



VT DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL

The Mission of VTDDC is to help build connections and supports that bring people with developmental disabilities and their families into the heart of Vermont communities.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) ADVOCACY IN ACTION

A. Introduction to VTDDC: The Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council is a state-wide board created under the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act [DDAct]. Fourteen of the 23 members are people with disabilities or family members who are appointed by the Governor; other members are representatives from state and nonprofit agencies.

VTDDC uses the federal definition of developmental disability:

A disability that begins before age 22 that substantially affects three or more activities of daily life such as self-care, communication, movement, learning, self-direction, independent living, and employment.

VTDDC receives federal funding to support advocacy and improve services and supports for people with developmental disabilities. With these federal dollars, VTDDC funds activities to increase the availability of individual and family-centered supports and to promote independence, self-determination and community inclusion. VTDDC also advocates for and works to increase public awareness of issues affecting people with developmental disabilities and their families.

B. Purpose & Scope of Services: *Through laws, rules and guidelines, State policymakers, including elected officials and government agency leaders, play a significant role in the lives of Vermonters living with disabilities. Self-advocates and their family members are in the best positioned to educate these decision-makers about legislation, policies and practices and to provide feedback on plans, studies, and white papers. Opportunities need to be developed that bring people with developmental disabilities and their families together with policymakers, and to support their advocacy efforts at the local, regional, and state level.*

The *purpose of Advocacy in Action Projects* is to support and engage individuals and organizations in planning and implementing advocacy activities that bring people together to educate and inform policymakers about the needs of people with developmental disabilities and their family members. Advocacy activities should support policies that are consistent with the four values set out in the federal DD Act:

To enable individuals with developmental disabilities to exercise self-determination, be independent, be productive, and be integrated and included in all facets of community life.

Projects may have a local, regional, or state-wide focus. Applicants should have the demonstrated ability to plan and carry out the proposed advocacy activities, which may include:

- Advocacy days at the legislature
- Coalition building and regional outreach
- Educating key policymakers, who may include elected representatives, decision-makers in State agencies, and/or local government officials.
- Local educational activities that raise awareness about key issues, laws, and/or policies.
- Other advocacy activities that reveal an existing problem, highlight an alternative, or demonstrate a possible solution *at a systems level* to an issue related to the needs of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

C. Funding: Funding ranges from \$2,000 to \$10,000 per project. Total funding available is \$20,000.

D. Project Time-Frame: January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015.

E. Requirements for Submission: The proposal must be completed using the *One Year Project Application Instructions and Application Form*.

The signed original application and 5 copies must be **received** no later than **5 pm** on **October 20, 2014**. An electronic version of the application also needs to be sent to vtddc@state.vt.us by that deadline.

To arrange delivery, call: 802-828-1310 or 888-317-2006 or **email** vtddc@state.vt.us

Please note that **mail service** for our temporary location in Berlin is routed through Waterbury. There will not be anyone there to receive it, and it will take extra time to reach us. The mailing address is:

VT Developmental Disabilities Council
103 South Main Street
One North, Suite 117
Waterbury, VT 05671-0206

F. Applications and Questions: People or organizations interested in submitting proposals may obtain the *One Year Application Instructions* and forms at

www.ddc.vermont.gov; or by e-mailing vtddc@state.vt.us or calling (802) 828-1310 or toll-free (888) 317-2006.

The application form uses a fill-in format. If you need an alternate format please call as soon as possible.

There will be an **informational meeting** about RFPs and the application process on **Friday, September 26, 2014** from **10:00 a.m. to 12 p.m.** in Berlin at the Central VT Chamber of Commerce, 33 Stewart Road, at the corner of Berlin Street and Paine Turnpike.

The deadline for submitting questions is **12:00 noon on Friday, October 3, 2014**. Applicants may submit questions by e-mail to Kirsten.Murphy@state.vt.us or by fax to (802) 828-1321.

G. Liability: VTDDC will not be held responsible for any costs of any proposing organization or individual(s) for work done in the preparation and production of a proposal to this RFP or for any work performed prior to the formal signing of a contract. VTDDC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP, use any and all ideas submitted in the proposal(s) selected, adopt all or any part of a bidder's proposal, and amend the RFP requirements after release.

H. Notice of Award and Public Announcement: VTDDC will notify the selected proposing organization or individual(s) in writing, and reserves the right to publicly announce its plan to award the contract.

I. Specific Award Requirements: Requirements are outlined in the *One Year Project Application Instructions and Information on Award Requirements*, including:

- Assure certain provisions required by both federal and state law, including non-discrimination and accessibility.
- Provide nonfederal matching funds equal to 25% of total project costs. Matching funds may be in cash or in-kind.
- Submit quarterly program and financial reports per the formats required by VTDDC.
- Make presentations at VTDDC meetings on request.
- Participate in consumer satisfaction surveys.
- Credit VTDDC in media and project publicity.
- Provide draft copies of publications, videotapes or other products for VTDDC approval. VTDDC will also retain royalty-free, non-exclusive and irrevocable rights of use.

J. Evaluation Criteria: VTDDC will review and evaluate the proposal as outlined in the *One Year Grant Project Application Instructions*, including:

- Capacity of applicant to carry out the project, including demonstrated knowledge and experience working with individuals with disabilities and their families.
- Consistency with VTDDC's Mission, State Plan Goals and Objectives, and values as expressed in the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act
- Overall responsiveness to the Request for Proposal
- Need for the project
- Project demonstrates an innovative approach and/or use of resources
- Involvement of and benefit to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Diversity of target population
- Coordination and collaboration with other organizations
- Measurable products and/or outcomes, and evaluation plan
- Project impact, including potential for systems change
- Cost-effective budget, with expenses related to project activities.
- Plan for project continuation or replication after VTDDC funding has ended.

Thank you.