



VT DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL

The Mission of VTDDDC 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 RESPONSE NETWORK PROJECT

A. Introduction to VTDDDC: The Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council is a state-wide board created under the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act [DDAct]. 14 of 23 members are people with disabilities or family members who are appointed by the Governor; other members are representatives from state and nonprofit agencies.

VTDDDC 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.

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

B. Purpose & Scope of Services: *Policymakers play a pivotal role through passage and implementation of laws that impact the lives of Vermonters. Self-advocates and parents are the natural voice to educate legislators and other key policymakers about current and proposed laws, policies and practice and to provide feedback on reports, studies and white papers. People with disabilities and family members need to have up-to-date information and easy to use tools to provide feedback when it is a critical time to weigh in. What is needed is a year-round, single source of information and quick response system focused on developmental disabilities.*

The purpose of this project is to provide year-round, regular (weekly) updates on policy issues of interest to self advocates and their families. The updates should also include user friendly, detailed information about how to weigh in on issues in a timely and effective manner. During the legislative session, updates should include information and analysis about issues legislators are working on related to developmental disabilities. Throughout the year, the Network should provide information about administrative projects, rulemakings, reports, white papers, and even news articles that self advocates and their families could be responding to.

The applicant for this grant should demonstrate both their capacity and their plan for the following:

- Maintain an up-to-date website that includes:
 - information about current issues, including non-partisan policy analysis
 - information about how to contact legislators, administration officials, and other decision makers
 - clear information about effective and timely ways to weigh in on issues
 - a way to sign up for email updates
- Build and expand an email list that includes self-advocates and their families that is kept informed through
 - weekly updates that include timely issues, news stories, and clear instructions about how to participate in the process
 - email updates that include analysis of upcoming issues, and what to watch for, as well as information about what happened when a decision was made.
- Develop and maintain a Rapid Response System that can link advocates with lawmakers and policymakers both by district and by topic area and includes online tools to link to policymakers, as well as ways to contact them by phone and snail mail.

C. Funding: Up to \$30,000 per year; renewable for up to three additional years conditioned on satisfactory performance; submission of extension materials; and continued availability of funds.

D. Project Time-Frame: January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013 for the initial Work Plan, with extension as described above.

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

The signed original application and 5 copies must be **received** no later than **noon** on November 5, 2012. 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 *Multi-Year Project Application Instructions* and forms at www.ddc.vermont.gov; 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 October 19, 2012 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 October 25, 2012.** Applicants may submit questions by e-mail to karen.schwartz@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 *Multi-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 *Multi-Year Project Application Instructions*, including:

- Capacity of application to carry out 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 in the federal DDAct.
- Overall responsiveness to the Request for Proposal
- Need for the project
- Project innovation
- Involvement of and benefit to people with 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 continuation at end of VTDDC funding

Thank you.