. In addition, children without developmental differences who participated in inclusive early care and education have been demonstrated to later show greater empathy and understanding towards people with developmental differences. Accordingly, these early experiences may benefit people with developmental differences more broadly, as children in inclusive settings grow into adults with greater compassion and empathy for those with developmental differences.

Measurable Outcomes

Changes in knowledge, comfort, and confidence will be examined in a series of retrospective pre- post- evaluations. For instance, after the Level 1 training, early care and education providers will rate changes in knowledge, comfort, and confidence before and after the training, as described above. In addition, providers will fill out a rank-order list of their preferred priority areas for consultation and intervention following the Level 1 training that will guide the topics addressed in the Level 2 consultations. Based on what topics are selected, providers will similarly retrospectively report on changes in knowledge, comfort, and confidence in relevant topic areas. Outcomes of the individualized, Level 3 consultations will be examined through a qualitative follow-up with providers and a brief survey focused on observable changes in the child's behavior following the consultation. In addition, we will examine outcomes related to how many childcare centers and staff participated in each level of the training. Free Center for Early Childhood Professional Development (CECPD) hours will be offered to incentivize participation.

20. Duplication or expansion:

*

Does this proposal duplicate or expand upon any existing work in Oklahoma or elsewhere? The Council cannot supplant funding to continue existing work unless the proposal is to expand on the work and enhances what is being done.

If your proposal duplicates or expands upon existing work, please describe the existing work and explain what makes your project unique and innovative. Be specific about how this approach and expected outcomes differ from and add value to what is already being done.

Yes. This proposal is an expansion of work being done under our current contract with the DDCO. We are continuing efforts to maintain and expand screening and diagnostic partners, and we are working to better document and improve assistance and support provided to families during the process of early identification, screening, assessment, and connecting with services. Our new activities, outlined in detail elsewhere in this proposal make our efforts more holistic in building capacity to support children and improve Oklahoma's early childhood systems' ability to serve and include them before, during, and after they have been identified as having a developmental delay or disability. While we have been able to pilot some of the proposed activities with two childcare facilities prior to this submission, we are requesting support from the DDCO to initiate this work with other early care facilities (possibly expanding to include Head Start, Early Head Start, and other early childhood education programs) and to incorporate components tailored to the needs of early care providers across Oklahoma.

21. Best Practices:

*

Will your proposed project use current evidence-based best practices in the field of developmental disabilities?

Identify the specific practices you will use, explain how you will incorporate them into your project, and cite your sources. Citations should include a mix of professional literature, research studies, and respected organizations or programs.

This proposed project will use evidence-based best practices, including the implementation of a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) framework for early childhood, teaching of empirically tested positive behavioral supports, and integration of the Research Units in Behavioral Intervention (RUBI) Parent Training curriculum into the Level 3 training. MTSS is a well-established framework that can effectively address challenges in schools and other settings through a tiered system of support. A recent systematic review of 40 studies illustrated the effectiveness of MTSS for promoting behavior change in educational settings. The strong evidence base for MTSS in K-12 settings has resulted in the expansion of this model to early childhood settings, such as the Pyramid Model for Promoting Social-Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children, with components related to inclusion (https://challengingbehavior.org/docs/indicators_inclusion_ece.pdf). Within our proposed intervention, the Level 1 and 2 trainings will incorporate evidence-based practices such as universal positive behavior support strategies and modifications to the classroom environment that have been shown to provide strong supports to children with developmental differences across settings. In addition, the Level 3 training will specifically incorporate strategies such as functional behavioral assessment and behavior intervention planning using a prevent-teach-reinforce model for young children, as well as the RUBI Parent Training program, an evidence-based parent management training program that has been repeatedly shown to be effective in reducing challenging behaviors for children with developmental differences.

22. **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.

How will your proposed project lead to **lasting systems change** for people with developmental disabilities? Please provide a detailed explanation of how your project's outcomes will shift thinking, improve practices, or empower individuals and families within the state's service system.

Our new belonging-focused professional development activities for early care providers will increase the capacity to include and support children with developmental delays and disabilities in early childhood settings. This will provide increased opportunities for all children to have access to their peers and to receive high quality services that prepare them for success in the future. The Early Access program also proposes to continue efforts for systems change by working with healthcare and mental healthcare agencies and programs by embedding developmental monitoring, screening and effective diagnostic services into existing service structures. Successful implementation will allow existing service providers within local communities to expand their services to provide efficient responses to developmental concerns. These expanded services will be integrated and tailored to the individual community and will result in long-term and sustainable changes in service delivery. These changes will allow children to be identified and to receive appropriate intervention at a younger age, and families will be supported throughout the process.

23. **Where implemented:**

*

Will the proposed project be implemented or offered statewide? If no, please define the specific counties and cities you will serve and provide the rationale for their selection.

The project will be implemented statewide, with broad outreach and education efforts across all regions. During the first year we will focus our belonging partnerships on early care providers in central-Oklahoma's urban and suburban communities as well as at least one provider in a more rural, outlying community so that we can replicate and scale-up these efforts in the future.

Performance Measures

The Council is required to submit performance reports to evaluate the effectiveness of all Council activities to our Federal partners. We require all contracted vendors to submit performance measure data prior to final payment. As a required component of your application, please provide **projected data** for the following performance measures. All contractors must collect **baseline data** to evaluate the project's outcomes. If you have questions about these projected and baseline numbers, please reach out to us.

Note: Not all measures may be applicable to your proposal. If a measure does not apply, please enter zero.

- **IA** = Individual and family **A**dvocacy
- **SC** = System **C**hange

24. **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

25. **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

26. **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

27. **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

28. **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

29. **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

30. **IA 2.2.2**

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

The value must be a number

31. **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

32. **IA 3.1**

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

The value must be a number

33. **IA 3.2**

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

The value must be a number

34. **SC 1.1.1**

The number of policy and or procedures created or changed.

The value must be a number

35. **SC 1.2.1**

The number of statutes and or regulations created or changed.

The value must be a number

36. **SC 1.3.1**

The number of promising practices created.

The value must be a number

37. **SC 1.3.2**

The number of promising practices supported through Council activities.

The value must be a number

38. **SC 1.3.3**

The number of best practices created.

The value must be a number

39. **SC 1.4.1**

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

The value must be a number

40. **SC 1.5.1**

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

The value must be a number

41. **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

42. **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

43. **SC 2.1.2**

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

The value must be a number

44. SC 2.1.3

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

The value must be a number

45. SC 2.1.4

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

The value must be a number

46. 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

47. FINANCIAL INFORMATION ***Proposal Budget:**

- Include a detailed revenue and expenditure budget, detailing the total costs and revenues of the proposal.
- Identify the amount requested from the Council within the context of the budget.
- Identify the amount of the required 25% funding match for your project's total budget. You also need to explain where this matching funding will come from. Sources for the match can include non-federal funding, donated services or items, discounted services or items, and volunteer time. If you need help calculating the value of volunteer time, you can contact Jennifer. Match funding helps the Council understand all partners who are helping with the project.
- 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 your budget** to Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org and include the Project Name in the subject line.

A detailed budget and budget narrative will be emailed as attachment upon the submission of this proposal.

48. STATEMENT OF WORK (SoW): *

Provide a proposed statement of work for the contractual requirements. This should include a detailed description of the work to be done, project milestones, deliverables to the Council, and other details important to the work that you will provide in exchange for Council funding. [ProjectManager.com](https://www.projectmanager.com) has some good information for you to develop your statement of work: <https://www.projectmanager.com/blog/statement-work-definition-examples>.

Introduction

This proposal would involve an expansion of Early Access's efforts to address the ongoing need for increasing early identification and promoting inclusion for children with autism and other developmental delays.

Scope of Work

Early Access's primary goal is to continue and expand our systems change efforts to increase early identification of children at risk for autism and other developmental disabilities, while also increasing the capacity of communities and providers to offer effective supports for young children with developmental delays. In particular, we aim to offer training and consultation focused on fostering inclusive classrooms and positive outcomes for young children with developmental delays in early care and education settings. These efforts will build on our existing collaborations with community screening partners, while expanding to build new partnerships with early care and education providers as well.

Our aim is to provide three levels of support to promote belonging in early care and education settings through application of evidence-based practices, aligning with a multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) framework, prevent-teach-reinforce for young children, and the Research-Based Units for Intervention (RUBI) coaching model. Selected early care and education centers will progress through receiving each layer of support. Level 1 involves training early care and education staff on inclusive classroom practices to address the needs of all children, including those with developmental delays; Level 2 involves facilitated, small-group workshops to provide hands-on practice with inclusive practices; and Level 3 involves direct and in-depth consultation, integrating strategies from the RUBI curriculum, an evidence-based intervention focused on providing caregivers with tools to navigate challenging behaviors. Our end goal is to increase access to inclusive educational environments and positive behavioral supports so that children with developmental delays can benefit from access to early care and education settings and peer models who can help support language and social development.

The project will continue the ongoing work of supporting existing Community Screening Partners and families, while also incorporating early care and education providers, by offering trainings focused on developmental monitoring and early identification of children with developmental delays.

Period of Performance

July 1, '26 to June 30, '27

Place of Performance

The Oklahoma Autism Center and in community locations to be determined as events are scheduled.

Work Requirements

This proposal will focus on 1) providing training for early care and education professionals so that they can successfully incorporate developmental monitoring and/or autism screening into their daily practice, and 2) providing support to early care and education professionals to better promote belonging for children with developmental differences.

Work to be accomplished to meet project objectives includes:

- Form partnerships with early care professionals
- Provide support to professionals within early care settings
- Continue to support the existing CSP network
- Train new CSPs statewide as partners are identified
- Promote parent engaged developmental monitoring in healthcare and other early childhood systems
- Collect and summarize data on the effectiveness of the project

Acceptance Criteria

Both parties will agree upon the acceptance of the following deliverables:

- Partners identified and engaged
- Partners trained in steps of early identification and positive behavioral supports
- Children screened for autism and referred for appropriate services
- Providers trained to work with families in developmental monitoring practices
- Communities' increased capacity for early identification of developmental disabilities
- Early care partners provided with layered supports to promote inclusion for children with developmental differences

49. Sustainability Plan: *

It is the Council's hope that funded projects will have a lasting impact on the community and achieve financial sustainability after the Council's funding is complete. The Council's funding is intended as a catalyst to help new work become self-sustaining. To assure the Council of this long-term vision, all applicants must submit a detailed Financial Sustainability Plan. Financial sustainability is defined as maintaining services to the community through a diversified funding model. **Important Note:** *The Council can approve funding for an activity for a maximum of five (5) years. However, our funding is not guaranteed, so applications for Council funding must be submitted annually.* The Council expects all funded work to be self-sustaining by the end of the contract period. Your Financial Sustainability Plan should include, but is not limited to, the following components for each year of your proposed project:

- Annual Funding Goals: Clear, measurable funding targets for each year of the project.
- Projected Budgets: A multi-year budget forecast that demonstrates decreasing reliance on Council funding.
- Identified Partners: A list of specific organizations or entities with whom you will partner, along with a description of their role in your sustainability plan. Please also include any documented commitment of resources they are able to provide.
- Timeline: A clear timeline for all sustainability activities (e.g., "Year 2: Apply for three new grants," "Year 3: Implement a pilot fee-for-service program").

Early Access Sustainability Plan, 2026-2031

As the Early Access Project expands its scope beyond developmental monitoring, screening, and evaluation to include training and support to promote belonging and inclusive practices in early care and learning programs, we have highlighted several areas through which to address sustainability of our efforts:

Leveraging Partnerships

- Taking advantage of overlapping goals with other projects/programs at the Oklahoma Autism Center
- Sharing resources and opportunities with external partners
- Develop new partnerships in the early care and education system

Funding Diversification

- Applying for discrete activity funding from private foundations, etc.
- Accepting fee-for-service trainings etc. for organizations with budgets that can accommodate it (see past successes with the Oklahoma State Department of Health and the Chickasaw Nation Pediatric Collaborative)

Activities with Built-In Resiliency/Sustainability

- Deliverable resources that will outlive funding streams (e.g. resource and training kit that can be utilized independently by partner agencies for new staff in the future)
- Persistent systems change activities (i.e. embedding training, developmental monitoring, and screening services in partner agency policies and procedures)

Yearly breakdown of sustainability goals and efforts:

2026-27

Budget Projections: \$180,837 Total Budget, \$135,532 DDCO Support Requested

Sustainability Partners: OSDH, Chickasaw Nation, LTSAE-CDC

Sustainability Activities: Identify potential funding mechanisms for scaling up Belonging activities

2027-28

Budget Projections: \$185,000 Total Budget, \$135,000 DDCO Support Requested

Targeted Sustainability Partners: Child Care Resource and Referral

Sustainability Activities: Apply for at least 1 additional funding source to augment activities

2028-29

Budget Projections: \$185,000 Total Budget, \$135,000 DDCO Support Requested

Targeted Sustainability Partners: to be determined

Sustainability Activities: Pursue ongoing training contract with at least one early childhood provider or organization

2029-30

Budget Projections: \$185,000 Total Budget, \$130,000 DDCO Support Requested

Targeted Sustainability Partners: to be determined

Sustainability Activities: Pilot fee for service model for select training/support components where possible, focusing continued free services on high-need target areas

2030-31

Budget Projections: \$185,000 Total Budget, \$130,000 DDCO Support Requested

Targeted Sustainability Partners: to be determined

Sustainability Activities: Develop Belonging curriculum manual for ongoing use and replication

50. Outreach and Awareness Plan of the Work: *

Too often people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, and others are not aware of resources available in Oklahoma. Please provide a marketing and outreach plan to bring awareness about the work being proposed. Your plan should address the following:

- **Target Audience:** Clearly identify the specific groups within the intellectual and developmental disability community you aim to reach (e.g., specific age ranges, individuals in rural vs. urban areas, diverse cultural communities).
- **Marketing Channels:** Describe the specific marketing channels you will use (e.g., social media, community events, partnerships, print materials) and how you will use them effectively to reach your target audiences.
- **Partnerships:** Explain how you will collaborate with other organizations, advocacy groups, or community leaders to expand the reach of your message.
- **Accessibility and Language:** Detail your strategy for ensuring your outreach is accessible and inclusive. Please discuss your plan for language translations, including which languages you will prioritize and how you will ensure cultural appropriateness.
- **Measurement:** Describe how you will measure the success and impact of your marketing and outreach efforts.

Target Audience: Our target audience for this program will be children ages 0-5 with developmental differences, their families, and the professionals who serve them, although we hope that this program will ultimately positively impact individuals with developmental differences across the lifespan. We aim to prioritize individuals in rural communities and from traditionally underserved populations.

Marketing Channels: We aim to disseminate information about this project using social media, podcasts, and informational flyers or handouts. We will provide information about the project itself, as well as the strategies discussed within the project (e.g., behavioral strategies through RUBI, information about developmental monitoring), through these mechanisms.

Partnerships: We will collaborate with community leaders involved in early child and education to refine our training techniques and organize opportunities for trainings. We aim to expand upon our relationships with organizations such as Sooner Start, as well as Tribal nations, to offer the Level 1, community-focused trainings.

Accessibility and Language: All presentations will comply with ADA specifications to increase accessibility. We plan to develop Spanish language materials in future years of the project in line with formalization of our training curriculum as outlined in our sustainability plan.

Measurement: We will measure the success and impact of our marketing and outreach efforts by tracking engagement with social media posts and podcasts. In addition, we will track the number of informational flyers dispersed to members of the community.

51. Logic Model:

To help the Council and your organization effectively evaluate the program's success, a logic model is a required component for all contracts in excess of \$5,000. A logic model is a simple visual tool that illustrates the connection between your project's resources (inputs), what you plan to do (activities), the immediate results of your work (outputs), and the changes you hope to achieve (outcomes). For a helpful guide to developing a clear and effective logic model, please refer to this resource from The Compass: <https://thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guide/how-develop-logic-model-0>

A logic model will be emailed as an attachment upon submission of this form.

59. **Registered partnership?** *

Is the proposed vendor a registered partnership?

Yes

No

60. **Registered corporation?** *

Is the proposed vendor a registered corporation?

Yes

No

61. **ID Number** *

Social Security Number, FEI Number, or OMES Supplier ID

73-1563627

Contact information

62. **Signing authority** *

Name of individual with contract signing authority, title, Phone number, email address

Jane C. Yaciuk, PhD, CRA
Lead Contract/Grant Administrator
Telephone: (405) 271-2090
Email: Jane-Yaciuk@ou.edu

63. **Primary Contact:** *

Name of individual(s) to contact regarding contract performance & operations, title, Phone number, email address

Juliana Vanderburg,
Clinical Psychologist, Assistant Professor
405-271-5700
JULIANA.VANDERBURG@ou.edu

64. Finance Contact: *

Name of individual(s) responsible for finance and accounting, title, Phone number, email address

Michelle Bremenkamp
Director, Grants & Contracts Accounting
405-271-2177
Michelle-Brenmenkamp@ou.edu

65. Legal Notices: *

Name of individual(s) to send legal notices, title, Phone number, email address

Kathleen Furr, EdD, CRA
Associate Vice President for Research
405-271-2090
Kathleen-Furr@ou.edu

BUDGET NARRATIVE

Early Access: Advancing Belonging and Family Support by Strengthening Early Childhood Environments for Young Children with Developmental Delays July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027

Personnel

PI/Project Director, Psychologist and Autism Specialist – Juliana Vanderburg, PhD

20% Total Effort: 10% paid funds, 10% matching funds (.48 CM)

Council Funds Requested \$11,652

In-Kind Matching Funds (OUHSC) \$11,652

Dr. Vanderburg has expertise in the identification of developmental delays, including autism, and in evidence-based strategies effective for supporting young children experiencing developmental delays. She will oversee all project activities, measurement of project outcomes, and program administration including program and fiscal accountability.

CDC Act Early Ambassador - Bonnie McBride, PhD, BCBA

5% Total Effort: 0% paid funds, 5% matching funds (0.60 CM)

Council Funds Requested \$0.00

In-Kind Matching Funds (OUHSC) \$6,130

Dr. McBride will provide support and assistance as well as connect the project with the national CDC developmental health promotion program.

Outreach and Research/Project Evaluation Coordinator - Seth Kastner*

53% Total Effort: 50% paid funds, 3% matching funds (6.36 CM)

Council Funds Requested \$31,768

In-Kind Matching Funds (OUHSC) \$1,906

Mr. Kastner will coordinate education and research/evaluation components of the project. He will facilitate the development and implementation of modular training components on topics pertinent to identifying, including, and supporting young children with developmental delays in early childhood environments. He will also assist with autism and developmental screenings. Mr. Kastner will support research activities, data collection, and evaluation of project operations and outcomes.

Community Outreach Coordinator – Andrea Quillen*

42% Total Effort: 42% paid funds, 0% matching funds (5.04 CM)

Council Funds Requested \$19,467

In-Kind Matching Funds (OUHSC) \$0

Ms. Quillen will engage in outreach to promote the project and recruit early childhood centers to participate in training opportunities designed to build their capacity to support young children experiencing developmental delays. To facilitate training development and implementation, she will also contribute her experience in coaching and mentoring teachers on classroom strategies to promote positive early childhood development and classroom participation.

Administrative Assistant – To Be Hired*

30% Total Effort: 10% paid funds, 20% matching funds (3.6 CM)

Council Funds Requested: \$3,914

In-Kind Matching Funds (OUHSC) \$7,828

The Administrative Assistant will provide general support for the project. They will assist with ordering supplies and materials, data entry, coordinating travel, and any other activities to ensure the project goals are met.

Financial and Contract Support Coordinator - Gina Bryan*

5% Total Effort: 3% paid funds, 2% matching funds (0.45 CM)

Council Funds Requested \$1,749

In-Kind Matching Funds (OUHSC) \$1,166

Ms. Bryan will assist with budget and contract management, purchasing supplies, and provide overall fiscal support for the project.

*To accommodate university-level discretion for yearly cost of living/merit increases, a 3% raise has been included for all full-time staff (not including faculty) that have been employed over a year.

TOTAL PERSONNEL: \$97,232

Council Funds Requested \$68,550

Matching Funds \$28,682

FRINGE BENEFITS

Employee benefits are calculated at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center FY25 rates of 36.2% for professional and full-time staff and 31.7% on Matching, and 16.1% for Faculty Limited Benefits. Fringe benefit rates will be applied in strict accordance with the University's approved DHHS rates.

TOTAL FRINGE: \$29,747

Council Funds Requested \$22,473

Matching Funds \$7,274

TRAVEL

In-state travel will be necessary for training and awareness activities. Travel expenses include lodging, mileage, and per diem for faculty, staff, and consultants/partners. Mileage and per diem will be paid at the current federal rate.

TOTAL TRAVEL \$1,000

Council Funds Requested \$1,000

Matching Funds \$0.00

OTHER

Professional Services

To complete the activities of the project the following outside Independent Contractors will be used.

Project Consultant – Kathryn Moore, PhD

Council Funds Requested \$4,800 In-Kind Matching Funds \$0

Dr. Moore is a licensed psychologist with expertise in identifying and supporting young children with developmental delays, including autism. She will support project oversight, implementation, and evaluation given her experience with initiatives that promote the meaningful participation of children with developmental delays in early childhood environments.

Early Childhood Inclusive Education Consultant – Twana Ross

Council Funds Requested \$2,500 In-Kind Matching Funds \$0

Ms. Ross has direct experience supporting children with developmental delays in early childhood settings. She will contribute to training development and provide feedback on content accessibility and relevance.

Project Facilitator - Margaret Bergant

Council Funds Requested \$5,000 In-Kind Matching Funds (Bergant Consulting) \$0

Ms. Bergant will provide professional services to the project in the areas of group facilitation, early intervention, and strategic planning.

TOTAL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES: \$12,300

Council Funds Requested \$12,300

Matching Funds \$0

Supplies

Funds are requested for materials and supplies such as folders, pens, printer supplies, clipboards, paper, post its, staples, binders, jump drives, paper clips, portfolios, ADOS protocols, developmental monitoring and screening tools, laptop/computer supplies, mailing labels, and other desk supplies necessary for project operations. Supplies also include printing and duplication of promotional items for awareness activities, training materials, resources, reports, brochures, posters, and flyers. Funds are also requested for the purchase of a set of classroom materials (e.g., developmentally appropriate toys, visual supports) to demonstrate evidence-based instructional strategies during training.

TOTAL SUPPLIES: \$3,242

Council Funds Requested \$3,242

Matching Funds \$0.00

TOTAL OTHER \$15,542

Council Funds Requested \$15,542

In-Kind Matching Funds (OUHSC) \$0.00

Indirect Costs

For this project we are subject to the Off-Campus Rate of 26%. Per the University, our Indirect Cost rate for Research Grants and Contracts are calculated at 45% for On-Campus and 26% for Off-Campus. Indirect Costs are calculated on a modified total direct cost base (MTDC) for all salaries and wages, fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel and subgrants and subcontracts up to \$25,000 of each subgrant and subcontract. Equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, and participant support costs, as well as the portion of each subgrant and subcontract in excess of \$25,000, shall be excluded from modified total direct costs.

Total Indirect Costs (26%) \$37,316

Council Funds Requested (26%) \$27,967 In-Kind Matching Funds (OUHSC) (26%) \$9,349

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS: \$180,837

COUNCIL FUNDS REQUESTED: \$135,532

MATCHING FUNDS: \$45,305

FY '27 DDCO Early Access
 PI: Juliana Vanderburg, Ph.D.

Includes 3% cost of living raise

July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

DDCO BUDGET					
Personnel	FTE	Effort	Requested Salary	Fringe	Total
Juli Vanderburg	0.20	10%	\$11,652.00	\$1,876.00	\$13,528.00
Bonnie McBride	1.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Seth Kastner	1.00	50%	\$31,768.00	\$11,500.00	\$43,268.00
Gina Bryan	0.75	3%	\$1,749.00	\$633.00	\$2,382.00
Andrea Quillen	1.00	42%	\$19,467.00	\$7,047.00	\$26,514.00
Admin Assist. TBH	1.00	10%	\$3,914.00	\$1,417.00	\$5,331.00
TOTAL PERSONNEL & FRINGE		115%	\$68,550.00	\$22,473.00	\$91,023.00

Supplies & Operating Expenses

Travel	\$1,000
Contracts	\$12,300
Materials/Supplies/Printing	\$3,242
TOTAL SUPPLIES & OPERATING EXPENSES	\$16,542

MATCH BUDGET

Personnel	FTE	Effort	Requested Salary	Fringe	Total
Juli Vanderburg	0.20	10%	\$11,652.00	\$1,876.00	\$13,528.00
Bonnie McBride	1.00	5%	\$6,130.00	\$1,943.00	\$8,073.00
Seth Kastner	1.00	3%	\$1,906.00	\$604.00	\$2,510.00
Gina Bryan	0.75	2%	\$1,166.00	\$370.00	\$1,536.00
Andrea Quillen	1.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Admin Assist. TBH	1.00	20%	\$7,828.00	\$2,481.00	\$10,309.00
			\$28,682.00	\$7,274.00	\$35,956.00

Supplies & Operating Expenses

Materials/Supplies	0
Contracts	\$0
TOTAL SUPPLIES & OPERATING EXPENSES	\$0

Total Direct Costs					\$107,565
Total Indirect Costs			26%		\$27,967
TOTAL COSTS					\$135,532
TOTAL REQUIRED MATCH			25%		\$45,209
TOTAL MATCH					\$35,956
Total Indirect Costs			26%		\$9,349
TOTAL MATCH					\$45,305
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS					\$180,837



BUILDING EARLY IDENTIFICATION CAPACITY		TIER 2: Screening		TIER 3: Diagnostic Evaluation	
Activities	Outcomes	Activities	Outcomes	Activities	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote developmental monitoring to providers and public Conduct training on autism and developmental monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trained organizations have increased knowledge and awareness Improved developmental monitoring practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct in-depth screening training for ASD and developmental delays Provide screening practicum opportunities & ongoing support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More professionals conducting screenings. Increased number of children screened and referred for evaluation and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and network with licensed providers Facilitate training in ADOS-2 assessment Provide ongoing support and updates for diagnostic clinicians 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More qualified and confident diagnostic clinicians Increased diagnostic capacity throughout OK Age of diagnosis & start of intervention lowered
SUPPORTING FAMILIES THROUGH THE PROCESS		TIER 2: Facilitating Referrals		TIER 3: Targeted Supports	
Activities	Outcomes	Activities	Outcomes	Activities	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote developmental monitoring and screening services Field inquiries from families across the state Provide initial referral/resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More families are aware of and utilizing screening services. More individual children are identified as possibly having delays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referring families to community screening partners Booking and conducting screenings Referral for other services and resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families receive timely screening results & recommendations Children and families receive referrals for services that hasten initiation of services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide additional resources for families who have received or are waiting for evaluation Serve as a continued trusted information source for families who have received screenings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families receive additional info and resources based on needs Fewer families are left waiting without supports or updates
PROMOTING BELONGING IN EARLY CARE SETTINGS		TIER 2:		TIER 3	
Activities	Outcomes	Activities	Outcomes	Activities	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and partner with early care and education providers Provide training on inclusive classroom practices & supports for children with developmental delays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased provider confidence to include children with developmental delays in early care settings Providers have knowledge and tools to increase access to early care and education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small group workshops to provide hands-on practice with specific tools Workshops with guided role play, development of classroom materials, and collaborative teaming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providers have a deeper understanding of skills & tools Providers have practiced skills & tools & have high confidence in their abilities to implement skills in the classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth consultation for individual providers Supports to enhance family partnerships, coaching in positive behavior supports, and direct assistance with improvements to the learning environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providers successfully implement strategies learned from the trainings Providers better include individual children in their early care and education settings

Part 1 - Contact Information

7. **Organization Name ***
Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center
8. **Organization Address ***
Mailing address please: Street number, Street name, City, State, 9-digit Zip Code

865 Research Parkway, URP865-450, Oklahoma City, OK 73104-3609
9. **Contact Info ***
Name, email address **and** phone number of the person completing this application.

Aietah Stephens, Aietah-stephens@ou.edu 405-271-2710
10. **Website**
Organization's Website

<http://soonersuccess.ouhsc.edu>

Our State Plan Goals

To qualify for funding, projects must meet the goals in the 5-Year Council State Plan. The state plan is available for review <https://oklahoma.gov/ddco/about/state-plan.html>. The new state plan for 2027-2031 is in the process of being developed.

11. **State Plan Goal ***
As of August 2025, the Council is in the process of reviewing input from publicly held listening sessions and information about current services and systems in Oklahoma. Goals have not been established for our next 5 Year State Plan (2027-2031), however proposals submitted should fall within one of our themes we have identified.
 - Access to Services
 - Inclusive Education
 - Caregiver Support
 - Representation and Public Attitudes
 - Advocacy and Self-Advocacy

This proposal falls within three areas: Access to Services, Caregiver Support and Advocacy and Self-Advocacy.

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 purpose of this policy is to ensure a fair and impartial procurement process. The questions that follow are designed to help the state determine if such a conflict exists.

12. **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

13. **Identify names and relationships**

If you answered yes to "**Any relationships to the organization?**" please explain in detail. Identify names and relationships, as necessary.

Part 3 - Your activity proposal:

The Council's committee carefully reviews all complete and accurate applications. The information you provide in Part III will help our members understand your proposed work and how it aligns with the Council's funding priorities and expectations.

14. **Proposal. ***

Provide a written overview of your proposal (750 words or fewer). A good overview should cover the key components of your proposal. This includes:

- **Introduction:** A brief summary of your project's purpose.
- **Problem Statement:** The issue your project aims to address.
- **Proposed Solution:** A clear description of your methodology and how your project will solve the problem.
- **Expected Outcomes:** The anticipated results or impact of your work.
- **Evaluation:** How the work will be measured.
- **Relevance:** How your project aligns with the council's goals and funding priorities.

The goal of this proposal is to expand the current respite options available in Oklahoma for those identified as primary caregivers of children and adults with I/DD by allowing them to experience respite as well as assist them in identifying ongoing ways to incorporate respite into their daily lives. The caregiver group will include parents, single individuals and any others in the caregiver category who are caring for a loved one with I/DD. All caregivers supporting an individual with I/DD will be eligible, regardless of their current status in seeking support services for their care receiver.

Activity One - Respite Retreats

Our respite retreats offer a longer respite opportunity for caregivers, but just as important our staff teach them how to utilize respite vouchers and how to identify potential respite

providers within their unique situation, allowing them to integrate respite into their routine more frequently moving forward. The retreat format also offers the chance for social connection with other family caregivers.

Each respite retreat would include the following components:

- A **respite voucher** to cover the cost of providing a substitute caregiver for their loved one with I/DD of any age, in the caregiver's choice of setting.
- **Meals and lodging** for all caregivers during the weekend retreat. Based on the available lodging options and associated costs, each site will select the length of stay that the budget can accommodate, either Friday night through Saturday afternoon or Friday night through Sunday morning.
- **Social connection** - Each retreat will include group activities designed to encourage connection between the caregivers and parent to parent mentoring/support. Examples might include: mixers, bonfires, group dining arrangements, art experiences, games/recreational activities, etc.
- **Surprises** - Drawings for door prizes focused on self-care or utilizing local recreational opportunities will be incorporated into all retreats.
- A **gift bag of self-care items and self-care educational materials** will be provided for each couple/single parent.

Down time - We believe the most fundamental type of self-care is the opportunity to simply relax, catch your breath, be present with our own thoughts, and choose what it is we need in that moment. Each retreat will incorporate some unstructured time to relax or strengthen partner relationships. To ensure options for caregivers, each retreat site will offer indoor and outdoor activity suggestions. Each caregiver will have the option to participate in as much as they want as well as the option to decline activities and simply be, if that's what they need in the moment.

- Whole family support - Prior to their retreat each caregiver will receive a **1 on 1 service navigation session with a Sooner SUCCESS staff member to ensure that the family has access to the resources, and supports across the lifespan that would benefit their family's unique needs.**
- The service navigation will also include the use of **life course tools created by the ARCH National Respite Network to help each family identify ongoing respite resources and supports.**
- **Information about DDCO, their activities and projects will be**
- **shared** with the group and DDCO handouts/materials will be disseminated. The DDCO Consumer Survey will also be completed **by participants.**
- **Bilingual staff will be available to assist** caregivers who are Spanish speaking.

Activity Two - Sibling Camp- Overnight 3-day, 2-night and Day Camps

Both multi-night and day camps Respite/Sibshop camps for children with special needs and their typically developing siblings. One would provide a multi-night camp for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, plans would include campers ages 8-25 and the camp would be hosted at an established camp site within the state working in partnership with the camp organization and utilizing their expertise to offer camp specific activities. The other Day Camps would be offered across the state to increase access to siblings and respite for caregivers. Sibling camps would be offered at no cost to the family.

- The children would enjoy **accessible camp activities** in combination with custom Sibshop activities geared especially for children who have siblings with special needs.

- While the kids are enjoying camp, family caregivers will have the opportunity to enjoy **respite and relaxation**.
- **Self-care educational materials** will be provided to family caregivers.
- A **1 on 1 service navigation session with a Sooner SUCCESS** staff member to ensure that the family has access to resources, and supports across the lifespan that would benefit their family's unique needs.
- Pre and post-camp surveys will be completed by each participating family.
- **Bilingual staff will be available** to assist campers who are Spanish speaking.

Together, these activities promote access, reduce isolation, and strengthen family well-being through compassionate, coordinated, and community-based support.

In Oklahoma, the Department of Human Services (2023) has identified caregiver well-being as critical to child stability and health.

Evaluation Plan

Assessment: Intention will be put into making each retreat available to diverse populations and across all counties within our state using an open contact interest form specific to each region of our state. Pre and post-weekend surveys will be completed with participants to determine the impact of the respite on their stress level as well as their satisfaction with the content and implementation of the retreat. The DDCO Consumer Survey will also be completed during the retreat. Staff will collect video testimonials from retreat participants who wish to share their thoughts on the retreat model and what it meant to them. Evaluation will be led by the OUHSC Core Research Team using mixed quantitative and qualitative measures.

- Surveys: Pre/post caregiver assessments
- Program Metrics: Number of families served, student hours trained, respite hours accessed, and sibling camps hosted.
- Retreat and Camp evaluation surveys
- Quantitative and Qualitative Feedback: Collected from families, hospital staff, and students to assess program quality and satisfaction.

Pre and post-weekend surveys will be completed with participants to determine the impact of the respite on their stress level as well as their satisfaction with the content and implementation of the retreat. The DDCO Consumer Survey will also be completed during the retreat. Staff will collect video testimonials from retreat participants who wish to share their thoughts on the retreat model and what it meant to them.

Findings will inform program improvement and contribute to broader understanding of the health impacts of respite care for complex-care families.

15. **Have you completed a needs assessment? ***

No

Yes

16. **Needs assessment:**

If you have completed a needs assessment, please provide a summary below. Your response should include:

- A brief description of the methodology used (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups).
- The key findings that support the need for your proposed project.
- The population included in your assessment.
- An explanation of how this assessment directly informs your proposal.

In Oklahoma, respite options that can safely serve this population are extremely limited. Families often rely on hospital admissions or private-duty nursing for temporary relief — approaches that are costly, unsustainable, and emotionally taxing. Many caregivers report they have not had a single full night of uninterrupted rest in years.

The Oklahoma Department of Human Services (2023, <https://oklahoma.gov/okdhs>) recognizes caregiver well-being as essential to child safety and stability. The Caregiver Retreats and Sibling Camps fills this gap by increasing access to safe respite options.

Measuring the Value of Respite - A White Paper by the ARCH Committee for Advancement of Respite Research (CARR) found that:

- *There is an urgent need to identify, expand, and develop evidence-based and evidence-informed respite that improves caregiver outcomes.*
- *Current research and evaluation methods do not adequately measure the economic value of respite.*
- *Caregivers need respite and accrue beneficial effects from respite, even if providing respite does not save money.*

The full white paper is available to download and review at: _

<https://archrespite.org/research/carr-publications/>

Understanding the Respite Needs of Family Caregivers

53 million Family caregivers of children and adults in the US. **490,000 of those caregivers live in Oklahoma**

86% of family caregivers of adults in the US receive no respite

75% of family caregivers of children have unmet needs for respite.

Sources: National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP Public Policy Institute, **Caregiving in the U.S. 2020.**

Assessment results from year 1 through 4 of our project offering Caregiver Respite Retreats revealed that 97.6% of our participating caregivers reported that the retreat reduced the stress level in their family. 82.5% of them reported that they would not have access to respite without the weekend retreat process offered by Sooner SUCCESS.

17. **Who will do the work? ***

Please list all people and organizations that will be working on the project and describe their experience and qualifications to provide the proposed goods and services.

Partnerships and Collaboration

This project is led by Sooner SUCCESS within the Department of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics at OUHSC.

Key partners include:

- Children's Health Foundation
- DHS Oklahoma Caregivers Lifespan Respite Coalition – coordination of vouchers and resources
- Oklahoma State Department of Health
- Community Partners that provide disability services, support, education and outreach

These partnerships ensure a comprehensive approach that combines medical, academic, and community expertise to best serve Oklahoma families.

Sooner SUCCESS, (State Unified Children's Comprehensive Exemplary Services for Special Needs) is a program established over 23 years ago, under the Child Study Center, a division of the section of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. Sooner SUCCESS remains on the forefront of systems design, family advocacy, policy change and community engagement specifically for families that have been impacted by disability. Sooner SUCCESS is a community-based service available to anyone and any family in Oklahoma that needs services and connections to programs in their community that will meet their unique needs.

The primary mission of Sooner SUCCESS is to support and empower parents/caregivers of children with disabilities and support the development of inclusive communities. Years of lived experience among our staff as well as extensive, in-depth experience working with parents who feel their family's needs have been dismissed or marginalized due to disability drive Sooner SUCCESS in this mission.

The organizational structure and management model of Sooner SUCCESS creates a continuous loop of communication with families and collaboration with providers that serve in the community. This is accomplished through one-on-one service navigation to families in need and development of community coalitions with a mission to identify and address local service gaps whenever possible. Regional teams serving as technical assistance hubs that share resources and ideas to identify and resolve similar problems occurring in multiple communities statewide. And lastly, our state level interagency council brings together

decision makers from multiple disciplines to respond to emerging trends indicating the need for change at the policy and procedure level. At each of these levels, Sooner SUCCESS has assembled partnerships and a continuing history of successful collaboration allowing new projects to coalesce smoothly and move into implementation efficiently.

Sooner SUCCESS in partnership with OKDHS Aging Services, administers the Lifespan Respite Voucher Program as well as the Systems of Care Respite Program in partnership with the Oklahoma State Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. Sooner SUCCESS has also developed a partnership with the Oklahoma State Department of Health to improve supports for typically developing siblings in families impacted by disability. Sooner SUCCESS works in tandem with Aging Services, Developmental Disabilities Services, Oklahoma State Department of Mental Health and

Substance Abuse Services and other state programs to increase access to respite. This care coordination model to serve caregivers across the lifespan through the Oklahoma Caregiver Coalition has improved access to not only respite, but other essential resources for family caregivers that have a loved one with a disability.

This comprehensive approach along with expertise, data management, infrastructure and community partnerships put Sooner SUCCESS in an advanced position to provide supports to families raising a child with special needs.

18. **Targeted population:**

*

Tell us more about who you are targeting to improve outcomes for? Describe the age, region, familial status, learning or support needs, and type of disability.

Statewide, approximately 23–24 % of Oklahoma children (roughly 217,000 individuals ages 0-17) are identified as having special health care needs (mchb.tvisdata.hrsa.gov; americashealthrankings.org). Families of these children often report high stress, limited respite, and difficulty accessing trained support providers—challenges that are magnified in rural and underserved areas.

The targeted population therefore includes:

- **Children, youth and young adults** with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).
- **Parents and caregivers** that are responsible for their loved one's care and wellbeing.
- **Siblings** of children with disabilities, who frequently experience due to having a brother or sister with special health care needs.
- **Culturally and geographically diverse families**, including those in rural counties who face limited transportation and provider availability.

We anticipate individuals with I/DD participating in the respite activities above will participate in new social and recreational experiences; reduce overall social isolation; have improved access to supports; and benefit from a healthier and more energized family caregiver.

19. **Impact:**

*

Please describe the anticipated impact of your proposal by addressing the following three components:

Goals for the targeted population?

- What are the specific, measurable goals you hope to achieve for the individuals directly served by this project?

Broader implications for people with developmental disabilities:

- Beyond the direct participants, how will this project create a broader, positive impact for the population of people with developmental disabilities as a whole?

Measurable outcomes:

- What specific, quantifiable metrics will you use to track your success and demonstrate the project's effectiveness?

Goals for the Targeted Population

The primary goal of the Caregiver Retreats and Sibling Camps is to improve quality of life, well-being, and access to support for families that have a loved one with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Specific goals include:

- **Reduce caregiver stress and burnout** by increasing access to respite, providing service navigation, and support.
- **Increase access** to disability resources, respite and connect with other families.
- **Enhance sibling well-being** through Sibling Camps.
- **Build preparedness and confidence** among caregivers through hands-on

education and peer networking.

Measurable Outcomes

To demonstrate both individual and systems impact, the following outcomes will be tracked annually:

Quantitative Measures

- *Families served: 70 to 100 families receiving direct navigation assistance.*
- *Family Retreat participation: 70 families served annually.*
- *Sibling Camps: ≈ 150 siblings across five events.*

Qualitative Measures

- Pre/post caregiver surveys.
- Family satisfaction and access-to-resources surveys.
- Volunteer and staff feedback.

20. Duplication or expansion:

*

Does this proposal duplicate or expand upon any existing work in Oklahoma or elsewhere? The Council cannot supplant funding to continue existing work unless the proposal is to expand on the work and enhances what is being done.

If your proposal duplicates or expands upon existing work, please describe the existing work and explain what makes your project unique and innovative. Be specific about how this approach and expected outcomes differ from and add value to what is already being done.

We see this proposal as an expansion of our work providing weekend retreats in years 1-5 as well as our efforts under the Lifespan Respite Voucher program that we administer in conjunction with the OHS Aging Services division and the Respite Voucher program that we administer for ODMHSAS for their Systems of Care participants. The camp portion of the proposal will expand on our efforts to enhance sibling support to better serve the entire family unit. All of the programs provide caregiver respite, but the retreats offer the additional benefits of extended respite, service navigation on both resources and planning to support more consistent respite, and the peer-to-peer support that occurs when caregivers are in a supportive, relaxing environment together.

21. Best Practices:

*

Will your proposed project use current evidence-based best practices in the field of developmental disabilities? Identify the specific practices you will use, explain how you will incorporate them into your project, and cite your sources. Citations should include a mix of professional literature, research studies, and respected organizations or programs. Providing respite is, in and of itself, considered a best practice resource for those with full time caregiver responsibilities. The Administration for Community Living recommends "coordinated systems of community-based respite for family caregivers of children or adults regardless of special need"

In addition, our program will integrate the use of Life Course Tools for Respite as recommended by the ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center <https://archrespite.org/consumer-information/lifecourse-tools-for-respite>

The inclusion of Sibshop activities in our sibling camp is also a best practice. In the spring of 2005, University of Washington colleagues Amanda Johnson and Susan Sandall conducted an online survey of adults (ages 18-34, n=30) who had participated in Sibshops as children, and confirmed that when it comes to the lasting impact of Sibshops, there's lots of good news to share.

Here are just a few of their findings:

Over 90% of the respondents said Sibshops had a positive effect on the feelings they had for their siblings;

- Sibshops taught coping strategies to over 67% of respondents;
- 75% reported that Sibshops affected their adult lives; and
- 94% said they would recommend Sibshops to others.

The authors state that the "results show that many aspects of the Sibshop program appeared to

serve as protective factors for siblings of individuals with disabilities, a population who is frequently considered at-risk" and the "study shows that these positive results last into adulthood." The study concluded, "The positive effects of the Sibshop program are not only apparent, but enduring." Johnson, A. B., & Sandall, S. (2005). Sibshops: A Follow-Up of Participants of a Sibling Support Program. University of Washington, Seattle

22. **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.

The caregiver retreats and sibling camps have already demonstrated models with established costs that can be replicated or repeated for future groups. By incorporating the ARCH respite life course tools, we can also help caregivers generate new ideas for ways to incorporate more respite into their normal day-to-day routines. And by seeking out new caregivers each year of the project with an intentional focus on serving diverse populations; we ensure that we raise awareness about the importance of respite for family caregivers and the existence of multiple respite voucher programs within our state to support such self-care.

23. **Where implemented:**

*

Will the proposed project be implemented or offered statewide? If no, please define the specific counties and cities you will serve and provide the rationale for their selection.

Open, online interest forms will connect each caregiver with the correct retreat closest to their location. We will continue to prioritize publicity in areas where we have not yet served any caregivers to reach these final pockets.

Performance Measures

The Council is required to submit performance reports to evaluate the effectiveness of all Council activities to our Federal partners. We require all contracted vendors to submit performance measure data prior to final payment. As a required component of your application, please provide **projected data** for the following performance measures. All contractors must collect **baseline data** to evaluate the project's outcomes.

Note: Not all measures may be applicable to your proposal. If a measure does not apply, please enter zero.

- **IA** = Individual and family
- **Adv**ocacy **SC** = System **C**hange

24. **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.

150

The value must be a number

25. **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.

150

The value must be a number

26. **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

27. **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.

75%

The value must be a number

28. **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.

75%

The value must be a number

29. **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.

75%

The value must be a number

30. **IA 2.2.2**

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

50%

The value must be a number

31. **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.

25%

The value must be a number

32. **IA 3.1**

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

Over 75%

The value must be a number

33. **IA 3.2**

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

Over 75% Using the program evaluation tools

The value must be a number

34. **SC 1.1.1**

The number of policy and or procedures created or changed.

0

The value must be a number

35. **SC 1.2.1**

The number of statutes and or regulations created or changed.

36. **SC 1.3.1**

The number of promising practices created.

5

The value must be a number

37. **SC 1.3.2**

The number of promising practices supported through Council activities.

5

The value must be a number

38. **SC 1.3.3**

The number of best practices created.

5

The value must be a number

39. **SC 1.4.1**

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

200

The value must be a number

40. **SC 1.5.1**

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

10

The value must be a number

41. **SC 2.1**

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

0

The value must be a number

42. **SC 2.1.1**

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

43. **SC 2.1.2**

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

0

The value must be a number

44. **SC 2.1.3**

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

0

The value must be a number

45. **SC 2.1.4**

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

5

The value must be a number

46. **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.

5

The value must be a number

Additional Requirements for funding

47. FINANCIAL INFORMATION *

Proposal Budget:

A detailed budget and budget narrative will be emailed as attachments upon the submission of this proposal.

- Include a detailed revenue and expenditure budget, detailing the total costs and revenues of the proposal.
- Identify the amount requested from the Council within the context of the budget.
- Identify the amount of the required 25% funding match for your project's total budget. You also need to explain where this matching funding will come from. Sources for the match can include non-federal funding, donated services or items, discounted services or items, and volunteer time. If you need help calculating the value of volunteer time, you can contact Jennifer. Match funding helps the Council understand all partners who are helping with the project.
- 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 your budget** to Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org and include the Project Name in the subject line.

48. STATEMENT OF WORK (SoW): *

Provide a proposed statement of work for the contractual requirements. This should include a detailed description of the work to be done, project milestones, deliverables to the Council, and other details important to the work that you will provide in exchange for Council funding. ProjectManager.com has some good information for you to develop your statement of work: <https://www.projectmanager.com/blog/statement-work-definition-examples>.

Attachment A

Statement of Work

OUHSC – Sooner SUCCESS

Project Title: Caregiver Retreats/Sibling Camp to Increase Access to Respite

DELIVERABLE 1

Vendor will research and compile an updated packet of information on the importance of self-care along with activities and strategies that can be used to mitigate the stress of caregiving. Packets will be disseminated to caregivers at each regional retreat and during drop off of participants at the respite/sibshop camp event.

DELIVERABLE 2

Vendor will host 4 weekend retreat respite events for caregivers in regional locations to serve Northwest, Northeast, Central, Southern Oklahoma caregivers. Each participating caregiver will receive:

- A **respite voucher** to cover the cost of providing a substitute caregiver for their loved one with I/DD of any age, in the caregiver's choice of setting.
- **Meals and lodging** for all caregivers during the weekend retreat.
- **Social connection** - Each retreat will include group activities designed to encourage connection between the caregivers
- A **gift bag of self-care items** and **self-care educational materials** will be provided for each couple/single parent.
- *Down time or optional relaxation and recreational activities*
- **A 1 on 1 service navigation session with a Sooner SUCCESS staff member to ensure that the family has access to the resources, and supports across the lifespan that would benefit their family's unique needs** including the use of **life course tools created by the ARCH National Respite Network to help each family identify ongoing respite resources and supports.**
- *Information about the activities and programs of the Council*
- **Bilingual staff as needed to assist** caregivers who are Spanish speaking.
- **A post event DDCO consumer survey and a post respite voucher survey to measure consumer satisfaction** will be completed by each participating family.

DELIVERABLE 3

Vendor will host Sibling Camps for siblings with and without disabilities (individuals with special needs and their typical siblings). Participants will attend a multi-night camp for campers with intellectual and developmental disabilities, ages 8-25, in partnership with at no cost to the family. Sibling Day Camps will also be offered across the state to increase access for camp opportunities and Respite for caregivers.

- The children will enjoy **typical camp activities** in combination with **custom Sibshop activities** geared especially for children who have siblings with special needs.
- While the kids are enjoying camp, caregivers will have the opportunity to enjoy **3 days of respite and relaxation and or 1 day depending upon what camp event they attend.**
- **Self-care educational materials** will be provided to caregivers at camp drop off.
- **A 1 on 1 service navigation session** with a Sooner SUCCESS staff member to ensure that the family has access to resources, services and supports across the lifespan that will allow them to live their best lives.
- **A post event DDCO consumer survey and a post respite voucher survey to measure consumer satisfaction** will be completed by each participating family.

DELIVERABLE 4

- Develop and provide three (3) quarterly reports to ODDC detailing all activities and reports cited in the scope of work. First quarterly report shall be submitted thirty (30) days after the end of the quarter. (Oct 15, 2026, Jan 15, 2027, and April 15, 2027)
- Develop and provide a 4th quarter and final report summarizing contract activities and summary of results. The Final Report shall be submitted thirty (30) days after the contract ends (July 30, 2027).

49. **Sustainability Plan:** *

It is the Council's hope that funded projects will have a lasting impact on the community and achieve financial sustainability after the Council's funding is complete. The Council's funding is intended as a catalyst to help new work become self-sustaining. To assure the Council of this long-term vision, all applicants must submit a detailed Financial Sustainability Plan. Financial sustainability is defined as maintaining services to the community through a diversified funding model. **Important Note: The Council can approve funding for an activity for a maximum of five (5) years.**

However, our funding is not guaranteed, so applications for Council funding must be submitted annually. The Council expects all funded work to be self-sustaining by the end of the contract period. Your Financial Sustainability Plan should include, but is not limited to, the following components for each year of your proposed project:

- Annual Funding Goals: Clear, measurable funding targets for each year of the project.
- Projected Budgets: A multi-year budget forecast that demonstrates decreasing reliance on Council funding.

- Identified Partners: A list of specific organizations or entities with whom you will partner, along with a description of their role in your sustainability plan. Please also include any documented commitment of resources they are able to provide.
- Timeline: A clear timeline for all sustainability activities (e.g., "Year 2: Apply for three new grants," "Year 3: Implement a pilot fee-for-service program").

Sooner SUCCESS will continue to work to increase community connections and awareness about the importance of respite for family caregivers and establish caregiver interest in respite and utilizing the appropriate state respite voucher program. We will also continue to work with individual family caregivers using the life course tools to help them identify new options for personal respite and assist them in accessing the respite voucher program appropriate for their unique situation to assist them in paying for the respite provider.

Our respite retreats and sibling camp have been EXTREMELY popular with caregivers and our campers and Sooner SUCCESS is invested in continuing to offer these programs to families.

We have worked to identify and develop other funds to support them, including:

- We submitted 6 metro high school applications to become a designated organization to benefit from their annual fundraising efforts, our presentations addressed needs in both respite and sibling support services.
- These efforts are also a way to increase awareness of the needs of families and recruit volunteers to help with community programming.
- We included respite retreats in our submitted Lifespan Respite Enhancement grant to see as a respite option and education venue during the next funding cycle.
- We included both respite and sibling support funding in our current contract with the Oklahoma State Department of Health and expect to continue that funding into our next contract.

- We are actively working with Children's Health Foundation to identify new grant opportunities.
- We are committed to working with community partners across the state to implement the Respite/Sibshops model to allow for family caregivers to access a few hours of respite monthly.

50. **Outreach and Awareness Plan of the Work: ***

Too often people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, and others are not aware of resources available in Oklahoma. Please provide a marketing and outreach plan to bring awareness about the work being proposed. Your plan should address the following:

- **Target Audience:** Clearly identify the specific groups within the intellectual and developmental disability community you aim to reach (e.g., specific age ranges, individuals in rural vs. urban areas, diverse cultural communities).
- **Marketing Channels:** Describe the specific marketing channels you will use (e.g., social media, community events, partnerships, print materials) and how you will use them effectively to reach your target audiences. **Partnerships:** Explain how you will collaborate with other organizations, advocacy groups, or community leaders to expand the reach of your message.
- **Accessibility and Language:** Detail your strategy for ensuring your outreach is accessible and inclusive. Please discuss your plan for language translations, including which languages you will prioritize and how you will ensure cultural appropriateness.
- **Measurement:** Describe how you will measure the success and impact of your marketing and outreach efforts.

Sooner SUCCESS will implement a targeted, statewide outreach and awareness strategy to ensure that individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), their families, and key partners are informed about the availability of **Family Caregiver Retreats and Sibling Camps**. Outreach efforts will prioritize families who are least likely to be aware of or connected to respite and caregiver support resources, including first-time respite users, families in rural and underserved communities, and culturally and linguistically diverse populations.

Target Audience

The primary target audiences for this project include:

- **Family caregivers of individuals with I/DD across the lifespan**, including parents, grandparents, kinship caregivers, and foster families
- **Families who have not previously accessed respite**, including those experiencing caregiver stress or isolation
- **Siblings of individuals with I/DD**, particularly children and youth who may benefit from peer connection and support
- **Families in rural and underserved areas of Oklahoma**, where access to information and services is often limited
- **Culturally and linguistically diverse families**, including Native American and Hispanic/Latino families

Secondary audiences include disability service providers, educators, advocacy organizations,

and community partners who interact regularly with families and can assist in sharing information about the project.

Marketing Channels

Sooner SUCCESS will use a multi-channel outreach approach to maximize reach and ensure information is accessible to families across Oklahoma. Channels will include:

- **Digital outreach**, including the Sooner SUCCESS website, online interest forms, email newsletters, and social media platforms, to provide timely information about retreat and camp opportunities
- **Community-based outreach**, including distribution of flyers and informational materials through schools, clinics, community centers, tribal programs, and family support organizations
- **Direct referrals**, leveraging existing family navigation services and helpline contacts to inform families who have expressed interest in respite or caregiver support
- **Partner amplification**, where collaborating organizations share retreat and camp opportunities through their own newsletters, social media, and listservs

Messaging will emphasize that participation is **no-cost**, inclusive, and designed for families who may be new to respite or unsure how to access support.

Partnerships

Partnerships are central to Sooner SUCCESS's outreach strategy. The project will collaborate with:

- Disability advocacy organizations and family support groups
- Tribal partners and Native-serving organizations
- Schools, early intervention programs, and special education networks
- Healthcare and community-based providers who serve individuals with I/DD
- County and statewide coalitions and caregiver groups

These partnerships expand outreach beyond traditional channels and ensure information reaches families who may not actively seek services. Partners will assist with culturally appropriate messaging, local dissemination, and trust-building within their communities.

Accessibility and Language

All outreach materials will be designed to be **accessible, inclusive, and culturally appropriate**. Strategies include:

- Providing materials in **plain language** and accessible formats
- Offering **Spanish-language outreach and materials** as a priority, reflecting the needs of families served
- Utilizing bilingual staff or partners to support outreach and follow-up communication
- Ensuring materials are respectful of cultural values and family structures, particularly for Native American and Hispanic/Latino families
- Using multiple formats (digital and print) to reach families with varying levels of internet access

Accessibility considerations will be reviewed regularly to reduce barriers to participation.

Measurement

The success of outreach and awareness efforts will be measured through both quantitative and qualitative indicators, including:

- Number of inquiries and applications received for retreats and sibling camps
- Demographic data reflecting geographic reach, rural participation, and diversity of families served
- Referral source tracking to identify which outreach channels are most effective
- Participant feedback regarding how they learned about the program
- Participation rates among first-time respite users

These measures will be used to refine outreach strategies, improve equity in access, and ensure that awareness efforts effectively connect families to respite and caregiver support opportunities.

51. **Logic Model:**

To help the Council and your organization effectively evaluate the program's success, a logic model is a required component for all contracts in excess of \$5,000. A logic model is a simple visual tool that illustrates the connection between your project's resources (inputs), what you plan to do (activities), the immediate results of your work (outputs), and the changes you hope to achieve (outcomes). For a helpful guide to developing a clear and effective logic model, please refer to this resource from The Compass: <https://thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guide/how-develop-logic-model-0>

Logic Model for DDCO Funds- Family Caregiver Retreats & Sibling Camps

60. **ID Number ***

Social Security Number, FEI Number, or OMES Supplier ID

73-1563627

Contact information

61. **Signing authority ***

Name of individual with contract signing authority, title, Phone number, email address

Jane C. Yaciuk, PhD. CRA, Lead Contract/Grant Administrator, 405-271-2090,
jane-yaciuk@ou.edu

62. **Primary Contact: ***

Name of individual(s) to contact regarding contract performance & operations, title, Phone number, email address

Aietah Stephens, Executive Director Sooner SUCCESS, 405-271-5700 ext. 47803
aietah-stephens@ou.edu

63. **Finance Contact: ***

Name of individual(s) responsible for finance and accounting, title, Phone number, email address

Michelle Brekenkamp, Asst. Vice President of Research Financial Services, 405-271-2177, michelle-brekenkamp@ou.edu

64. **Legal Notices: ***

Name of individual(s) to send legal notices, title, Phone number, email address

Kathleen Furr, EdD, CRA, Associate Vice President for Research, 405-271-2090,
Kathleen-furr@ou.edu

**Sooner SUCCESS
BUDGET JUSTIFICATION
07.01.26 – 06.30.27**

PERSONNEL

Executive Director: The Executive Director provides administrative leadership to the project. She is responsible for the overall administration of the project, the implementation of the project plan, the supervision of the Regional Coordinators, and the Business Accountant, the Graduate Research Assistant, and fulfilling reporting requirements. The Executive Director is also the Principal Investigator; this position is supported with 2% effort (.24 CM) with no cost share.

Regional Coordinator: The Regional Coordinators are supported on this project: Regional Coordinators are responsible for project implementation in their respective Regions. This will include the implementation of Respite Retreats. Regional Coordinators will work under the direction of the PI and assist with project requirements in the regions and administering all aspects of the project at the regional level. 4 Regional Coordinators will be on this project, 1 position supported at 9% paid effort (1.32 CM), 2 positions supported at 7% paid effort (0.84 CM), and 1 position supported at 16% paid effort (0.84 CM).

Program Coordinator/Business Accountant/Admin: Program Coordinator/Business Accountant/Admin on this project is responsible to help process project payment expenditures once approved by the Principal Investigator. This position will also assist in providing the budget activity reports as needed. This position is supported at 5% paid effort (.60 CM).

Fringe benefits have been calculated using the SFY26 University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center fringe benefit rate of 37.5% for full-time employees on sponsored projects. Fringe benefits will be applied in strict accordance with the University's approved DHHS rates.

Council Paid Personnel costs total \$38,339 for this project. This amount includes fringe benefits as applicable to the staff on the project.

SUPPLIES/OTHER

Supplies for retreat/camp activities, materials for caregiver self-care bags, retreat evening activity and door prizes, snacks/light food items are supported at \$8,775. Printing is supported at \$800.

Other:

Room Rental/Space Rental for Retreats, Retreat Meals and Snacks are supported at \$18,141. Postage is supported at \$100.

Respite Vouchers, Fiscal Agent Vendor: Woven Life will be the Fiscal Agent for Respite Voucher payments will be issued to approved Respite Care Providers and the fiscal agent for the voucher payments. The Administrative Fee is 15% of the allocated Respite Funding Amount. Respite Vouchers is supported at \$13,000 and Fiscal Agent Administrative Fee is supported at \$1,950 totaling \$14,950.

SUPPLY/OTHER COMBINED TOTAL: \$42,766

Lease/workspace (cost share): Sooner SUCCESS state team office is located at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center in Oklahoma City. Sooner SUCCESS will report the monthly costs of \$2,878.91 lease amount to count towards cost share obligations. These lease costs are not covered by federal funding therefore are allowed to be reported towards cost share, this amount to be cost shared is projected to be \$34,546.95.

TRAVEL

Travel will be used to support the Respite Retreats' Lodging costs for the hotels and selected lodging sites for program personnel and family caregivers participating in the Retreats. In-State mileage expenses for Program staff,

to travel to and from each of the Respite Retreats to implement the program. The travel will be reimbursed at actual and reasonable costs based on the established State mileage rate. Travel is supported at \$14,500.

INDIRECT COSTS

Funds contracted to the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center will incur the 26% indirect cost rate. Council requested the reduced IDC rate as set by the Federal funder at 8%. Indirect paid costs are \$7,648.

From: [Jennifer Robinson](#)
To: "Stephens, Aietah L. (HSC)"
Cc: [Jennifer Randle](#); [Monroe, Carley B \(HSC\)](#); [Marchand, Samantha \(HSC\)](#); [Castaneda, Mayra I. \(HSC\)](#)
Subject: RE: DDCO - Remaining Questions
Date: Tuesday, February 10, 2026 1:10:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Aietah,

We need the information by this Friday, February 13th.

Thank you,

Jennifer Robinson

Planning and Grants Director

Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma

[Set an appointment with me](#)

From: Stephens, Aietah L. (HSC) <Aietah-Stephens@ou.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2026 10:24 AM
To: Jennifer Robinson <Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>
Cc: Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>; Monroe, Carley B (HSC) <Carley-Monroe@ou.edu>; Marchand, Samantha (HSC) <Samantha-Marchand@ou.edu>; Castaneda, Mayra I. (HSC) <mayra-castaneda@ouhsc.edu>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: DDCO - Remaining Questions

Hi Jennifer,

We are working on the additional information you requested. When do you need it back?

Thanks for your help,

Aietah

Aietah Stephens, MS

Executive Director

Sooner SUCCESS

1000 NE 13th Street, Suite 4800

Oklahoma City, OK 73104

405.271.4000 ext. 47803

aietah-stephens@ou.edu

<http://soonersuccess.ouhsc.edu>

<https://www.facebook.com/SoonerSUCCESS>

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in error, please notify the sender immediately by a "reply to sender only" message and destroy all electronic and hard copies of this email and any attached files.

From: Jennifer Robinson <Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org>
Sent: Thursday, February 5, 2026 1:42 PM
To: Stephens, Aietah L. (HSC) <Aietah-Stephens@ou.edu>
Cc: Jenifer Randle <Jenifer.Randle@okdhs.org>; Monroe, Carley B (HSC) <Carley-Monroe@ou.edu>; Marchand, Samantha (HSC) <Samantha-Marchand@ou.edu>; Castaneda, Mayra I. (HSC) <Mayra-Castaneda@ou.edu>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] DDCO - Remaining Questions

External Email

Good afternoon, Aietah,

Thank you for responding to our questions. There are three questions that need further clarification.

I have included our original question, then your response, then our current responses/questions.

1. Please **separate all the expenses** of the Respite Retreats and the Sibling Camps, to include Personnel and Supplies & Operating Expenses.
 - a. The budget justification attached matches the budget provided. We do have to adhere to the current budget categories on the budget. For example, Retreat lodging is listed under the Travel budget category.

-

2/5/26 Response: We understand you have categories to adhere to, and we are not asking you to change your budget categories. We do need to understand the budgeted items, so please break down each category, for example:

-

Travel

Lodging for participants of caregiver retreats and 2 staff members at each retreat - \$12,000. Mileage for 6 staff to travel to each caregiver retreat - \$2,500

(It looks like you aren't funding any of the sibling camp lodging or mileage for FY27, which is a change from FY26. If this is covered by someone else, then include that. This helps the Council understand the partnerships developed and provides a true picture of the work and funding.)

Supplies

Printing - \$800

Supplies for Caregiver Retreats - \$5,000

(caregiver gift baskets, activities, door prizes, snacks)

Supplies for Sibling Camps - \$3,775

(camp activities, snacks)

Other

Postage \$100

Room/Space Rental Caregiver Retreats - \$8,141

Meals and Snacks for Caregiver Retreats - \$10,000

-

2. Please provide a five-year estimate showing how DD Council funding could be reduced without impacting service levels.
 - a. Do you need us to update the section of the proposal or budget to include the other 4 years? We can provide additional details if needed to show a five-year sustainability projection demonstrating how DD Council funding could be gradually reduced without impacting service levels.
 - b. The model will include:
 - c. Increased diversification of funding sources (state contracts, grants, sponsorships)
 - d. Incremental increases in partner and in-kind support
 - e. Cost efficiencies through shared staffing, volunteer facilitation, and community partner support.

2/5/26 Response:

Yes, we would appreciate you updating the sustainability section of your request. As you develop this, please keep in mind while we want the funding reliance on the Council to decrease, the Council doesn't want the services to decrease. We understand sustainability is a challenge, but we really want the work the Council funds to sustain over time for Oklahomans with developmental disabilities and their families.

3. With the increased project expenses are you increasing services compared to last year? (FY26 at \$86,113 vs FY27 at \$95,605 = over \$9,000 increase) If so, what is being increased?
 - a. Yes. Direct costs increased from \$86,113 (FY26) to \$95,605 (FY27) an increase of \$9,492. This increase supports: Expansion to four sibling day camps plus one overnight camp. Increased number of siblings served. Enhanced staffing time for service navigation and coordination. Expanded

supplies and materials for camps and retreats. Service reach, activities, and intensity are all increased in FY27 compared to FY26 .

2/5/26 Response:

Can you please note the dollar amount that was increased specifically to help with the expansion of the four sibling day camps to help us understand the request fully? The only place we see direct costs for the sibling camps is in the supplies category. There is no funding listed for camp lodging (funded in FY26). As far as staff costs, we noticed that Lori is the one with more staff time, and Samantha is not provided with any staff time in the budget. Can you help us understand the staff support for the Sibling overnight and day camps? Do regional directors help? What support do the other collaborators provide?

Thank you!

Jennifer



[Set an appointment with me](#)

View results

Respondent

15 Anonymous

40:44

Time to complete

Information for applying for funding

The Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma (DDCO) welcomes unsolicited proposals and applications for contracts to fund activities to advance the Council's 5-year plan, which will improve the independence, productivity, and inclusion of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

- All proposals and applications must be for activities currently included, or eligible for inclusion, in the 5 Year DDCO State Plan found on our website.
- Applications must be complete for consideration by the Council.
- Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Please know this application cannot be saved and returned to at a later date. You will need to complete the application in one sitting.
- * means the question is required.

1. Budgeting information for requests:

- The Council does not provide grants. Funding is provided through a contract in which an organization agrees to perform specific duties as agreed upon. Funding is provided by reimbursement only, meaning there is no funding provided to the organization in advance. The Council can approve to fund up to 75% of a total budget cost with matching funds required. Matching funds cannot be from federal sources and expected to be at least 25% of the total budget.
- Required match funding may be in the form of cash, direct expenditures, indirect expenditures, or in-kind contributions, but may not include any direct or indirect federal funds. *An exception to this rule is made for projects specifically serving a designated poverty area. In those situations, the Council can approve to fund up to 90% of the total budget cost, with at 10% matching funds from the organization making up the rest of the total budget cost. Other exceptions to the 10% or 25% match requirement may be negotiated but are rarely approved.*
- Federal law prohibits the Council from investing in real property, building enhancements, vehicles, or vehicle enhancements. Generally, any equipment purchased via a Council contract should be an item that could be returned to the Council in the event of contract cancellation.
- The Council does not consider applications that would provide any item solely for the use of a single individual – such as a wheelchair or other personalized assistive technology.

\$5,000 Budget Breakdown 1. Program Activities & Facilitation – \$2,000 Planning and facilitation of inclusive activities Gardening workshops and hands-on learning sessions Stipends for program facilitators or subject-matter leaders 2. Gardening & Activity Supplies – \$1,500 Raised garden bed materials Soil, seeds, plants, and tools Adaptive gardening tools to support accessibility Gloves, containers, and instructional materials 3. Educational & Life-Skills Materials – \$800 Printed learning guides and visual supports Curriculum materials focused on responsibility, teamwork, and independence Participant workbooks or activity kits 4. Community Engagement & Outreach – \$400 Outreach materials (flyers, signage, digital promotion) Community learning events tied to inclusive participation 5. Administrative, Reporting & Compliance – \$300 Program coordination Fiscal tracking and reporting Data collection and evaluation aligned with DDCO requirements

2. Proposals requesting \$5,000 or less:

- Project funding requests less than \$5,000 can be approved by the Executive Committee. Applications should be received a minimum of 6 weeks before the next the next scheduled Executive Committee meeting.
- Applicant(s) will be notified by email within 5 business days of meeting of a decision or request for more information.
- A resulting contract will have an effective start date of no less than 60 days from the approval date.
- Per Oklahoma Statute, no funding can or will be reimbursed for any good or service purchased before the effective start date of a contract.

The Theodore E. Parker Foundation respectfully requests \$5,000 to support inclusive, community-based activities that promote independence, skill development, and meaningful participation for individuals with developmental disabilities. Grant funds will be used to implement hands-on programming centered on gardening and life-skills activities, including structured workshops, adaptive gardening projects, and educational sessions designed to build responsibility, routine, teamwork, and self-confidence. Activities will be accessible and inclusive, supporting individuals with developmental disabilities in developing practical skills that enhance independence and community inclusion. Funds will support program facilitation, gardening and activity supplies, educational materials, community engagement, and required administrative reporting. No funds will be used for transportation. All activities align with and support the goals of the DDCO 5-Year State Plan, emphasizing inclusion, productivity, and self-determination.

3. Proposals requesting more than \$5,000, less than \$25,000:

- Project funding requests must be received a minimum of 6 months in advance of a July 1 start date.
- Applicant(s) will be notified by email within 5 business days of meeting of a decision or request for more information.
- A resulting contract will have an effective start date of no less than 60 days from the approval date.
- Per Oklahoma Statute, no funding can or will be reimbursed for any good or service purchased before the effective start date of a contract.

4. Proposals requesting more than \$25,000:

- Project funding requests must be received a minimum of 6 months in advance of a July 1 start date.
- If a non-governmental entity, project funding requests are limited to no more than \$25,000.
 - Non-governmental organizations include, but are not limited to, not-for-profit corporations and for-profit corporations. Individual persons are also non-governmental organizations for this purpose.
 - Governmental entities include state agencies, local government agencies, tribal governments, public school districts, or public colleges and universities.
- Applicant(s) will be notified by email within 5 business days of meeting of a decision or request for more information.
- A resulting contract will have an effective start date of no less than 60 days from the approval date.
- Per Oklahoma Statute, no funding can or will be reimbursed for any good or service purchased before the effective start date of a contract.

5. Note about the Invitation to Bid / Competitive Bidding process

- *Please note that any entity can apply for funding through an invitation to bid process with no restrictions as to funding amount. However, all invitation to bid applications are done through the Oklahoma Office of Management and Enterprise Services (OMES). This application is NOT an invitation to bid. You can learn about the statewide competitive bidding process at this website: <https://oklahoma.gov/omes/divisions/central-purchasing.html>. All questions regarding this process, statewide purchasing, and/or competitive contracting should be directed to OMES.*
- *The Council is not allowed to have any contact with persons, groups, or organizations submitting proposals that are subject to competitive bidding. If you or your organization are submitting a response for a competitive contract or is part of any other organization's proposal for a contract, please DO NOT discuss or disclose any information about your proposal with any DDCO member or staff.*

Agree

6. **General Timelines:**

Funding decisions can take time for the Council to discuss. Please allow time for feedback on your proposal and possible revision of your proposal or providing more information. We want to be a partner and are happy to work with you as you complete an application. Please ask questions. If approved for funding, contract dates depend on when the proposal was received, length of review by Council committee, and contract negotiations.

For a proposal requesting funding for a full year, contracts will typically follow the state fiscal year: July 1 through June 30.

Proposals received are evaluated by a Council Committee, and if approved, a recommendation is made to the full Council for a decision. If approved by the full Council, we will make every effort for contracts to be effective as early as possible, typically by July 1. Applicants will be notified by email within 5 business days of the full Council's decision.

IMPORTANT: Do not begin work until a fully executed contract and purchase order (PO) is in hand. Per Oklahoma Statute, no funding can or will be reimbursed for any goods or service prior to the effective date of a contract.

If you have any questions, email our Planning & Grants Director, Jennifer Robinson: Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org.

Chrissy Parker

Part 1 - Contact Information

7. **Organization Name ***

The Theodore E. Parker Foundation

8. **Organization Address ***

Mailing address please: Street number, Street name, City, State, 9-digit Zip Code

701 W. 101st Pl S Jenk OK, 74037 Apt#1133

9. **Contact Info ***

Name, email address **and** phone number of the person completing this application.

Chrissy Parker Chrissyparkermanrs@yahoo.com 918-406-0022

10. **Website**

Organization's Website

Processing

Our State Plan Goals

To qualify for funding, projects must meet the goals in the 5-Year Council State Plan. The state plan is available for review <https://oklahoma.gov/ddco/about/state-plan.html>. The new state plan for 2027-2031 is in the process of being developed.

11. **State Plan Goal ***

As of August 2025, the Council is in the process of reviewing input from publicly held listening sessions and information about current services and systems in Oklahoma. Goals have not been established for our next 5 Year State Plan (2027-2031), however proposals submitted should fall within one of our themes we have identified.

- Access to Services
- Inclusive Education
- Caregiver Support
- Representation and Public Attitudes
- Advocacy and Self-Advocacy

Inclusive Education, Access to service,

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 purpose of this policy is to ensure a fair and impartial procurement process. The questions that follow are designed to help the state determine if such a conflict exists.

12. **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

13. **Identify names and relationships**

If you answered yes to "**Any relationships to the organization?**" please explain in detail. Identify names and relationships, as necessary.

Part 3 - Your activity proposal:

The Council's committee carefully reviews all complete and accurate applications. The information you provide in Part III will help our members understand your proposed work and how it aligns with the Council's funding priorities and expectations.

14. **Proposal.** *

Provide a written overview of your proposal (up to 4000 characters). A good overview should cover the key components of your proposal. This includes:

- **Introduction:** A brief summary of your project's purpose.
- **Problem Statement:** The issue your project aims to address.
- **Proposed Solution:** A clear description of your methodology and how your project will solve the problem.
- **Expected Outcomes:** The anticipated results or impact of your work.
- **Evaluation:** How the work will be measured.
- **Relevance:** How your project aligns with the council's goals and funding priorities.

Introduction

The Theodore E. Parker Foundation proposes an inclusive, community-based program designed to promote independence, skill development, and meaningful participation for individuals with developmental disabilities. This project will utilize hands-on gardening and structured life-skills activities to support self-determination, responsibility, and community inclusion in alignment with the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma (DDCO) 5-Year State Plan.

Problem Statement

Individuals with developmental disabilities often face limited access to inclusive, skill-building activities that foster independence, routine, and practical life experience. Many community programs lack hands-on opportunities that allow participants to actively engage in meaningful tasks while developing transferable skills such as responsibility, teamwork, and problem-solving. This gap can limit independence, reduce confidence, and hinder full participation in community life.

Proposed Solution

The Theodore E. Parker Foundation will implement a series of structured gardening and life-skills activities that provide participants with hands-on learning experiences in a supportive, inclusive environment. Activities will include garden planning, planting, maintenance, and harvest-based lessons, along with guided instruction focused on responsibility, routine-building, collaboration, and self-advocacy. Adaptive tools and accessible materials will be used to ensure full participation. Program facilitation will be led by trained staff and volunteers who emphasize inclusion, safety, and skill development. No transportation services will be provided, reducing risk and ensuring sustainability.

Expected Outcomes

Participants will demonstrate increased engagement, improved confidence, and enhanced practical life skills. Expected outcomes include:

Improved understanding of responsibility and routine through ongoing gardening tasks

Increased social interaction and teamwork

Greater confidence in completing structured activities

Enhanced sense of inclusion and community participation

At least 20 participants are expected to benefit directly from the program.

Evaluation

Program success will be measured through attendance tracking, participant observation, facilitator reports, and brief pre- and post-activity feedback. Qualitative data will assess changes in participant engagement, confidence, and skill development. Program documentation and summaries will be compiled to meet DDCO reporting requirements.

Relevance to DDCO Goals

This project directly supports DDCO's priorities by promoting independence, inclusion, and productivity for individuals with developmental disabilities. By offering inclusive, community-based, hands-on activities, the program aligns with the DDCO 5-Year State Plan's emphasis on self-determination, capacity-building, and meaningful participation in everyday community life.

15. **Have you completed a needs assessment? ***

- Yes
- No

16. **Needs assessment:**

If you have completed a needs assessment, please provide a summary below. Your response should include:

- A brief description of the methodology used (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups).
- The key findings that support the need for your proposed project.
- The population included in your assessment.
- An explanation of how this assessment directly informs your proposal.

Methodology

The Theodore E. Parker Foundation conducted a community-based needs assessment using informal surveys, direct conversations, and observational feedback gathered through interactions with families, caregivers, educators, and community members who support individuals with developmental disabilities. Input was collected during community events, educational programming, and ongoing engagement with families and service providers. This qualitative approach allowed the Foundation to identify common barriers and unmet needs related to inclusive, skill-building opportunities.

Key Findings

The assessment identified several consistent needs:

Limited access to hands-on, inclusive activities that build practical life skills

A lack of structured programs that promote routine, responsibility, and independence

Few opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities to participate in community-based activities alongside peers

A need for low-cost, accessible programming that supports engagement without requiring transportation or intensive resources

Families and caregivers emphasized the importance of activities that are both meaningful and adaptable, allowing participants of varying ability levels to engage successfully.

Population Included

The needs assessment included individuals with developmental disabilities, family members, caregivers, educators, and community advocates primarily located in Oklahoma. Participants represented youth and young adults with varying levels of support needs, as well as families seeking inclusive community-based opportunities that promote independence and social participation.

Use of Assessment to Inform the Proposal

Findings from this assessment directly informed the design of the proposed project. The identified need for hands-on, practical, and inclusive activities led to the development of a gardening and life-skills program that emphasizes routine, responsibility, and community participation. Feedback highlighting accessibility concerns influenced the use of adaptive tools and the decision not to include transportation services, reducing barriers and risk while ensuring sustainability. This needs assessment confirms that the proposed project addresses a documented community gap and aligns with DDCO priorities for inclusion, independence, and meaningful participation.

17. Who will do the work? *

Please list all people and organizations that will be working on the project, and describe their experience and qualifications to provide the proposed goods and services.

The proposed project will be implemented through a collaborative partnership led by the Theodore E. Parker Foundation, with support from community-based partners who bring complementary experience in agriculture, logistics, and hands-on program support.

Theodore E. Parker Foundation (Lead Organization)

The Theodore E. Parker Foundation will serve as the lead organization and fiscal agent for the project. The Foundation has experience developing and managing community-based programs focused on education, skill development, and inclusion. Responsibilities will include overall project coordination, activity planning, budgeting and fiscal oversight, documentation, and reporting to the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma. The Foundation will also oversee participant engagement, ensure accessibility, and monitor outcomes aligned with DDCO priorities.

Champagne Posse (Agriculture-Based Community Group)

Champagne Posse is an agriculture-based community group with experience in hands-on outdoor activities, land stewardship, and community engagement. Champagne Posse will support the gardening and life-skills components of the project by assisting with activity facilitation, basic agricultural instruction, and inclusive, team-based learning experiences. Their background in agriculture and community programming supports experiential learning opportunities that build responsibility, routine, and collaboration.

Money by the Ton Transport

Money by the Ton Transport will provide non-transport logistical and labor support as needed for the project. This includes assistance with setup, materials handling, equipment coordination, and general labor related to gardening activities and program implementation. While no participant transportation services will be provided, this support ensures activities are organized, safe, and efficiently executed.

Program Workers and Volunteers

The project will also be supported by trained workers and volunteers affiliated with the Theodore E. Parker Foundation and its partner organizations. These individuals have experience supporting community programs, assisting with hands-on activities, and working alongside diverse populations. All workers will operate under the guidance of the Foundation to ensure inclusive practices, safety, and alignment with program goals.

Collective Capacity

Together, these organizations bring a combination of nonprofit leadership, agricultural experience, practical labor support, and community engagement. This collaborative approach ensures the project is well-managed, inclusive, and capable of delivering meaningful gardening and life-skills activities that promote independence, productivity, and community inclusion for individuals with developmental disabilities.

18. Targeted population:

*

Tell us more about who you are targeting to improve outcomes for? Describe the age, region, familial status, learning or support needs, and type of disability.

The Theodore E. Parker Foundation’s project targets individuals with developmental disabilities who benefit from inclusive, hands-on, community-based learning opportunities that promote independence, responsibility, and meaningful participation.

Age:

The primary population includes youth and young adults ages 14–30. Activities are designed to be adaptable to a range of developmental levels and support needs.

Region:

Participants will be served in Oklahoma, with a focus on local and rural communities where access to inclusive, skill-building programs is often limited.

Familial Status:

Participants may live with parents, guardians, extended family members, or caregivers. Many families are actively seeking supportive, low-cost programs that reinforce life skills, routine, and independence outside of school or clinical settings.

Learning and Support Needs:

Participants may require:

Structured routines and clear expectations

Visual supports and hands-on instruction

Opportunities to practice responsibility and task completion

Support with social interaction, communication, and teamwork

Accessible tools and flexible pacing to ensure full participation

Type of Disability:

The project is inclusive of individuals with a range of developmental disabilities, including but not limited to:

Autism spectrum disorder

Intellectual and developmental disabilities

Learning disabilities

Other developmental delays that impact daily living and social participation

Focus on Improvement of Outcomes:

This project aims to improve outcomes by increasing participants’ confidence, independence, and engagement through practical, meaningful activities such as gardening and team-based projects. By participating in inclusive community activities, individuals build transferable life skills while strengthening their sense of belonging and self-determination.

19. **Impact:**

*

Please describe the anticipated impact of your proposal by addressing the following three components:

- Goals for the targeted population?
 - What are the specific, measurable goals you hope to achieve for the individuals directly served by this project?
- Broader implications for people with developmental disabilities:
 - Beyond the direct participants, how will this project create a broader, positive impact for the population of people with developmental disabilities as a whole?
- Measurable outcomes:
 - What specific, quantifiable metrics will you use to track your success and demonstrate the project's effectiveness?

Goals for the Targeted Population

The primary goal of this project is to increase independence, confidence, and meaningful participation for individuals with developmental disabilities through inclusive, hands-on gardening and life-skills activities.

Specific goals for individuals directly served include:

Strengthening responsibility and routine through structured, recurring tasks

Increasing engagement and participation in community-based activities

Improving teamwork, communication, and social interaction skills

Enhancing confidence in completing hands-on tasks independently or with reduced support

Specific, Measurable Goals

The project will directly serve at least 20 individuals with developmental disabilities. By the conclusion of the project:

75% of participants will demonstrate increased engagement and task completion, as observed by facilitators

70% of participants will show improved confidence and willingness to participate in group activities

80% of participants will complete at least one gardening or life-skills task with reduced assistance

100% of participants will participate in at least one inclusive, hands-on community activity

Broader Implications for People with Developmental Disabilities

Beyond direct participants, this project will contribute to broader positive outcomes by:

Demonstrating a replicable, low-cost, inclusive program model that can be implemented by other community organizations

Increasing community awareness of the capabilities and contributions of individuals with developmental disabilities

Encouraging inclusive practices within community-based agricultural and outdoor activities

Supporting families and caregivers by offering practical, skill-building opportunities that reinforce independence

The project will serve as a model for inclusive community engagement that emphasizes ability, participation, and self-determination.

Measurable Outcomes

Project effectiveness will be tracked using the following quantifiable metrics:

Number of participants enrolled and completing activities

Attendance rates across all program sessions

Task completion data (independent vs. supported completion)

Pre- and post-program participant and caregiver feedback

Facilitator observation checklists documenting skill development, engagement, and confidence

These outcomes will be documented and reported to demonstrate progress toward project goals and alignment with DDCO priorities related to inclusion, independence, and productivity.

20. Duplication or expansion:

*

Does this proposal duplicate or expand upon any existing work in Oklahoma or elsewhere? The Council cannot supplant funding to continue existing work unless the proposal is to expand on the work and enhances what is being done.

If your proposal duplicates or expands upon existing work, please describe the existing work and explain what makes your project unique and innovative. Be specific about how this approach and expected outcomes differ from and add value to what is already being done.

This proposal does not duplicate existing services in Oklahoma and does not supplant funding for ongoing programs. Instead, it introduces an expanded, community-driven model that fills a documented gap in accessible, hands-on, non-clinical programming for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Existing Work in Oklahoma

While Oklahoma offers a range of school-based, clinical, and agency-led services for individuals with developmental disabilities, many programs focus on therapy, classroom instruction, or compliance-driven outcomes. Opportunities for inclusive, practical, community-based skill development—particularly those rooted in agriculture and outdoor learning—are limited, episodic, or restricted to specific service systems. Additionally, many existing programs require transportation, formal enrollment, or long-term funding structures that can exclude families seeking flexible, low-cost options.

How This Project Expands and Adds Value

This project expands upon the concept of skill development by shifting learning out of institutional or clinical settings and into inclusive, real-world environments. The Theodore E. Parker Foundation's approach emphasizes:

Hands-on, experiential learning rather than classroom-based instruction

Agriculture-based activities (such as gardening) that naturally build routine, responsibility, and independence

Low-barrier participation, with no transportation services required and adaptable activities for varying support needs

Community inclusion, where individuals with developmental disabilities participate alongside peers in shared spaces

Rather than replacing existing services, this project complements and enhances them by offering a setting where learned skills can be practiced in everyday contexts.

What Makes This Project Unique and Innovative

This project is innovative because it:

Integrates agriculture and life-skills development in a way that is accessible, scalable, and community-led

Focuses on ability-based participation rather than deficit-driven programming

Operates outside traditional service models, reducing administrative and systemic barriers

Provides a replicable, low-cost framework that can be adopted by other communities without ongoing high-dollar funding

Expected outcomes differ from existing programs by emphasizing confidence, engagement, and practical independence over clinical benchmarks. Participants gain transferable skills through meaningful work that mirrors real-life responsibilities, reinforcing dignity, self-determination, and inclusion.

Conclusion

This proposal represents an expansion of opportunity, not a duplication of services. By offering a distinct, agriculture-based, community-centered model, the project enhances Oklahoma's existing developmental disability landscape and adds measurable value aligned with the Council's priorities for independence, productivity, and inclusion.

21. Best Practices:

*

Will your proposed project use current evidence-based best practices in the field of developmental disabilities? Identify the specific practices you will use, explain how you will incorporate them into your project, and cite your sources. Citations should include a mix of professional literature, research studies, and respected organizations or programs.

1) Person-Centered Planning (PCP)

What it is: A best practice approach that centers the individual's strengths, preferences, goals, and needed supports.
How we'll use it:

Participants will select preferred roles/tasks (planting, watering, harvesting, labeling, organizing supplies).

Facilitators will offer choice-based options and adjust task difficulty, pacing, and supports.

Each participant will have a simple "support plan" (what helps me succeed + what goals I'm working on).

2) Community-Based Instruction (CBI) / Real-World Skill Practice

What it is: Teaching functional skills in natural community settings to improve generalization and independence; widely recognized as an evidence-based approach for learners with disabilities.

How we'll use it:

Gardening activities are structured to mirror real-life responsibilities (routine, task completion, tool safety, teamwork).

Skills taught will be practiced in the actual setting where they occur (garden/site), supporting real-world independence.

3) Positive Behavior Support (PBS)

What it is: A proactive, supportive approach to increase positive behaviors and reduce barriers to participation through environmental supports, prevention strategies, and skill-building.

How we'll use it:

Predictable session routines, clear visual expectations, and positive reinforcement for participation.

Prevention-focused supports (structured choices, calm transitions, break options, and role clarity).

Staff/volunteers will use consistent, respectful approaches to support engagement.

4) Self-Determination & Supported Decision-Making (SDM)

What it is: Evidence supports teaching self-determination skills (choice-making, goal setting, self-advocacy) and using supports that help individuals direct their own lives.

How we'll use it:

Participants make choices each session (task selection, goals, roles, pacing).

Simple goal-setting and reflection (e.g., "Today I will..." / "Next time I want to...").

Family/caregiver involvement as appropriate to reinforce choice-making at home.

5) Accessible Design (Universal Design for Learning principles)

What it is: Designing instruction and materials to reduce barriers and support varied learning needs.

How we'll use it:

Multiple ways to participate (hands-on, picture prompts, modeling, step-by-step checklists).

Adaptive tools as needed (e.g., easy-grip tools, raised planters, simplified instructions).

Multiple ways for participants to show success (doing, demonstrating, explaining, or completing steps with prompts).

6) Therapeutic Benefits of Horticulture-Based Activities

What it is: Research indicates horticultural interventions can improve outcomes such as cognitive functioning, social interaction, and work-

related skills.

How we'll use it:

Structured planting-to-harvest activities that support attention, routine, and teamwork.

Social skill practice embedded naturally (shared tasks, turn-taking, collaboration).

How These Best Practices Will Be Embedded in the Project

Session structure: consistent routines + choice points (PBS + self-determination).

Instructional approach: modeling, guided practice, and real-world task completion (CBI + UDL).

Individualization: strengths-based, participant-led activity selection (PCP + SDM).

Engagement and inclusion: accessible tools/materials and flexible participation methods (UDL).

22. **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.

How will your proposed project lead to **lasting systems change** for people with developmental disabilities? Please provide a detailed explanation of how your project's outcomes will shift thinking, improve practices, or empower individuals and families within the state's service system.

This project is designed as a demonstration model that shifts how individuals, families, and community partners in Oklahoma think about supporting people with developmental disabilities. Rather than relying on clinical or institutional settings, the project shows that inclusive, community-based activities can effectively build independence, confidence, and real-world skills.

The project will help change thinking by reinforcing an ability-based mindset—highlighting what individuals with developmental disabilities can do when given meaningful roles and appropriate supports. By participating in visible, valued community activities such as gardening, participants are recognized as contributors, which promotes broader acceptance and inclusion.

The project will also improve practices by implementing and sharing a low-cost, replicable model for inclusive programming. Simple tools such as adaptable activity plans, visual supports, and outcome tracking templates will be shared with community partners, helping other organizations adopt best practices without requiring significant funding or infrastructure.

Finally, the project will empower individuals and families by strengthening self-determination and advocacy skills. Participants will practice choice-making and goal setting, while families gain practical strategies to support independence and communicate needs within schools, service systems, and community settings.

Together, these outcomes create lasting systems change by expanding inclusive community options, improving program quality, and strengthening the voice and participation of people with developmental disabilities across Oklahoma.

23. **Where implemented:**

*

Will the proposed project be implemented or offered statewide? If no, please define the specific counties and cities you will serve and provide the rationale for their selection.

The proposed project will not be implemented statewide. Services will be offered in Wagoner County and Tulsa County, including the City of Tulsa and surrounding areas.

Counties and Cities Served

Tulsa County (including Tulsa and surrounding communities)

Wagoner County

Rationale for Selection

These counties were selected due to the identified need for accessible, community-based, inclusive programming for individuals with developmental disabilities, particularly in areas where hands-on life-skills activities are limited. Tulsa County provides access to a diverse population and established community partnerships, while Wagoner County includes rural and semi-rural communities that often face fewer program options and greater service gaps.

Serving both counties allows the project to reach individuals and families across urban and rural settings, increasing equity and inclusion while remaining manageable within the scope of a \$5,000 project. The geographic focus also supports strong collaboration with local partners and ensures effective implementation, monitoring, and sustainability.

Performance Measures

The Council is required to submit performance reports to evaluate the effectiveness of all Council activities to our Federal partners. We require all contracted vendors to submit performance measure data prior to final payment. As a required component of your application, please provide **projected data** for the following performance measures. All contractors must collect **baseline data** to evaluate the project's outcomes. If you have questions about these projected and baseline numbers, please reach out to us.

Note: Not all measures may be applicable to your proposal. If a measure does not apply, please enter zero.

- **IA** = Individual and family **A**dvocacy
- **SC** = **S**ystem **C**hange

24. **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

25. **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

26. **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

27. **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

28. **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

29. **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

30. **IA 2.2.2**

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

The value must be a number

31. **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

32. **IA 3.1**

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

The value must be a number

33. **IA 3.2**

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

The value must be a number

34. **SC 1.1.1**

The number of policy and or procedures created or changed.

The value must be a number

35. **SC 1.2.1**

The number of statutes and or regulations created or changed.

The value must be a number

36. **SC 1.3.1**

The number of promising practices created.

The value must be a number

37. **SC 1.3.2**

The number of promising practices supported through Council activities.

The value must be a number

38. **SC 1.3.3**

The number of best practices created.

The value must be a number

39. **SC 1.4.1**

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

The value must be a number

40. **SC 1.5.1**

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

The value must be a number

41. **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

42. **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

43. **SC 2.1.2**

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

The value must be a number

44. **SC 2.1.3**

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

The value must be a number

45. **SC 2.1.4**

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

The value must be a number

46. **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

47. **FINANCIAL INFORMATION *****Proposal Budget:**

- Include a detailed revenue and expenditure budget, detailing the total costs and revenues of the proposal.
- Identify the amount requested from the Council within the context of the budget.
- **Projected budgets for multi-year project planning should show a decrease on Council funding.**
- **Council funding cannot exceed 75% of your budget.** For example, if your budget is \$10,000, our funding can be up to \$7,500. Your match would be a minimum of \$2,500. **Start with your budget** and calculate the 75/25 split. If you are located in/providing services in a designated rural county, please contact us.
- Identify the amount of the required 25% funding match for your project's total budget. You need to explain where this matching funding will come from. **Sources for match funding** can include non-federal funding, monies from fundraisers or donations/sponsorships, salary/fringe, donated services or items, discounted services or items, and volunteer time. (*paid employees of a non-profit organization cannot volunteer to provide the same type of services to their non-profit organization that they are employed to provide) For help calculating match contact us. Match funding helps the Council understand all partners working with the project.
- 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 your budget** to Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org and include the Project Name in the subject line.

Total Project Budget: \$5,000

Council Request (75%): \$3,750

Required Match (25%): \$1,250

Revenue Sources

DDCO Funding: \$3,750

Matching Funds (Non-Federal): \$1,250

In-kind volunteer support

Donated or discounted gardening supplies and materials

In-kind labor and setup support from community partners

Foundation fundraising and community donations

Expenditure Budget

Program Activities & Facilitation: \$1,900

Gardening & Activity Supplies: \$1,500

Educational Materials & Outreach: \$900

Administrative & Reporting Costs: \$700

Total Expenditures: \$5,000

Match Funding Explanation (25%)

The required \$1,250 match will be met through non-federal, in-kind contributions and local support, including volunteer time, donated or discounted materials, and community partner support. No paid employees will volunteer to provide the same services for which they are compensated.

Multi-Year Budget Outlook (Decreasing Council Reliance)

Year 1: 75% Council / 25% Match

Year 2: 60% Council / 40% Other Funding

Year 3: 40% Council / 60% Other Funding

Year 4-5: Program sustained primarily through grants, donations, partnerships, and earned revenue

48. STATEMENT OF WORK (SoW): *

Provide a proposed statement of work for the contractual requirements. This should include a detailed description of the work to be done, project milestones, deliverables to the Council, and other details important to the work that you will provide in exchange for Council funding. [ProjectManager.com](https://www.projectmanager.com) has some good information for you to develop your statement of work: <https://www.projectmanager.com/blog/statement-work-definition-examples>.

The Theodore E. Parker Foundation will implement an inclusive, community-based gardening and life-skills project designed to promote independence, responsibility, and community participation for individuals with developmental disabilities in Tulsa County and Wagoner County.

Scope of Work

Plan and deliver structured, hands-on gardening and life-skills activities using inclusive and accessible practices

Facilitate participant choice-making, routine-building, and teamwork during each activity session

Utilize adaptive tools and visual supports to ensure full participation

Coordinate partner support for activity facilitation and site preparation

Track participation, engagement, and outcomes aligned with DDCO priorities

Project Milestones

Project Start: Program planning, partner coordination, and material preparation

Implementation Phase: Delivery of inclusive gardening and life-skills sessions

Project Close: Outcome review, documentation, and reporting

Deliverables to the Council

Project implementation summary

Participation and attendance data

Outcome measures demonstrating progress toward independence and inclusion

Final narrative and financial report consistent with DDCO requirements

Other Key Details

No transportation services will be provided

All activities will align with the DDCO 5-Year State Plan and contractual requirements

Funds will be used solely for approved program activities and reporting

49. Sustainability Plan: *

It is the Council's hope that funded projects will have a lasting impact on the community and achieve financial sustainability after the Council's funding is complete. The Council's funding is intended as a catalyst to help new work become self-sustaining. To assure the Council of this long-term vision, all applicants must submit a detailed Financial Sustainability Plan. Financial sustainability is defined as maintaining services to the community through a diversified funding model. **Important Note:** *The Council can approve funding for an activity for a maximum of five (5) years. However, our funding is not guaranteed, so applications for Council funding must be submitted annually.* **The Council expects all funded work to be self-sustaining by the end of the contract period.** For example, consider our year one funding to be 100%, year two could be 80%, year three could be 60%, year 4 could be 40% and year 5 could be 20%.

Your Financial Sustainability Plan should include, but is not limited to, the following components for each year of your proposed project:

- Annual Funding Goals: Clear, measurable funding targets for each year of the project.
- **Projected Budgets: A multi-year budget forecast that demonstrates decreasing reliance on Council funding.**
- Identified Partners: A list of specific organizations or entities with whom you will partner, along with a description of their role in your sustainability plan. Please also include any documented commitment of resources they are able to provide.
- Timeline: A clear timeline for all sustainability activities (e.g., "Year 2: Apply for three new grants," "Year 3: Implement a pilot fee-for-service program").

The Theodore E. Parker Foundation views DDCO funding as a catalyst to launch and stabilize this program while building a diversified funding model that supports long-term sustainability. The project is designed to become self-sustaining through a combination of grants, partnerships, in-kind support, and earned revenue over a five-year period.

Annual Funding Goals & Projected Budgets

Year 1 (100% DDCO – \$5,000): Program launch, implementation, and data collection

Year 2 (80% DDCO / 20% Other): Secure at least \$1,000 in supplemental funding through local grants, donations, and in-kind support

Year 3 (60% DDCO / 40% Other): Secure \$2,000–\$3,000 through diversified funding sources

Year 4 (40% DDCO / 60% Other): Majority funding supported by grants, partnerships, and earned revenue

Year 5 (20% DDCO / 80% Other): Program fully sustained through non-DDCO funding

Identified Partners & Support

Champagne Posse: In-kind support through agriculture expertise, volunteer facilitation, and activity assistance

Money by the Ton Transport: In-kind labor support for setup, materials handling, and project logistics (non-transport)

Local community partners and donors: Modest financial contributions, supplies, and volunteer support

Theodore E. Parker Foundation: Ongoing fiscal oversight, fundraising, and grant development

Timeline for Sustainability Activities

Year 1: Establish program model, collect outcomes data, identify funding opportunities

Year 2: Apply for at least three new grants; increase local donor engagement

Year 3: Introduce pilot fee-for-service workshops and sponsorship opportunities

Year 4: Expand earned revenue and formalize partner commitments

Year 5: Maintain program operations primarily through diversified funding

This phased approach ensures decreasing reliance on Council funding while strengthening community partnerships, diversified revenue streams, and long-term program viability.

50. **Outreach and Awareness Plan of the Work:** *

Too often people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, and others are not aware of resources available in Oklahoma. Please provide a marketing and outreach plan to bring awareness about the work being proposed. Your plan should address the following:

- **Target Audience:** Clearly identify the specific groups within the intellectual and developmental disability community you aim to reach (e.g., specific age ranges, individuals in rural vs. urban areas, diverse cultural communities).
- **Marketing Channels:** Describe the specific marketing channels you will use (e.g., social media, community events, partnerships, print materials) and how you will use them effectively to reach your target audiences.
- **Partnerships:** Explain how you will collaborate with other organizations, advocacy groups, or community leaders to expand the reach of your message.
- **Accessibility and Language:** Detail your strategy for ensuring your outreach is accessible and inclusive. Please discuss your plan for language translations, including which languages you will prioritize and how you will ensure cultural appropriateness.
- **Measurement:** Describe how you will measure the success and impact of your marketing and outreach efforts.

The project will focus on youth and young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ages 14–30), along with their families, caregivers, and support networks in Tulsa County and Wagoner County, including both urban and rural communities. Outreach will prioritize families who may have limited access to inclusive, community-based programming, including culturally diverse populations.

Marketing Channels

Social Media: Use Facebook and Instagram to share program information, photos, and simple updates through the Theodore E. Parker Foundation and partner platforms.

Community Outreach: Distribute flyers and information at community events, local organizations, and family gatherings.

Word-of-Mouth & Referrals: Encourage families, caregivers, and partners to share information within their networks.

Partner Networks: Share program details through partner organizations' communication channels.

Partnerships

The Foundation will collaborate with Champagne Posse, Money by the Ton Transport, and local community organizations to expand outreach. Partners will assist with sharing information, engaging families, and promoting inclusive participation within their existing networks.

Accessibility and Language

Outreach materials will be written in plain, easy-to-understand language and formatted for accessibility. Visual supports will be used where possible. Materials will be provided in English, with Spanish translations prioritized as needed to reach families in the service area. Cultural sensitivity will be maintained by using respectful, person-centered language.

Measurement

Outreach success will be measured by:

Number of inquiries and referrals received

Participant enrollment and attendance

Social media engagement (views, shares, messages)

Informal feedback from participants and families

51. **Logic Model:**

To help the Council and your organization effectively evaluate the program's success, a logic model is a required component for all contracts in excess of \$5,000. A logic model is a simple visual tool that illustrates the connection between your project's resources (inputs), what you plan to do (activities), the immediate results of your work (outputs), and the changes you hope to achieve (outcomes). For a helpful guide to developing a clear and effective logic model, please refer to this resource from The Compass: <https://thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guide/how-develop-logic-model-0>

Inputs
DDCO funding
Theodore E. Parker Foundation staff and volunteers
Partner support (Champagne Posse and Money by the Ton Transport – in-kind labor and activity support)
Gardening supplies, adaptive tools, and educational materials
Community space for activities
Activities
Plan and facilitate inclusive gardening and life-skills sessions
Provide hands-on instruction using accessible, adaptive methods
Support participant choice-making, routine-building, and teamwork
Track participation and engagement
Outputs
Number of gardening and life-skills sessions delivered
Number of participants served
Educational materials and activity kits used
Participation and attendance records
Outcomes
Increased participant engagement and confidence
Improved responsibility, routine, and task completion skills
Greater inclusion and community participation for individuals with developmental disabilities

52. **Registered Vendor? ***

Are you a registered vendor with the State of Oklahoma? All contractors must be registered in the State Supplier Portal. You can do this online: <https://oklahoma.gov/omes/divisions/central-purchasing/suppliers-and-payees/supplier-portal.html>

Yes

No

53. **IRS 501(c)3? ***

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

Yes

No

54. **Government entity? ***

Is the proposed vendor a Government entity:

Yes

No

55. **Provide form of government and name of entity ***

The Theodore E. Parker Foundation

56. **Are you a Tribal Organization? ***

Is the proposed vendor a tribal nation:

Yes

No

60. Registered corporation? *

Is the proposed vendor a registered corporation?

Yes

No

61. ID Number *

Social Security Number, FEI Number, or OMES Supplier ID

Contact information

62. Signing authority *

Name of individual with contract signing authority, title, Phone number, email address

63. Primary Contact: *

Name of individual(s) to contact regarding contract performance & operations, title, Phone number, email address

64. Finance Contact: *

Name of individual(s) responsible for finance and accounting, title, Phone number, email address

65. Legal Notices: *

Name of individual(s) to send legal notices, title, Phone number, email address

Blend Ability Episode

VGM Visual Storytelling, Valentina Gutierrez

Fiscal Year FY27 Funding Request

Project/Activity: Blend Ability Series – One Episode

Organization: VGM Visual Storytelling, Valentina Gutierrez

Proposal Description: *Blend Ability* began as an award-winning short documentary about a coffee shop in Oklahoma employing people of all abilities. Building on that success, this project seeks funding to expand into a six-episode documentary series (10–15 minutes each) highlighting individuals with developmental disabilities and their experiences with employment. Each episode will feature diverse subjects, across gender, disability, and type of work, showcasing both the barriers they face and the unique strengths they bring, challenging misconceptions and promoting understanding that inclusive hiring benefits both individuals and communities.

The series will combine storytelling with practical solutions, featuring in-depth interviews, workplace footage, and authentic narratives that emphasize dignity and ability. Each episode will include a guided framework for HR professionals and business leaders, offering tools, resources, and best practices to advance inclusive hiring. With a budget of \$33,334 per episode, *Blend Ability* will be released progressively online and shared with corporations, HR departments, and diversity programs to maximize reach and impact.

Anticipated outcomes include increased public understanding of employment barriers, stronger representation of people with developmental disabilities, and direct commitments from businesses to expand inclusive hiring. Success will be measured through viewership, engagement, festival recognition, and reported employment actions by participating organizations. Ultimately, *Blend Ability* aims to drive long-term systems change, embedding inclusion into workplace culture, influencing HR practices, and shaping public attitudes toward individuals with developmental disabilities as capable, valuable contributors.

Council Goal & Objective: Advocacy and Self-Advocacy

Targeted Audience: The *Blend Ability* series aims to uplift individuals with developmental disabilities by sharing their stories and affirming their value in the workforce. At the same time, it targets HR professionals and business leaders, providing tools and insights to promote inclusive hiring practices. By also engaging the general public, the series seeks to reduce stigma and build a culture where inclusive employment is expected and celebrated.

Funding requested for Fiscal Year FY27

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$25,000	\$8,334	\$33,334

6. **General Timelines:**

Funding decisions can take time for the Council to discuss. Please allow time for feedback on your proposal and possible revision of your proposal or providing more information. We want to be a partner and are happy to work with you as you complete an application. Please ask questions. If approved for funding, contract dates depend on when the proposal was received, length of review by Council committee, and contract negotiations.

For a proposal requesting funding for a full year, contracts will typically follow the state fiscal year: July 1 through June 30.

Proposals received are evaluated by a Council Committee, and if approved, a recommendation is made to the full Council for a decision. If approved by the full Council, we will make every effort for contracts to be effective as early as possible, typically by July 1. Applicants will be notified by email within 5 business days of the full Council's decision.

IMPORTANT: Do not begin work until a fully executed contract and purchase order (PO) is in hand. Per Oklahoma Statute, no funding can or will be reimbursed for any goods or service prior to the effective date of a contract.

If you have any questions, email our Planning & Grants Director, Jennifer Robinson: Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org.

Part 1 - Contact Information

7. **Organization Name ***

8. **Organization Address ***

Mailing address please: Street number, Street name, City, State, 9-digit Zip Code

9. **Contact Info ***

Name, email address **and** phone number of the person completing this application.

10. **Website**

Organization's Website

Our State Plan Goals

To qualify for funding, projects must meet the goals in the 5-Year Council State Plan. The state plan is available for review <https://oklahoma.gov/ddco/about/state-plan.html>. The new state plan for 2027-2031 is in the process of being developed.

11. State Plan Goal *

As of August 2025, the Council is in the process of reviewing input from publicly held listening sessions and information about current services and systems in Oklahoma. Goals have not been established for our next 5 Year State Plan (2027-2031), however proposals submitted should fall within one of our themes we have identified.

- Access to Services
- Inclusive Education
- Caregiver Support
- Representation and Public Attitudes
- Advocacy and Self-Advocacy

Advocacy and Self-Advocacy

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 purpose of this policy is to ensure a fair and impartial procurement process. The questions that follow are designed to help the state determine if such a conflict exists.

12. 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

13. Identify names and relationships

If you answered yes to "**Any relationships to the organization?**" please explain in detail. Identify names and relationships, as necessary.

I have met Jennifer Robinson and Jenifer Randall before through a short film I made featuring the importance of inclusion of people with disability in the workforce.

Part 3 - Your activity proposal:

The Council's committee carefully reviews all complete and accurate applications. The information you provide in Part III will help our members understand your proposed work and how it aligns with the Council's funding priorities and expectations.

14. Proposal. *

Provide a written overview of your proposal (750 words or fewer). A good overview should cover the key components of your proposal. This includes:

- **Introduction:** A brief summary of your project's purpose.
- **Problem Statement:** The issue your project aims to address.
- **Proposed Solution:** A clear description of your methodology and how your project will solve the problem.
- **Expected Outcomes:** The anticipated results or impact of your work.
- **Evaluation:** How the work will be measured.
- **Relevance:** How your project aligns with the council's goals and funding priorities.

Introduction

Blend Ability began as a short documentary that captured the story of a coffee shop in Oklahoma employing people of all abilities. The film went on to win multiple international awards and touch audiences around the world. Building on that success, this project seeks funding to expand Blend Ability into a six-episode series of short documentaries (10–15 minutes each) that spotlight individuals with developmental disabilities and their connection to employment. Each episode will feature a diverse subject—across gender, disability, and type of work—showcasing both the barriers they face and the potential for inclusive solutions.

Problem Statement

Employment remains one of the greatest challenges for individuals with developmental disabilities. According to national data, 77.5% of people with disabilities are either underemployed or unemployed after high school. This statistic reflects not a lack of ability, but a lack of opportunity. Misconceptions, stigma, and limited inclusive hiring practices continue to exclude talented, capable individuals from contributing meaningfully to the workforce. Beyond the personal cost of unemployment, this exclusion deprives businesses and communities of diverse perspectives and valuable skills. The issue is not only economic but cultural—without visibility and understanding, stereotypes persist.

Proposed Solution

The Blend Ability series will address this problem by combining storytelling with actionable solutions. Through six short documentaries, the project will:

Share authentic stories of people with developmental disabilities navigating employment.

Highlight the barriers they face and the unique strengths they bring to the workforce.

Provide a guided framework for HR departments and employers, including resources, connections, and best practices for inclusive hiring.

By targeting both the general public and corporate audiences, the series aims to shift perceptions and drive practical change. Each episode will be both inspirational and educational, making the case that inclusive hiring is not charity—it's smart business and essential for thriving communities.

Methodology

The series will be produced using a documentary approach rooted in authenticity and human connection. Each episode will feature: In-depth interviews with individuals with disabilities, their families, and employers.

Workplace b-roll to visually capture the individual's role, environment, and impact.

Narrative structure that emphasizes dignity, ability, and possibility rather than limitations.

Diverse representation across gender, disability type, and employment sector to ensure a broad and inclusive scope.

The budget for each episode is projected at \$25,000 covering pre-production, filming, editing, sound, original score, and distribution. Episodes will be released progressively, ensuring sustained audience engagement. The content will be widely accessible online, with targeted outreach to corporations and HR departments to integrate the films into training and diversity initiatives.

Expected Outcomes

The anticipated outcomes include:

Awareness: Increased public understanding of the employment barriers faced by people with developmental disabilities.

Education: HR professionals and corporate leaders gain tools and strategies for inclusive hiring.

Action: Measurable commitments from businesses to hire individuals with disabilities, with the goal of at least one hire per HR department reached.

Representation: Diverse and accurate media portrayal of individuals with disabilities, shifting cultural perceptions from pity to partnership.

Beyond immediate results, the series has the potential to influence long-term change in workplace practices and contribute to broader cultural acceptance and inclusion.

Evaluation

Success will be evaluated through both quantitative and qualitative measures, including:

Audience reach (online viewership, festival screenings, media coverage).

Engagement metrics (social media shares, comm

15. Have you completed a needs assessment? * Yes No**16. Who will do the work? ***

Please list all people and organizations that will be working on the project, and describe their experience and qualifications to provide the proposed goods and services.

This project will be led by Valentina Gutierrez, Director, Producer, and Cinematographer of Blend Ability and founder of VGM Visual Storytelling. Valentina is an award-winning filmmaker whose work has been recognized internationally, including multiple Telly Awards and the Audience Choice Award at the Art of Documentary. At VGM Visual Storytelling, she leads every stage of production—concept development, directing, cinematography, editing, and color grading—ensuring each project reflects both artistic vision and professional polish. VGM Visual Storytelling is an award-winning agency with nearly a decade of experience producing impactful documentary and brand story content for nonprofits, businesses, and cultural institutions. With expertise in storytelling, cinematography, editing, sound, and strategy, Valentina and her team are uniquely equipped to create films that are both moving and actionable.

17. Targeted population:

*

Tell us more about who you are targeting to improve outcomes for? Describe the age, region, familial status, learning or support needs, and type of disability.

The Blend Ability series is designed to serve two primary audiences. First, it seeks to amplify the voices of individuals with developmental disabilities who are unemployed, underemployed, or seeking to transition into meaningful work. By centering their stories, the project affirms their value, dignity, and capacity to thrive in the workforce. Second, the series targets human resources departments, business owners, and corporate leaders who influence hiring practices. Through education and exposure, the films aim to equip these decision-makers with the knowledge, resources, and practical framework to adopt inclusive hiring strategies. Beyond these groups, the series will also engage the general public, fostering greater understanding and reducing stigma, ultimately creating a culture where inclusive employment is both expected and celebrated.

18. Impact:

*

Please describe the anticipated impact of your proposal by addressing the following three components:

- Goals for the targeted population?
 - What are the specific, measurable goals you hope to achieve for the individuals directly served by this project?
- Broader implications for people with developmental disabilities:
 - Beyond the direct participants, how will this project create a broader, positive impact for the population of people with developmental disabilities as a whole?
- Measurable outcomes:
 - What specific, quantifiable metrics will you use to track your success and demonstrate the project's effectiveness?

Anticipated Impact**Goals for the Target Population**

For the individuals featured in the Blend Ability series, the primary goal is visibility and validation. Each person's story will be documented with dignity and care, highlighting their strengths, challenges, and aspirations in the workforce. By centering their voices, the films will provide participants with a platform to be seen, respected, and recognized. On a practical level, the series aims to inspire direct employment opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities by equipping HR departments and business leaders with the tools and confidence to hire inclusively.

Broader Implications for People with Developmental Disabilities

Beyond the direct participants, the series is intended to influence cultural perceptions and business practices on a wider scale. By presenting diverse stories across gender, disability type, and employment sectors, Blend Ability will demonstrate that inclusion is not only possible but mutually beneficial for employees and employers alike. The broader goal is to normalize inclusive hiring, reduce stigma, and catalyze systemic change—encouraging businesses across industries to rethink who belongs in their workforce.

Measurable Outcomes

The effectiveness of the project will be measured through both qualitative and quantitative outcomes, including:

Employment commitments: Tracking the number of HR departments and companies that pledge or act to hire at least one individual with a developmental disability after engaging with the films.

Reach and engagement: Measuring online viewership, social media engagement, and feedback from disability organizations.

Film festivals and awards: Submitting each episode to national and international film festivals, with the goal of achieving festival selections, awards, and global distribution. This not only extends the visibility of the stories worldwide but also affirms the artistic and social impact of the project.

Educational adoption: Monitoring the number of organizations and HR departments integrating the series into diversity and inclusion training programs.

Participant feedback: Gathering testimonials from the individuals featured and their families on the personal impact of sharing their stories.

Through these measures, the project seeks to demonstrate both immediate and long-term effectiveness—changing lives on an individual level while creating a ripple effect of awareness, opportunity, and inclusion for the developmental disability community worldwide.

19. Duplication or expansion:

*

Does this proposal duplicate or expand upon any existing work in Oklahoma or elsewhere? The Council cannot supplant funding to continue existing work unless the proposal is to expand on the work and enhances what is being done.

If your proposal duplicates or expands upon existing work, please describe the existing work and explain what makes your project unique and innovative. Be specific about how this approach and expected outcomes differ from and add value to what is already being done.

This proposal is not a duplication of existing work but an intentional expansion of a proven concept. The short documentary Blend Ability served as a pilot project, demonstrating the power of storytelling to highlight inclusive employment. The film has been well received both locally and internationally, winning multiple awards, being accepted into festivals worldwide, and most notably screening at the deadCenter Film Festival here in Oklahoma—one of the region's most respected platforms for independent film. The success of the pilot confirms both the need and the audience for this work. Building on that foundation, the proposed six-episode series will significantly expand the scope and impact. While the original short focused on a single workplace, the new series will showcase a diverse range of individuals with developmental disabilities across multiple industries, genders, and backgrounds. Each episode will not only humanize the challenges and successes of the participants but also directly target corporate audiences with actionable tools for inclusive hiring.

This approach is unique in that it goes beyond awareness-raising to drive measurable change. By pairing powerful storytelling with a guided hiring framework for HR departments, the project adds practical value not present in other disability awareness campaigns. In this way, the series expands upon the success of the original short film while elevating the expected outcomes—broadening public understanding, supporting systemic change in workplaces, and positioning Oklahoma as a leader in inclusive storytelling with national and international reach.

20. Best Practices:

*

Will your proposed project use current evidence-based best practices in the field of developmental disabilities? Identify the specific practices you will use, explain how you will incorporate them into your project, and cite your sources. Citations should include a mix of professional literature, research studies, and respected organizations or programs.

The Blend Ability series is grounded in evidence-based best practices that promote inclusion, representation, and employment opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities. Research consistently shows that supported and inclusive employment leads to improved quality of life, increased independence, and greater community participation for people with disabilities (Wehman et al., 2018; National Core Indicators, 2022). Aligning with these findings, the project will highlight real-life examples of inclusive workplaces and provide HR professionals with strategies and resources to replicate these practices.

One best practice incorporated into this project is the use of person-centered approaches, which emphasize the unique strengths, goals, and aspirations of each individual (Hall, Butterworth, & Winsor, 2014). By centering each film episode on a single participant's story, the series ensures their voice, experience, and perspective lead the narrative.

Another best practice is employer education and training, identified by organizations such as the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) and the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) as critical to reducing stigma and increasing hiring. The Blend Ability series supports this practice by providing HR departments and businesses with both real-world examples and a guided roadmap for inclusive hiring.

Finally, the project addresses the best practice of community awareness and stigma reduction, which research identifies as essential for long-term change (Lindsay et al., 2019). By distributing the series widely—including at film festivals, online platforms, and directly to corporate audiences—the films expand public understanding and shift perceptions from limitation to capability.

In this way, the Blend Ability series does more than share stories—it actively incorporates and advances recognized best practices in the developmental disabilities field, ensuring the project is both impactful and aligned with professional standards.

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.

How will your proposed project lead to **lasting systems change** for people with developmental disabilities? Please provide a detailed explanation of how your project's outcomes will shift thinking, improve practices, or empower individuals and families within the state's service system.

The Blend Ability series is designed to create more than individual opportunities—it seeks to drive lasting systems change in how people with developmental disabilities are viewed and supported in the workforce. By educating HR professionals, business leaders, and the public, the project challenges existing barriers and promotes inclusive hiring as a standard practice rather than an exception. Each episode not only raises awareness but also equips organizations with a roadmap and resources to act, shifting hiring policies and workplace cultures. Over time, this approach contributes to systemic change by embedding inclusion into corporate practices, influencing training programs, and fostering broader acceptance across industries. The lasting impact is a stronger, more equitable employment system where individuals with developmental disabilities are recognized as valuable contributors to the economy and community.

22. **Where implemented:**

*

Will the proposed project be implemented or offered statewide? If no, please define the specific counties and cities you will serve and provide the rationale for their selection.

The Blend Ability series will be distributed worldwide through film festivals, online platforms, and targeted outreach to corporations, ensuring the stories have broad visibility and global impact. However, Oklahoma will remain the heart of this initiative. By highlighting stories rooted in our communities and engaging directly with corporations and HR departments across the state, the project aims to inspire inclusive hiring practices locally while positioning Oklahoma as a leader in disability inclusion. In this way, the films will both reach an international audience and serve as a catalyst for change within Oklahoma, creating a model that can be replicated across other states.

Performance Measures

The Council is required to submit performance reports to evaluate the effectiveness of all Council activities to our Federal partners. We require all contracted vendors to submit performance measure data prior to final payment. As a required component of your application, please provide **projected data** for the following performance measures. All contractors must collect **baseline data** to evaluate the project's outcomes.

Note: Not all measures may be applicable to your proposal. If a measure does not apply, please enter zero.

- **IA** = Individual and family **A**dvocacy
- **SC** = **S**ystem **C**hange

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.

0

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.

0

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.

0

The value must be a number

Additional Requirements for funding

46. **FINANCIAL INFORMATION ***

Proposal Budget:

- Include a detailed revenue and expenditure budget, detailing the total costs and revenues of the proposal.
- Identify the amount requested from the Council within the context of the budget.
- Identify the amount of the required 25% funding match for your project's total budget. You also need to explain where this matching funding will come from. Sources for the match can include non-federal funding, donated services or items, discounted services or items, and volunteer time. If you need help calculating the value of volunteer time, you can contact Jennifer. Match funding helps the Council understand all partners who are helping with the project.
- 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 your budget** to Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org and include the Project Name in the subject line.

Expenditure Breakdown
 Pre-Production (planning, research, coordination): \$3,500
 Production (filming days, crew support, equipment, travel within Oklahoma): \$11,000
 Post-Production (editing, sound design, color grading, original score, graphics): \$8,000
 Marketing & Distribution (film festival submissions, accessibility captions, outreach materials): \$2,500
 Total Expenditures: \$25,000

The requested \$25,000 will fund one 10–15 minute episode in the Blend Ability series. This allocation covers all production phases: pre-production planning, professional filming, and post-production editing to deliver a polished, high-quality documentary. A significant portion of the budget is devoted to marketing and distribution, ensuring the episode reaches both general audiences and HR professionals through film festivals, online platforms, and targeted outreach.

As the Director and Producer, I am donating part of my time to this project. Blend Ability is more than a production—it is a personal mission to educate, inspire, and shift workplace culture toward inclusion. My contribution of unpaid hours demonstrates my commitment to the success and long-term impact of the series.

47. STATEMENT OF WORK (SoW): *

Provide a proposed statement of work for the contractual requirements. This should include a detailed description of the work to be done, project milestones, deliverables to the Council, and other details important to the work that you will provide in exchange for Council funding. [ProjectManager.com](https://www.projectmanager.com) has some good information for you to develop your statement of work: <https://www.projectmanager.com/blog/statement-work-definition-examples>.

Project Title: Blend Ability – Short Documentary Episode on Inclusive Employment

Project Description:

VGM Visual Storytelling will produce one 10–15 minute short documentary episode highlighting an individual with a developmental disability and their connection to employment. The film will showcase personal stories, workplace experiences, and practical insights to inspire inclusive hiring.

Scope of Work:

Plan and coordinate filming with the selected participant.

Film interviews and workplace footage.

Edit and produce a polished documentary episode with captions and accessibility features.

Submit the finished episode to film festivals and distribute it online for public and corporate audiences.

Deliverables to the Council:

Completed 10–15 minute short documentary episode (final digital file).

Report summarizing festival submissions, online release, and outreach to Oklahoma corporations.

Project Leadership:

The project will be directed and produced by Valentina Gutierrez of VGM Visual Storytelling, an award-winning filmmaker. Valentina will donate a portion of her time to ensure the project's success.

48. Sustainability Plan: *

It is the Council's hope that funded projects will have a lasting impact on the community and achieve financial sustainability after the Council's funding is complete. The Council's funding is intended as a catalyst to help new work become self-sustaining. To assure the Council of this long-term vision, all applicants must submit a detailed Financial Sustainability Plan. Financial sustainability is defined as maintaining services to the community through a diversified funding model.

Important Note: *The Council can approve funding for an activity for a maximum of five (5) years. However, our funding is not guaranteed, so applications for Council funding must be submitted annually.* The Council expects all funded work to be self-sustaining by the end of the contract period. Your Financial Sustainability Plan should include, but is not limited to, the following components for each year of your proposed project:

- Annual Funding Goals: Clear, measurable funding targets for each year of the project.
- Projected Budgets: A multi-year budget forecast that demonstrates decreasing reliance on Council funding.
- Identified Partners: A list of specific organizations or entities with whom you will partner, along with a description of their role in your sustainability plan. Please also include any documented commitment of resources they are able to provide.
- Timeline: A clear timeline for all sustainability activities (e.g., "Year 2: Apply for three new grants," "Year 3: Implement a pilot fee-for-service program").

Council funding will serve as a catalyst by supporting one of the six planned episodes of the Blend Ability series. This initial investment will not only make one story possible but will also demonstrate the quality, impact, and reach of the project, which is essential for securing additional funding.

Beyond this episode, I am actively seeking partnerships and support from other organizations, nonprofits, and corporate sponsors to fund the remaining five episodes in Season One. Each completed episode strengthens the case for continued investment by showing measurable outcomes such as community impact, corporate engagement, and film festival recognition.

In addition, the long-term sustainability of the project will be supported through distribution strategies that include international film festivals, online streaming, and integration into HR training programs. These efforts will extend the life and reach of each episode, ensuring the Council's investment has lasting visibility and impact while positioning the project to attract further financial backing.

49. **Outreach and Awareness Plan of the Work:** *

Too often people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, and others are not aware of resources available in Oklahoma. Please provide a marketing and outreach plan to bring awareness about the work being proposed. Your plan should address the following:

- Target Audience: Clearly identify the specific groups within the intellectual and developmental disability community you aim to reach (e.g., specific age ranges, individuals in rural vs. urban areas, diverse cultural communities).
- Marketing Channels: Describe the specific marketing channels you will use (e.g., social media, community events, partnerships, print materials) and how you will use them effectively to reach your target audiences.
- Partnerships: Explain how you will collaborate with other organizations, advocacy groups, or community leaders to expand the reach of your message.
- Accessibility and Language: Detail your strategy for ensuring your outreach is accessible and inclusive. Please discuss your plan for language translations, including which languages you will prioritize and how you will ensure cultural appropriateness.
- Measurement: Describe how you will measure the success and impact of your marketing and outreach efforts.

The outreach strategy for the Blend Ability series is designed to ensure both individuals with developmental disabilities and the broader community are aware of the project and its resources. The target audiences include people with developmental disabilities and their families, nonprofit organizations that provide disability services, HR departments, and corporate leaders in Oklahoma and beyond.

Marketing efforts will include creating dedicated social media accounts for the Blend Ability series to share updates, behind-the-scenes content, and finished episodes with a wide audience. We will also partner with local and statewide nonprofit organizations devoted to disability inclusion to amplify the reach of each episode and connect with individuals and families directly.

In addition, outreach will include in-person screenings across Oklahoma City and other key communities to bring the films directly to local audiences. Private screenings and presentations will also be offered to HR departments and corporate leaders, providing both awareness and actionable steps for inclusive hiring. By combining online visibility, nonprofit partnerships, and direct engagement with businesses, the project will build momentum across multiple channels to maximize awareness and impact.

50. **Logic Model:**

To help the Council and your organization effectively evaluate the program's success, a logic model is a required component for all contracts in excess of \$5,000. A logic model is a simple visual tool that illustrates the connection between your project's resources (inputs), what you plan to do (activities), the immediate results of your work (outputs), and the changes you hope to achieve (outcomes). For a helpful guide to developing a clear and effective logic model, please refer to this resource from The Compass: <https://thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guide/how-develop-logic-model-0>

51. **Registered Vendor?** *

Are you a registered vendor with the State of Oklahoma? All contractors must be registered in the State Supplier Portal. You can do this online: <https://oklahoma.gov/omes/divisions/central-purchasing/suppliers-and-payees/supplier-portal.html>

Yes

No

52. **IRS 501(c)3?** *

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

Yes

No

58. **Registered partnership? ***

Is the proposed vendor a registered partnership?

Yes

No

59. **Registered corporation? ***

Is the proposed vendor a registered corporation?

Yes

No

60. **ID Number ***

Social Security Number, FEI Number, or OMES Supplier ID

81-3273417

Contact information

61. **Signing authority ***

Name of individual with contract signing authority, title, Phone number, email address

Valentina Gutierrez
405-604-7510
info@vgm.social

62. **Primary Contact: ***

Name of individual(s) to contact regarding contract performance & operations, title, Phone number, email address

Valentina Gutierrez
405-604-7510
info@vgm.social

63. **Finance Contact: ***

Name of individual(s) responsible for finance and accounting, title, Phone number, email address

Valentina Gutierrez
405-604-7510
info@vgm.social

Budget Proposal for One Episode of *Blend Ability*

Total Project Budget (per episode): \$33,334

Amount Requested from the Council (75%): \$25,000

Match Contribution (25%): \$8,334

Expenditure Breakdown

- **Pre-Production (planning, research, coordination): \$4,500**
- **Production (filming days, crew support, equipment, travel within Oklahoma): \$14,000**
- **Post-Production (editing, sound design, original score, color grading, graphics): \$11,000**
- **Marketing & Distribution (film festival submissions, accessibility captions, outreach materials): \$3,834**

Total Expenditures: \$33,334

Match Contribution

The required 25% match (\$8,334) will be met through:

- **Donated professional services** from Valentina Gutierrez (Director/Producer/Cinematographer) – \$5,000 in unpaid hours.
- **Discounted equipment use** provided by VGM Visual Storytelling – \$2,000.
- **Community partner/volunteer support** (coordination, outreach, subject participation time) – \$1,334.

Total Match Contributions: \$8,334

Budget Narrative

The council's funding of \$25,000 will support the majority of production costs, including pre-production planning, filming, and post-production editing. The required match of \$8,334 will be covered through a combination of donated professional time, discounted equipment, and community contributions.

This ensures that the total project budget of \$33,334 is fully supported, with the council providing 75% and VGM Visual Storytelling and partners contributing 25%. The combined investment demonstrates both sustainability and community commitment, while ensuring the finished product reaches the highest standards of quality and impact.

Outreach Coordinator

The Zarrow Institute on Transition and Self-Determination at the University of Oklahoma

Fiscal Year FY27 Funding Request

Project/Activity: Outreach Coordinator

Organization: Zarrow Institute on Transition & Self-Determination at OU

Proposal Description: The Zarrow Institute on Transition and Self-Determination at the University of Oklahoma seeks to expand its inclusive education and advocacy efforts through the creation of a dedicated Outreach Coordinator position. Building on the success of *Sooner Works* and *SPARK360°*, which provide individualized academic and social supports to students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and autism, this project will extend inclusion beyond program participants to the entire university community. As enrollment and visibility of neurodiverse students have increased, so has the need for coordinated, university-wide training to equip faculty, staff, and employers with the tools to teach, advise, and employ students with developmental disabilities effectively.

The new Outreach Coordinator will lead a comprehensive inclusion initiative that unites and expands existing outreach efforts across OU's Norman, Health Sciences Center, and Tulsa campuses. This position will design and deliver interactive workshops on inclusive teaching, Universal Design for Learning, and workplace accommodations; coordinate campus-wide advocacy initiatives such as Inclusion Week and student-led panels; and build sustainable partnerships with employers and community organizations to increase inclusive internships, hiring practices, and mentorship opportunities. During Year 1, the project aims to conduct at least 12 educational sessions reaching more than 250 participants, develop accessible training materials, and establish or expand partnerships with a minimum of 10 employers and community organizations.

Evaluation will track participation, knowledge gains, confidence levels, and indicators of systems change such as new departmental policies or increased requests for inclusion training. This project directly aligns with the DDCO priorities in *Inclusive Education* and *Advocacy and Self-Advocacy* by embedding inclusive practices into the daily operations of the university and its community partners. By formalizing outreach under a unified strategy, the Zarrow Institute will strengthen the infrastructure supporting all neurodiverse students, enhance faculty and employer readiness, and foster a campus culture where inclusion is not an exception but a standard part of academic and professional life.

Council Goal & Objective: Inclusive Education, Representation and Public Attitudes, and Advocacy and Self-Advocacy

Targeted Audience: The initiative will serve students with intellectual and developmental disabilities and autism, along with the faculty, staff, student organizations, and employers who support them.

Funding requested for Fiscal Year FY27

Council	Match (in kind)	Total
\$101,602	\$52,743	\$154,345

6. **General Timelines:**

Funding decisions can take time for the Council to discuss. Please allow time for feedback on your proposal and possible revision of your proposal or providing more information. We want to be a partner and are happy to work with you as you complete an application. Please ask questions. If approved for funding, contract dates depend on when the proposal was received, length of review by Council committee, and contract negotiations.

For a proposal requesting funding for a full year, contracts will typically follow the state fiscal year: July 1 through June 30.

Proposals received are evaluated by a Council Committee, and if approved, a recommendation is made to the full Council for a decision. If approved by the full Council, we will make every effort for contracts to be effective as early as possible, typically by July 1. Applicants will be notified by email within 5 business days of the full Council's decision.

IMPORTANT: Do not begin work until a fully executed contract and purchase order (PO) is in hand. Per Oklahoma Statute, no funding can or will be reimbursed for any goods or service prior to the effective date of a contract.

If you have any questions, email our Planning & Grants Director, Jennifer Robinson: Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org.

Acknowledge Timelines

Part 1 - Contact Information

7. **Organization Name ***

University of Oklahoma (Zarrow Institute on Transition & Self-Determination)

8. **Organization Address ***

Mailing address please: Street number, Street name, City, State, 9-digit Zip Code

338 Cate Center Dr. Room 190. Norman, OK 73019

9. **Contact Info ***

Name, email address **and** phone number of the person completing this application.

Kendra Williams-Diehm, klwd@ou.edu, 405-325-8951

10. **Website**

Organization's Website

http://zarrowinstitute.ou.edu

Our State Plan Goals

To qualify for funding, projects must meet the goals in the 5-Year Council State Plan. The state plan is available for review <https://oklahoma.gov/ddco/about/state-plan.html>. The new state plan for 2027-2031 is in the process of being developed.

11. **State Plan Goal** *

As of August 2025, the Council is in the process of reviewing input from publicly held listening sessions and information about current services and systems in Oklahoma. Goals have not been established for our next 5 Year State Plan (2027-2031), however proposals submitted should fall within one of our themes we have identified.

- Access to Services
- Inclusive Education
- Caregiver Support
- Representation and Public Attitudes
- Advocacy and Self-Advocacy

This initiative directly supports the Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities State Plan goals related to (1) Inclusive Education, (2) Representation and Public Attitudes, and (3) Advocacy and Self-Advocacy. Through the systematic delivery of faculty and staff training, inclusive outreach initiatives, and collaborative partnership development, this project advances the equitable participation of students with developmental disabilities within the University of Oklahoma community. By embedding disability inclusion into the university's educational, social, and professional environments, this effort not only strengthens institutional capacity for inclusive education but also contributes to positive shifts in public perception. Ultimately, this project promotes disability as an integral dimension of the OU 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 purpose of this policy is to ensure a fair and impartial procurement process. The questions that follow are designed to help the state determine if such a conflict exists.

12. **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

13. **Identify names and relationships**

If you answered yes to "**Any relationships to the organization?**" please explain in detail. Identify names and relationships, as necessary.

Jenifer Randle, Executive Director of the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma (DDCO), is currently enrolled as a doctoral student in the Special Education program at the University of Oklahoma. Although Ms. Randle receives financial support for her doctoral studies through a federal grant from the Office of Special Education Programs, this support is unrelated to the activities or outcomes of this proposal. Additionally, Dr. Kendra Williams-Diehm has previously served on state-level committees that included representatives from the DDCO, including Ms. Randle.

14. **Proposal.** *

Provide a written overview of your proposal (up to 4000 characters). A good overview should cover the key components of your proposal. This includes:

- **Introduction:** A brief summary of your project's purpose.
- **Problem Statement:** The issue your project aims to address.
- **Proposed Solution:** A clear description of your methodology and how your project will solve the problem.
- **Expected Outcomes:** The anticipated results or impact of your work.
- **Evaluation:** How the work will be measured.
- **Relevance:** How your project aligns with the council's goals and funding priorities.

The Zarrow Institute on Transition & Self-Determination houses two inclusive postsecondary education (IPSE) programs. SPARK360°, est. in 2023, provides wraparound support to autistic, degree-seeking students. Sooner Works, est. in 2019, is a federally recognized Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Program for students with IDD, offering a four-year non-degree Certificate in Integrated Community Studies. Both programs have demonstrated measurable success in fostering students' academic, social, and professional growth, largely because of the intensive, individualized supports provided by OU-ZI personnel. As enrollment and visibility have grown, however, so has the need to move beyond program-specific support. The next step in advancing #inclusiveOU is to infuse knowledge of developmental disability and training on effective strategies for supporting neurodiverse students across the entire university community.

Problem: Across the OU community, faculty, staff, and employers increasingly want to be inclusive of all students, but too often lack the practical tools, training, and confidence to translate good intentions into meaningful action. This uncertainty limits the full participation of SwIDD in coursework, campus life, and employment. A common question is, "Why doesn't OU already provide this?" Historically, students with developmental disabilities have been inadequately supported or completely excluded from college settings. Outside of institutes like OU-ZI, most university personnel simply have not had the opportunity to learn how to teach, advise, or employ this population effectively. Through programs like SPARK360° and Sooner Works, students with developmental disabilities can now attend the University of Oklahoma, but the next challenge is ensuring that the entire university community is truly ready for them.

While Sooner Works and SPARK360° have each provided ad-hoc training and advocacy events, these efforts have been fragmented and limited to what program staff can manage on top of providing individualized student supports to enrolled students.

Solution: We propose hiring a new Outreach Coordinator to lead a coordinated initiative that builds awareness, delivers training, and forges partnerships to advance inclusion across the OU community. Working collaboratively with both programs, this position will unify and expand the outreach efforts of the Zarrow Institute. The outreach coordinator will: 1) design and facilitate interactive workshops for faculty, staff, and employers focused on inclusive teaching, workplace supports, and Universal Design for Learning; 2) coordinate advocacy initiatives such as Inclusion Week events, student-led panels, and community presentations that elevate the voices of SwDD; 3) build and sustain partnerships with campus departments, employers, and community organizations to increase inclusive internships, hiring practices, and mentorship opportunities.

During Year 1, the project will deliver at least twelve educational sessions reaching more than 250 campus and community participants in various formats (e.g., online vs. in-person), and on each OU campus (Norman, HSC, and Tulsa); establish or expand partnerships with at least ten employers and community organizations; support a minimum of three student-led advocacy or awareness events; and develop accessible training resources.

Evaluation: Project outcomes will be measured through (a) attendance tracking, (b) quantitative data from surveys assessing changes in knowledge and confidence, (c) quantitative data including satisfaction survey scores, ratings on perceived needs, and frequency measures, and (d) qualitative feedback from participants. The team will also document tangible indicators of systems change such revised departmental policies, or increased requests for inclusive training.

Relevance: This project directly aligns with the DDCO goals in Inclusive Education and Advocacy and Self-Advocacy.

15. Have you completed a needs assessment? * Yes No**16. Needs assessment:**

If you have completed a needs assessment, please provide a summary below. Your response should include:

- A brief description of the methodology used (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups).
- The key findings that support the need for your proposed project.
- The population included in your assessment.
- An explanation of how this assessment directly informs your proposal.

Both SPARK360° and Sooner Works have independently identified the need for a coordinated, campus-wide approach to disability inclusion. Surveys of students, families, and faculty; feedback from employers; and ongoing collaboration with campus partners consistently point to the same issue: a lack of structured education and outreach related to disability inclusion that is accessible to a wide audience. While each program has developed strong internal supports, there is limited infrastructure to educate the broader university community. A shared Outreach Coordinator will address this gap by creating unified messaging, delivering consistent training, and connecting both programs' outreach activities. This collaboration reflects the next logical step in advancing inclusive higher education under the Zarrow Institute's mission.

17. Who will do the work? *

Please list all people and organizations that will be working on the project, and describe their experience and qualifications to provide the proposed goods and services.

The project will be housed within the Zarrow Institute on Transition and Self-Determination at the University of Oklahoma. Dr. Kendra Williams-Diehm, Executive Director of the Zarrow Institute, will provide administrative oversight and ensure the project aligns with the Institute's strategic goals. Dr. Angela Barbour, Director of SPARK360° and Dr. Anna Barritt, Director of Sooner Works, will serve as co-leads, providing direction and coordination for their respective programs. The Outreach Coordinator will manage day-to-day implementation, including developing and facilitating trainings, coordinating campus and community events, and maintaining partnerships. Graduate assistants, peer mentors, and staff from both programs will assist with logistics, communications, and evaluation. This structure ensures institute-level accountability while promoting equal collaboration between the two programs.

18. Targeted population:

*

Tell us more about who you are targeting to improve outcomes for? Describe the age, region, familial status, learning or support needs, and type of disability.

The initiative will serve students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, students with autism, and the campus and community members who interact with them. Primary audiences include faculty, staff, student organizations, and employers associated with the OU community. By engaging these groups, the project aims to strengthen the broader ecosystem that supports inclusive postsecondary education and transition to employment. We plan to expand this effort into Norman, OKC, Tulsa and the state during Year 2 of the project.

19. Impact:

*

Please describe the anticipated impact of your proposal by addressing the following three components:

- Goals for the targeted population?
 - What are the specific, measurable goals you hope to achieve for the individuals directly served by this project?
- Broader implications for people with developmental disabilities:
 - Beyond the direct participants, how will this project create a broader, positive impact for the population of people with developmental disabilities as a whole?
- Measurable outcomes:
 - What specific, quantifiable metrics will you use to track your success and demonstrate the project's effectiveness?

For students, the project will expand access to inclusive classes, campus involvement, and meaningful career experiences. For faculty and employers, it will build confidence and practical skills for supporting neurodiverse learners and workers. For the broader community, it will strengthen awareness of disability inclusion as both a social value and an economic advantage. During the first year, the Outreach Coordinator will conduct trainings and events expected to engage several hundred participants across the university and surrounding community, with continued growth in future years as materials and partnerships expand. The project will also facilitate new collaborations between OU departments, local employers, and community organizations to create more inclusive learning and employment opportunities. Over time, the initiative aims to influence everyday practices and policies so that inclusion becomes a natural part of the university's culture, reaching well beyond individual programs or participants.

20. Duplication or expansion:

*

Does this proposal duplicate or expand upon any existing work in Oklahoma or elsewhere? The Council cannot supplant funding to continue existing work unless the proposal is to expand on the work and enhances what is being done.

If your proposal duplicates or expands upon existing work, please describe the existing work and explain what makes your project unique and innovative. Be specific about how this approach and expected outcomes differ from and add value to what is already being done.

This proposal expands upon—but does not duplicate—the existing efforts of SPARK360° and Sooner Works. Both programs have engaged in outreach as capacity allows, but these activities have been limited and disconnected. The new Outreach Coordinator will formalize and expand this work into a cohesive, strategic effort that benefits both programs equally and supports the wider mission of the Zarrow Institute: to promote successful transition outcomes by implementing innovative research, putting findings into practice, and disseminating knowledge.

21. Best Practices:

*

Will your proposed project use current evidence-based best practices in the field of developmental disabilities? Identify the specific practices you will use, explain how you will incorporate them into your project, and cite your sources. Citations should include a mix of professional literature, research studies, and respected organizations or programs.

The project will follow established frameworks and evidence-based practices, including Think College Standards for inclusive postsecondary education, College Autism Network's Autism-Inclusive Campus standards, Universal Design for Learning principles for accessibility and instructional flexibility, and self-advocacy and peer-leadership models that promote autonomy and engagement. These approaches will guide the development of workshops and resources that are practical, adaptable, and responsive to diverse audiences.

22. **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.

How will your proposed project lead to **lasting systems change** for people with developmental disabilities? Please provide a detailed explanation of how your project's outcomes will shift thinking, improve practices, or empower individuals and families within the state's service system.

This project seeks to create lasting systems change by embedding inclusive education and advocacy into the daily operations of the university and its community partners. The Outreach Coordinator will integrate training into departmental meetings, campus orientations, and employer networks, ensuring that inclusion becomes part of institutional practice rather than an isolated initiative. By combining SPARK360° and Sooner Works under one outreach strategy, the project will strengthen the infrastructure that supports all neurodiverse students and position the Zarrow Institute as a statewide leader in advancing inclusive higher education and employment.

23. **Where implemented:**

*

Will the proposed project be implemented or offered statewide? If no, please define the specific counties and cities you will serve and provide the rationale for their selection.

The project will be implemented primarily on the University of Oklahoma – Norman campus and in surrounding Norman and central Oklahoma communities, including Oklahoma City and nearby municipalities where students enrolled in both SPARK360° and Sooner Works live, study, and work. These sites were selected for their high potential for community partnerships and visibility. Training materials and outreach frameworks will be developed with scalability in mind so that other institutions across Oklahoma can adapt and replicate them.

Performance Measures

The Council is required to submit performance reports to evaluate the effectiveness of all Council activities to our Federal partners. We require all contracted vendors to submit performance measure data prior to final payment. As a required component of your application, please provide **projected data** for the following performance measures. All contractors must collect **baseline data** to evaluate the project's outcomes. If you have questions about these projected and baseline numbers, please reach out to us.

Note: Not all measures may be applicable to your proposal. If a measure does not apply, please enter zero.

- **IA** = Individual and family **A**dvocacy
- **SC** = System **C**hange

24. **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.

45

The value must be a number

25. **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

26. **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

27. **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

28. **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

29. **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

30. **IA 2.2.2**

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

The value must be a number

31. **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

32. **IA 3.1**

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

The value must be a number

33. **IA 3.2**

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

The value must be a number

34. **SC 1.1.1**

The number of policy and or procedures created or changed.

The value must be a number

35. **SC 1.2.1**

The number of statutes and or regulations created or changed.

The value must be a number

36. **SC 1.3.1**

The number of promising practices created.

The value must be a number

37. **SC 1.3.2**

The number of promising practices supported through Council activities.

The value must be a number

38. **SC 1.3.3**

The number of best practices created.

The value must be a number

39. **SC 1.4.1**

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

The value must be a number

40. **SC 1.5.1**

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

The value must be a number

41. **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

42. **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

43. **SC 2.1.2**

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

The value must be a number

44. **SC 2.1.3**

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

The value must be a number

45. **SC 2.1.4**

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

The value must be a number

46. **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

47. **FINANCIAL INFORMATION *****Proposal Budget:**

- Include a detailed revenue and expenditure budget, detailing the total costs and revenues of the proposal.
- Identify the amount requested from the Council within the context of the budget.
- **The Council funding cannot exceed 75% of your budget.** For example, if your budget is \$10,000, our funding can be up to \$7,500. Your 25% match would be a minimum of \$2,500. **Start with your budget** and calculate the 75/25 split. *If you believe you are located in/providing services in a Poverty County, please note that, or contact us. For Poverty Counties the split is 90/10.
- Identify the amount of the required 25% funding match for your project's total budget. You also need to explain where this matching funding will come from. **Sources for the match funding** can include non-federal funding, monies from fundraisers or donations/sponsorships, monies from your organization for salary/fringe, donated services or items, discounted services or items, and volunteer time. (*paid employees of a non-profit organization cannot volunteer to provide the same type of services to their non-profit organization that they are employed to provide) If you need help calculating the value of volunteer time, you can contact Jennifer. Match funding helps the Council understand all partners who are helping with the project.
- 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 your budget** to Jennifer.Robinson@okdhs.org and include the Project Name in the subject line.

48. STATEMENT OF WORK (SoW): *

Provide a proposed statement of work for the contractual requirements. This should include a detailed description of the work to be done, project milestones, deliverables to the Council, and other details important to the work that you will provide in exchange for Council funding. [ProjectManager.com](https://www.projectmanager.com) has some good information for you to develop your statement of work: <https://www.projectmanager.com/blog/statement-work-definition-examples>.

STATEMENT OF WORK

#inclusiveOU: Expanding Awareness and Inclusion in the OU Community to Increase Support for Students with Developmental Disabilities.

1.0 Introduction/Background:

Faculty, staff, and employers across the university and community increasingly want to be inclusive of students with developmental disabilities, but too often lack the practical tools, training, and confidence to translate that intention into action. This uncertainty limits the full participation of students with disabilities in coursework, campus life, and employment. While Sooner Works and SPARK360° have each provided ad-hoc training and advocacy events, these efforts have been fragmented.

The purpose of this project is to expand awareness, knowledge, and support for students with developmental disabilities across the greater University of Oklahoma (OU) campus and surrounding community. This project seeks to build shared understanding through coordinated education, outreach, and partnership development designed to promote true inclusion across all areas of campus and community life.

This statement of work is the result of a proposal submitted by the Zarrow Institute on Transition & Self-Determination at the University of Oklahoma to the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma.

2.0 Scope of Work:

During Year 1, the project will deliver at least twelve educational sessions reaching more than 250 campus and community participants in various formats (e.g., online vs. in-person), and on each OU campus (Norman, Health Science Center, and Tulsa); establish or expand partnerships with at least ten employers and community organizations; support a minimum of three student-led advocacy or awareness events; and develop accessible training resources that remain available after the grant period ends. Over time, these efforts will deepen understanding of disability inclusion, expand opportunities for students and alumni, and contribute to sustainable systems of change across both higher education and employment sectors.

3.0 Description of Tasks

- I. Establish Project and hire Outreach Coordinator to lead a unified, campus-wide effort to enhance understanding and inclusion of students with developmental disabilities (SwDD) across the University of Oklahoma.
- II. Equip OU faculty and staff with practical strategies for supporting SwDD in academic and workplace environments (n=12+)
- III. Build sustainable partnerships among Sooner Works, SPARK360°, academic units, and campus-based student organizations. (n=10+)
- IV. Increase student led advocacy through student outreach (n=3+)
- V. Evaluate increased awareness and application of universal design and inclusive practices across OU–Norman, OU–HSC, and OU–Tulsa.
- VI. Create an enduring framework for inclusion education that extends beyond the project year for adaption into the greater community and state.

4.0 Deliverables:

See Table in Budget Narrative

49. Sustainability Plan: *

It is the Council's hope that funded projects will have a lasting impact on the community and achieve financial sustainability after the Council's funding is complete. The Council's funding is intended as a catalyst to help new work become self-sustaining. To assure the Council of this long-term vision, all applicants must submit a detailed Financial Sustainability Plan. Financial sustainability is defined as maintaining services to the community through a diversified funding model. **Important Note:** *The Council can approve funding for an activity for a maximum of five (5) years. However, our funding is not guaranteed, so applications for Council funding must be submitted annually.* The Council expects all funded work to be self-sustaining by the end of the contract period. Your Financial Sustainability Plan should include, but is not limited to, the following components for each year of your proposed project:

- Annual Funding Goals: Clear, measurable funding targets for each year of the project.
- Projected Budgets: A multi-year budget forecast that demonstrates decreasing reliance on Council funding.
- Identified Partners: A list of specific organizations or entities with whom you will partner, along with a description of their role in your sustainability plan. Please also include any documented commitment of resources they are able to provide.
- Timeline: A clear timeline for all sustainability activities (e.g., "Year 2: Apply for three new grants," "Year 3: Implement a pilot fee-for-service program").

We acknowledge that the DDCO provides funding for a maximum period of five years. At this time, we anticipate requesting support for two years. Year 1 will focus primarily on outreach within the University of Oklahoma community, including the Norman, Health Sciences Center, and Tulsa campuses. Year 2 will expand these efforts to emphasize outreach and engagement with the broader Oklahoma community and statewide partners.

Over the next two years, we anticipate changes to the funding structures of both Sooner Works and SPARK360° at the University of Oklahoma. The Zarrow Institute continues to actively pursue external funding opportunities through grant writing and donor engagement to enhance program sustainability. As this is the first year of funding requested from the DDCO, detailed budgets are available upon request. We are confident that the anticipated funding adjustments and projected enrollment growth by FY28 (July 1, 2027–June 30, 2028) will strengthen long-term sustainability. The Zarrow Institute is engaged in ongoing discussions with university leadership to secure increased institutional support while maintaining our commitment not to exceed available resources or raise costs for participants.

The Sooner Works program is estimated to received approximately \$264,000 for FY26 (July, 1 2025 – June 30, 2026). This income results from program fees of \$5,500/semester for 25 students (24 * \$5,500 * 2 semesters). The Program also received a \$100,000 donor donation to come academic support. (Total: \$364,000)

Basic FY 26 Budget

Salary & Fringe

- Director
- Student Support Coordinator
- Employment Coordinator
- Academic Coordinator \$328,050

Travel

- PD for Staff
- Transition Fairs
- Mileage \$10,000

Supplies & Materials

- Rotating computer purchase
- Paper
- Vendor swag \$5,000

Direct Student Support

- Student Social Events
- Shopping/cooking
- Bus transportation
- Doctoral stipends for overtime \$10,000

\$353,050

The SPARK360° program is estimated to received approximately \$90,000 for FY26 (July, 1 2025 – June 30, 2026). This income results from program fees of \$2,500/semester for 18 students (18 * \$2,500 * 2 semesters).

Basic FY 26 Budget

Salary & Fringe

- Director \$81,000
- Travel
- PD for Staff
- Transition Fairs
- Mileage \$2,500
- Supplies & Materials
- Rotating computer purchase
- Paper
- Vendor swag \$2,000
- Direct Student Support
- Student Social Events
- Doctoral stipends for overtime \$3,000
- \$88,500

50. Outreach and Awareness Plan of the Work: *

Too often people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, and others are not aware of resources available in Oklahoma. Please provide a marketing and outreach plan to bring awareness about the work being proposed. Your plan should address the following:

- **Target Audience:** Clearly identify the specific groups within the intellectual and developmental disability community you aim to reach (e.g., specific age ranges, individuals in rural vs. urban areas, diverse cultural communities).
- **Marketing Channels:** Describe the specific marketing channels you will use (e.g., social media, community events, partnerships, print materials) and how you will use them effectively to reach your target audiences.
- **Partnerships:** Explain how you will collaborate with other organizations, advocacy groups, or community leaders to expand the reach of your message.
- **Accessibility and Language:** Detail your strategy for ensuring your outreach is accessible and inclusive. Please discuss your plan for language translations, including which languages you will prioritize and how you will ensure cultural appropriateness.
- **Measurement:** Describe how you will measure the success and impact of your marketing and outreach efforts.

During Year 1, outreach and awareness efforts will focus on the University of Oklahoma–Norman campus and the surrounding central Oklahoma community, including Norman and the Oklahoma City metro area. The goal is to strengthen understanding of developmental disability and promote inclusive practices across the OU community. Currently, approximately forty-five OU students (SW has 24 this semester—couldnt remmeber how many Spark has right now??) with developmental disabilities participate in SPARK360° and Sooner Works. However, this number represents only a portion of the students on campus who either have a developmental disability or would benefit from an inclusive and informed learning environment. Many students are undiagnosed or not formally connected to a support program, yet their success depends on the awareness and preparedness of the university personnel who teach, employ, and engage with them every day. The Outreach Coordinator will lead a coordinated strategy that combines social media, digital and print materials, university newsletters, and campus events to raise awareness and promote inclusion. Social media will feature student stories and highlight inclusive teaching and employment practices, while in-person events and presentations will foster dialogue and collaboration. The ZI will partner with OU departments, student organizations, and local groups such as the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services and the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma to share resources, co-host events, and expand the reach of messaging through trusted networks.

To ensure materials are both engaging and accessible, the Outreach Coordinator will collaborate with OU Marketing and Communications and the Accessibility and Disability Resource Center. All materials will follow Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles and include plain-language content, captioned and audio-described videos, alternative formats, and translations into Spanish and other languages identified through community partnerships.

Effectiveness will be measured through participation data, social media analytics, and post-event surveys assessing growth in awareness and confidence among participants. These efforts will directly enhance the experiences of all current and future students enrolled in Sooner Works and SPARK360°, while also improving outcomes for the broader population of students with developmental disabilities at OU. As campus and community members gain knowledge and confidence, they will carry those inclusive practices forward, thus creating a lasting ripple effect that reaches classrooms, workplaces, and communities across Oklahoma.

51. Logic Model:

To help the Council and your organization effectively evaluate the program's success, a logic model is a required component for all contracts in excess of \$5,000. A logic model is a simple visual tool that illustrates the connection between your project's resources (inputs), what you plan to do (activities), the immediate results of your work (outputs), and the changes you hope to achieve (outcomes). For a helpful guide to developing a clear and effective logic model, please refer to this resource from The Compass: <https://thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guide/how-develop-logic-model-0>

Emailed to Jennifer Robinson

52. Registered Vendor? *

Are you a registered vendor with the State of Oklahoma? All contractors must be registered in the State Supplier Portal. You can do this online: <https://oklahoma.gov/omes/divisions/central-purchasing/suppliers-and-payees/supplier-portal.html>

Yes

No

53. IRS 501(c)3? *

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

Yes

No

54. Government entity? *

Is the proposed vendor a Government entity:

Yes

No

55. Provide form of government and name of entity *

NA

56. Are you a Tribal Organization? *

Is the proposed vendor a tribal nation:

Yes

No

59. **Registered partnership? ***

Is the proposed vendor a registered partnership?

Yes

No

60. **Registered corporation? ***

Is the proposed vendor a registered corporation?

Yes

No

61. **ID Number ***

Social Security Number, FEI Number, or OMES Supplier ID

EIN 73-1377584; UEI: EVTSTTLCEWS5

Contact information

62. **Signing authority ***

Name of individual with contract signing authority, title, Phone number, email address

Gayle Parker, CRA
Senior Award Administrator
Office of Research Services | University of Oklahoma
201 Stephenson Pkwy., 5 PP, Ste. 3100 | Norman, OK 73019
405-325-6061 (no voice mail) | 405-325-4757 (leave message)
Email: gparker@ou.edu

63. **Primary Contact: ***

Name of individual(s) to contact regarding contract performance & operations, title, Phone number, email address

Ellen Bannister
Award Coordinator
ellenbannister@ou.edu
405.325.4450

AND

Kendra Williams-Diehm
klwd@ou.edu
405-325-8951

64. Finance Contact: *

Name of individual(s) responsible for finance and accounting, title, Phone number, email address

Donald Smith
Research Financial Services
Donald.E.Smith-1@ou.edu
405.3254979, Director

65. Legal Notices: *

Name of individual(s) to send legal notices, title, Phone number, email address

Shaojuan (Amy) Jiang
shaojuan.jiang-1@ou.edu
University Counsel | Office of Legal Counsel
The University of Oklahoma
660 Parrington Oval, Evans Hall, Suite 213 | Norman, Oklahoma 73019
405-325-4124 (main)
405-325-1869 (direct)

#inclusiveOU: Expanding Awareness and Knowledge in the OU Community to Increase Support for Students with Developmental Disabilities.

The Zarrow Institute on Transition & Self-Determination requests a total of \$101,602 for the 12-month period from July 1, 2026, until June 30, 2027. The total cost of the project is \$154,345 which includes 34% matching funds of \$52,743.

The current funding model for the SPARK360° and Sooner Works program come from a semesterly fee charged to student bursar accounts. Although students in Sooner Works enroll in coursework and pay tuition specific to EDSW (Education-Sooner Works program), the university does not provide a return of tuition dollars to the program. In addition, the entirety of the SPARK360° program is supported by student fees for the additional services. We will provide the full SPARK360° and Sooner Works annual budget if requested. The programs currently function at a break-even point. Funds generated from student fees are reinvested into the program, with the vast majority (85%) cover salaries for program staff: (1) program Directors (Barbour and Barritt), (2) student support specialist (Murray), and (3) employment specialist (Kendall). The remaining 15% of the budget covers additional costs such as (1) program materials, (2) professional development, and (3) student support – i.e. cooking classes, social events, parties, etc.

Cost Match: 52,743 (34%)

Donated Time/Services

Principal Investigator (PI). Kendra Williams-Diehm, Ph.D., BCBA, professor, will be responsible for overall project direction and coordination, assuring successful project completion, submission of progress reports, and assisting with training. Dr. Williams-Diehm is a national expert in secondary special education and transition services, having been awarded a distinguished graduate from Texas A&M University in 2019. She is a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) and has over two decades of experience supporting and mentoring graduate students in the University of Oklahoma's transition program. Dr. Williams-Diehm will donate 10% of her time to this project.

- Year 1: .10 FTE = \$14,477. (1.2 months/year ~ 192 hours)

Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI). Angela Barbour, PhD, SPARK360° directors, will be responsible for implementation with the SPARK360° program. She will participate in all trainings and outreach. Dr. Barbour is a Certified Autism specialist and has worked in higher education with individuals with disabilities for over six years. She previously served as the Associate Director of the Accessibility and Disability Resource Center, also at the University of Oklahoma.. Dr. Barbour will donate 15% of her time to this project.

- Year 1: .15 FTE = \$9,323 (1.8 months/year ~288 hours)

Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI). Anna Barritt, PhD, Sooner Works Director, will be responsible for implementation with the Sooner Works program. She will participate in all trainings and outreach. Dr. Anna Barritt directs Sooner Works at the University of Oklahoma, guiding program development, statewide partnerships, and systems-change initiatives that advance inclusive postsecondary education. With a Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Writing Studies, her work examines how communication, policy, and institutional structures shape inclusion for people with disabilities. Dr. Barritt's leadership centers on collaboration with families, schools, agencies, and employers

#inclusiveOU: Expanding Awareness and Knowledge in the OU Community to Increase Support for Students with Developmental Disabilities.

to strengthen equitable access and community integration across Oklahoma. Dr. Britt will donate 15% of her time to this project.

- Year 1: .15 FTE (w fringe) = \$11,473 (1.8 months/year ~288 hours)

Fringe:

Year 1: \$10,970

Materials:

The Zarrow Institute on Transition & Self-Determination will be providing the following materials and supplies to the project:

- \$2,500: Computer purchase for the Outreach Coordinator, per university computer guidelines (<https://itsupport.ou.edu/TDClient/30/Unified/KB/ArticleDet?ID=3103>)
- \$1,500: Printing Services
- \$2,500: Food for outreach activities. We have contacted local vendors to help offset the costs associated with purchasing lunch, snacks, etc for training and outreach. Due to the majority of trainings held on the OU Campus, OU Food Services must be used.

Total Request of: \$101,602

Project Evaluator (Co-PI). Dr. Malarie Deardorff, Ph.D., assistant research professor will be responsible for supporting all data collection and evaluation procedures. Dr. Deardorff has experience with project evaluation for Office of Special Education and IES projects. Due to her funding structure (100% grant funding), Dr. Deardorff must charge time and effort to this project.

- Year 1: .10 FTE (w fringe) = \$13,276. (1.2 months/year ~ 192 hours)

Outreach Coordinator: We will hire an outreach coordinator to be fully supported on this project at the rate of \$54,000 with fringe. This position will require a bachelor's degree (masters preferred) and a minimum of 5-years' experience working in the field of disability.

- Year 1: 1.0 FTE (w fringe) = \$72,900

The University of Oklahoma, recognizing its obligation to guarantee equal opportunity to all persons in all segments of University life, reaffirms its commitment to the continuation and expansion of positive programs which reinforce and strengthen its fair and equal employment policies. The University will continue its policy of fair and equal employment practices for all employees and job applicants without insidious discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, genetic information, gender identity/expression (consistent with applicable law), age (40 or older), religion, disability, political beliefs, or status as a veteran. The University will maintain a critical and continuing evaluation of its employment policies, programs, and practices. Each budget unit bears a responsibility for constructive implementation of this Plan, and whenever possible, to the overall progress toward employment opportunity and participation in all University programs and activities. Our commitment to the concept of fair and equal treatment and opportunities requires sincere and cooperative efforts throughout all levels of our employment structure. We will continue to strive to reach the goals of fair and equal employment opportunities for all.

#inclusiveOU: Expanding Awareness and Knowledge in the OU Community to Increase Support for Students with Developmental Disabilities.

Fringe Benefits:

At the University of Oklahoma (OU), the current fringe benefits rates as negotiated with DHHS, are: 35% for senior personnel, 19% for postdoctoral associates, 9.50% for graduate research assistants and 0.20% for undergraduates. These benefits may include FICA, workmen's compensation, unemployment compensation, retirement, and life, dental, and health insurance. The fringe benefits have been computed based on the negotiated University rates and assigned positions of project personnel. <https://ou.edu/research-norman/research-services/rates-and-reports>. The OU fiscal year is July 1 to June 30. Project year may vary from fiscal year and normally consists of increments of 12 months from project start.

Travel:

\$1,400 is requested to support travel on this project to travel to Tulsa twice to provide appropriate training and outreach to the OU-Tulsa Campus. Travel is NOT budgeted for the OU-HSC campus in OKC. Rooms will be shared at 2 people/room and 2 rooms/trip. If additional, money is needed for travel, the Zarrow Institute will provide.

Millage: Estimated at \$200/trip

Toll: Estimated at \$30/trip

Hotel: Estimated at \$175/room

+ necessary per diem

Cost per trip to Tulsa: \$700

Materials & Supplies:

The following is requested on the budget from the DDCO.

- A total of \$2,500 is requested for materials, copies, notebooks, etc for those attending all training.
- A total of \$1,500 is requested to cover partial computer costs for the Outreach Coordinator position.

Other:

- A total of \$2,500 is requested to cover food at respective training and outreach events.

Indirect Costs: \$7,526

Sponsor limits IDC to 8%.

#inclusiveOU: Expanding Awareness and Knowledge in the OU Community to Increase Support for Students with Developmental Disabilities.

Summary Table:

	Requested Funds	Matching Funds
PI Williams-Diehm		\$14,477
Co-PI Barbour		\$9,323
Co-PI Barritt		\$11,473
Evaluator: Deardorff	\$9,834	
Outreach Coordinator	\$54,000	
FRINGE	\$22,342	\$10,970
Travel	\$1,400	
Materials & Supplies	\$6,500	\$6,500
IDC (8%)	\$7,526	
TOTAL	\$101,602	\$52,743

STATEMENT OF WORK

#inclusiveOU: Expanding Awareness and Inclusion in the OU Community to Increase Support for Students with Developmental Disabilities.

1.0 Introduction/Background:

Faculty, staff, and employers across the university and community increasingly want to be inclusive of students with developmental disabilities, but too often lack the practical tools, training, and confidence to translate that intention into action. This uncertainty limits the full participation of students with disabilities in coursework, campus life, and employment. While Sooner Works and SPARK360° have each provided ad-hoc training and advocacy events, these efforts have been fragmented.

The purpose of this project is to expand awareness, knowledge, and support for students with developmental disabilities across the greater University of Oklahoma (OU) campus and surrounding community. This project seeks to build shared understanding through coordinated education, outreach, and partnership development designed to promote true inclusion across all areas of campus and community life.

This statement of work is the result of a proposal submitted by the Zarrow Institute on Transition & Self-Determination at the University of Oklahoma to the Developmental Disabilities Council of Oklahoma.

2.0 Scope of Work:

During Year 1, the project will deliver at least twelve educational sessions reaching more than 250 campus and community participants in various formats (e.g., online vs. in-person), and on each OU campus (Norman, Health Science Center, and Tulsa); establish or expand partnerships with at least ten employers and community organizations; support a minimum of three student-led advocacy or awareness events; and develop accessible training resources that remain available after the grant period ends. Over time, these efforts will deepen understanding of disability inclusion, expand opportunities for students and alumni, and contribute to sustainable systems of change across both higher education and employment sectors.

3.0 Description of Tasks

- I. Establish Project and hire Outreach Coordinator to lead a unified, campus-wide effort to enhance understanding and inclusion of students with developmental disabilities (SwDD) across the University of Oklahoma.
- II. Equip OU faculty and staff with practical strategies for supporting SwDD in academic and workplace environments (n=12+)
- III. Build sustainable partnerships among Sooner Works, SPARK360°, academic units, and campus-based student organizations. (n=10+)
- IV. Increase student led advocacy through student outreach (n=3+)

PROPOSAL: Expanding Awareness and Advocacy in the OU Community

- V. Evaluate increased awareness and application of universal design and inclusive practices across OU–Norman, OU–HSC, and OU–Tulsa.
- VI. Create an enduring framework for inclusion education that extends beyond the project year for adaption into the greater community and state.

4.0 Deliverables:

	Person	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Goal 1: Establish Project and hire Outreach Coordinator													
1.1 Inform university partners of funded project	KWD												
1.2 Check in the DDCO quarterly (or as agreed upon)	KWD OC	X		X			X			X			X
1.3 Create project website and update	OC	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
1.4 Obtain IRB approval project	MD		X	X									
1.5 Prepare Year 2 DDCO proposal	KWD OC				X								
Goal 2: Equip OU faculty and staff with practical strategies for supporting SwDD in academic and workplace environments													
2.1 Develop Training for OU Faculty and Staff	OC	X	X										
2.2 Put training in Canvas Course Shell	OC			X									
2.3 Deliver a minimum of 12 trainings across the OU community (Norman, HSC, and Tulsa)	OC AB AB				2	2	1	2	2	2	1	X	X
2.4 Establish permanent OU Inclusion Hub website/resources	OC								X	X	X	X	X
GOAL 3: Build sustainable partnerships among on-campus internship sites, academic units, and campus-based student organizations. (n=10+)													
3.1 Develop outreach materials for partnerships	OC KWD	X	X	X	X								
3.2 Establish a minimum of 4 new partnership among on-campus internship sites	OC			1		2		3		4		X	
3.3 Establish a minimum of 3 academic unit partnerships across campus	OC				1			2			3		X
3.4 Establish a minimum of 3 student organization partnerships across campus.	OC			1			2			3			X
GOAL 4: Increase student led advocacy (n=3+)													
4.1 Develop advocacy materials for partnerships	KWD OC		X	X	X								
4.2 Pilot advocacy materials for SPARK360°	AB					X	X						
4.3 Pilot advocacy materials for Sooner Works	AB						X	X					
4.4 Provide strategic outreach and education for advocacy (n=3+)	OC								1		2		3
Goal 5: Evaluate increased awareness and application of universal design and inclusive practices across OU–Norman, OU–HSC, and OU–Tulsa.													
5.1 Develop evaluation materials (surveys, interviews, etc)	MD	X	X	X									
5.1 Implement Evaluation materials at respective trainings and partnerships	MD			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
5.2 Analyze findings	MD KWD										X	X	X
5.3 Disseminate findings to DDCO and greater community	MD KWD												

KWD= PI Kendra Williams Diehm; AB = Angela Barbur, SPARK360°; AB = Anna Barritt, Sooner Works, MD = Malarie Deardorff, Evaluator, OU = Outreach Coordinator

#inclusiveOU

Expanding Awareness and Inclusion in the OU Community to Increase Support for Students with Developmental Disabilities.

Goal: build shared understanding through coordinated education, outreach, and partnership development designed to promote true inclusion across all areas of OU campus and community life to better support students with Developmental Disabilities.



Outputs & Activities

12+ educational sessions through various formats

10+ partnerships with employers and community organizations

3+ Student-led advocacy and awareness events

Quality Accessible Training resources and program for OU

Attendance

Participant Knowledge and Confidence Surveys

Qualitative Interview Feedback

Quantitative Data on a Variety of Indicators

Proximal Outcomes

- Improved OU Faculty and Staff Competence
- Broader Institutional Engagement
- Expanded Employer Readiness

Distal Outcomes & Sustained Impacts

- Stronger Culture of Belonging
- Systemic and Sustainable Change
- Expanded Postsecondary and Employment Outcomes