

# NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDS

## Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC)

99 Washington Ave., Suite 1230  
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NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS;\* PUBLIC OR PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS, SUCH AS UNIVERSITIES, COLLEGES, HOSPITALS; DISABILITY-SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS; COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS; CONSORTIA, GROUPS OR PARTNERSHIPS AMONG ORGANIZATIONS

### Self-Advocacy Leadership Academy

Organizations whose staff was involved in the development of this Request for Proposal are not eligible to directly apply or be included as a sub-contractor for another applicant.

\*Note: the lead applicant cannot be a for-profit organization; however, for-profit organizations may serve as subcontractors to the lead applicant.

To fund one grantee up to \$300,000 (\$100,000 per year for three years) to establish a Self-Advocacy Leadership Academy in New York State.

The evolution of the Self-Advocacy movement has been dynamic. Today, self-advocacy has expanded beyond the notion of solely advocating for one's self, to also advocating at the level of the Community and the entire System. Community Advocacy involves promoting the betterment of communities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and Systemic Advocacy involves promoting the improvement of the overall service delivery system for people with I/DD. Both of these additions to the Self-Advocacy movement continue to require ongoing and advanced skill building for self-advocates in order for them to effectively lead advocacy organizations and efforts.

In 2014, the DDPC hosted a presentation by a representative from the Autistic Self-Advocacy Network (ASAN) where they presented findings from their report entitled "The State of Self-Advocacy in 2013: Reflections, Barriers and Next Steps." Their presentation and report highlighted the increasing need for self-advocates who are well-informed about current policy initiatives and who have the skills required to take on leadership roles in their respective communities. Following ASAN's presentation, the DDPC membership held small group discussions that affirmed the need for improved Community and Systemic training of self-advocates in order to enhance advocacy efforts statewide.

The DDPC also held a summit for self-advocates in New York State in March 2015. At the summit, self-advocates and DDPC staff discussed the prospect of developing a Community and Systemic Advocacy training program for self-advocates across the state. Participants of the summit supported the idea of holding a training and identified key administrative and topical areas where there was a need for enhanced education. The key Administrative areas included Communication, Marketing, Finance and Technology. Employment was selected as the topical area with the most significant interest and therefore will be the first key subject area to be considered at the Self-Advocacy Leadership Academy (see Approach section for more information about administrative and topical areas).

The ASAN report and presentation, feedback from our Council membership and input from self-advocates at the summit all made clear that there is a need and desire for an educational and training

program for self-advocates across New York State to build and develop sophisticated leadership skills. The aim of this DDPC initiative is to fund the establishment of a Self-Advocacy Leadership Academy to provide the opportunity for self-advocates to participate in a training program that will enhance their leadership capacity.

### Approach:

The DDPC will select one grantee to develop a Self-Advocacy Leadership Academy. The grantee will design an educational program to train self-advocates to advocate at the community and systemic level. The DDPC is looking for an applicant (or a collaborative network) with experience in the development and delivery of leadership training and an understanding of the administrative and topical areas that support and advance advocacy and leadership for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD). Applicants will have established connections to public officials at the local, state and federal levels to assist in the program and facilitate the placement of individuals in advocacy positions during and after participation in the Leadership Academy.

The project will develop a training framework and leadership infrastructure to promote people with I/DD in advocacy and leadership. The training infrastructure will be informed by nationally recognized leadership and self-advocacy training models. Research shows that successful advocacy training models like Partners in Policymaking and the Kentucky Youth Advocacy Project (KYAP) tend to embed interactive learning methods into the training program.<sup>1</sup> For example, periodic face-to-face training modules, independent and supported study and project work, as well as action learning<sup>2</sup> and team-based exercises allow participants to both learn and actively practice newly acquired skills.<sup>3</sup> The program will include (but not be limited to) trainings focused on building individual skills in the following administrative areas:

- Communication Skills: Effective public speaking, drafting communication messages and materials, facilitating a successful meeting, working with the media and engaging in civic participation (e.g. letter writing, contacting and visiting policymakers, volunteering, political actions).

- Marketing Skills: Identifying and expanding audiences, targeting groups and networks beyond well-established contacts, conducting outreach to racially and ethnically diverse communities, using social media successfully and sustaining group efforts over time.

- Financial Skills: Fundraising, effective grant writing, creating a budget, how to find funding sources (e.g. government, foundations, non-profits, etc.) and fiscal compliance with state/federal or grant-specified regulations.

- Technology: Developing and building skills around the use of technology, using technology to leverage advocacy efforts and exploring technological options for marketing, communication, finance, etc.

Aside from training on the above administrative areas, each cohort class will be assigned a specific topic area. The topic areas will be developed each year by a Project Advisory Group and approved by the DDPC. For the first year, the topic area will be Employment. The employment-themed trainings will include, but not be limited to, the following areas: the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Employment First, sheltered and community-based employment, State Department of Labor (DOL) One Stop Centers, Regional Economic Development Councils, Access-VR and the New York Employment Services System. Self-advocates should gain both an

understanding of the topical area as well as training on how to influence legislation and local policy on the topic area.

The selected applicant will support opportunities for graduates to provide leadership training to other self-advocates by empowering a minimum of 30 graduates (out of the total 45) to conduct and replicate Leadership Academy trainings in their local area at least 5 regions in New York State) following a train-the-trainer model. All graduates will also have the opportunity to be connected to future advocacy and leadership opportunities by establishing an Emerging Leaders Network (Network). The Network, in collaboration with the DDPC, will help to identify organizations or locations where trained self-advocates can conduct advocacy-based trainings and place participants in advocacy positions in order to ensure that graduates are able to put newly acquired leadership skills into practice. The grantee will establish an infrastructure for the Network to serve as a resource and connection hub between the grantee and past and future graduates. Through the Network graduates will be able to engage with and participate in advocacy opportunities, information and resource sharing as well as receiving ongoing technical support from the grantee.

Finally, the selected grantee will be expected to develop evaluation measures and a sustainability plan. The evaluation measures should track graduates in order to measure long-term and systemic outcomes of participation in the Leadership Academy. For example, through pre-and post-test measures graduates should be able to show demonstrated change and improvement in the use of skills in systems level advocacy. Grantees should establish 6-month and annual follow-up to track long-term engagement and impact from the initial academy training. Evaluation measures should be designed to track improvement and retention in advocacy leadership positions and other systems changes that result from the leadership training. Examples include but are not limited to: an improved knowledge of the topical area and ability to serve in a leadership capacity after graduating from the Leadership Academy. The selected grantee will also develop a sustainability plan which will outline how the Self-Advocacy Leadership Academy will be continued, both financially and administratively, after the end of the 3-year DDPC grant.

The selected grantee will be expected to:

- A. Develop a curriculum, timeline and plan for the roll-out of the Self-Advocacy Leadership Academy;
- B. Establish a Project Advisory Group in the first year to provide recommendations and input for the subsequent 2 years, including selection of the annual topical area;
- C. Pilot, deliver, and embed a statewide training program for a total of 45 Self-Advocates over three years and build infrastructure for an Emerging Leaders Network and future advocacy opportunities;
- D. Assist Graduates to conduct advocacy-based trainings in at least 5 regions in New York State; and
- E. Evaluate the implementation, impact and future sustainability of the Self-Advocacy Leadership Academy.

The full RFP can be downloaded from [http://www.ddpc.ny.gov/ddpc\\_funding\\_support](http://www.ddpc.ny.gov/ddpc_funding_support). All interested applicants are required to submit a one page letter of intent by 3:00 pm June 22, 2016 to [James.Huben@ddpc.ny.gov](mailto:James.Huben@ddpc.ny.gov) Letters of intent are required for applications to be accepted for this RFP see full RFP for letter of intent required format.

It is the applicant's responsibility to check the DDPC website periodically for any amendments to the RFP. All changes will be posted by July 8, 2016 at [http://www.ddpc.ny.gov/ddpc\\_funding\\_support](http://www.ddpc.ny.gov/ddpc_funding_support). No other notifications will be given.

All final grant applications should be sent to the address listed above and to the attention of Sheila Carey, Executive Director, and must be delivered to the DDPC office by 3:00 pm on July 22, 2016. No applications will be accepted after this deadline.

<sup>1</sup> Jane O'Regan Kleinert et al. " 'I Can' and 'I Did' -- Self-Advocacy for Young Students with Developmental Disabilities. *Teaching Exceptional Children*. Nov/Dec 2010 (43.2): p16-26; and TJ Zirpoli et al. "Partners in Policymaking: Empowering People." *Research and Practice*. 1989.

<sup>2</sup> Action learning is an approach to working with and developing people that uses work on an actual project or problem as the way to learn.

<sup>3</sup> Tracy Duberman et al. "Learning by Doing." *Physician Leadership Journal*. Sept/Oct 2015: 34-37; and Alex Adams et al. "A Novel Education and Training Program to Enhance Student Advocacy." *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*. 79 (7), 2015.