Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities
August 21, 2026 at 9:30AM, CDT

In-Person Meeting
Nebraska State Office Building
[Lower-Level Meadowlark Conference Room]
301 Centennial Mall South Street
Lincoln, NE

The agenda was mailed to Council members prior to the meeting. The meeting was chaired by Beth Libra and called to order at 9:31AM, CDT, and the *Pledge of Allegiance* was recited. Quorum was present.

Present (In-Person): Amanda Anderson, Christopher Chambers, Diane Cochran, Quinton Corwin, Brent Hoffman, Shaistha Kiran Karipi, Seamus Kelly, Beth Libra, Jacob McIver, Hannah Mercer, Sasha Reeks, Jennifer Severe-Oforah, Mark Shriver, Judy Trent, Joe Valenti, Josh Whitfield, and Sadie Worthing.
Absent: Dr. Jamar Dorsey, Shauna Graham, Tony Green, Eddie Kraska, Diane Meadors, Angie Ohlrich, DJ Plautz, and Dawn Sybrant.
Guest (In-Person): Lisa Bickford, Larry Cochran, Tania Diaz, Linda Mercer, Stacy Pfeiffer, and Kathy Rohwedder.
Staff: Kristen Larsen, Rachel Ward, and Nikki Krause.

Welcome and Introductions
Beth Libra welcomed everyone to today's meeting. Attendees had the opportunity to introduce themselves.

Nebraska Open Meetings Act
Beth explained that Council meetings fall under the Nebraska Open Meetings Act and a copy of the Act is posted on the entrance door by the sign-in table.

The Governor's Public Meeting Calendar referred members of the public and media to the Council's Meetings webpage for additional information (posted July 24, 2026).

Federal Compliance Reminder
Given the current climate, it is important to remember that the Council must comply with certain federal requirements. In your meeting packet, there was a July 2026 Advocacy Activity iTACC Guidance handout. Councils may educate and inform policymakers, not lobby. This distinction is being scrutinized and may affect the next legislative session. The Council may need to go on record as neutral regarding the legislative bills and provide education on their pros and cons.

Public Comment Period #1
Beth mentioned that all public meetings must allow time on their agenda for people who are not on the Council to comment. Members of the public who wanted to address the Council were

instructed to identify themselves, including an address and the name of any organization represented.

Shauna Paolini – Director of Enable Savings Plan – 1445 K Street, Room 2027, Lincoln, NE
[Kristen Larsen read an announcement from Shauna Paolini for public comment, as Shauna could not be here.]
A letter of support was submitted from the Enable Savings Plan and the Council to the Administration for Community Living (ACL) supporting the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities' (NACDD) application for the cooperative agreement, *Expanding Financial Literacy and Empowerment: Increasing Awareness and Use of ABLE Accounts for Americans with Disabilities*. The selection announcement should be made on September 30th. National Able to Save Day was celebrated on August 14th. Additionally, there have been multiple updates to the EnableSavings.com website.

Approval of Minutes
Beth asked the Council members if there were any corrections to the *DRAFT* April 17, 2026, Council meeting minutes. There were no corrections. Council members were reminded to abstain from voting if they were not in attendance for the April 17th Council meeting. As there were no corrections,
Sadie Worthing made the motion to approve the minutes, and Brent Hoffman seconded.
A roll call vote was taken: **Yes – 14, No – 0, Abstain – 2.*** Motion carried.

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest
As required by Council policy, at the first meeting of each federal fiscal year, members of the Council shall verbally declare any potential conflicts of interest of which they are aware. Council members, who had not already done so or had updates, were asked to verbally declare any potential conflicts of interest. They are noted below.

Judy Trent	The Arc of Buffalo County

Financial Report
The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is the Designated State Agency (DSA) for the Council. DHHS is the flow-through for Council funds. However, it is the Council that decides how Council funds are to be allocated and monitors the funds allocated.

Kristen reviewed the Financial Report for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2026, a handout at the meeting. At the August 15, 2025 Council meeting, the Council approved the budget of $372,718 for FFY2026 (October 1, 2025 to September 30, 2026). The Year-to-Date Expenditures for the third quarter of FFY2026 (October 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026) were $261,720 – 70.2% of the FFY2026 budget.

NOTE: Functions of the DSA is listed at $43,056 (163.6% of the budget). This should be $26,316. The DSA can only take 5% of total funds. Kristen will work on getting this adjusted.

The report reflects the balance of funds from FFY2025 and FFY2026. Available Current Funds totaled $354,311.26. Expenditures (obligations) totaled $171,314.49. Balance of Current Funds Available was 182,996.77.

One of the responsibilities of Council members under the DD Act is to approve the annual Financial Budget. A handout was provided with the *proposed* FFY2027 Financial Budget (October 1, 2026 to September 30, 2027). The Estimated Council Expenses for FFY2027 is $348,368.

- Personal Expenses & Benefits - $249,140
- Operating Expenses - $37,510
- Travel - $35,515
- Functions of the DSA - $26,203

NOTE: Per the Nebraska Open Meetings Act, no more than half of the meetings can be held virtually. Therefore, the November 2026 and February 2027 Council meetings will be hybrid (in-person and virtual). Members who live outside Lincoln will participate virtually. The Council will not be covering hotel expenses or mileage for those outside Lincoln as a cost-saving measure.

NOTE: For FFY2027, Council meetings will be held at the Nebraska State Office Building (NSOB) in Lincoln. This will save on facility rental fees and food costs.

A motion was made by Joe Valenti to approve the *proposed* FFY2027 Financial Budget in the amount of $348,368 and Shaistha Kiran Karipi seconded.
A roll call vote was taken: **Yes – 16, No – 0, Abstain – 0.*** Motion carried.

FFY2027 Meeting Dates and Location
Committee and Council meeting dates for FFY2027 were set.

Grant Review Committee meeting – November 19, 2026 - Virtual
Council meeting – November 20, 2026 – Hybrid
Legislative & Advocacy Committee meeting – February 4, 2027 - Hybrid
Council meeting – February 5, 2027 – Hybrid
Planning Committee meeting – May 6, 2027 - Hybrid
Council meeting – May 7, 2027 – In-Person
Grant Review Committee meeting – August 19, 2027 - Virtual
Council meeting – August 20, 2027 – In-Person

Meetings will be held at the Nebraska State Office Building – Lincoln (301 Centennial Mall South).

SAVE THE DATE! For 2027, the Tri-Board meeting will be on June 11th.

Member Reappointments and Recognition of Outgoing Members
Eligible Council members whose term expire on October 1, 2026, and are interested in continuing to serve on the Council, were encouraged to reapply with the Governor. Applications can be submitted either online at the Boards & Commissions – Application for Executive Appointment webpage at https://governor.nebraska.gov/board-comm-req or by mailing a **completed** Executive Appointment Application to Pat Selk at the Office of the Governor. Council members eligible to apply for reappointment are:

Brent Hoffman (Individual)
Shaistha Kiran Karipi (Family)
Joe Valenti (Family with Relative at ICFMR)

The following Council members, whose second term is ending on October 1, 2026 or who have decided not to seek a second term were recognized for their time with the Council:

Quinton Corwin (Individual)
Seamus Kelly (P&E – Disability Rights Nebraska)
Judy Trent (Family)

The outgoing Council members took a few minutes to say a few words about their time on the Council. Outgoing Council members were reminded that they would still serve on the Council until the Governor appoints their replacement.

Election of FFY2027 Council Officers

Per the By-Laws, officer elections for FFY2027 were conducted at today's Council meeting. This included the offices of Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. These officers were elected to serve a term of office from October 1, 2026 through September 30, 2027. Officers may be re-elected for a maximum of an additional two (2) consecutive terms. That limit on terms being only for that office; they may be elected to another office without a break in service. Agency representatives are not eligible to serve as Chair or Vice-Chair of the Council. On June 25, 2026 and July 27, 2026, Nikki Krause sent emails to all Council members seeking nominations for Council Officers.

Chair – The Chair presides at all meetings of the Council and the Executive Committee, provides overall direction for Council activities, and is an ex officio member of all Council standing and ad hoc committees. Beth Libra had indicated that she would be willing to run for the office of Chair. When asked if there were any nominations from the floor, there were none.

(Sasha) Reeks nominated Beth for the position of Chair, and Sadie seconded. By unanimous consent, Beth Libra will be the Chair for FFY2027.

Vice-Chair – The Vice-Chair assists the Chair in the performance of his/her duties and performs all duties of the Chair in his/her absence. Shaistha Kiran Karipi had indicated that she would be willing to run for the office of Vice-Chair. When asked if there were any nominations from the floor, there were none.

Reeks nominated Shaistha for the position of Vice-Chair, and Joe seconded. By unanimous consent, Shaistha Kiran Karipi will be the Vice-Chair for FFY2027.

Secretary – The Secretary (along with the Council Chair) will review the *draft* minutes taken by Council staff prior to them being posted on the Council's public webpage and included in the meeting packets mailed to Council members, and the Secretary will present the Council minutes for formal approval at the subsequent Council meeting. Eddie Kraska and Brent Hoffman had indicated that they would be willing to run for the office of Secretary. When asked if there were any nominations from the floor, there were none.

Reeks nominated Eddie for the position of Secretary, and Seamus Kelly seconded. Shaistha nominated Brent for the position of Secretary, and Judy Trent seconded. Brent was allotted time to explain why he should be elected Secretary. (Eddie was not at the meeting due to illness.) A vote was taken by secret ballot. Brent Hoffman will be the Secretary for FFY2027. (Brent 11 votes, Eddie 6 votes)

Kristen will forward the Council's recommendation for the office of Chair to the Governor's Appointments Office. Per Council By-Laws, the Governor appoints the Council Chair based on the Council's recommendation.

Committee Preferences
All Council members are expected to serve on one of the standing committees – Legislative and Advocacy, Planning, or Grant Review. Beth gave a summary of each committee's responsibilities. Members were asked to complete the FFY2027 Committee Preference form included in the meeting packet and return it to Nikki by the end of the meeting. Council staff and the Chair will review Council members' preferences. Committee preferences will be followed as closely as possible while adhering to iTACC's recommendation of being mindful of potential conflicts of interest for those serving on the Planning and Grant Review Committees.

NOTE: You do not need to be on the same committee that you were on in FFY2026. Each year you can change your committee preference if you would like.

NOTE: You are also not limited to serving on only one committee. You may serve on two or all three committees if you would like. A lot of discussion/heavy lifting is done at the committee meeting.

Council members were asked to note their interest in running for Chair of a committee on the Committee Preference form. Committee Chair elections for FFY2027 will be held during the November 20, 2026 Council meeting.

Council members were also encouraged to recommend non-Council members who would make good representatives to one of the three standing committees. Their names and contact information can be listed on the back of the Committee Preference form.

Report of the Planning Committee
Judy mentioned that the Planning Committee met on Thursday – August 20, 2026, to make recommendations for FFY2027 formal competitive/noncompetitive subaward/direct contract projects, and funding for up to two opportunity subawards.

NOTE: Council members were reminded to follow the Conflict-of-Interest Policy. Those with conflict(s) related to the proposed formal Request for Applications (RFAs) were asked not to participate in the discussion and to abstain from voting. This will provide transparency in the voting record.

NOTE: Becki Koehler is listed as a non-Council Planning Committee member; however, she withdrew from the Committee due to a potential conflict of interest in applying for a subaward.

Opportunity Subawards
The committee recommended:

- Fund up to two subawards at $20,000 each.
- Opportunity Subawards allows applicants to address any area within the State Plan.

- NCDD will remove the language stating, “Subawards may be renewed for an additional one (1) year period, subject to DHHS’ discretion.”
- Subrecipients wishing to continue their project in a second year will need to submit a new proposal.

A roll call vote was taken: **Yes – 16, No – 0, Abstain – 0.*** Motion carried.

Self-Advocacy Organization Subaward

The Committee recommended:

- Fund one subaward at $25,000.00.
- Include special consideration language for organizations engaging high schools to recruit youth into the self-advocacy movement. Potential collaboration partners include ASD Network, transition facilitators, and Nebraska VR Pre-ETS counselors.
- Remove language referencing renewal at DHHS’ discretion. This provides an opportunity to release an RFA next year, offering flexibility to fund another self-advocacy organization, especially if the current organization is not demonstrating outcomes.

A roll call vote was taken: **Yes – 16, No – 0, Abstain – 0.*** Motion carried.

Mini Grants for Youth Self-Advocacy Groups

The Committee recommended:

- Use an application process instead of an RFA.
- Fund 20 groups (instead of 10) at $500 each, totaling $10,000.
- Allow private schools to apply, including Madonna School (Omaha) and Villa Marie (Lincoln). NCDD staff will work with Diane Cochran, Stacy Pfeifer, and SEAC to distribute information.
- The Grant Committee will vote on these applications; the full Council will not.
- Add a sustainability question to the application.
- Add a section where schools may note in-kind match or support (e.g., teacher special duty pay). This is optional but demonstrates long-term commitment.
- Allow rural/small schools or areas to partner and submit one combined application.
- Include special consideration language for schools collaborating with other organizations/programs (e.g., local 4-H Extension Office).
- Add language noting that funding supports a group of self-advocates. Clarify that funding is not intended for unified groups, including neurotypical peers, in order to support leadership development among students with I/DD.
- Note that the intent is not to fund a unified approach that includes neurotypical peers. This provides an environment for the students with I/DD to step up into leadership roles.
- Exclude renewal language; schools must reapply annually.
- NCDD staff will create a flyer and cover letter to accompany the mini-grant application.
- A roll call vote was taken: **Yes – 16, No – 0, Abstain – 0.*** Motion carried.

Formal Subaward

The Committee recommended:

- Fund one subaward at $50,000.00
- Include broad **employment-focused** language in the RFA, with the following specific areas as suggestions:
    - Address **transportation** barriers (e.g., research, look at Oklahoma DD Council Transportation Mobility Specialist work).
    - Support **transition** for youth/young adults leaving high school, including person-centered planning using the Charting the LifeCourse (CtLC) framework. CtLC PCP activities may also help identify transportation solutions.
    - Provide **training** and development outreach to businesses and potential employers.
    - Do not include recommendations related to SE job coach training, as this falls under Nebraska VR's role.
- Remove language referencing renewal at DHHS' discretion.

A roll call vote was taken: **Yes – 15, No – 0, Abstain – 0.*** Motion carried. [Jennifer Severe-Oforah stepped out of the room.]

DD Council Executive Director Annual Evaluation

One of the duties of Council members is to complete an annual evaluation of the DD Council Executive Director, Kristen Larsen. The shorter and briefer 2026 Executive Director Evaluation was included in the Council meeting packet. The evaluation needs to be completed and returned to Beth by October 1, 2026. Either scan and email the completed evaluation to Beth at bplisek111@gmail.com or snail mail the evaluation to:

Beth Libra
84816 559 Avenue
Hoskins, NE 68701

The outgoing Executive Committee (FFY2026 Officers and Committee Chairs) and incoming Executive Committee (FFY2027 Officers) will reference these evaluations when they meet to complete the formal recommended 2026 Executive Director Evaluation, which will be presented and voted on at the November 20, 2026 Council meeting.

DD Council Executive Committee Meeting Summary

The Executive Committee met virtually on August 4, 2026, and decided to write a letter from the Executive Committee to Governor Pillen regarding recent concerns in the DD community.

NOTE: The Executive Committee Meeting Minutes and the Letter to Governor Pillen were included in your day of handouts.

In the day of handouts, you will find a DHHS News Release entitled "DHHS Partners with Independent Third Party to Evaluate InterRAI Implementation for Developmental Disability Waivers". This was a no-bid contract and the state picked out who it would work with. Additionally, this is the same company that Kristen Smith left DHHS to work for.

Also, Disability Alliance held a press conference on August 19th. The Council (Kristen) was not there, as it could have been perceived as lobbying. Joe said that he attended the press conference. It was done very well and was well attended.

In the day of handouts, you will also find an article titled “Gov. Pillen Issue Memo Directing Further Reductions in State Spending; Outlines Processes to Ensure Compliance”. Governor Pillen wants a 5% cut in budgets. With that, changes will happen fast.

If self-advocates want to tell their stories, Brad Meurens with Disability Rights Nebraska can assist with writing letters. The local Arc chapters may be able to help as well.

June 12, 2026 Tri-Board Meeting Summary
The theme for this year’s Tri-Board meeting was *Strengthening Disability Advocacy through Resilience and Collaboration*. This was very timely and appropriate. The meeting was well attended and successful. The national panel was good and illustrated that they see some of the same problems at the national level that we see at the state level. We are not alone in our advocacy. The importance of collaboration was emphasized.

SAVE THE DATE! For 2027, the Tri-Board meeting will be on June 11th.

2027-2031 Five-Year State Plan and FFY2027 Work Plan
The 2027-2031 Five-Year State Plan and FFY2027 Work Plan have been submitted and have been conditionally approved. Both plans are being peer-reviewed and will then be sent to ACL Project Specialist Sara Newell-Perez for final approval.

Updates from State Agency Representatives
NOTE: Agency representatives were asked to briefly touch on any pressing issues or important updates the Council needed to be informed of. The written reports are attached at the end of the minutes and Council members are encouraged to read the written reports in their entirety. (Tony Green, Diana Meadors, Jennifer Severe-Oforah, DJ Plautz, and Dawn Sybrant were absent and not able to present their reports.) [Christopher Chambers, Department of Education – Office of Special Education; Tony Green, Division of Developmental Disabilities; Diana Meadors, Division of Behavioral Health; Jennifer Severe-Oforah, Division of Public Health – Maternal and Child Health; DJ Plautz, Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation; Dawn Sybrant, Medicaid and Long-Term Care and Aging]

Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) – Office of Special Education (OSE)
All 245 Districts in Nebraska received their District Determinations based on their Nebraska Counts data, and Nebraska meets requirements. Districts in the Indicator 8 Parent Survey for the 2025-2026 school year will soon have their results and feedback from parents of students with disabilities.

OSE continues with focused monitoring of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for students with disabilities. Part of that is ensuring that all Districts meet the state criteria for identifying students with disabilities within the 45- school-day or 60-day timeline. Indicator 13 – Self-

Assessment opens on September 7th for District Monitoring of Transition Planning and Services (students 14-21). OSE continues to refine its General Supervision of Monitoring in response to guidance and changes from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

OSE is excited about its new transportation guidance document that was just released and can be found on its website under technical assistance. This is a huge hot topic now in the state of Nebraska for students of all ages with disabilities.

The transition website (transition.ne.gov) is as up-to-date as possible. There are six transition facilitators across Nebraska who provide technical assistance, advocacy, and other support to students in transition age. Once the *Along the Way Guides* are updated, they will put that information out on their website and in their Friday blast.

Future/upcoming activities:

- The 2026 NEMTSS Summit- Destination Impact is October 8-9, 2026, at the Younes Conference Center in Kearney, Nebraska.
- The 2026 Tri-State Law Conference is November 12-13, 2026.
- The Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Network Conference is April 8-9, 2027, in Kearney, Nebraska.

Division of Disability and Aging

From Tony Green's report, Beth shared that the renewal of the DD Waivers (Family Support Waiver (FSW), Developmental Disabilities Adult Day Waiver (DDAD), and the Comprehensive Developmental Disabilities Waiver (CDD)) will be effective March 1, 2027. They anticipate going to public comment in October 2026.

- The DD Advisory Committee meeting is September 9, 2026.
- The Monthly DHHS Stakeholder meeting is September 14, 2026.
- The Nebraska Olmstead Advisory Committee meets on November 17, 2026.

Division of Public Health – Maternal and Child Health (DPH-MCH)

From Jennifer Severe-Oforah's report, Beth shared that a major component of the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) is expanding the Community Health Worker (CHW) workforce. Each Local Health Department (LHD) is eligible to apply for funding to hire up to 10 CHWs, and this opportunity has now been extended to Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). Many LHDs have already hired their CHWs and begun training activities.

Updates from the DD Network Representatives

NOTE: DD Network representatives were asked to briefly touch on any pressing issues or important updates the Council needed to be informed of. The written reports are attached at the end of the minutes and Council members are encouraged to read the written reports in their entirety. [Seamus Kelly, Disability Rights Nebraska; Mark Shriver, Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI)/University Center of Excellence for Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)]

Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI)/University Center of Excellence for Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)

The annual UCEDD performance report was submitted to ACL on July 29, 2026. Some examples from the report are outlined below.

- Core Function: Education/Training
    - A total of 247 students received interdisciplinary clinical training. Of these, 62 students participated in LEND Core interdisciplinary clinical training.
    - They have three Graduate programs, including Applied Behavior Analysis (MS and PhD) and Genetic Counseling (MGC), with successfully graduated students (7 for MS ABA, 5 in PhD ABA, 8 in MGC)
    - 83 continuing education events were provided to 3,694 participants.
    - 195 community trainings were provided for 8,740 participants.
        - 295 adults with disabilities participated in the community trainings, and there were 1,269 families/caregivers.
    - 982 hours of technical assistance were provided through 201 technical assistance activities.
- Core Function: Community Services
    - 26,921 individuals received services this year.
        - These individuals received at least 155,000 services, including clinical visits, recreation program visits, contracted services, and school visits/services offered at Omaha Public and Bellevue Public Schools by their Psychology, Occupational, and Physical Therapy Departments.
    - The total count for clinical services provided directly by MMI was 7,331 individuals.
    - The Transition to Lifespan Care clinic provided interdisciplinary services to 28 individuals aged 14 and older this past fiscal year.
- Core Function: Research
    - MMI faculty published 91 peer-reviewed articles.
    - MMI UCEDD faculty and staff presented 184 papers or posters at over 30 state, regional, national, and international conferences.
- Core Function: Information Dissemination
    - There were 10 webinars provided by their Family Care Enhancement Project team.

MMI will be working on its new 5-year work plan due this next fiscal year, based on the recent needs assessment completed with the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Disability Rights Nebraska (DRN)

Monitoring continues at the Beatrice State Development Center (BSDC). The number of permanent residents continues to drop (now 67 people) while the number of younger temporary residents at the Crisis Stabilization Unit fluctuates each month. Of concern, DRN observed paper logs in residential spaces documenting medication refusals. Administrator Jesse Bjerrum

met with Amy Miller and assured them that medication refusals are recorded immediately on their digital system, Therap, and the paper logs are a remnant of an older situation.

DRN met with Nebraska Supreme Court Administrator Corey Steel to discuss implementation of the new caseload limits and other statutory changes. They learned that the court has hired three new specialists to scrutinize the financial filings in every case where a guardian has five or more wards. [This past legislative session, LB985 was passed, which limits the number of people an individual guardian can serve to 20 people.]

Policy documents were requested from the Douglas County Youth Center (DCYC) to evaluate their use of segregation and restraint. Their state reports indicate a high number of youth are placed in segregation for very long periods of time. DRN received the documents just as the quarter was ending. In the next quarter, they will determine whether DCYC rules comply with state statutes on solitary and identify areas for reform.

The Inclusive Education Lay Advocacy training concluded at the end of March. The dates for the fall training are August 25 – October 1, 2026.

DRN continues to work with Senator Rountree's office on several legislative efforts related to Olmstead. DRN felt that greater legislative involvement, education, and awareness was important to further the goals of Olmstead implementation in Nebraska. LB737, which was approved, requires the Legislature's Urban Affairs Committee and Health and Human Services Committee to hold a joint public hearing to discuss state planning and possible legislative activity regarding housing, employment, education, community supports, and transportation for Nebraskans with disabilities. The joint hearing is scheduled for September 18th at 9:00am.

Finally, DRN continues to conduct voter registrations alongside its monitoring work.

Council Chair and Staff Updates

Beth mentioned that Norfolk has been very busy. Over 450 people attended the Norfolk Disability Pride event. Buddy Baseball is in full swing. They started with 14 players and are now at 72 players. Evolve for All is a nonprofit gym for able-bodied people and people with disabilities, with a focus on parents and caregivers. September 12th is the Light Up the Night Dance in Norfolk. There are 100 dancers expected, and the DJ, catering, room, and dresses/tuxes have all been donated.

Kristen mentioned several things.

- Paid caregiving and links to fraud, waste, and abuse are hot topics right now.
- ACL's Administration on Disability Commissioner is visiting each state.
- The Governor's DD Advisory Committee has been very busy trying to leverage its membership there to move systems. For example, at the last meeting, they heard from Donna Barker, The Arc of Nebraska. She lives in Scottsbluff, in Western Nebraska, and faces all kinds of challenges in receiving Medicaid across state lines. It makes more

sense for her to go to Children's over in Denver than it does to go across the state to Omaha. She has brought this to the attention of the Governor's DD Advisory Committee, the Medicaid Advisory Committee, and the Beneficiary Advisory Committee.
- Drew Gonshorowski, Director of Medicaid and Long-Term Care (MLTC), has resigned. Jeremy Brunssen, MLTC's Deputy Director of Finance and Program Integrity, has been appointed by Governor Pillen to serve as the interim director.
- She wrote a LEND letter of support and contributed language to the letter of support for NACDD's application.
- Mark Friedman, who worked with the Council years ago on person-centered planning, is planning an event on how to use artificial intelligence (AI) safely. The Council has agreed to be a sponsor of this event. The workshop will be in November, and more information will come.

Rachel mentioned that all the Disability Pride groups need to get together to talk and share ideas. The Lincoln Disability Pride event began with the Resource Fair outside, then moved into the Auld Pavilion. Unfortunately, the food trucks did not show up.

Charting the LifeCourse Community of Practice is evolving, working to communicate better, and engaging more ambassadors.

TransCen's employment project is coming to an end. They will finish up the summer institute next month and hold a webinar with PTI.

Nikki reminded everyone to turn in their expense reimbursements and Committee Preference forms before they left for the day.

Member Updates

Josh Whitfield mentioned that he had had a very busy summer. He had PCP in June. Scooping is going well. He went on a five-day cruise and will be going to a Cardinal baseball game.

Seamus mentioned that this is his last meeting, and he has appreciated working with everyone. He is figuring out adult services for his daughter. If anyone is interested or knows someone who is looking for a new job, he is looking for a new assistant.

Diane said that in June, she attended the American Association of IDD (AAIDD) national conference in Chicago. She made a connection with the president of AAIDD, and he is fearful for the future of IDD. She will be attending a Reimagining Quality Conference in Baltimore. She went to the Caribbean for five days and will be an auditor for various magazines.

Reeks mentioned that she has recently moved back to Omaha, and next week she will be going to court regarding the termination matter with the Department of Correctional Services.

Brent has been league bowling through Parks and Rec. He also went to the Disability Pride event in Lincoln.

Hannah Mercer has been babysitting her two nephews, ages four and two. She started doing cornhole for Special Olympics this is her second year. She went to the prom dance in April.

Sadie has been working with the Lexington Public Schools. They have a STARS program for elementary students during summer school, for special needs kids. They had a short trial (two weeks) for the older kids, during which they went to the pool and did homework. She has a senior this year.

Amanda Anderson mentioned that her brother's provider is changing to no community activities starting September 1st. As a result, they are looking for a new provider. As a family, they are anxious about a second time for her brother's interRAI assessment.

Jacob McIver said he is taking a trip next week to see his 94-year-old grandma in Kansas.

Joe mentioned that BSDC deals with some of the toughest cases in the crisis stabilization unit. Regarding supported employment, his son works independently at BSDC, and other individuals have total independence on campus.

Judy mentioned that her sister got a gold medal in bocce at the Special Olympics. They went to Kearney's Disability Pride Day. There was a resource fair and a dance. Judy is now serving on The Arc of Buffalo County Board.

Public Comment Period #2
Beth mentioned that all public meetings must allow time on their agenda for people who are not on the Council to comment. Members of the public who wanted to address the Council were instructed to identify themselves, including an address and the name of any organization represented.

Reeks mentioned OPS and shock gloves. Omaha has decided not to have School Resource Officers (SROs) use them.

Adjourn
The meeting adjourned at 2:38PM, CDT.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for November 20, 2026, and will be held in a hybrid format. The Grant Review Committee will meet virtually in the afternoon of November 19, 2026.

NOTE: Members who live outside Lincoln will participate virtually. The Council will not be covering hotel expenses or mileage for those outside Lincoln as a cost-saving measure.

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities

State Agency Representative
Report to Council Members

Representative: Christopher Chambers

Agency: Nebraska Department of Education- Office of Special Education

Update on activities/trends/improvements/issues impacting individuals with I/DD since the last Agency update:

- All 245 Districts in Nebraska received their District Determinations based on their NE Counts data (Nebraska meets requirements)
- Districts in the Indicator 8 Parent Survey for the 2025-2026 school year will soon have their results and feedback from parents of students with disabilities
- New personnel, new opportunities at the Office of Special Education

Current Agency activities/trends/improvements/issues impacting individuals with I/DD:

- Indicator 11 Child Find Monitoring- Initial evaluation (data for initial evaluations due August 31, 2026)
- Indicator 13- Self Assessment opens September 7, 2026, for District Monitoring for Transition Planning and Services (students 14-21)
- Continuing to refine/refine our General Supervision of Monitoring based on guidance and changes at the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)

New Guidance Document on Transportation
Transportation as a Component of Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and Documentation within the Individualized Education Plan

Future/upcoming Agency activities:
Indicator 8 Parent Survey- All 245 Districts this school year- opens
2026 NeMTSS Summit- October 8-9, 2026 Kearney, Nebraska Younes North Center
2026 Tri-State Law Conference
Save the Date: ASD Network Conference, April 8-9, 2026 Kearney, Nebraska

As always check out our Office of Special Education website: Special Education – Nebraska Department of Education

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities

State Agency Representative
Report to Council Members

Representative: Tony Green, Director

Agency: Division of Disability and Aging

Update on activities/trends/improvements/issues impacting individuals with I/DD since the last Agency update:

1. Division Name Change:
   - The Division of Developmental Disabilities became the **Division of Disability and Aging** on July 18, 2026. The division name change reflects years of strategic work to better align programs, people, and resources that serve Nebraskans with disabilities and aging-related needs.

2. State Long-term Care Ombudsman:
   - The state long-term care ombudsman program has moved from a hybrid model to a full centralized DHHS run program under Stepanie Beran, State Long-Term Ombudsman.

3. Omstead Strategic Plan:
   - Olmstead Evaluation of the 6-year Olmstead Strategic Plan went out for RFP (Request for Proposal)
   - Letter of intent to award was issued August 4, 2026 to Partners for Insightful Evaluation (PIE) for the evaluation.

Future/upcoming Agency activities:

1. Developmental Disabilities Waiver Renewals:
   - Renewal of the DD waivers (Family Support Waiver (FSW), Developmental Disabilities Adult Day (DDAD) Waiver & Comprehensive Developmental Disabilities (CDD) Waiver) will be effective March 1, 2027.
   - Anticipate going to public comment in October 2026.

2. National Core Indicators (NCI) Surveys
   - Developmental Disabilities NCI Survey anticipated start date November 2026
   - Aging and Disabled NCI Survey anticipated start date February 2027
   - DD and AD State of the Workforce surveys to merge into a singular survey for all waivers with an anticipated start date of March 2027

3. Upcoming Meetings - *All Information available on DD Calendar of Events page on DD Homepage*
   - DD Advisory Committee Meeting – Wednesday, September 9, 2026
   - Monthly DHHS Stakeholder Meeting – Monday, September 17, 2026
   - Nebraska Olmstead Advisory Committee - Tuesday, November 17, 2026

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities

State Agency Representative
Report to Council Members

Representative: Diana Meadors, Deputy Director of Operations

Agency: Division of Behavioral Health

Update on activities/trends/improvements/issues impacting individuals with I/DD since the last Agency update:
DBH continues to work on the Rural Health Transformation Initiatives. DBH's initiative is Rural Emergency Behavioral Health: 5.1 to 5.4
5.1 Integration of Behavioral Health Services in rural communities with a focus on specialty healthcare clinics.
5.2 Telehealth Crisis responders for Law enforcement:
Providing Crisis intervention Trainings to law enforcement across Nebraska. Avel Healthcare platform is a telehealth platform where law enforcement will have access to a nurse and or therapist when responding to a crisis call by pushing a button. RideCare is a secure transportation service for individuals needing transport to alleviate law enforcement from having to drive for hours.
5.3 RFA for crisis centers for minor items such as furniture, ADA accessible doors, generators and or crisis vans/cars. As well
5.4 Behavioral Health nursing home pilot program. To assist hospitals with placement of individuals needing additional behavioral health care while also meeting criteria for nursing home level of care.

All RHTP contracts/Grants are active and in the implementation stage as of July 31, 2026.

Current Agency activities/trends/improvements/issues impacting individuals with I/DD:

We have our upcoming mini block grant application due in September 2026. We will be working with UNL PPC to conduct a needs assessment as well as develop our strategic plan for the behavioral health system in Nebraska.

Future/upcoming Agency activities:
September 1, 2026 at 9:00 am recovery month proclamation.
September 10, 2026 DBH DHHS Recovery Month Celebration See Attachment.


2026
Nebraska
Recovery
Month
Celebration
September 10
3 pm - 6 pm
Shildneck Bandshell Antelope Park
1630 Memorial Dr, Lincoln, NE
Celebrate the journey of recovery & learn about community resources.
Play with therapy dogs.
DHHS will present Excellence in Recovery awards to outstanding individuals and organizations.
Hope Healing Recovery
NEBRASKA
Good Life. Great Mission.
DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities

State Agency Representative
Report to Council Members

Representative: DJ Plautz

Agency: Nebraska VR

Update on activities/trends/improvements/issues impacting individuals with I/DD since the last Agency update:

- Technical Assistance to Providers: Nebraska VR continues to provide technical assistance to agency providers to support and improve the quality of service delivery, with an ongoing focus on effective Supported Employment (SE) and Customized Employment (CE) practices.

- Supported/Customized Employment Outcomes: Nebraska VR achieved 175 successful SE/CE outcomes during Program Year 2025, reflecting continued progress in helping individuals with disabilities obtain and maintain competitive integrated employment.

- Collaboration with Agency Partners: Nebraska VR continues to collaborate with agency partners in response to the findings of the Dr. Mills study and the subsequent action plan. These collaborative efforts remain focused on strengthening services and improving employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

- Olmstead Planning: Nebraska VR and the ATP continue to be actively engaged in the development and implementation of Nebraska's Olmstead Plan. The VR Director leads the employment workgroup, while the ATP Director serves as chair of the housing workgroup. The agencies' involvement helps ensure that employment and accessibility remain priorities for Nebraskans with disabilities.

- WIOA State Plan: Nebraska VR and other workforce partners have spent the past several months developing updates and documenting progress on implementation of Nebraska's four-year WIOA State Plan. Nebraska was recently notified that the WIOA Combined State Plan Modification has been approved by federal partners. Nebraska VR's portion of the plan includes specific goals and strategies focused on improving Supported Employment outcomes.

- Nebraska EmployABILITY Project: During July, implementation of the Nebraska EmployABILITY Project officially began in three pilot offices: Omaha West, Lincoln, and Norfolk. Selected staff from each office completed hands-on training with Transfr virtual reality headsets and Sphero robotics and coding products, including BOLT+, RVR+, indi, and littleBits. The training was designed to increase staff knowledge, confidence, and

proficiency in using these technologies to support client engagement and skill development.

- Summer Work-Based Learning: Nebraska VR funded five summer programs providing community-based work-based learning experiences for students with disabilities ages 14–21. These programs provided students with opportunities to develop job skills and explore career pathways based on their individual interests.

- Student Participation: A total of 187 students participated in paid work-based learning experiences during the summer.

- Project SEARCH: Three Nebraska Project SEARCH teams received recognition at the National Project SEARCH Conference for their employment outcomes. The teams met the Project SEARCH employment outcome criteria of individuals working 16 or more hours per week.

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities

State Agency Representative
Report to Council Members

Representative: Jennifer Severe-Oforah

Agency: Division of Public Health, DHHS

The Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) remains a key priority for the Division of Public Health. During the past quarter, efforts were primarily directed toward obligating available funds to support program objectives.

A major component of RHTP is expanding the Community Health Worker (CHW) workforce. Each Local Health Department (LHD) is eligible to apply for funding to hire up to 10 CHWs, and this opportunity has now been extended to Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). Many LHDs have already hired their CHWs and begun training activities.

MCH has two other RHTP Initiatives:

1) Perinatal Regionalization aimed at reducing maternal morbidity and mortality by easing access to high-risk pregnancy care and standardizing clinical best practices through education and collaboration.

- **Hub-and-spoke care model**: Creates a regional network where rural sites integrate into broader perinatal care systems, reducing travel burdens and improving care continuity.
- **Maternal Fetal Medicine Rural Provider Pairing Program**: for structured mentorship, case consultation, and streamlined patient referrals.

2) Maternal Mobile Health Clinics are designed to bring maternity services directly to underserved rural areas to improve maternal and infant health outcomes by increasing access to care, expanding early intervention, and reducing rural disparity in maternal health.

More information is available at:

https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Rural-Health-Transformation.aspx

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities

State Agency Representative
Report to Council Members

Representative: Dawn Sybrant – Administrator II

Agency: Medicaid and Long-Term Care

Update on activities/trends/improvements/issues impacting individuals with I/DD since the last Agency update:

Approved: State Plan Amendment (SPA) NE 26-0004 -- Targeted Case Management (TCM) for Aged, Blind, and Disabled (ABD) and Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) eligibility groups.

Effective July 1, 2026, this SPA specifies which providers can provide TCM services to these groups by aligning it with the 1915(b)(4) waiver that was approved by CMS last year.

Providers allowed to provide TCM services for these groups include

- State staff employed by DHHS
- Entities awarded a contract through DHHS' competitive bid process to provide TCM services
- Entities for whom DHHS has entered into a sole source award for the provision of TCM

The SPA was submitted May 18, 2026

- Submission

Current Agency activities/trends/improvements/issues impacting individuals with I/DD:

State Plan Amendment (SPA) 26-0007: Nursing Facility Inflation Factor

- Effective July 1, 2026, the inflation factor for the nursing facility rate period is -2.07%

State Plan Amendment (SPA) 26-0008: Intermediate Care Facility Inflation Factor

- Effective July 1, 2026, the inflation factor for intermediate care facilities for individuals with developmental disabilities (ICF-DD) is 24.0%

Future/upcoming Agency activities:

Upcoming federal changes from H.R.1 (The "One Big Beautiful Bill Act"):

H.R.1 Section 71109: Eligibility Changes for Immigrants – October 1, 2026
This change removes certain immigration statuses from being eligible for full Medicaid coverage.

Noncitizens who may continue to qualify after October 1, 2026:	**Noncitizens who may no longer qualify after October 1, 2026:**

• **(Green Card Holders)** Lawful Permanent Residents*
• **Cuban/Haitian Entrants**
• **Compact of Free Association (COFA) migrants**, including individuals from Micronesia, Marshall Islands, and Palau
• Lawfully present noncitizens who are:
  o Pregnant, or
  o Under the age of 19
 	
*Green card holders (lawful permanent residents) must:
• Meet the five-year bar;
• Be credited with 40 working quarters; or
• Be exempt from meeting the 5-year bar.
	• Refugees*
	• Asylees*
	• Victims of severe trafficking*
	• Noncitizens whose deportation is being withheld*
	• Noncitizens granted conditional entry
	• Noncitizens victims of domestic violence by a spouse or parent
	• Iraqi and Afghani Parolees*
	• Amerasian Immigrants
	• Noncitizens who are veterans or active-duty military and spouses or unmarried dependents who also have qualified noncitizen status*
	• Other humanitarian parolees
	Other noncitizens
	
	*These groups of noncitizens do not have to meet the five-year bar.

For more information:
- Webpage: https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Medicaid-Eligibility-for-Noncitizens.aspx
- FAQ: https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Medicaid-Eligibility-for-Noncitizens.aspx#docaccess-cbc4eb2af768e44fe92e4d0d1849e82d

H.R.1. Section 71112: Retroactive Coverage Limits – January 1, 2027
- Current (prior to 1/1/2027): States are required to provide up to three months of retroactive coverage if the applicant would have been eligible during that time.
- Change (effective 1/1/2027): Limits retroactive coverage to 1 month for the Medicaid expansion group and 2 months for all other Medicaid beneficiaries (such as Waiver recipients).

Disability Rights Nebraska
Report to Council Members
August 2026

Representative: Seamus Kelly/ Tania Diaz

Agency: Disability Rights Nebraska

Monitoring of Beatrice State Developmental Center:

The number of permanent residents continues to drop (now 67 people) while the number of younger temporary residents at the Crisis Stabilization Unit fluctuates each month.

Routine monitoring throughout the quarter revealed some efforts to improve recreational spaces for grilling outdoors, which is appreciated, though we have seen no movement on improving the barren rooms in the Crisis Stabilization Unit nor completion of the classrooms that are intended to permit in-person instruction. As the quarter ends ahead of the new school year, we will be requesting further updates about the educational opportunities for residents.

While monitoring this quarter, we observed paper logs in the residential spaces that recorded medication refusals. This gave us concern: how did medical staff learn about the paper notes of front line staff? If a resident is refusing medications regularly, is someone evaluating the situation? The logs mostly recorded over the counter medications, such as stool softeners, but at least one entry noted the refusal of Trazodone. We wrote to request any policies around medication refusals and had a positive experience with leadership: they did produce the policies and then Administrator Jesse Bjerrum met with Amy Miller on her next monitoring visit to review in person.

Mr. Bjerrum assured us that medication refusals are recorded immediately on their digital system Therap, and the paper logs are a remnant of an older system. He thanked us for bringing the matter to his attention, acknowledging that it could be dangerous if information was only in paper form, and indicated he would review with all staff.

Guardianship Reform:

This quarter included more macro level advocacy around guardianship reform. We met with the Nebraska Supreme Court Administrator Corey Steel to discuss implementation of the new caseload limits and other statutory changes. It was a positive meeting and we learned that the court has hired three new specialist positions to scrutinize the financial filings of every case where a guardian has five or more wards. We were very gratified to find this proactive step since up until now, the judicial branch has seemed to deny there was an issue.

In response to intakes and in order to provide a detailed view of how one guardian with over 60 clients is serving people, we engaged in two individual case reviews. One is a resident of the Norfolk Regional Center who asserted this guardian is not providing him with adequate spending money—as of the end of this quarter, we are awaiting records from NRC. The second client is a woman living with serious mental illness in North Platte who says this guardian has been verbally abusive and inattentive. By entering our appearance in court on behalf of this woman, we hope to gather more information than we normally have access to through court files and determine whether there is financial misconduct.

During this quarter, we conducted additional macro level research for next steps in guardianship reform that we believe will be necessary to complete this several-years-long-project: requiring guardians to post bond and to pass a clean credit history check. Currently, state court rules permit judges to waive bonds, and while credit history checks are done, they don't seem to be taken into account even when red flags like active debt collection lawsuits pop up. We've renewed our communication with the American Bar Association (since they conducted judicial education sessions in 2023 on the need for guardianship reform in Nebraska) and hope to have a final report next quarter that outlines remedies that other states have adopted.

Monitoring Veterans' Home:

The Nebraska state veterans' home system refused our access authority last quarter when we sought to conduct a monitoring visit at their Norfolk facility. This quarter, we reached out directly to the state director, John Hilgert, with a full outline of our legal authority. We were gratified to have a prompt response agreeing with our position, and immediately conducted a monitoring visit at the Eastern State Veterans Home in Bellevue. The visit

was conducted without incident, and it appears that we have successfully resolved this issue for all future VA home monitoring.

Monitoring in individual facilities also proceeded throughout the quarter. We have been examining the business practices of one-star-rated facilities that are owned by large out-of-state corporations, which guided us to a number of both rural and urban facilities with exceedingly poor track records. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services have documented grievous safety concerns at many of these facilities in Nebraska. Several of these facilities turn out to have bewilderingly mixed populations: adults with serious mental illness living alongside people who are aged/elderly as well as adults with intellectual disabilities. We are observing patterns in these facilities: lack of real recreation or activities designed to return someone to independence, severe staffing shortages, dirty conditions. Since one of the facilities was locked all day long—only staff have the key pad code to exist—but was not a dementia unit requiring safety precautions, we submitted a formal complaint to DHHS Licensure and the Long Term Care Ombudsman that is pending as this quarter ended.

Douglas County Youth Center:

Previously, we requested policy documents from the Douglas County Youth Center ("DCYC") in Omaha to evaluate their use of segregation and restraint. Their state reports indicate a high number of youth are placed in segregation for very long periods of time. We wanted to examine the policies to determine whether there is a need to reform their written rules or whether this is a staff re-education issue. Initially, DCYC refused, citing security concerns. After providing them with a full explanation of our access authority, we received these policy documents just as the quarter was ending. In the next quarter, we will determine whether their rules comply with the state statutes relating to solitary and examine areas to propose reform.

Inclusive Education Lay Advocacy:

The spring Inclusive Education Lay Advocacy training concluded at the end of March and dates were set for the fall training for August 25-October 1. Recruitment and registration materials were developed and sent out.

On May 28 an advocate meeting was held for all those who have participated in the training since the beginning in 2019. Successes were shared including the story of one young man with Down Syndrome whose mother is an advocate and has advocated for her son since the first training session in 2019. Her son graduated from high school this year with his typical class and was chosen as one of the student speakers at the ceremony. Another

advocate shared an art installation she created to demonstrate the physical and emotional toll that the use of restraint and seclusion causes for children with disabilities. The project was shared with members of the public this past spring at Nebraska Wesleyan University.

Eleven (11) referrals were made to the Inclusive Education Lay Advocacy program. Five (5) of the referrals were assigned an advocate to assist with IEP meetings. The Inclusive Education Lay Advocacy Coordinator attended IEP and 504 meetings with five (5) families.

Olmstead:

During the third quarter, we continued to work with Sen. Rountree's office on several legislative efforts related to Olmstead. In our discussions with his office, we felt that greater legislative involvement, education and awareness was important to further the goals of Olmstead implementation in Nebraska. As a result, Sen. Rountree introduced LB 737. Legislative Bill 737 requires the Legislature's Urban Affairs Committee and Health and Human Services Committee to hold a joint public hearing to discuss state planning and possible legislative activity regarding housing, employment, education, community supports, and transportation for Nebraskans with disabilities. The bill creates a space for legislators to hear from people with disabilities, advocates, and other agencies on important disability policy. Disability Rights Nebraska supported this legislation. The bill was approved by the Legislature on a 47-1 vote and Governor Pillen signed LB 737 into law April 14, 2026. The joint hearing before the Health and Human Services and Urban Affairs Committee is scheduled for September 18, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

The Olmstead Advisory Committee met on April 28, 2026, during the third quarter. The committee received updates from the Health and Human Services Division of Developmental Disabilities regarding the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services waiver amendments for the Aged and Disabled and Traumatic Brain Injury Waivers. Following a second round of public comments on the proposed waivers, the Division has made revisions addressing the public's concerns. This included elimination of the 40-hour weekly cap on personal care services for live-in caregivers and elimination of the 70-hour combined limit on Legally Responsible Individual (LRI) personal care and companion services. Previously, the proposed waiver included a cost limit set at 150% of the average nursing facility rate. While exceptions to this limit were allowed through a Developmental Disabilities (DD) Clinical

Team review, the waiver did not specify how the exception would be implemented when using in-home providers exclusively or in combination with out-of-home providers. Under the updated waiver, participants using both in-home and out-of-home services are eligible to request a threshold exemption.

The committee discussed concerns regarding the role and direction of its work emphasizing the need to continue to push the plan and implementation forward and to begin addressing goals for the next iteration of the plan.

Disability-Related Public Policy:

Brad Meurrens met weekly with Courtney Hurd as the advisor for her Applied Practice and Experience program. Courtney attended the legislative hearing for LR 422 which calls for Congress to fully fund IDEA and Brad worked with Courtney to develop her position statement on the resolution. Brad helped Courtney hand deliver her statement to every senator on the Education Committee. Here is a link to some photos. Courtney is a person with disabilities and a mom to a daughter with disabilities.

Brad met bi-weekly with Michele Zephier as her policy mentor for the Policy Mentor project with Civic Nebraska. Michele is a mom to a son with developmental disabilities.

Voting:

We continue to conduct voter registrations alongside our monitoring work so that we are in the field to accomplish multiple goals at once. For example, while monitoring the Inavale facility, we had a quarter of the residents complete voter registrations. Similarly, while monitoring at a Lincoln facility, a resident recognized us from previous visits and happily told us that he'd taken our voting rights materials and obtained a State ID card for the first time in decades so he can vote and use the card for all other purposes. Last quarter, while monitoring a day program for adults with intellectual disabilities in Norfolk, we discussed voting rights with staff, who promptly scheduled us to return this quarter to attend their monthly meeting between three different providers' clients. We met at the Norfolk Public Library and spoke to a gathering of approximately 60 adults about their voting rights and distributed information to them and their staff.

Finally, we continued our partnership with Tectonic Change to plan a get out the vote initiative under the Rev Up grant they received last quarter. We

offered our experiences about what questions people ask during voting registration, recommended having our partners take the training to become election registrars, and joined in the planning for activities to occur in the fall.

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities

State Agency Representative
Report to Council Members

Representative: Mark Shriver

Agency: Munroe-Meyer Institute University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

Update on activities/trends/improvements/issues impacting individuals with I/DD since the last Agency update:

Annual UCEDD performance report submitted to the Administration on Community Living on July 29. 2026. Some examples from the report are outlined below

Core Function: Education/Training:

- There were 100 intermediate (150-300 hours) and 147 long-term (over 300 hours) students for a total of 247 students who received interdisciplinary clinical training.
- Of these students, 62 participated in LEND Core interdisciplinary training provided.
- Majority of students are in clinical rotations and included disciplines such as Applied Behavior Analysis, Genetic Counseling, Law, Mental/Behavioral Health, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Psychology, Public Health, School Psychology/Counseling, Speech-Language, Family/Community members.
- We have 3 Graduate programs including Applied Behavior Analysis (MS and PhD) and Genetic Counseling (MGC) successfully graduated students (7 for MS ABA, 5 in PhD ABA, 8 in MGC)
- We provided 83 continuing education events to 3,694 participants.
- We provided 195 community trainings for 8,740 participants.
- Participants included trainees, professionals and paraprofessionals in the community, family members and caregivers and public/community members.
- Health-Related and Education and Early Intervention were the most often presented areas of emphasis.
- There were 295 adults with disabilities who participated in the community trainings and 1,269 families/caregivers.
- We provided 982 hours of technical assistance through 201 technical assistance activities.

Core Function: Community Services

- 26,921 individuals received services this year

- These individuals received at least 155,000 services including clinical visits, recreational program visits, contracted services, and school visits/services offered at Omaha Public and Bellevue Public Schools by our Psychology, Occupational and Physical Therapy Departments.
- The total count for clinical services provided directly by MMI (excluding school-based and other contracted services) was 7,331 individuals. Of these, 3,116 (42.5%) were 14 years or older. When we look at those in Nebraska who are 21 years and older, there were 2,032 (27.7%) individuals between the ages of 21-101 who received clinical services in fiscal year 2026.
- The Recreation department provided services to adults through programs including evening respite, adult swim, wheel club, garden club, cooking club, leisure explorer club, urban adventure club, art club, dance, acting classes, theater cam, and yoga. Participants ranged from 12 adults in Integrity Club to 84 adults in the Urban Adventure Club.
- The Recreation department also partnered with Millard Public Schools to offer social activities for middle school and Madonna Catholic High School and Transition program in Omaha to offer transition programming. There were 52 students who participated with programs with these school districts.
- We also provide transition, college and career exploration, and employment skills training through our collaborations with UNO, local provider agencies, Nebraska Medicine, Local School Districts and Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation. A total of 463 transition age students (14 -21 years-old) and adults were served through these programs.
- The Transition to Lifespan Care clinic provided interdisciplinary services to 28 individuals ages 14 and older this past fiscal year.

Core Function: Research

- MMI faculty published 91 peer-reviewed articles
- Another 24 manuscripts have been submitted for peer-review.
- In addition, the faculty had 9 book chapters published.
- MMI UCEDD faculty and staff presented 184 papers or posters at over 30 state, regional, national, and international conferences.

Core Function: Information Dissemination

- There were 10 webinars provided by our Family Care Enhancement Project team
    - These are available at Family Care Enhancement Project – YouTube
    - The FCEP team also hosted 6 informational sessions for Spanish-speaking families
- We had 279,268 unique page views for our MMI website.
- There were 99,224 unique visitors and 4,277 returning visitors. Most visitors were from the United States, but we also had visitors from China, Singapore, India, and Sweden.

- MMI Facebook had 6,287 followers and 638,154 views.
- Instagram had 1,818 followers and 33,193 views.
- X had 926 followers and Bluesky had 114 followers.

Current Agency activities/trends/improvements/issues impacting individuals with I/DD:

Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) Grant 5-year renewal submitted July 10th. Dr. Jenny Burt (Psychology) new LEND Director. Dr. Whitney Strong-Bak (Psychology) new LEND Associate Director. Kellie Ellerbusch continues as LEND Program Coordinator.

Future/upcoming Agency activities:

We will be working on our new 5-year workplan due this next fiscal year and based on the recent needs assessment completed with the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities

Conflict of Interest Policy

Developmental Disabilities Council membership is required by law to be diverse. The Developmental Disabilities Act mandates that there be representatives on the Council of principal state agencies serving individuals with developmental disabilities, the Protection and Advocacy System and the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Services (UCEDD). These Council members (who serve on the Council by virtue of their position) are key providers and players in the state system and may also wish to expand services to more individuals with developmental disabilities in innovative ways. Councils are mandated to encourage and support these agencies to do so.

The DD Act mandates that a non-governmental representative and a non-profit representative from organizations concerned with services for individuals with developmental disabilities shall be included in the Council Membership.

In accordance with the DD Act, 60% of the Council's membership must consist of individuals with developmental disabilities, parents or guardians of children with developmental disabilities, or immediate relatives or guardians of adults with mentally impairing developmental disabilities who cannot advocate for themselves. These citizen Council members represent the interests of all individuals with developmental disabilities in the State, the key stakeholders who seek and use the system of services.

Depending upon the objectives in the Council's State Plan, it is possible that agencies and organizations with which Council members and staff are associated might apply for and receive grants or contracts from the Council. Thus, there is the possibility that these Council members may <u>appear</u> to have a conflict of interest, even where one does not exist, because of their associations with these agencies and organizations.

This policy attempts to deal with the problem of conflict of interest in ways fair to Council members and staff which enable the Council to function while protecting the integrity of the Council.

<u>CONFLICT OF INTEREST:</u> A potential conflict of interest exists when a Council member, in the discharge of official duties, would be required to take an action or make any decision that may cause financial benefit or detriment to himself/herself, a member of his/her immediate family or a business with which the Council member is associated which is distinguishable from the effects of such action on the public generally or a broad segment of the public.

<u>CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION:</u> Upon receipt of any materials determined to be confidential, Council members promises to keep confidential all provided material designated as being confidential. Council members promises to not copy, scan, print, photograph, or otherwise reproduce the confidential material.

THIRD PARTY CONTACT: Council members will not engage in any contact or communication with any third party, including but not limited to any vendor, applicant, or potential applicant. If any such contact or communication should occur or if the Council member believes any such contact may have occurred or should occur, Council member will notify the Chairperson and/or NCCD staff immediately.

1. A copy of the "Conflict of Interest" Policy will be given to each Council member and at the first meeting of each federal fiscal year, Council members shall disclose any potential conflict of interests of which they are aware. These disclosures shall be duly recorded in the minutes.

2. When a Council member is aware of a conflict of interest, they should notify the chairperson and/or NCDD staff.

3. Council members with a conflict of interest should refrain from participating in the discussion. When a vote is taken, the Council members should abstain from voting. The minutes shall reflect that the Council members "abstained" from voting.

4. Any Council member who is unsure whether there is a conflict of interest or a potential conflict of interest should present the question to the Chairperson and/or NCCD staff prior to any vote being taken.

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities

Council Member Conflicts of Interest

FFY2026

1. Amanda Anderson	Community Support Network, Collaborative Industries, The Arc of Nebraska
2. Christopher Chambers	Nebraska Department of Education – Office of Special Education
3. Diane Cochran	None
4. Quinton Corwin	None
5. Dr. Jamar Dorsey	
6. Shauna Graham	None
7. Tony Green	Department of Health and Human Services – Division of Developmental Disabilities
8. Brent Hoffman	Special Olympics Nebraska, Community Supports Network, Integrated Life Choices, Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation, Enable Savings Plan
9. Shaistha Kiran Karipi	Nebraska Department of Education – Educational Service Unit #3
10. Seamus Kelly	Disability Rights Nebraska
11. Eddie Kraska	Ollie Webb Center, Special Olympics
12. Beth Libra	The Arc of Norfolk, Northeast Nebraska Diversity Council, Disability Rights Nebraska, Hands of Heartland, Norfolk Area Buddy Baseball
13. Jacob McIver	None
14. Diana Meadors	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services – Division of Behavioral Health
15. Hannah Mercer	None
16. Angie Ohlrich	None
17. DJ Plautz	Nebraska Department of Education – Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation
18. Sasha Reeks	Nebraska Department of Correctional Services
19. Jennifer Severe-Oforah	Department of Health and Human Services – Division of Public Health – Maternal & Child Health
20. Mark Shriver	University of Nebraska Medical Center, Munroe-Meyer Institute, University Center of Excellence for Developmental Disabilities, People First of Nebraska, University of Nebraska at Omaha
21. Dawn Sybrant	Department of Health and Human Services – Division of Medicaid and Long-Term Care
22. Judy Trent	The Arc of Buffalo County
23. Joe Valenti	Governor's Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee, Munroe-Meyer Institute Community Advisory Board, Olmstead Advisory Committee
24. Joshua Whitfield	Poo Patrol, Extended Families of Nebraska
25. Sadie Worthing	Teammates of Lexington, Lexington Planning Commission

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities
Council Committees for FFY2027

HYBRID Legislative & Advocacy Committee (February 4, 2027)

Legislative & Advocacy Committee Chairperson – NAME

1. Shauna Graham
2. Brent Hoffman
3. Eddie Kraska
4. Diana Meadors
5. Jacob McIver
6. Hannah Mercer
7. Sasha Reeks
8. Joe Valenti (interested in Chair)
9. Josh Whitfield

*Beth Libra

HYBRID Planning Committee (May 6, 2027)

Planning Committee Chairperson – NAME

1. Amanda Anderson
2. Christopher Chambers
3. Diane Cochran
4. Jamar Dorsey
5. DJ Plautz
6. Mark Shriver

*Beth Libra

VIRTUAL Grant Review Committee (August 19, 2027)

Grant Review Committee Chairperson – NAME

1. Shaistha Karipi
2. Tony Green
3. Angie Ohlrich
4. Jennifer Severe-Oforah
5. Dawn Sybrant
6. Sadie Worthing

*Beth Libra

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities
Grant Review Committee
November 2026

Council Members

Shaistha Karipi, Chairperson
Family Member
kiranshai2019@gmail.com

Amanda Anderson
Family Member
aanderson@cii.us.com

Tony Green
DHHS Division of Disability & Aging
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Jennifer Severe-Oforah
DHHS Division of Public Health
Maternal & Child Health
jennifer.severeoforah@nebraska.gov

Angie Ohlrich
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Non-Council Members assisting with scoring Youth Self-Advocacy Mini-Grant Applications:

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Self-Advocate and Co-Chair of NE Olmstead Advisory Committee
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Previous NCDD Chair, Family member, Hands of Heartland and NASP Supported Employment Committee
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Opportunity

FORM 1: APPLICATION COVER PAGE

Instructions: This form must be signed and returned, along with the application materials, before the Application Due Date, to the POC or designated email address, as applicable.

RFA #	RELEASE DATE
7571	September 14, 2026
APPLICATION DUE DATE	**POINT OF CONTACT**
October 26, 2026	DHHS.DDCouncil@nebraska.gov

CERTIFICATION AND GUARANTEE OF COMPLIANCE

By signing this Application Cover Sheet, the Applicant guarantees compliance with the provisions stated in this Request for Application and certifies that all information contained in this Application is accurate. This Application is submitted pursuant to the terms of the RFA, and if the Applicant is awarded funding, it will be incorporated into the Subaward between the parties. I understand that if anything in this Application conflicts with the RFA or with the subsequent Subaward, the Subaward and RFA shall govern as set forth in the Subaward.

Application Requirements The following information **must** be included in the application in order for it to be considered for review:

- The target population - individuals with developmental disabilities
- Must address one of the four goals in the Council's 2022-2026 5-year State Plan of the applicant's choice
- Applicants who have been disbarred by the US Federal government are not eligible to receive funding under this RFA

ORGANIZATION LEGAL NAME*: OMNI BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

ORGANIZATION DBA NAME (IF APPLICABLE): Omni Inventive Care

ORGANIZATION UEI NUMBER: HDLJV2CJ8639 ORGANIZATION EIN NUMBER: 47-0765107

ORGANIZATION TYPE: ☑ Non-Profit Organization ☐ Institution of Higher Learning
☐ For- Profit Organization ☐ State, Local, or Tribal Government
☐ Other:

COMPLETE ADDRESS: 5115 F ST
Omaha, Nebraska 68117-2807
United States

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Nebraska 02

TELEPHONE NUMBER: (402) 397-9866 EMAIL ADDRESS: lisa.benner@omniic.com

☑ I CERTIFY THAT THIS ORGANIZATION IS AN "ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATION" AS DEFINED BY THIS RFA

☑ I CERTIFY THAT THIS ORGANIZATION IS NOT PRESENTLY DEBARRED OR SUSPENDED.

SIGNATURE: Lisa Benner Digitally signed by Lisa Benner Date: 2026.10.23 12:55:44 -05'00'

TYPED NAME & TITLE OF SIGNER: Lisa Benner - Director of Training

**Name must match UEI Number*

Omni Organization Overview

FORM 2

1. Organization Information:

Organization Name: OMNI BEHAVIORAL HEALTH D/B/A Omni Inventive Care
Unique Entity Identifier (UEI): HDLJV2CJ8639

2. Summary of Federal Grants Experience:

Omni Inventive Care (Omni) has experience receiving and administering federally funded programs through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the U.S. Department of the Treasury, and Nebraska-based funding agencies.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Omni received $27,000 through Nebraska's Community CARES Stabilization Grant, Round 2. This funding supported eligible operational and COVID-19-related expenses necessary to maintain services during the pandemic. Omni maintained financial records and supporting documentation consistent with program requirements.

Omni also received $334,679.15 through the HHS Provider Relief Fund, administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). This federal funding required documentation of eligible expenditures, reporting of financial information, and compliance with applicable federal oversight requirements. Omni successfully completed all required federal reporting associated with these funds, demonstrating experience with federal financial accountability and reporting procedures.

More recently, Omni entered into a $499,840 contract with Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare for a federally funded Community Violence Intervention Pilot examining community violence exposure and trauma in North Omaha. The project was supported through federal funding under Assistance Listing Number 21.027, Federal Award Number SLFRP1965. The underlying federal award period was July 1, 2022, through September 30, 2025. This project involved community-based research intended to inform behavioral health interventions and decision-making.

These funding experiences have provided Omni with knowledge of federal funding requirements, including applicable provisions of the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200) and HHS grant guidance. Omni recognizes the importance of maintaining accurate financial records, documenting necessary and allowable expenditures, preventing duplicate reimbursement, retaining supporting documentation, and meeting financial and programmatic reporting requirements.

For the proposed Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities project, Omni will apply these practices to ensure responsible management of federal funds, accurate documentation of personnel expenses and nonfederal matching contributions, compliance with applicable cost principles, and timely submission of required programmatic and financial reports.

3. Summary of Programmatic Experience:

Omni is a nonprofit organization providing community-based behavioral health and developmental disability services to individuals and families with complex needs. Omni's services include foster care, outpatient psychotherapy, in-home therapeutic services, substitute care and shared living, community-based group homes, vocational services, and consultative and functional behavioral assessments. Through these programs, Omni works to improve quality of life, strengthen families, promote independence, and support meaningful participation in community life.

Omni has extensive experience supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), including those with co-occurring behavioral health needs. This specialized experience provides a strong foundation for developing and delivering professional education that addresses the complexities of assessment, individualized service planning, and community-based supports.

Through its developmental disability services, Omni supports individuals and families in navigating complex service systems, understanding available supports, and participating in individualized service planning. Omni emphasizes person-centered practices that recognize each individual's strengths, preferences, rights, and goals while encouraging family and guardian involvement. Its community-based services promote informed decision-making, independence, and meaningful community inclusion.

Omni also has experience working with culturally diverse and historically underserved populations, including youth and families in North Omaha. This experience reinforces the importance of providing accessible, culturally responsive education and ensuring that individuals and families have the information needed to participate in decisions affecting their services and supports.

In addition to its direct services, Omni has extensive experience developing and delivering educational programs for behavioral health professionals, community providers, families, and individuals with IDD.

Through funding from the Charles E. Lakin Foundation, Omni implemented an evidence-based training initiative for behavioral health professionals across southwest Iowa. The program provided 12 in-person trainings, ongoing virtual instruction, and advanced training opportunities, reaching 180 professionals in 2022–2023. Training focused on improving professionals' ability to support individuals with complex

behavioral health needs and intellectual disabilities. Participant evaluations demonstrated increased knowledge and strong satisfaction with the training.

Omni also collaborated with the University of Nebraska at Omaha and Nebraska's Behavioral Health System of Care on *Understanding Youth Populations with Low-Cognitive Disorders and Mental Illness*, a specialized training initiative focused on evidence-based approaches for professionals serving youth with mental illness and developmental disabilities.

Additionally, Omni has provided community-based education through its Support for Students Exposed to Trauma (SSET) program in North Omaha. The initiative began with a community needs assessment that incorporated input from local residents to identify challenges and areas where additional support was needed. Using these findings, Omni developed and implemented a pilot program designed to address the identified needs. The program serves youth and families in historically underserved communities, teaching coping strategies, emotional regulation, social skills, and problem-solving through small-group instruction.

These initiatives demonstrate Omni's ability to coordinate accessible training, collaborate with community partners, engage culturally diverse and underserved populations, and evaluate educational outcomes. This experience directly supports Omni's ability to implement the proposed interRAI Professional Education Initiative, which will provide four free, quarterly virtual training sessions to approximately 120 professionals serving individuals with IDD across Nebraska.

4. Personnel and Management:

Omni will implement the proposed interRAI training initiative through an experienced team with expertise in intellectual and developmental disabilities, behavioral health, assessment administration, professional education, program evaluation, and regulatory compliance. The project team will include a Project Coordinator, an Evaluation and Compliance Lead, and two interRAI trainers who will co-facilitate four quarterly training sessions.

Lisa Benner, MBA – Project Coordinator

Lisa serves as Omni's Director of Training and has been with the organization since 2018. She holds an MBA from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and has experience coordinating professional training programs, community partnerships, and grant-funded initiatives, including projects supported by Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare and the Charles E. Lakin Foundation. Lisa will oversee scheduling, registration, training logistics, participant communication, evaluation coordination, and grant reporting documentation.

Kristine D. Tevis, PhD – Evaluation and Compliance Oversight

Kristine serves as Omni's Chief Compliance Officer and has more than 20 years of experience in behavioral health, organizational leadership, research, and program evaluation. She holds a PhD in Social Psychology from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, with specialized training in statistics, research methodology, and program evaluation. Kristine has led grant-funded initiatives and oversees Omni's compliance and quality improvement activities. She will oversee program evaluation, including participant feedback, training outcomes, and assessment of program effectiveness.

Kate Sorrell, LICSW – interRAI Trainer

Kate is Omni's Director of Clinical Operations and has more than 14 years of experience supporting individuals with IDD and their families. She provides clinical oversight, risk assessment, and behavioral support planning for individuals with complex needs. Kate is trained and authorized to administer interRAI assessments and brings expertise in person-centered care and service planning. She will assist with developing the training curriculum and educational materials and co-facilitate all four training sessions.

Taylor Wochnick, PLMHP – interRAI Trainer

Taylor is an Outpatient Therapist at Omni and has worked with individuals with IDD and complex behavioral health needs since 2018. She is trained and authorized to administer interRAI assessments and has experience with assessment processes, person-centered planning, and community-based supports. She will assist with developing the training curriculum and educational materials and co-facilitate all four training sessions.

Project Management and Oversight

Lisa Benner will coordinate the four quarterly training sessions and oversee project administration, including scheduling, participant registration, statewide outreach, communication, and reporting documentation.

Kate Sorrell and Taylor Wochnick will develop the interRAI training curriculum and accompanying educational materials and co-facilitate the sessions. Training will focus on the assessment process, relevant terminology, and the relationship between assessment information and person-centered service planning.

Kristine Tevis will oversee program evaluation, including reviewing participant knowledge assessments, satisfaction surveys, and training outcomes to assess effectiveness and identify opportunities for improvement.

Omni will maintain project records, track expenditures and matching contributions, and complete required financial and programmatic reporting in accordance with applicable federal and state requirements.

5. Agreements Terminated or Costs Disallowed:

Omni reports no agreements executed within the past five years with federal awarding agencies or pass-through entities that were terminated for cause or had specific conditions imposed as described in the application requirements.

Omni Work Plan and Narrative

FORM 3

1. Project Summary

Omni proposes to provide four free, two-hour virtual interRAI training sessions for approximately 120 professionals who support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) throughout Nebraska. The project aligns with the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities' 2027–2031 State Plan, Goal 1, Objective E – Training Opportunities. Through these training sessions, participants will develop a greater understanding of Nebraska's interRAI assessment process, the use of assessment information in individualized service planning, and practices that support self-determination, independence, safety, and community inclusion. By strengthening professional knowledge and reducing geographic barriers to training, the initiative aims to improve the quality of information and support available to individuals with IDD and their families.

2. Agency Qualifications

Omni provides a comprehensive range of community-based behavioral health and developmental disability services designed to support individuals and families with complex needs. Services include foster care, in-home therapeutic and family preservation services, outpatient psychotherapy, and Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT). Omni also provides specialized services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including substitute care and shared living arrangements, community-based group homes, vocational services, and consultative and functional behavioral assessments. These programs focus on individualized support, behavioral intervention, skill development, family stability, and community integration. Through its work with individuals with IDD, Omni has extensive practical experience in assessment, individualized service planning, and supporting independence and meaningful participation in community life. This experience provides a strong foundation for delivering professional interRAI education that emphasizes person-centered practices and informed service planning. Omni supports individuals and families in understanding available services, participating in individualized planning, and expressing preferences about supports and community participation. Its experience serving youth and families in historically underserved North Omaha communities informs its approach to accessible, culturally responsive education and family engagement.

Omni has experience developing and delivering professional education initiatives. With support from the Charles E. Lakin Foundation, Omni conducted 12 in-person trainings across southwest Iowa, along with online and advanced training opportunities, reaching approximately 180 behavioral health professionals. The initiative demonstrated measurable improvements in participant knowledge and received positive participant evaluations. Omni has also collaborated with the University of Nebraska at Omaha and the Nebraska Behavioral Health System of Care on professional education initiatives.

The proposed project will be administered by four experienced Omni professionals:

Lisa Benner, MBA – Project Coordinator: Lisa is Omni's Director of Training and has served the organization since 2018. She has experience coordinating professional education, grant-funded projects, scheduling, participant communications, and training logistics. She will manage implementation, registration, virtual delivery coordination, documentation, and grant reporting.

Kristine D. Tevis, PhD – Evaluation and Compliance Oversight: Kristine is Omni's Chief Compliance Officer, with more than 20 years of experience in behavioral health, research, program evaluation, organizational leadership, and regulatory compliance. She will oversee evaluation design, review training outcomes, and provide quality and compliance oversight.

Kate Sorrell, LICSW – interRAI Trainer: Kate is Omni's Director of Clinical Operations and has more than 14 years of experience supporting individuals with IDD and their families. She is trained and authorized to administer interRAI assessments and has expertise in clinical oversight, risk assessment, and person-centered service planning.

Taylor Wochnick, PLMHP – interRAI Trainer: Taylor is an Outpatient Therapist at Omni with experience supporting individuals with IDD and complex behavioral health needs since 2018. She is trained and authorized to administer interRAI assessments and has practical experience with individualized planning and community-based services.

Together, the project team brings experience in interRAI assessment administration, professional education, project management, program evaluation, and compliance with grant requirements.

3. Coordination and Collaboration

Omni recognizes that meaningful community impact requires collaboration with organizations that share its commitment to supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Omni has maintained long-standing contracts with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, including the Division of Children and Family Services and the Division of Disability, spanning multiple decades. Omni has also established relationships with behavioral health professionals, developmental disability service providers, community organizations, and public-sector partners through its service delivery, professional training, and grant-funded initiatives.

Omni's previous collaborations include work with Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare, the Charles E. Lakin Foundation, the University of Nebraska at Omaha, and the Nebraska Behavioral Health System of Care. These experiences demonstrate Omni's ability to coordinate educational initiatives, engage community stakeholders, and successfully implement grant-supported activities.

Several Omaha-area organizations share Omni's commitment to supporting individuals with IDD, including KVC Nebraska and Capture DCS. These organizations provide developmental disability and family support services that promote independence,

individualized care, and community inclusion. Omni's specialized experience serving individuals with co-occurring developmental disabilities and complex behavioral health needs, combined with its history of providing professional education and its team of trained and authorized interRAI assessors, positions the organization to provide valuable education and guidance to the broader provider community.

Through the proposed initiative, Omni will invite KVC Nebraska, Capture DCS, and other community-based developmental disability providers to participate in four free, virtual interRAI training sessions. The trainings will strengthen provider knowledge of the assessment process and person-centered service planning while expanding access to education across Nebraska, particularly for professionals in rural communities and areas with limited access to specialized training.

Omni has received letters of community support from KVC Nebraska and Capture DCS. Omni will encourage these organizations and other providers to share training opportunities within their professional networks. The project will be coordinated and delivered by Omni staff. Letters of support from KVC Nebraska and Capture DCS are attached to the application email.

4. Detailed Narrative

Selected State Plan Goal and Objective

Goal 1 – Strengthening Systems for Community Inclusion

The Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities' (NCDD) 2027–2031 Five-Year State Plan seeks measurable increases in opportunities for self-determination, independence, productivity, safety, and community inclusion for Nebraskans with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families through systemic improvements at the state, regional, and local levels.

Objective E – Training Opportunities

Through September 30, 2031, NCDD will support at least three high-quality, person-centered training opportunities for professionals who provide support to individuals with IDD. These trainings will focus on enhancing skills that promote self-determination, independence, productivity, safety, and inclusion in community life and educational settings.

Omni Inventive Care's proposed interRAI Professional Education Initiative directly aligns with Goal 1, Objective E by providing four free, accessible professional training opportunities focused on Nebraska's interRAI assessment process and its application to person-centered service planning. By strengthening professional knowledge and understanding, the project aims to improve the quality of support provided to individuals with IDD and their families throughout Nebraska. The targeted system-level improvement is more consistent access to practical interRAI education across providers and geographic regions, reducing differences in professional familiarity with assessment terminology and its relationship to person-

centered planning. The project measures professional learning directly; downstream improvements in services are anticipated longer-term benefits rather than guaranteed results.

Statement of Need

Nebraska's implementation of interRAI assessment tools has introduced assessment processes and terminology that professionals supporting individuals with IDD must understand to effectively assist individuals and families. These assessments collect information about an individual's needs, abilities, and circumstances and may inform service planning and decisions within Nebraska's developmental disabilities system. However, there are no existing trainings that inform providers of their role in the implementation.

Nebraska has a substantial workforce of professionals supporting individuals with IDD. The state's 2024–2025 State of the Workforce report represented more than 4,330 direct support professionals across 77 responding provider agencies, highlighting the potential reach and importance of accessible professional education. As Nebraska continues implementing interRAI assessments, providers need clear, practical information about the assessment process and its relationship to individualized service planning. Omni's initiative will address this need by providing four free, virtual training sessions designed to reach approximately 120 professionals statewide, including those serving rural and underserved communities.

Professionals who work with individuals with IDD may have different levels of familiarity with the assessment process, the information collected, and how assessment findings relate to individualized supports. Without accessible educational opportunities, misunderstandings may make it more difficult for professionals to explain the process, communicate with families, and support person-centered planning. Incomplete or inaccurate information during the assessment process may affect how an individual's needs are represented and could potentially influence decisions regarding service levels and available supports. This highlights the importance of ensuring professionals understand the assessment process and can help individuals and families participate effectively.

To ensure the training reflects Nebraska's specific implementation of interRAI, Omni plans to collaborate with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to gather input on priority training topics, common areas of confusion among providers, and how assessment information is used within the state's developmental disabilities service system. Omni will seek DHHS guidance during curriculum development to help ensure the information presented is accurate, relevant, and responsive to the needs of Nebraska providers. This collaboration will also help identify areas where additional education could improve providers' understanding of their responsibilities throughout the assessment process.

Training availability can also vary geographically. Professionals in rural communities may encounter additional barriers to attending in-person education, including travel time, staffing limitations, and related expenses.

Omni proposes a statewide virtual training initiative to address these educational needs by providing consistent, practical information at no cost to participants. By increasing professional understanding of interRAI assessments and their relationship to person-centered service planning, the project will strengthen providers' ability to support informed choice, independence, self-determination, and community inclusion for individuals with IDD.

Primary Project Activities

Omni will conduct four two-hour virtual training sessions during the 2027 grant period. Each session will be delivered through Zoom and will be free to participating professionals. The project aims to reach approximately 120 professionals who provide support to individuals with IDD across Nebraska.

Two Omni clinicians who are trained and authorized to administer interRAI assessments, Kate Sorrell, LICSW, and Taylor Wochnick, PLMHP, will co-facilitate all four sessions. Lisa Benner, MBA, Omni's Director of Training, will coordinate scheduling, registration, participant communication, virtual training logistics, and project documentation. Kristine Tevis, PhD, Omni's Chief Compliance Officer, will oversee program evaluation and compliance.

During curriculum development, Omni will seek input from DHHS regarding Nebraska-specific interRAI implementation, provider responsibilities, and priority educational needs. Any guidance received will be considered when developing training materials to ensure the content is relevant to professionals working within Nebraska's developmental disabilities service system.

The training will provide practical education on Nebraska's interRAI assessment system, including:

- The purpose of interRAI assessments and their role within Nebraska's developmental disabilities service system.
- The assessment process, including common terminology, assessment domains, and information collected.
- How assessment information is used to inform individualized service planning.
- The importance of recognizing individual strengths, preferences, needs, and goals when interpreting assessment information.
- Strategies for supporting informed choice, self-determination, independence, safety, and community inclusion.
- Effective communication with individuals with IDD, families, and other professionals throughout the assessment and service planning process.

Training sessions will incorporate presentations, practical examples, and opportunities for participant questions and discussion. Educational materials will be developed for electronic distribution and made available in accessible formats.

Omni will promote the training opportunities through its established professional networks and outreach to developmental disability service providers and community organizations, including providers serving rural and underserved populations. Virtual delivery will eliminate the need for travel and allow professionals throughout Nebraska to participate regardless of geographic location.

Omni will maintain registration and attendance records and use participant identifiers to count unique professionals separately from total session attendance. A brief pre-training and post-training knowledge check will assess understanding of core interRAI concepts; post-session satisfaction surveys, including any Council-required instrument, will capture perceived learning and training quality. The project target is for at least 80% of evaluation respondents to report increased understanding. Kristine Tevis will review results following each session, and the team will use feedback to refine subsequent delivery. Training materials will be submitted for required NCDD review and approval before public dissemination.

Expected Project Outputs

By December 31, 2027, Omni anticipates achieving the following outputs:

- Four virtual training sessions: Four free, two-hour interRAI education sessions delivered to professionals supporting individuals with IDD.
- Approximately 120 professionals trained: Approximately 120 professionals who provide support to individuals with IDD participating in the training opportunities, with a target of 30 participants per session in various geographical areas of Nebraska.
- Educational materials: Development of a training curriculum, PowerPoint presentations, and electronic resources explaining the interRAI assessment process and its relationship to person-centered service planning.
- Evaluation materials and results: Participant knowledge assessments, satisfaction surveys, and a summary of evaluation findings.
- Project documentation: Registration records, attendance documentation, quarterly reports, and a final summary of project activities and outcomes.
- Reusable training resources: Educational materials retained for potential future training opportunities and continued professional development.

Expected Project Outcomes

The primary anticipated outcome is increased professional understanding of Nebraska's interRAI assessment process and its relationship to person-centered service planning.

Through the four training sessions, participants are expected to strengthen their ability to explain the assessment process, recognize the importance of individual preferences and

needs, and understand how assessment information can inform decisions about services and supports.

Omni will evaluate training effectiveness using brief pre- and post-training knowledge checks and participant satisfaction surveys. The project will aim for at least 80% of evaluation respondents to report increased understanding of interRAI assessments and their application to individualized service planning. Pre/post responses will also be summarized to describe observed knowledge changes; results will be reported with the number of respondents and response rates.

Additional anticipated outcomes include:

- Increased access to specialized professional education for providers throughout Nebraska, including rural communities.
- Greater confidence among participants in discussing the interRAI assessment process with individuals with IDD and their families.
- Improved understanding of how assessment information relates to person-centered planning, informed choice, and individualized supports.
- Stronger professional capacity to promote independence, safety, self-determination, and community inclusion.

These outcomes support NCDD's Goal 1, Objective E by strengthening the knowledge and skills of professionals who provide support to individuals with IDD. Although the project directly trains professionals, the intended long-term beneficiaries are individuals with IDD and their families, who may benefit from clearer communication, more informed planning, and support that better reflects their individual needs and preferences.

Community Inclusion and Person-Centered Practice

Omni's interRAI training initiative supports the principles of person-centered planning and community inclusion by helping professionals better understand how assessment information relates to individualized services and supports. The training will emphasize the importance of considering each individual's strengths, needs, preferences, and personal goals when using assessment information to inform service planning.

By improving professionals' understanding of the interRAI assessment process, the project aims to strengthen their ability to communicate effectively with individuals with IDD and their families and support informed decision-making. This knowledge can contribute to services that reflect individual choice, promote independence, and support meaningful participation in community life.

Although the project directly provides education to professionals, its broader purpose is to strengthen the quality of support available to individuals with IDD throughout Nebraska, consistent with NCDD's Goal 1, Objective E – Training Opportunities.

5. Accomplishments

During the 12-month grant period, Omni expects to provide four free virtual training sessions and reach approximately 120 professionals who provide support to individuals with IDD across Nebraska, while tracking repeat attendance separately. The project will develop reusable educational materials, collect participant knowledge checks and satisfaction surveys, and summarize changes in understanding of interRAI assessments and person-centered service planning. At least 80% of evaluation respondents are expected to report increased understanding; actual results and response counts will be documented in quarterly and final reporting.

Short-Term Benefits:

Participants will have increased access to free professional education, improved familiarity with interRAI terminology and assessment processes, and a stronger understanding of how assessment information can support individualized services. Virtual delivery will make training available to professionals regardless of geographic location.

Long-Term Benefits:

The project is intended to strengthen professional capacity within Nebraska's developmental disabilities service system. Increased understanding of assessments and person-centered planning may support clearer communication, more informed service planning, and greater opportunities for individuals with IDD to express preferences and participate in decisions affecting their lives. Ultimately, this results in more accurate assessments completed for participants receiving services.

These accomplishments contribute to State Plan Goal 1, Objective E by providing high-quality training opportunities that build professional skills supporting independence, safety, self-determination, and community inclusion.

6. Work Plan

Below.

WORK PLAN

Omni Inventive Care

interRAI Professional Education Initiative

January 1, 2027 – December 31, 2027

	Goal: Expand access to high-quality, person-centered interRAI education
	Objective: By December 31, 2027, provide four free, two-hour virtual interRAI training sessions to approximately 120 professionals supporting individuals with IDD throughout Nebraska.

#	Activity	List What Your Measure of Success Will Be	Responsible Staff/Party	Start Date	End Date
1	Seek DHHS input and develop curriculum and accessible electronic materials	DHHS input requested and any feedback received incorporated as appropriate; curriculum, presentations, and resources completed and submitted for required review	Kate, Taylor, Kristine, and Lisa	January 4th, 2027	February 26th, 2027
2	Promote sessions and coordinate registration	Training announcements distributed; registration system established	Lisa	February 1st, 2027	November 12th, 2027
3	Deliver four virtual sessions	Four sessions completed; approximately 120 professionals reached	Kate, Taylor, and Lisa	March 1st, 2027	November 30th, 2027
4	Collect attendance and participant evaluations	Attendance records and evaluations collected after each session	Lisa and Kristine	March 1st, 2027	December 3rd, 2027

	Goal: Evaluate outcomes and sustain project resources
	Objective: By December 31, 2027, evaluate training effectiveness, preserve reusable educational materials, and develop a plan for continued access to interRAI education.

#	Activity	List What Your Measure of Success Will Be	Responsible Staff/Party	Start Date	End Date
1	Develop evaluation measures and participant surveys	Evaluation instruments prepared and reviewed	Kristine, Lisa	January 11th, 2027	February 26th, 2027
2	Review participation and training outcomes	Quarterly evaluation summaries and a final outcomes summary	Kristine, Lisa	March 15th, 2027	December 17th, 2027
3	Record, Review, and organize reusable training materials	Final curriculum and electronic resources retained for future use	Kate, Taylor, and Lisa	October 1st, 2027	December 17th, 2027
4	Develop a sustainability plan	Written plan identifying future training options, responsible staff, and resource needs	Kristine and Lisa	October 1st, 2027	December 17th, 2027

7. Project Sustainability

Omni intends to sustain the benefits of the interRAI Professional Education Initiative beyond the 2027 grant period by retaining the curriculum, presentations, accessible electronic resources, and evaluation findings in its internal training resource library. The project will create materials designed for updating and reuse rather than one-time distribution.

After each training session, Kristine Tevis and Lisa Benner will review participant evaluations, knowledge-check results, and feedback to identify areas for improvement. Each session will build upon the previous one, allowing Omni to refine the curriculum and improve training effectiveness. The final session will be recorded and made available for future training opportunities, supporting continued education beyond the grant period. By December 17, 2027, Kristine and Lisa will develop a sustainability plan outlining ongoing responsibilities, content updates, and future use of the training materials.

Following the grant period, Omni's Director of Training will maintain the files, registration and evaluation summaries, and an inventory of reusable resources. Kate Sorrell and Taylor Wochnick, or designated clinical leadership, will review content for accuracy before any subsequent use and when Nebraska assessment practices or guidance materially change. Subject to available staff capacity, Omni may incorporate relevant materials into existing staff professional development and share approved resources with interested provider organizations.

Omni will maintain outreach contacts established through the project, including interested developmental disability providers, to share information about available educational resources where feasible. No external agency has been assigned an ongoing responsibility without its agreement.

This approach supports NCDD's broader goal of strengthening systems for community inclusion by building professional capacity to support individuals with IDD through informed, person-centered practices.

Omni Budget and Justification

FORM 4

1. Budget

SUMMARY BUDGET

Omni Inventive Care

interRAI Professional Education Initiative

January 1, 2027 – December 31, 2027

		Requested Funds	Matching Funds	Total Project Budget
A	Personnel	$ 19,400.00	$ 4,329.00	$ 23,729.00
B	Fringe Benefits	$ 0	$ 3,559.35	$ 3,559.35
C	Travel	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0
D	Equipment	$ 0	$ 60.00	$ 60.00
E	Supplies	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0
F	Consultants/Contracts	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0
G	Other Direct Costs	$ 600.00	$ 0	$ 600.00
H	Total Direct Costs	$ 20,000.00	$ 7,948.35	$ 27,948.35
I	Total Indirect Costs	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0
J	Total (Sum H+I)	**$ 20,000.00**	**$ 7,948.35**	**$ 27,948.35**

2. Budget Justification

Omni Inventive Care is requesting $20,000 from the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCDD) to implement the interRAI Professional Education Initiative. The project will provide four free, two-hour virtual training sessions for approximately 120 professionals supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) throughout Nebraska.

Funding will support curriculum development, preparation of educational materials, statewide outreach, participant registration, training delivery, evaluation, and grant administration. Each session will build upon the previous one, allowing Omni to refine the curriculum based on participant feedback. The final session will be recorded for future educational use.

The total project budget is $27,948.35, consisting of $20,000 in requested federal funds and $7,948.35 in nonfederal matching contributions provided by Omni.

A. Personnel

Federal Request: $19,400.00
Nonfederal Match: $4,329.00
Total Personnel: $23,729.00

Personnel expenses will support four Omni employees responsible for developing, implementing, coordinating, and evaluating the project.

Kate Sorrell, LICSW – Director of Clinical Operations / interRAI Trainer

- Estimated Project Hours: 100
- Percentage of Annual Work Time: 4.8%
- Responsibilities: Curriculum research and development, preparation and revision of educational materials, training delivery, participant feedback review, and assistance with project documentation.

Taylor Wochnick, PLMHP – Outpatient Therapist / interRAI Trainer

- Estimated Project Hours: 100
- Percentage of Annual Work Time: 4.8%
- Responsibilities: Curriculum research and development, preparation and revision of educational materials, training delivery, participant feedback review, and assistance with project documentation.

Lisa Benner, MBA – Director of Training / Project Coordinator

- Estimated Project Hours: 300
- Percentage of Annual Work Time: 14.4%
- Responsibilities: Project coordination, statewide outreach, marketing, participant registration, communications, training preparation and delivery logistics, evaluation coordination, grant administration, budget tracking, and reporting.

Kristine D. Tevis, PhD – Chief Compliance Officer / Evaluation and Compliance Oversight

- Estimated Project Hours: 100
- Percentage of Annual Work Time: 4.8%
- Responsibilities: Curriculum and training material review, development and oversight of evaluation measures, analysis of participant feedback, grant administration, reporting, and compliance oversight.

Total Estimated Personnel Hours: 600

Omni will maintain payroll and time records to substantiate personnel expenses and ensure that federally funded staff time and nonfederal matching contributions are appropriately allocated.

B. Fringe Benefits

Federal Request: $0.00
Nonfederal Match: $3,559.35
Total Fringe Benefits: $3,559.35

Fringe benefits are calculated at an estimated rate of 15% of total personnel expenses.

$23,729.00 × 15% = $3,559.35

Omni will cover all project-related fringe benefits through eligible nonfederal organizational resources as part of its matching contribution. These expenses will be supported by payroll records and applicable benefit calculations.

C. Travel

Total: $0.00

No travel expenses are anticipated. All four training sessions will be delivered virtually, allowing professionals throughout Nebraska to participate without traveling.

D. Equipment

Federal Request: $0.00
Nonfederal Match: $60.00
Total Equipment: $60.00

Omni will contribute $60 in nonfederal matching funds toward its Zoom account, which will be used to host the four virtual interRAI training sessions. This amount represents four months of Zoom service at an estimated cost of $15 per month ($15 × 4 = $60). The subscription will support virtual training delivery and participant engagement throughout the project.

E. Supplies

Total: $0.00

No additional supply expenses are anticipated. Training presentations, participant resources, and evaluation materials will be developed and distributed electronically using existing organizational resources.

F. Consultants/Contracts

Total: $0.00

No outside consultants or contractors are anticipated. All project activities will be completed by qualified Omni employees.

G. Other Direct Costs

Federal Request: $600.00
Nonfederal Match: $0.00
Total Other Direct Costs: $600.00

Omni is requesting $600 for paid social media advertising to promote the four virtual interRAI training sessions to professionals supporting individuals with IDD throughout Nebraska. These

funds will support targeted statewide outreach, increase awareness, and encourage registration, particularly among professionals in rural communities and areas with limited access to specialized training opportunities.

Advertising expenses are estimated at $150 per training session ($150 × 4 = $600). Omni will maintain documentation of advertising expenditures and related promotional activities.

H. Total Direct Costs

Federal Request: $20,000.00
Nonfederal Match: $7,948.35
Total Direct Costs: $27,948.35

Direct costs include personnel, fringe benefits, the Zoom subscription contribution, and social media advertising expenses necessary to implement the project.

No rent, telephone, copying, printing, or general office expenses are separately charged to federal funds or included as matching contributions. Therefore, no allocation of these expenses is included in the project budget.

I. Total Indirect Costs

Total: $0.00

Omni is not requesting indirect costs for this project.

Matching Funds

Omni Inventive Care will provide $7,948.35 in eligible nonfederal matching contributions toward implementation of the interRAI Professional Education Initiative. These contributions consist of $4,329.00 in personnel expenses, $3,559.35 in fringe benefits, and $60.00 toward the Zoom subscription.

Matching contributions will be supported through eligible nonfederal organizational resources. Omni will maintain payroll records, employee time documentation, subscription expense records, and financial documentation to verify all matching contributions. Expenses will be allocated appropriately between federal funding and nonfederal matching contributions, with no costs counted toward both funding sources or used as match for another federal award.

Omni's proposed matching contribution exceeds the NCDD minimum requirement and demonstrates its commitment to implementing the project and sustaining its educational benefits.

Program Income

No program income is anticipated. All four training sessions will be offered free of charge to participants.

CAPTURE DCS
CAPTURE YOUR GROWTH

October 21st, 2026

DHHS, Division of Public Health, Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities

Letter of Support for Omni Inventive Care's interRAI Training Initiative

Dear Grant Review Committee:

On behalf of Capture DCS, I am pleased to express our support for Omni Inventive Care's proposed interRAI training initiative.

As an organization serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), we recognize the importance of providing professionals with clear, accessible education about Nebraska's interRAI assessment process and its role in supporting individuals with IDD.

Omni's proposed training initiative will provide free educational opportunities for professionals like us who support individuals with IDD. By increasing understanding of the interRAI assessment process, person-centered service planning, and available supports, this initiative has the potential to strengthen service delivery, improve communication, and promote informed decision-making.

We believe this training will be a valuable resource for professionals and organizations throughout Nebraska and will contribute to more informed, person-centered services for individuals with IDD.

We support Omni's efforts to expand access to this education and encourage consideration of its funding request.

Sincerely,

Jamar Dorsey, Ed.D

Capture DCS

2910 North 63rd Street
Omaha, Nebraska
(402) 502-3513

KVC Nebraska

Omaha
11550 I St., Suite 100
Omaha, NE 68137
(402) 498-4700

Lincoln
5001 Central Park Dr., Suite 100
Lincoln, NE 68504
(402) 742-8800
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STAFF
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President

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Director of Quality & Impact

Gloria Christian, L.I.M.H.P.
Director of Clinical & Prevention Services

Theresa Goley, M.A., L.M.H.P.
Director of Permanency

Hannah Tamayo, M.N.M.
Director of Developmental Disability Services

Nicole Deere-Andersen, M.A.
Director of Human Resources

KVC HEALTH SYSTEMS, INC.
Jason R. Hooper, M.S.W.
President and Chief Executive Officer

Chad E. Anderson, L.S.C.S.W.
Chief Clinical Officer

Lonnie Johnson
Chief Information Officer

Sherri Lohe
Chief Financial Officer

Erin Stucky, L.S.C.S.W.
Chief Operations Officer

October 23, 2026

DHHS, Division of Public Health, Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities

Letter of Support for Omni Inventive Care's interRAI Training Initiative

Dear Grant Review Committee:

On behalf of KVC Nebraska, I am pleased to express our support for Omni Inventive Care's proposed interRAI training initiative. As an organization serving individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD), we recognize the importance of providing professionals with clear, accessible education about Nebraska's interRAI assessment process and its role in supporting individuals with IDD.

Omni's proposed training initiative will provide free educational opportunities for professionals like us who support individuals with IDD. By increasing understanding of the interRAI assessment process, person-centered service planning, and available supports, this initiative has the potential to strengthen service delivery, improve communication, and promote informed decision-making.

We believe this training will be a valuable resource for professionals and organizations throughout Nebraska and will contribute to more informed, person-centered services for individuals with IDD.

We support Omni's efforts to expand access to this education and encourage consideration of its funding request.

Sincerely,

Ashley Brown

Ashley Brown, LCSW
KVC Nebraska President
adbrown@kvc.org
402-312-0280

Opportunity

FORM 1: APPLICATION COVER PAGE

Instructions: This form must be signed and returned, along with the application materials, before the Application Due Date, to the POC or designated email address, as applicable.

RFA #	RELEASE DATE
7571	September 14, 2026
APPLICATION DUE DATE	**POINT OF CONTACT**
October 26, 2026	DHHS.DDCouncil@nebraska.gov

CERTIFICATION AND GUARANTEE OF COMPLIANCE

By signing this Application Cover Sheet, the Applicant guarantees compliance with the provisions stated in this Request for Application and certifies that all information contained in this Application is accurate. This Application is submitted pursuant to the terms of the RFA, and if the Applicant is awarded funding, it will be incorporated into the Subaward between the parties. I understand that if anything in this Application conflicts with the RFA or with the subsequent Subaward, the Subaward and RFA shall govern as set forth in the Subaward.

Application Requirements The following information **must** be included in the application in order for it to be considered for review:

- The target population - individuals with developmental disabilities
- Must address one of the four goals in the Council's 2022-2026 5-year State Plan of the applicant's choice
- Applicants who have been disbarred by the US Federal government are not eligible to receive funding under this RFA

ORGANIZATION LEGAL NAME*: The Arc of Nebraska Inc

ORGANIZATION DBA NAME (IF APPLICABLE):

ORGANIZATION UEI NUMBER: GF71Y2ZEHJD3 ORGANIZATION EIN NUMBER: 47-0495350

ORGANIZATION TYPE:
- ☑ Non-Profit Organization
- ☐ For- Profit Organization
- ☐ Other: makayla@arc-nebraska.org
- ☐ Institution of Higher Learning
- ☐ State, Local, or Tribal Government

COMPLETE ADDRESS:
215 Centennial Mall South
Suite 508
Lincoln, NE 68508

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 1st Congressional District of Nebraska

TELEPHONE NUMBER: (402) 475-4407 EMAIL ADDRESS: arcnebraska1954@gmail com

☑ I CERTIFY THAT THIS ORGANIZATION IS AN "ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATION" AS DEFINED BY THIS RFA

☑ I CERTIFY THAT THIS ORGANIZATION IS NOT PRESENTLY DEBARRED OR SUSPENDED.

SIGNATURE:



TYPED NAME & TITLE OF SIGNER: MaKayla Bartels, Interim Executive Director

*Name must match UEI Number

FORM 2 – APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

The Applicant's Organization Overview section shall contain the following information about the Applicant. If the Application is a cooperative or joint venture between two or more entities, all information required in this section shall be provided for all entities, even if a new legal entity has been created or is planned to be created for the purposes of the Subaward.

1. **Organization Information.** Applicant's full legal name, including any other "doing business as" names, or any previous names the organization used. A Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) shall be provided. A parent UEI number shall also be provided, if applicable.

The Arc of Nebraska
215 Centennial Mall South
Suite #508
Lincoln, NE 68508

UEI: GF71Y2ZEHJD3
EIN: 47- 0495350

2. **Summary of Federal Grants Experience.** A description of Applicant's previous experience with receiving federal funds. This shall include, but not be limited to, experience receiving federal funds as a recipient or a subrecipient. Applicant should describe and demonstrate knowledge of the Uniform Grant Guidance / HHS Grants Guidance (as applicable), as well as any specific experience with the particular federal program and funding source that funds this RFA.

The Arc of Nebraska has a long history of working with federal grants, particularly from The Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities. Our work has supported Nebraskans seeking educational resources and has increased advocacy participation at the state level. Our work increases community awareness and promotes informed decision-making. We aim to provide educational opportunities for both self-advocates, caregivers, and their communities. The Arc of Nebraska has collaborated with the DD Council on several projects in the past and would like to continue a strong partnership for years to come through participation, information sharing, and advocacy.

The Interim Executive Director, MaKayla Bartels, has experience working on data collection and programming grants. Board members from The Arc of Nebraska have experience conducting research and working with IDEA state-funded grants from early childhood to transition to support individuals with disabilities in the community, including keeping individuals in their least restrictive settings, and financial accountability of such grants.

3. **Summary of Programmatic Experience.** A description of Applicant's experience with conducting the activities similar to those that applicant is proposing. Identify experience working with culturally diverse communities.

The Arc of Nebraska has conducted in-person and virtual events. Interim Executive Director, MaKayla Bartels, has participated in community resource fairs, coordinated a 300-person banquet event annually, and has experience building connections among strategic partners. This past year's focus has been bridging gaps to build a brighter future for those living with I/DD in Nebraska.

Amy Bonn, Vice President of the Arc of Nebraska, who will be providing leadership and assistance with this grant, worked for multiple years with culturally diverse communities, including through paid work in Alabama and volunteer work in Pennsylvania for students in TRiO federal grant programs, including Upward Bound and Talent Search. Among the students with whom she worked in the form of curriculum design, tutoring, and mentoring, were high school students from low-income families and students from families in which neither parent holds a bachelor's degree. Both programs were provided predominantly to students of color and students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

4. **Personnel and Management**. Applicant should identify individuals employed by Applicant, on its board of directors, or otherwise affiliated with Applicant, who have a demonstrated knowledge or experience with federal grants, the Uniform Grant Guidance or the HHS Grants Guidance, programmatic experience, or other relevant experience.

The Interim Executive Director of The Arc of Nebraska, MaKayla Bartels, has demonstrated knowledge and data collection experience through previous work with Big Brothers Big Sisters and undergrad studies at Hastings College. Part-time employee, Mikayla Teet, has experience writing, implementing, and reporting projects through her work with NSAC and JACHT.

The Secretary of the Board of The Arc of Nebraska, Angela Gleason, has worked in the scientific research field for over 10 years and has produced results for grants from national institutions such as the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, and the Department of Defense. Angela will play a key leadership role in the oversight and implementation of this project for The Arc of Nebraska.

The President of the Board of The Arc of Nebraska, Amy Bonn, worked for federal grant TRiO programs—Upward Bound and Talent Search—at Auburn University Montgomery as a curriculum developer and tutor. Through her work, she gained knowledge of and experience with federal grant programs, including federal reporting requirements. As part of her graduate practicum work in the course "Teaching Literacy in the Community" 3 at the University of Pittsburgh, she served as a volunteer tutor for high school students in the Upward Bound program at Chatham College. She currently serves on the Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates(COPAA) and brings knowledge of legal protection and the rights of students with disabilities and their families.

Past Board President, Mary Phillips, and Vice President Elect/Education Committee Chair, Matt McNiff also bring knowledge of state-funded grant and reporting to our executive team

5. **Agreements Terminated or Costs Disallowed**. Applicant must provide a summary of any agreements executed within the last five (5) years with federal awarding agencies or pass-through entities (either as grant agreements, cooperative agreements, subawards, or contracts) that:
    - Were terminated for cause; or
    - Where Specific Conditions were placed on Applicant (see 2 CFR § 200.207 or 45 CFR § 75.207).

If an Applicant has been disbarred by the United States Federal government, it is not eligible to receive funding under this RFA.

The Arc of Nebraska has never been disbarred by the United States Federal government. The Arc of Nebraska has not had any agreements with federal awarding agencies or pass-through entities within the last five years that were terminated for cause or where specific conditions were placed on our organization.

FORM 3 – APPLICANT'S WORK PLAN and NARRATIVE

Instructions:
Applicants must provide the following elements as part of the budget submission:

1. Work Plan (*work plan template provided)*
2. Work Plan Narrative

The Work Plan must respond in detail to the Project Description. It must contain a description of the work activities Applicant is proposing to complete under the RFA. It should contain an understanding of the requirements for the project under the applicable federal or state funding sources (or both), and, as applicable, descriptions of timelines, outcome/process measures, and program evaluation activities.

Applicant must demonstrate a working knowledge of the issues that affect individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, experience working with and/or advocating on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities, and a history of conducting education in the activity area identified in the application.

1. **Project Summary.** Provide a brief, one paragraph statement that clearly states the project goal, the major activities to be undertaken, and the projected impact on people with developmental disabilities and/or family members.

Develop an original The Arc of Nebraska Community Life Skills Curriculum rooted in safety & focused on quality of life through self-determination and advocacy. The curriculum is a growing collection of accessible educational modules designed for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and the caregivers, families, professionals and community members who support them. Statewide distribution of curriculum will increase community education,, incorporate into in-person training events, and virtual workshops. Individual life-skills packets would become modules within the larger curriculum that will be accessible on our website and social media platforms.

2. **Agency Qualifications.** Describe and document the applicant's capacity to carry out the programmatic intent of funds and proposed activities. Information in this section should include agency mission, programs, and services. The names, titles, qualifications, and experience of persons who will be responsible for and assisting with the project must be included.

The Arc of Nebraska's staff MaKayla Bartels and Mikayla Teet will use their expertise in data collection and marketing to increase visibility & implement curriculum training events. Our focus areas will offer accessible virtual training and in-person events. The Arc of Nebraska has video and photography equipment, including a drone piloting license. Mikayla Teet has equipment to transcribe materials into braille. These technical skills will increase education availability, promote short social media clips summaries, and provide professional-level quality when interviewing/storytelling with community professionals.

The Arc of Nebraska's Board is made up of strong advocates in areas of education, disability waivers, healthcare, research, legal protections, and community leadership. Executive Board members will participate in this project through professional spotlights and virtual webinars. Executive Board team members are: Amy Bonn, Mary Phillips, Matt McNiff, Angela Gleason. We also have two board members from the western Nebraska region: Jessica Barrett & Donna Barker. Both will be supportive of in-person educational events.

The Arc of Nebraska's board members come from a variety of backgrounds. We seek out self-advocates with intellectual and developmental disabilities to become board members. Our members also vary in age, race, profession, and military service. They come from all walks of life & lived experiences. The common factor that unites the board is a theme of I/DD playing a role in their day-to-day life or family. The board does not discriminate against gender identity, sexual orientation, age, race, mental and/or physical disability, or military service.

The Arc of Nebraska staff will host spotlight moments in this education series with professional community leaders and discuss the importance of accessible information and support. We will integrate knowledge of

I/DD, accommodations, and lived experience to increase understanding of services and community supports available to Nebraskans.

Current Reach:

- 13,703 Contacts
- 5,858 Contacts Subscribed to Mailing List
- 3,026 Contacts Subscribed to Emails
- 1,017 Website Page Followers
- 995 Website Views Last Month
- 4,043 Facebook followers
- 1,517 Instagram followers
- 11.2k Social Media Views Last Month

3. **Coordination and Collaboration.** Describe your community involvement and document the strength of relationships with other agencies to achieve common goals. Information included would be a list of current agency subawards or contracts, evidence of working relationships and community partnering, and a list of agency memberships on community focus groups, teams, coalitions, or other local organizations. If applicable, identify other individuals or organizations collaborating on the project, and provide a brief description of their contribution and qualifications. Attach letters of commitment/support from these partners.

The Arc of Nebraska has a history of collaboration and support with organizations such as SILC, People First, Disability Rights Nebraska, PTI Nebraska, and VR. We connect with disability service providers through a membership with NASP. We seek out opportunities to participate with ESU resource fairs, Transition Trainings, and PRT meetings. We have collaborated with Enable Savings Accounts for three past events. The Arc of Nebraska seeks out other disability groups and partners when identifying barriers and educational gaps. We continuously strive to work alongside others to reduce

We also participate in several civic engagement organizations and a strategic community partners:

- Advocacy Ambassadors
- Nebraska Association of Service Providers(NASP)
- Medicaid Advisory Committee (MAC)
- Beneficiary Advisory Committee (BAC)
- Education Equity Coalition
- Disability Rights Nebraska Initiatives
- Olmstead Advisory Committee & Education subcommittee
- NDE Transition Coalition
- Charting the Life Course Ambassadors
- Nebraska Civic Engagement Table
- Civic Nebraska
- Nebraska Appleseed
- League of Women Voters

We would love to replicate one of our in-person training sessions at the People First 2027 Convention next fall once the location is announced, but at this time collaboration has not been confirmed with People First leadership.

4. **Detailed Narrative.** Identify the selected State Plan Goal and Objective for this project. Describe in detail the need for the proposed project and how your project will address the stated need. Responding to the requirements detailed in the Project Specific Requirements section, describe the activities that you will engage in, why these activities are necessary, and what these Primary Project Activities will achieve.

Explain why this approach will be successful in achieving the project's goal, and the Expected Project Outputs (what will be created or achieved by the end of the project) and Expected Project Outcomes (the level of achievement or success that occurred because of the project activities). See Section 4 for examples of Expected Outputs and Expected Outcomes. Include a description of any products and deliverables that will be developed.

The Arc of Nebraska's Community Life Skills Curriculum touches on multiple areas within the Five Year Goals & Objectives. The most notable focus is on community inclusion and information access, but will also touch on healthcare and Medicaid.

State Plan Goal 1 Strengthening Systems for Community Inclusion:
- Objective D: Access & Use of Medicaid Services
- Objective G: Policy Advocacy

State Plan Goal 2 Strengthening Advocacy, Leadership, and Information Access
- Objective D: Information Access

This project will increase access to information and also provide supplemental community inclusion discussions and data. The Arc of Nebraska board has recently conducted outreach, collected data, and provided advocacy in a report on the impacts of Medicaid services and Western Nebraskans. We are constantly identifying areas of concern and bringing advocacy forward. (See attachment labeled "Report- Families Across Western NE")

The Arc of Nebraska not only will hit advocacy and data collection areas. We want to improve the lives of those with I/DD and their families. This Community Life Skills Curriculum will have at least two educational videos a month discussing advocacy, planning for the future, and overall safety topics from the proposed areas listed below. Nebraskans with I/DD and their families should understand what support looks like across the lifespan and where to go when concerns arise. Two barriers we can tackle headon is information sharing and community integration.

Here are some example educational questions we want to cover:
- Do you know what a preventative breast cancer screening looks like for someone with I/DD?
- What financial planning options are there for someone with I/DD to safeguard their future?
- How are we curating discussions around independence, bullying, and physical safety?
- What are the steps of home maintenance that prevent electrical fires, & what steps to take if an electrical emergency occurs?
- Do you understand what Nebraska State Ombudsman does? And what situations warrant Ombudsman outreach?

Purpose:
Create a sustainable, expandable community education program that gives Nebraskans with I/DD and their support networks practical, accessible tools for advocacy across the lifespan. The Community Life Skills Curriculum will be implemented through social media, youtube videos, webinars, and in-person events. Proposed curriculum areas will be recorded and shared on online for continuous viewing.

Goals:
- For individuals with disabilities: provide practical education and tools that support safety, independence, self-determination, safety, community participation and self-advocacy.

- For caregivers and support networks: provide strategies for teaching and supporting these skills while respecting the individual's autonomy and identifying opportunities to reduce unnecessary barriers.

The Community Life Skills Curriculum is designed around the idea that independence does not mean doing everything alone. Success means having knowledge, tools, accommodations and support necessary to participate in decisions and everyday life as fully as possible.

Proposed Curriculum Areas

1. **Self-determination & Self-advocacy:** Expressing lived experiences & preferences, knowing where to direct questions, requesting accommodations, participating in meetings, understanding personal rights, civic participation, understanding state systems for reporting concerns.
2. **Financial Life & Planning:** Understanding money, reading a paycheck, saving, understanding savings plan options like Enable Savings Accounts & special needs trusts, SSDI, recognizing scams/financial exploitation.
3. **Health & Wellness:** Making appointments, how to implement effective IEP goals with healthcare needs, communicating needs with healthcare providers, physical/mental health options, nutrition support, emergency care/planning, understanding & participating in health screenings.
4. **Relationships & Personal Safety:** Communication/boundary setting, healthy relationships between providers and friends, recognizing bullying & unsafe situations, identifying trusted support/seeking help, and safety online.
5. **Home Safety & Preparation:** Making an emergency plan for fire & weather, power outage/electrical safety, emergency contacts, emergency kits, home/yard maintenance, safe record keeping.

Public Input: "What should we teach next?" form to be on The Arc of Nebraska website.

Module Breakdown of Content:

- The Skill or Resource
- What I need to know
- What to do/What could happen
- Let's practice
- Let's plan
- Keep this - contact sheet, check list, etc
- Supporting this skill - caregiver guidance
- A list of additional resources

Social Media Integration

Each new life skill module would be accompanied by a social media post introducing the resource to the community. Each post would include a small piece of useful or engaging content related to the skill.

Examples

- Share a Tip - highlight one useful piece of information from the packet with a community rep.
- What would you do? - Present a realistic situation and ask followers how they would respond
- Did you know - Expand on an interesting fact or concept introduced in the packet.
- For Caregivers & supporters - Use the packet topic to share a strategy for supporting someone as they learn the skill.

Posts could direct users to the complete module on The Arc of Nebraska website, helping educational content also drive awareness and use of The Arc resources.

Why share information through videos & social media content?

Videos and photos make strong impressions and connect us. We must increase online education in short and moderate formats. Our goal is to make the education accessible, frequently occurring, and impactful. The busy routine of Nebraskans can make it challenging to attend events or pop-on a scheduled webinar. We must meet people where they get their news and updates. The Arc of Nebraska is prepared to elevate the way to share information. The age of technology is here and only getting more complicated. We want accessible education about living with I/DD to flood news feeds and make everyone feel more familiar with accommodations/supports. Nebraska communities will benefit from understanding each other's needs and how to navigate through life's challenges.

Why share information through in-person events & virtual webinars?
There's a need for human connection. We must offer both in-person & virtual options for information.

- In-person event locations include: North Omaha, Scottsbluff, and Nebraska City.
- The Arc of Nebraska knows there are also needs for in-person events in Chadron, Ogallala, and North Central Nebraska. However it is crucial to identify proposed educational areas with an inquiry to residents in those areas.
- Local Arc Chapter locations will help increase outreach in: Seward, Lincoln, Hastings, Kearney, Platte County, Norfolk, and Central Nebraska

5. **Accomplishments.** Summarize the expected accomplishments of the project. Identify the output and outcomes to be achieved (see Output and Outcome under the DD Suite Help button). Explain how successful completion of the project will contribute to achieving the State Plan Goal identified for this project. Explain what the projected short-term and long-term (post-project) benefits of the project will be for people with developmental disabilities and their family members.

Successful Completion of the Project will:

- Decrease confusion and fear around healthcare maintainenance & financial planning.
- Decrease crisis calls because Nebraskans will be more prepared to tackle challenges or navigate advocacy systems.
- Increase personal safety when emergencies or unsafe situations occur & decrease fear of "what if" questions.
- Increase community service provider knowledge about I/DD & how to support accommodations/independence within healthcare & emergency service providers.
- Increase positive provider/self-advocate & provider/caregiver relationships when advocating for healthcare needs.
- Increase participation in physical and mental health services.

Funding & Community Impact opportunity
This curriculum has the potential to serve not only as an educational resource, but also as a measurable community-impact initiative for The Arc of Nebraska.

By tracking participation, partnerships, online reach and qualitative surveys, the project will provide data that supports future reporting, community partnerships, and continued programming. Website resources will have long-term accessibility and bring forward expanding ideas as information should always be revisited year-round for future generations.

6. **Work Plan.** Create a Work Plan of activities to complete the objectives using the Work Plan template. The Work Plan must include the following: start and end dates for each Activity (these dates cannot simply reflect the start and end dates of the project, each activity will have a specific start and end date); the person responsible for the activity; and the estimated number of individuals who will benefit from the project. Work Plan MUST include a goal and activities related to sustainability of the project and/or its outcomes.

Work Plan of Activities:
(See template below.)

Project In-Kind Support:
In-kind match in the form of of development and implementation of advocacy presentations, guidance documents on The Arc of Nebraska website-- by education and legal experts in the amount of $12,800.

These in-kind match figures are based on the following rates: • $200/hour rate for Amy Bonn, Matt McNiff, and Mary Phillips for preparation and deliverance of presentations. • $50/hour rate for Amy Bonn, Matt McNiff, Donna Baker,

and Mary Phillips for travel to and from presentations events.

7. **Project Sustainability.** Applicants must describe in detail their plan to sustain the project once Council funds end. The plan should identify the activities, features, or practices that the applicant wants to sustain. A description of whether their agency or other agencies or collaborators will assume responsibility for maintaining the project.

Our project will be self-sustaining by The Arc of Nebraska, with support and leadership by our staff and board members. We will collect both quantitative and qualitative data over time to see the impact of our efforts at not only the individual level, but at the systemic-level, as well. As part of our sustainability efforts, we will disseminate a survey about gaps, barriers, and successes to identify where improvement is still needed.

In addition to the recorded trainings that will be conducted as part of this project, The Arc of Nebraska is well-positioned to present new, related trainings in the years to come(both in-person and online) and in conjunction with our advocacy organization partners.

WORK PLAN

The Arc of Nebraska

Community Life Skills

Project Duration: January 2027 – December 2027

	Goal: Self-Advocacy & Planning				
	Objective: Share educational information about state-level advocacy, committee participation, emergency planning, and financial planning options.				
#	**Activity**	**List What Your Measure of Success Will Be**	**Responsible Staff/Party**	**Start Date**	**End Date**
15-50	In-Person Events (Western NE, Southeastern NE)	Number of Participants & qualitative survey on education topic.	Staff & Board Members	February 2027	November 2027
50-200	Virtual Events	Number of Participants & qualitative survey on education topic.	Amy Bonn, Mary Phillips, & supplemental Board Members	January 2027	May 2027
1,000+	Educational Social Media Post	Number of views, number of interactions, poll/engagement question participation, website resource views.	Staff: MaKayla Bartels & Mikayla Teet	January 2027	May 2027
1,000+	Educational Video	Number of views, number of interactions, number of shares, website resource views.	Staff: MaKayla Bartels & Mikayla Teet	January 2027	May 2027
	Goal: Health & Safety				
	Objective: Share educational information about healthcare advocacy, community wellness opportunities, what healthcare preventative screenings look like, and how to respond to unsafe situations.				
#	**Activity**	**List What Your Measure of Success Will Be**	**Responsible Staff/Party**	**Start Date**	**End Date**

50-80	In-Person Events	Number of Participants & qualitative survey on education topic.	Staff: MaKayla Bartels, Mikayla Teet, & Board.	August 2027	October 2027
50-200	Virtual Events	Number of Participants & qualitative survey on education topic.	Amy Bonn, Jessica Barrett & supplemental Board Members	January 2027	December 2027
1,000+	Educational Social Media Post	Number of views, number of interactions, poll/engagement question participation, website resource views.	Staff: MaKayla Bartels & Mikayla Teet	January 2027	December 2027
1,000+	Educational Video	Number of views, number of interactions, number of shares, website resource views.	Staff: MaKayla Bartels & Mikayla Teet	January 2027	December 2027

FORM 4 – APPLICANT'S BUDGET

Program Income: As appropriate, include the estimated amount of income, if any, you expect to be generated from this project.

SUMMARY BUDGET

The Arc of Nebraska

Community Life Skills

Project Duration: January 2027 – December 2027

	Requested Funds	Matching Funds	Total Project Budget
A Personnel	$14,500	$ -	$14,500
B Fringe Benefits	$ -	$ -	$ -
C Travel	$2,000	$2,000	$4,000
D Equipment	$ -	$5,500	$5,500
E Supplies	$2,000	$2,000	$4,000
F Consultants/Contracts	$ -	$ -	$ -
G Other Direct Costs	$1,500	$12,800	$14,300
H Total Direct Costs	**$20,000**	**$22,300**	**$42,300**
I Total Indirect Costs	$ -	$ -	$ -
J Total (Sum H+I)	**$20,000.00**	**$22,300.00**	**$42,300.00**

Budget Narrative

Personnel hours for this project will be tracked during in-person events and virtual webinars. (In-kind hours from Board Members will include webinar planning and executing hours at the rate of $200/hr for approx. 10hrs per webinar training hosted by an Arc of Nebraska Board Member. See Form 3.)

Travel expenses will include mileage at the IRS reimbursement rate and hotel stay. Mileage to be tracked using a free app called Everlance or other similar application. Mileage is crucial in offering accessible educational event options in rural communities. One event is noted for the metro area of North Omaha, but the other in-person events will be offered in rural areas of the state.

Equipment expenses are calculated from hourly drone use rate of $200 per hour, video editing software use, and additional microphone/lighting equipment use as needed. This equipment investment is crucial in producing quality imagery. Visual learning is impactful for the I/DD community and brings familiarity when discussing community resources and support systems.

Supplies include printed materials, food, and event hosting materials. No alcohol will be served at in-person events, but food and beverage expenses increase educational event attendance. Matching funds for supplies will cover the cost of additional printing of organizational materials and curriculum beyond the requested funds amount. The Arc of Nebraska estimates 300 brochures to cost $250 through our local print company. Our part-time staff, Mikayla Teet will also transcribe materials into braille and tactile supplies will be offered as needed.

Other direct costs will be used to cover accessibility options such as ASL interpreters at the rate of $150/hr. There can be fees associated with marketing visibility on Meta business suite for social media platforms, but typically a targeted advertisement is under $10-50 per content ad. to target residents of a community for event promotion. (In-kind hours from Board Members will include webinar planning and executing hours at the rate of $200/hr for approx.10hrs per webinar training hosted by an Arc of Nebraska Board Member. Five in-kind expense waived presentations for a total of $12,800. See Form 3.)

FORM 4 – APPLICANT'S BUDGET and JUSTIFICATION

Instructions:
Applicants must provide the following elements as part of the budget submission:

1. Budget (*budget template provided)*
2. Budget Narrative

A budget template is provided, but is not exhaustive: your budget might have additional items not listed here. Applicants may edit the template to reflect planned expenditures. All electronic documents must be submitted in Portable Document Format (PDF).

Each budget should contain only costs that are allowable under the applicable federal statutes, regulations, terms and conditions of this RFA. Applicants will not be allowed to change their budgets once submitted to DHHS, unless the RFA POC specifically requests, in writing, budget changes. Budgets may be modified as required by DHHS or in agreement between DHHS and the Applicant after the Intent to Subaward is announced. Applicants should not rely on budget changes or modifications in submitting their proposed budget, but should be able to perform the program activities consistent with their budget.

If an Applicant has or has prepared a cost allocation plan for this subaward, it may be submitted along with the Application.

If an Applicant plans to charge indirect costs other than through a cost allocation plan, Applicant thus must provide one of the following along with their budget: 1) A current federally-approved indirect cost rate agreement; 2) A currently approved indirect cost rate agreement with DHHS; or 3) A calculation of *de minimis* indirect costs consistent with federal rules. DHHS may provide a calculator to aid programs in calculating *de minimis* indirect costs, upon request;

Indirect costs and cost allocation plans may also be negotiated after the Intent to Subaward. As consistent with law, Applicant may voluntarily opt to take a lower indirect rate than their approved agreement, or indirect cost calculation, allows.

1. **Budget.** Create a Budget using the Budget template. The amount of DHHS grant funds requested in the Applicant's budget must not exceed $20,000.
2. **Budget Justification.** Include a brief budget justification narrative to explain expenses listed and how you arrived at the requested amounts. Provide explanations as to why each item is necessary for the success of the project. Identify costs for which federal funds are requested and those that will be provided by match (non-federal cash funds or in-kind).

When calculating Personnel costs, provide the name of the employee or the position and the percentage of time they will be working on the project. Be prepared to provide documentation of the hourly rate/annual salary of each individual and calculations on how benefits for individuals were determined for the time they will be working on the project.

For Matching Funds, show how the amounts were determined and how they will be documented.

For Office Expenses, Communications, and other/Miscellaneous costs that can only partially be allocated to the project (e.g., rent or phone), explain how the amount was determined. For example, if personnel is 20% then rent, phone, etc. would be 20% of the annual costs.

For Other Costs, identify each dollar amount and describe how it will be used both for subaward and matching funds.

Indirect costs: Applicants that have included indirect costs in their budgets must include a copy of the current indirect cost rate agreement approved by a Federal agency or the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. This is optional for applicants that have not included indirect costs in their budgets.

Opportunity

FORM 1: APPLICATION COVER PAGE

Instructions: This form must be signed and returned, along with the application materials, before the Application Due Date, to the POC or designated email address, as applicable.

RFA #	RELEASE DATE
7571	September 14, 2026
APPLICATION DUE DATE	**POINT OF CONTACT**
October 26, 2026	DHHS.DDCouncil@nebraska.gov

CERTIFICATION AND GUARANTEE OF COMPLIANCE

By signing this Application Cover Sheet, the Applicant guarantees compliance with the provisions stated in this Request for Application and certifies that all information contained in this Application is accurate. This Application is submitted pursuant to the terms of the RFA, and if the Applicant is awarded funding, it will be incorporated into the Subaward between the parties. I understand that if anything in this Application conflicts with the RFA or with the subsequent Subaward, the Subaward and RFA shall govern as set forth in the Subaward.

Application Requirements The following information **must** be included in the application in order for it to be considered for review:

- The target population - individuals with developmental disabilities
- Must address one of the four goals in the Council's 2022-2026 5-year State Plan of the applicant's choice
- Applicants who have been disbarred by the US Federal government are not eligible to receive funding under this RFA

ORGANIZATION LEGAL NAME*: Madonna School and Community Based Services

ORGANIZATION DBA NAME (IF APPLICABLE):

ORGANIZATION UEI NUMBER: QDYXKLMEP3M4 ORGANIZATION EIN NUMBER: 47-0491332

ORGANIZATION TYPE: ☑ Non-Profit Organization ☐ Institution of Higher Learning
☐ For- Profit Organization ☐ State, Local, or Tribal Government
☐ Other:

COMPLETE ADDRESS: 7197 Pine St Omaha, NE 68106

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 2

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 4025561883 EMAIL ADDRESS: cmiller@madonnaalliance.org

✓ I CERTIFY THAT THIS ORGANIZATION IS AN "ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATION" AS DEFINED BY THIS RFA

✓ I CERTIFY THAT THIS ORGANIZATION IS NOT PRESENTLY DEBARRED OR SUSPENDED.

SIGNATURE: Chris Miller Digitally signed by Chris Miller Date: 2026.10.26 21:30:24 -05'00'

TYPED NAME & TITLE OF SIGNER: Chris Miller

**Name must match UEI Number*

RFA 7571 NCDD OpportunitySubaward – Madonna School & Community-Based Services (dba Madonna Ability Alliance)

Organization Overview

Organization information: Madonna School & Community-Based Services (dba Madonna Ability Alliance)

UEI number: QDYXKLMEP3M4

EIN number: 47-0491332

Summary of Federal Grants Experience: Madonna School & Community-Based Services was the recipient of an Opportunity Grant through NCDD in 2024 with an extension through 2025.

Summary of Programmatic Experience: Madonna School & Community-Based Services (SCBS) has served individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities since its inception in 1960. In 2016 Madonna SCBS, became an authorized provider of Medicaid Home and Community Based Services through the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Division of Developmental Disability and an authorized provider of Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation Supported Employment. Madonna School & Community-Based Services currently serves nearly 250 participants across both its Education Programs (PK-Transition) and Adult Services (DD & VR). Madonna SCBS is an across-the-life-span service, serving adults through Medicaid HCBS waivers and Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation and youths through an inclusion special education partnership in five Omaha area nonpublic schools. Madonna has touchpoints with nearly 250 Omaha area families with a loved in active service with Madonna as well as a network of hundreds of alumni and families.

Personnel and Management: Madonna is a 501c3 governed by its Board of Directors and operated by a lead executive and program directors who each possess advanced degrees, training, and/or leadership experience in their respective fields of special education, vocational rehabilitation and/or home and community-based waiver services.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="7">BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OFFICERS
Tate Fitzgerald – Chair David Langenberg – Vice Chair Drew Blossom – Treasurer Jon Burt – Secretary Joe Schwaller – Immediate Past Chair
DIRECTORS
Sr. Marie Angele - Nancy Crawford - Julie Lazure - Amelis Long - Michaela O'Kane - Fr. John Pietramale - Wendy Prosser - James Tews - Dan Vacek</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="7">PRESIDENT
Jon Burt
MS Ed. Leadership, M.Ed, BA</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">General Administration & Advancement</td><td colspan="3">Education Programs
Elementary, Secondary & Young Adult</td><td colspan="2">Adult Services
Day, Residential & Employment Services</td></tr>
<tr><td>Director of Administration
Tabitha Keating</td><td>Director of Advancement
Toody Moffatt</td><td>Director of Elementary
Rachael Zabokytsky
MS Ed. Leadership, M.Ed, BA</td><td>Director of Secondary
Sarah Struckman
M.Ed, BA</td><td>Director of Young Adult
Darian Stout
M.Ed, BA</td><td>Co-Director of Adult Services
Ian Froemming
CESP, CWIC</td><td>Co-Director of Adult Services
Chris Miller
CESP, MAT, BA</td></tr>
</table>

Agreements Terminated or Costs Disallowed: Madonna SCBS has not had any agreements terminated or costs disallowed in the last 5 years.

Project Work Plan

Project Summary: The goal of this project is to improve the quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities by educating families and self-advocates on a variety of different systems that directly affect the daily life of Nebraskans with disabilities. We plan to facilitate an educational series that will bring in subject matter experts on the following topics: state and federal benefits systems, employment for people with disabilities, policy and legislation, educational and recreational opportunities.

Agency Qualifications: Madonna SCBS's mission is to serve students and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and autism, and provide them with a foundation to achieve their full potential at school, work, home and in the community. Madonna SCBS, being both a provider of education services as well as an approved Nebraska Home and Community Based Services provider, is uniquely positioned to understand the needs of both school-aged children and adults an. Madonna SCBS employs the following leaders in their respective fields: Rachel Zabokrtsky (credentials), Sarah Struckman (credentials), Darian Stout (credentials), Chris Miller (BA, MAT, CESP), and Ian Froemming (CESP, member of NASP executive board, former CWIC).

Coordination and Collaboration: Madonna School and Community Based Services is a very active member of the disability community and has successfully partnered with a multitude of community resources in the past. From January of 2015 to July of 2026, Madonna SCBS has partnered with Omaha Public Schools, Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation, University of Nebraska Medical Center, Nebraska Medicine and Sodexo to execute the state's only Project SEARCH site that serves adults as well as transition aged youths. Through Madonna SCBS's employment program, it has built very strong relationships with local businesses, with the highest profile being NP Dodge, Cardinal Health, Home Goods and Boys Town. Through Madonna SCBS's education program and in collaboration with rural school districts they have been able to execute school contracts to serve individuals with special education needs. Currently Madonna SCBS partners with St. Pius X/Leo, Holy Name, St. Roberts and Roncalli High School to provide inclusive special education services.

Detailed Narrative: State plan goals: 1. Strengthening Systems for Community Inclusion Objectives B, C, D, G. 2. Strengthening Advocacy Leadership and Information Access Objectives B, C, D

Individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism face a multitude of barriers to accessing services and supports that help them be an active participant in their Activities of Daily Living. The systems that are currently available are confusing to navigate, which leads to frustration and anxiety for the people who support the individual. There is also constant misinformation regarding how specific policy and legislation affects this population.

To address this Madonna School and Community Based Services plans to host informational parent/caregiver meetings that are focused on informing and empowering people to make more informed decisions regarding care and community services for their loved one. The following topics will be discussed: Social Security, HCBS, Medicaid and Medicare services, Policy and Legislation advocacy, Employment Services, Special Olympics and other healthy living programs, IEP/MDT education and an Open House with various community resources. These meetings will include presentations given by subject matter experts in their respective fields. Meetings will be hosted on Madonna SCBS's main campus and ample time will be given for parents, guardians and individuals with IDD/Autism to connect with each other, as well as learn about available resources.

	WORK PLAN				
	Madonna School and Community Based Services				
	Parent/Caregiver and Guardian Presentations				
	January 1, 2027-December 31st, 2027				
	Goal: Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, HCBS presentation				
	Objective: To educate families about available State and Federal benefits systems. Benefits systems can be extremely complex and difficult to navigate. This presentation will be focused on understanding eligibility, easing the anxiety of application, how to utilize services in a person-centered format and frequently asked questions.				
#1	**Activity**	**List What Your Measure of Success Will Be.**	**Responsible Staff/Party**	**Start Date**	**End Date**
	Creation of presentation	Presentation	Ian Froemming, Katy Benson, Elyse Plugge	Mar-27	Apr-27
	Execution of presentation	KPI survey following presentation	Ian Froemming, Katy Benson, Elyse Plugge	Apr-27	Apr-27
	Goal: Policy and Legislation education and advocacy				
	Objective: To increase awareness of how state and federal legislation affects people with IDD/autism. Attendees will gain a greater understanding of how to advocate both at the state and federal levels, how the state unicameral works, and dispelling common myths and misconceptions about current policy/legislation.				
#2	**Activity**	**List What Your Measure of Success Will Be.**	**Responsible Staff/Party**	**Start Date**	**End Date**
	Creation of presentation	Presentation	Ian Froemming	Sep-27	Oct-27

	Execution of presentation	KPI survey following presentation	Ian Froemming	Oct-27	Oct-27
	Goal: Employment Services				
	Objective: To increase access and understanding of employment for people with IDD/austism. Families will gain knowledge of Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation services, NE medicaid HCBS long-term employment supports, Pre-employment training opportunities and solutions to logistical hurdles that are barriers to employment.				
#3	**Activity**	**List What Your Measure of Success Will Be.**	**Responsible Staff/Party**	**Start Date**	**End Date**
	Creation of presentation	Presentation	Chris Miller	May-27	Jun-27
	Execution of presentation	KPI survey following presentation	Chris Miller	Jun-27	Jun-27
	Goal: Healthy Living (Special Olympics)				
	Objective: To increase access and opportunity for education on healthy living for adults and children with IDD/Autism. Through Special Olympics of NE, parents and caregivers will have a better understanding of how to educate their loved one and build healthly living habits, as well as utilize available resources.				
#4	**Activity**	**List What Your Measure of Success Will Be.**	**Responsible Staff/Party**	**Start Date**	**End Date**
	Creation of presentation	Presentation	Sarah Struckman	Jul-27	Aug-27

	Execution of presentation	KPI survey following presentation	Sarah Struckman	Aug-27	Aug-27
	Goal: IEP/MDT Navigation				
	Objective: Increase parent and caregiver understanding of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) and Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) processes from preschool through young adulthood. Families will build the knowledge and confidence needed to participate meaningfully in decision-making, understand their rights and responsibilities, advocate for their child's needs, and support their child's progress toward greater independence and successful transitions into adulthood.				
#5	**Activity**	**List What Your Measure of Success Will Be.**	**Responsible Staff/Party**	**Start Date**	**End Date**
	Creation of presentation	Presentation	Rachel Zabokrtsky, Darian Stout	Jan-27	Feb-27
	Execution of presentation	KPI survey following presentation	Rachel Zabokrtsky, Darian Stout	Feb-27	Feb-27
	Goal: Take KPI data for entire project year				
	Objective: To gain a good understanding of how the project as a whole impacted and empowered the community.				
#6	**Activity**	**List What Your Measure of Success Will Be.**	**Responsible Staff/Party**	**Start Date**	**End Date**

	Creation of survey	Parent satisfaction, measurement of new knowledge gained	Ian Froemming, Chris Miller, Darian Stout, Sarah Struckman, Rachel Zabokrtsky	Oct-27	Nov-27
	Sending survey to all participants in presentations	50-75% response rate	Ian Froemming, Chris Miller, Darian Stout, Sarah Struckman, Rachel Zabokrtsky	Nov-27	Dec-27

Project Budget

SUMMARY BUDGET

Madonna School & Community-Based Services

Family & Self-Advocate Education

January 1, 2027 – December 31, 2027

		Requested Funds	Matching Funds	Total Project Budget
A	**Personnel**	$ 12,323.92	$ 3,080.96	$ 15,404.88
B	**Fringe Benefits**	$ 2,400.22	$ 792.00	$ 3,192.22
C	**Travel**	$ -	$ -	$ -
D	**Equipment**	$ -	$ -	$ -
E	**Supplies**	$ 1,500.00	$ 495.00	$ 1995.00
F	**Consultants/Contracts**	$ 1,000.00	$ 330.00	$ 1330.00
G	**Other Direct Costs**	$ -	$ -	$ -
H	**Total Direct Costs**	**$ 17,224.14**	**$ 4,697.96**	**$ 21,922.1**
I	**Total Indirect Costs**	$ 1,350.00	$ 445.50	$ 1,795.50
J	**Total (Sum H+I)**	**$18,574.14**	**$5,143.46**	**23,717.6$**

- Chris Miller, Co-Director of Adult Services – Primary Investigator ~4% -80 grant hours = $2,826.17 + ~1% match – 20 hours = $706.54
- Ian Froemming, Co-Director of Adult Services – Content Area Specialist ~4% - 80 grant hours =$3,000.00 + ~1% match – 20 hours = $750.00
- Rachel Zabokrtsky, Director of Elementary – Content Area Specialist ~2% - 40 grant hours = $1,403.84 + .5% match – 10 hours = $350.96
- Sarah Struckman, Director of Secondary – Content Area Specialist ~2% - 40 grant hours = $1,403.84 + .5% match – 10 hours = $350.96
- Darian Stout, Director of Young Adult Program – Content Area Specialist ~2% - 40 grant hours = $1,420.35 + .5% match – 10 hours = $355.08
- Katy Benson, Navigator – Content Area Specialist ~2% - 40 grant hours = $1,115.87 + .5% match – 10 hours = $278.96
- Elyse Plugge , Navigator – Content Area Specialist ~2% - 40 grant hours = $1,153.85 + .5% match – 10 hours = $288.46

Project Budget Narrative

This project's aim is to educate parents/guardians of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities on many aspects regarding services and funding for their loved ones. Madonna SCBS employs full-time professionals with high level credentials in special education, vocational rehabilitation, public benefits, and home and community-based waiver services. Madonna will buy out time from selected staff to run a series of presentations, open to Madonna families as well as the public, to better educate families, loved ones, guardians, and others on acquiring and executing services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Madonna will utilize its own space after working hours, its staff's time, contract with other experts in the field to serve as guest co-presenter, and supply refreshments for the guests at each presentation. Madonna will also run marketing and communication campaigns to promote attendance for each event.

madonna
Ability Alliance

NCCD Grant #6137
October 23, 2026

Dear Grant Committee,

I am writing this letter in support of my colleague, Mr. Ian Froemming, with Madonna Ability Alliance. Mr. Froemming and our organization partner with parents or clients while navigating services and supports available to their families. While our individual efforts are highly regarded by the people we serve, we are looking to further our impact and create better access to resources for families or clients.

As the Director of Elementary Education, I work closely with families of students between the ages of 4 and 14. During these formative years, parents and guardians often receive an overwhelming amount of information and may find themselves asking, *"How can I best support my child?"* Madonna Ability Alliance helps families navigate these questions by providing individualized guidance and facilitating group opportunities that explain available resources, support options, and potential next steps. In the past, our efforts in this area have been a distinctive and highly valued part of our organization's commitment to supporting individuals with disabilities and their families.

Grant funding for an education series would allow our organization to expand this work by providing families with accessible, educational opportunities to learn about relevant topics, ask questions, connect with resources, and engage with others who share similar experiences. These events would empower parents or clients with practical knowledge, strengthen their ability to advocate for their children or themselves, and help bridge the gap between available resources and the families or individuals who need them most.

In conclusion, I support Mr. Froemming's efforts to obtain funding for Madonna Ability Alliance. These funds will positively impact the families we serve and allow parents, guardians, and clients the ability to access resources for their own needs or those of their children. Thank you for your consideration.

With Gratitude,

Rachael Zabokrtsky
Director of Elementary Education

9

NCDD Grant Committee,

As a teacher of transition-age students with developmental disabilities (ages 18-21), I work closely with students and their families as they prepare for life after leaving the school system. One of the most common questions families ask is, "What happens next?" Unfortunately, there is no single answer. Each student has unique strengths, needs, goals, and circumstances, making the transition to adulthood a complex journey that often requires individualized guidance and support.

This is why the services and resources provided through Madonna Ability Alliance are so valuable. Families frequently face overwhelming decisions related to Social Security benefits, Medicaid, vocational services, employment opportunities, day services, residential options, guardianship, and long-term planning. Many parents are unsure where to begin or how to navigate the systems that support their loved ones.

Through family navigation and educational programming, parents gain access to trusted information, experienced professionals, and a supportive community of families facing similar challenges. When families receive confusing paperwork or must make important decisions regarding adult services, having knowledgeable guidance available reduces anxiety and helps them make informed choices. Just as importantly, families learn about resources and service providers that best match the needs and goals of their individual family member.

The proposed year-long Parent Night series would provide a much-needed opportunity for families to learn, ask questions, connect with experts, and build confidence as they navigate the many facets of developmental disabilities. Ongoing educational events throughout the year would allow families to receive information when it is most relevant, covering topics such as transition planning, employment, housing, benefits, Special Olympics, community inclusion, healthcare, and future planning.

In my experience, families who have access to navigation services and educational supports are better prepared for adulthood transitions. They are more likely to secure appropriate services, avoid gaps in supports, and develop meaningful plans that help their family members achieve greater independence and quality of life. The result is a smoother transition from school-based services into adulthood and stronger outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities.

I strongly support Madonna Ability Alliance's efforts to provide this year-long Parent Night series. Funding for this initiative will benefit not only the students and families I work with but countless others throughout our community who are seeking guidance, connection, and hope for the future.

10

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Darian Stout
Transition Specialist/Teacher

Employment

FORM 1: APPLICATION COVER PAGE

Instructions: This form must be signed and returned, along with the application materials, before the Application Due Date, to the POC or designated email address, as applicable.

RFA #	RELEASE DATE
7572	September 14, 2026
APPLICATION DUE DATE	**POINT OF CONTACT**
October 26, 2026	DHHS.DDCouncil@nebraska.gov

CERTIFICATION AND GUARANTEE OF COMPLIANCE

By signing this Application Cover Sheet, the Applicant guarantees compliance with the provisions stated in this Request for Application and certifies that all information contained in this Application is accurate. This Application is submitted pursuant to the terms of the RFA, and if the Applicant is awarded funding, it will be incorporated into the Subaward between the parties. I understand that if anything in this Application conflicts with the RFA or with the subsequent Subaward, the Subaward and RFA shall govern as set forth in the Subaward.

Application Requirements The following information **must** be included in the application in order for it to be considered for review:

- The target population - individuals with developmental disabilities
- Must address one of the four goals in the Council's 2022-2026 5-year State Plan of the applicant's choice
- Applicants who have been disbarred by the US Federal government are not eligible to receive funding under this RFA

ORGANIZATION LEGAL NAME*: Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska, Inc.

ORGANIZATION DBA NAME (IF APPLICABLE):

ORGANIZATION UEI NUMBER: C1GVKGZYWGR4 ORGANIZATION EIN NUMBER: 47-0522836

ORGANIZATION TYPE:
- ☑ Non-Profit Organization
- ☐ For- Profit Organization
- ☐ Other:
- ☐ Institution of Higher Learning
- ☐ State, Local, or Tribal Government

COMPLETE ADDRESS: 1804 South Eddy Street, PO Box 1863
Grand Island, NE 68802

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 3

TELEPHONE NUMBER: (308) 384-7896 EMAIL ADDRESS: tsnider@goodwillne.org

✓ I CERTIFY THAT THIS ORGANIZATION IS AN "ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATION" AS DEFINED BY THIS RFA

✓ I CERTIFY THAT THIS ORGANIZATION IS NOT PRESENTLY DEBARRED OR SUSPENDED.

SIGNATURE:

Tamara Snider Digitally signed by Tamara Snider
Date: 2026.10.23 12:11:38 -05'00'

TYPED NAME & TITLE OF SIGNER: Tamara Snider, Vice President Mission Services

*Name must match UEI Number

Goodwill
Industries of Greater Nebraska, Inc.

Benefits Navigator Project

DD Council RFA 7572 – Organizational Overview Form 2

Organization's Information

Organization Name:
Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska, Inc.

Headquarters:
1804 S Eddy Street, Grand Island, NE 68801

UEI Number: C1GVKGZYWGR4

Points of Contact:

Primary Contact: Tamara Snider, Vice President of Mission Services
tsnider@goodwillne.org Phone: 308-455-7571 Fax: 308-455-1402

Secondary Contact: Megan Boss, Benefits Program Manager
mboss@goodwillne.org Phone: 402-942-4572 Fax: 402-835-5254

Organizational Background and Capacity

Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska, Inc. (Goodwill) is a private not-for-profit rehabilitation organization focusing its mission on employment and self-sufficiency. Goodwill is a member of Goodwill Industries International but is independently organized and locally governed by its own independent board of directors. Goodwill has a 55-county territory covering western Nebraska, central Nebraska and part of Eastern Nebraska. Goodwill was recognized as the first rehabilitation facility in Nebraska (1977) to receive accreditation of its vocational programs through the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). Goodwill has continued to receive accreditation every three years from CARF. Goodwill helps people with disabilities or barriers to achieve their goals through a wide range of services that improve quality of life. Goodwill serves thousands each year in all its mission programs.

Goodwill has helped people obtain employment and advance in their careers since 1999 through supported employment services serving individuals with disabilities in partnership with Nebraska VR, Division of Behavioral Health services, and Division of Developmental Disability Services. Goodwill added Benefits Counseling services in 2009 to assist individuals in understanding the impact of earnings on their Supplemental Security Income (SSI), disability benefits, Medicaid, Medicare, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), housing, and other benefits and accessing available work incentives to earn their highest potential. In addition, Goodwill offers

various skills and community integration programming for individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (I/DD).

Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska, Inc. (Goodwill) believes in the "power of work" and offers this proposal to the Nebraska Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities to improve employment options and outcomes for Nebraskans with I/DD. Goodwill will initiate a systems change project that maintains and increases access to high-quality benefits counseling services and employment service awareness for individuals and families, service coordination, and service providers. With quality benefits counseling services, Nebraska's job seekers with I/DD who desire to work competitively within their communities will realize improved employment results through:

1. accurate and timely access to information about the effect that earned income will have on their Social Security disability benefits;
2. accurate and timely access to information about the effects that earned income will have on their Medicaid and Medicare health benefits and on Medicaid waiver funded services;
3. competent, timely, and ongoing assistance to understand and use the full array of State and Federal work incentive programs that are designed to facilitate successful transitions to competitive work; and
4. access to responsive problem solving and advocacy services when unforeseen Medicaid eligibility and other disability related benefit problems arise.

Summary of Federal Grants Experience

Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska has extensive experience administering federally funded workforce and human services programs as both a direct recipient and subrecipient of state-administered federal funds through partnerships with Social Security Administration, Nebraska VR, Department of Health and Human Services – Division of Developmental/Intellectual Disabilities, and four Regional behavioral health authorities. Our programs are designed to support individuals with barriers to employment through structured case management, job placement and retention services, and benefits counseling.

Goodwill maintains strong fiscal management systems and internal controls consistent with **Uniform Grant Guidance (2 CFR Part 200)** and applicable federal and state requirements. Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska understands that DD Council grants are funded through the federal U.S. Department Agriculture (USDA) and administered at the state level by Nebraska DHHS.

Goodwill
Industries of Greater Nebraska, Inc.

Summary of Programmatic Experience

Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska began providing employment services in 1972. Goodwill received Nebraska's first and its first Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) accreditation in 1976 and has continued to be accredited every three years since for employment services. Goodwill has been providing Supported Employment Services for over 30 years. Goodwill began offering benefits counseling services in 2009. Goodwill's Employment and Career Services serves approximately 1,000 individuals annually through its' employment and benefits programs.

Employment and Career Services involves a 24-person team across central and western Nebraska including one Vice President of Mission Services, three employment managers, one benefits manager, two program specialists, 13 employment specialists, and 4 primary benefits specialists. All Employment Specialists have obtained a national employment training certificate, and all Benefits Specialists have the Community Partner Work Incentives Counselor (CPWIC) certification. Goodwill's Employment and Career Services department has offices in Lincoln, Columbus, Grand Island, Hastings, Kearney, Lexington, North Platte, and McCook and serves the surrounding communities.

Goodwill has a very experienced Employment and Career Services leadership team consisting of a Vice President of Mission Services and managers across our 55-county territory.

- Tamara Snider, Vice President of Mission Services, has 22 years of experience in employment services focused on disability and mental health populations. Tamara has her bachelor's degree in criminal justice and a master's degree in community counseling. Tamara is also a CARF surveyor.
- Megan Boss, Benefits Program Manager, has 17 years of experience in employment services and 10 years in benefits counseling services. Megan has her bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's degree in community counseling. Megan also maintains the Community Partner Work Incentives Counselor certification and was instrumental in creating the benefits counseling service definitions for the DD waivers.

Goodwill has two program specialists that help with data tracking, quality assurance, and billing. Goodwill has strong data tracking mechanisms through an electronic health record and external tracking documents. Goodwill currently collects and shares reports with funders at varied intervals. Goodwill employment services currently maintain 8 state and federal contracts and service agreements with Nebraska VR, 4 behavioral health regions, Division of Developmental Disabilities, and Social Security Administration. The fiscal tracking system is well established with funds from a variety of sources being tracked diligently and staff's time and expenses are allocated by service department daily. Goodwill is able to maintain compliance with all aspects of the grant requirements, including data tracking, progress reports, and expenditure reports.

Goodwill
Industries of Greater Nebraska, Inc.

Personnel and Management

In addition to ECS team identified above, Goodwill has key players including employees and board members.

- Curtiss Dill – Curtiss is Goodwill's CEO. Curtiss has provided executive leadership in the non-profit space for over 15 years, primarily in Developmental Disability services.
- Tamara Snider – In addition to information above, Tamara has maintained various roles over the years as employment specialist, program specialist, quality improvement manager, and director and always had a strong role in the billing and quality improvement processes for ECS. Tamara has overseen a wide variety of state and federal contracts.
- Megan Boss – In addition to information above, Megan has been the lead on the oversight of Goodwill's Ticket to Work program that is administered through the Social Security Administration. Megan has ensured compliance and billing processes follow the federal contract. Megan also ensures Goodwill is meeting compliance on other state contracts.
- Melissa Bennett – Melissa is Goodwill's controller and oversees the accounting department. Melissa has her master's in business administrative with a focus on accounting and has worked in the finance and accounting field for 22 years. Melissa oversees the general ledger reporting and is responsible for oversight of all financial transactions, preparing financial statements and ensuring accuracy and compliance with accounting standards.
- Benefits Specialists – Goodwill's Benefits Specialists provide direct service delivery providing financial literacy and benefits counseling to help individuals make informed choices regarding their various state and federal benefits and access work incentives. They document daily what supports were provided to and on behalf of individuals and track benefits and work incentive use.

Agreements Terminated or Costs Disallowed

Goodwill has not had any agreements that were terminated for cause or where specific conditions were placed on applicant.

Goodwill
Industries of Greater Nebraska, Inc.

DD Council RFA 7572 – Work Plan and Narrative Form 3

Program Summary

Goodwill is proposing a Benefits Navigator Project to further help educate individuals, families, teachers, service coordination, and provider agencies about the services available and how to access these services. Goodwill will host virtual and/or in-person sessions. Goodwill also seeks to maintain and increase certified benefits counseling staff, amidst the closure of the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) National Training and Data Center (NTDC). The goal is to ensure individuals maintain and gain access to employment and benefits support now and into the future.

The Benefits Navigator Project helps address these needs by:

- Increasing individuals', families', and teachers' understanding of the importance of employment and benefits supports, how to access these services, and the impact services can have through peer success stories.
- Increasing service coordinators and provider agencies knowledge of the importance of employment and benefits supports, how to access these services, their role with the services and the impact services can have through success stories.
- Maintaining continuity and capacity of certified Benefits Specialists.

Agency Qualifications

Goodwill of Greater Nebraska's mission is to help people with disabilities or barriers reach their goals and improve their quality of life. Goodwill has two primary mission departments, Development Disability Services and Employment and Career Services. Our Developmental Disability Services offer Community Integration, Day Habilitation and Shared Living Services in Grand Island, Hastings, and Kearney. Employment and Career Services offers Supported Employment, Benefits Counseling, and Ticket to Work Services. Supported Employment services are offered in Lincoln, Columbus, Grand Island, Hastings, Kearney, Lexington, and North Platte and surrounding communities. Benefits Counseling and Ticket to Work services are available statewide.

The staff who will be providing the key services indicated in this RFA are below.

- Megan Boss, Benefits Program Manager – Megan has 17 years of experience in employment services and 10 years in benefits counseling services. Megan has her bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's degree in community counseling. Megan also maintains the Community Partner Work Incentives Counselor certification.
- Kylee Carstens, Benefits Specialist – Kylee has 12 years experience in disability services,

has her bachelor's degree in family studies, and is a certified Community Partner Work Incentives Counselor. Kylee previously was an Employment Specialist for Goodwill.

- Michelle Ernst, Benefits Specialist – Michelle has over 20 years experience in benefits counseling services, has her bachelor's degree in human resources, and is a certified Community Partner Work Incentives Counselor.
- Beverly Trotta, Benefits Specialist – Beverly has over 10 years experience in benefits counseling services, has her master's degree in business management, and is a certified Community Partner Work Incentives Counselor. Beverly previously was an Employment Specialist for Goodwill.
- Nicole Weaver, Benefits Specialist – Nicole has over 17 years experience in employment and behavioral health services, has her master's degree in community counseling, and is in process of becoming a certified Community Partner Work Incentives Counselor.
- Darlyn Ortez, Bilingual Benefits Specialist – Darlyn has over 7 years of experience in employment services, is the lead trainer on business and job development, and is a certified Community Partner Work Incentives Counselor.
- Nicole Olson, Program Specialist – Nicole has over 5 years experience as an employment specialist and program manager for supported employment services and she has her bachelor's degree in social work.

Goodwill's benefits team and leadership have provided similar activities in the past to those proposed in this project. Goodwill previously provided parent workshops on benefits through Nebraska VR's pre-ETS program and ESU's to families and teachers of transition-age students to understand various disability benefits, available work incentives, and how to access services. Goodwill has provided some education to service coordination on how to access benefits services for individuals when benefits issues have occurred. Goodwill has also been a leader in the benefits and employment services in Nebraska and met and mentored a few supported employment and benefits providers. Goodwill has been a mentor as well to other Goodwill agencies wishing to start or enhance these services.

Coordination and Collaboration

Goodwill is a leader in supported employment and benefits counseling services, advocacy, and education. Goodwill leaders actively contribute and have led the Supported Employment NASP Committee. Goodwill has provided peer agency training during the NASP conferences and Supported Employment Community of Practice on employment and benefits topics. Goodwill also leads a behavioral health supported employment workgroup for behavioral health providers.

Goodwill's Employment and Career Services department is a provider for supported employment and benefits counseling services for Nebraska VR, Department of Health and Human Services

(DHHS) division of Developmental Disabilities and Aging, DHHS division of Behavioral Health, and Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work. Goodwill also has a long-standing relationship in Nebraska's employment services community, providing supported employment services for individuals with disabilities in partnership with Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation (Nebraska VR) since 1999. Goodwill is a member of Nebraska Association of Service Providers (NASP), Nebraska Association of Behavioral Health Organizations (NABHO), National Employment Network Association (NENA), and National Association of Benefits and Work Incentives Specialists (NABWIS). Furthermore, Goodwill develops relationships with the business communities and has partnered with over 135 separate businesses across Nebraska, many of which have several locations across different cities that were not included to avoid duplication. These relationships provide established pathways for outreach, referral, and dissemination of project information to individuals, families, service coordinators, schools, providers, and employers throughout Nebraska.

Detailed Narrative

This project meets "Goal 1 – Strengthening Systems for Community Inclusion, Objective C – Employment" of the state plan by strengthening the system's knowledge of supported employment and benefits services and success of these programs to increase access and data collection. Although not the main focus of this RFA, this project also assists Goal 1, Objective D – Access and Use of Medicaid Services of the state plan with furthering the knowledge of the individuals, families, and service coordinators on understanding the waiver service options related to employment.

Statement of Need:

Goodwill's Employment and Career Services helps individuals with disabilities (mental health, substance use, I/DD, acquired brain injury, and autism spectrum diagnoses) and barriers achieve their employment goals and improve their quality of life and serves 500-600 individuals annually. With Goodwill's help, individuals overcome these barriers to achieve or are on the path to self-sufficiency.

Every year, approximately 400 individuals across Nebraska access Goodwill's Benefits Counseling services. State and federal benefit programs are complex and require expertise to navigate while accessing available work incentives to achieve goals. Individualized benefits counseling is key to the success of individuals obtaining employment and advancing in their careers. With the addition of the work requirements, individuals have needed further guidance and support in navigating the complexity. Without this help, individuals and families do not have the knowledge and confidence to try working more for fear of losing it all. In a recent cost

study performed by Nebraska VR on the impact of benefits counseling services, it was found that individuals that had access to benefits counseling doubled the successful closure rate, earned 6.5% higher wages at closure, and generated 150% more cost reimbursement for VR. Goodwill was the largest provider in benefits counseling services for Nebraska VR recipients. Great benefits counseling can also reduce individuals' dependency on state and federal programs, having great savings for the state of Nebraska.

Although a lot of individuals access employment and benefits services each year, there continues to be a significant amount of individuals, service coordinators, families, and support staff that are not fully aware of these services and how to access them. Families are overwhelmed with information as their loved one is transitioning out of school and the importance of accessing these programs gets lost in the process. Individuals enter day programming where it initially feels most safe with plans to explore employment later.

Service coordination incorporates employment goals into services if desired but this is not always revisited later. "Do you want to work?" may not be answered simply with a yes/no response as some individuals may not even know they can work as no one has ever asked them, told them they could, and showed them the path. These gaps contribute to lower awareness and utilization of employment supports, limiting opportunities for community inclusion and economic self-sufficiency. We will follow Nebraska VR's shared philosophy in that "everyone is ready for something" and service coordinator's role can be to determine where that person is on the employment continuum and revisit this ongoing throughout adulthood.

Service providers don't always feel they have capacity and ability to do Supported Employment well and collect data for their programs. The Nebraska system continues to slowly evolve into an employment first focus of ensuring individuals are exploring work at a young age and as they transition out of school and additional touchpoints later in life. It is difficult to collect data for this population as not all may be accessing the same source of services at the same time and there can be overlap. Individuals can be working for a long time successfully and this success may not appear in many data points reviewed. There are new benefits counseling service definitions for those on DD waivers but they're rarely accessed, especially Benefits Education to help individuals gain basic benefits information to ease their fears about exploring employment.

In addition to systems access and data gaps, it is important to keep a strong healthy benefits counseling service team across the state. Goodwill currently has 6 certified Community Partner Work Incentive Counselors (CPWIC), certified by Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). One is retiring, another will retire in a few years, and another one is expected to retire in 6 years. One staff primarily serves in the employment management role and does benefits counseling interpreting and translating for Spanish-speaking individuals on the side. To help build the

benefits bench, one additional staff began certification and was half-way through certification when the VCU National Training and Data Center (NTDC) closure announcement came. With the uncertainty of the CPWIC training with VCU, Cornell has announced additional training options for CPWICs to maintain certification. Unfortunately, Goodwill did not expect this unforeseen cost and did not have the training cost and staff training time budgeted for the 2026-2027 year. A few other agencies across Nebraska are facing similar concerns and maintaining a strong benefits counseling team is vital.

Understanding benefits is challenging enough for the disability community and adding language and cultural barriers adds another layer of difficulty. Goodwill has taken great pride in ensuring that we provide benefits counseling services and have a bilingual benefits specialist to serve individuals and families that have native Spanish speakers. We've found that translation and interpreters not trained as benefits specialist have great difficulty translating and interpreting Social Security information accurately. We must invest in our bilingual benefits specialist maintaining her certification.

Primary Project Activities

The Benefits Navigator Project helps address these issues by providing the following:

- Individuals/Families/Teachers – Goodwill will host 2 virtual family and teacher sessions to educate families and education professionals about how to access employment and benefits supports, provide basic education on the services available, and share success stories to inspire. Survey data will be collected following the presentations.
- Service Coordination – Goodwill will host 2 virtual sessions for Central and Western Nebraska service coordinators to educate them on how individuals can access employment and benefits supports, provide basic education on what these services provide, and share success stories to inspire increased usage of related waiver services. Survey data will be collected following the presentations.
- Provider Agencies – Goodwill will provide education and/or trainings for interested DD provider agencies to enhance their knowledge of how to access employment and benefits services, the benefits of these services, and share success stories to inspire organizations to do more employment services. Provider agencies often serve as the primary source of information and support for individuals with I/DD. Improving provider awareness and understanding of employment and benefits services expands system-wide access to these supports and strengthens Nebraska's Employment First efforts. Survey data will be collected following the presentations. Goodwill will obtain a point-in-time baseline data collection sample to gauge current employment data for individuals served for organizations willing to participate.

- Benefits Certification and Training – Goodwill may need to re-certify up to five staff under Cornell's Work Incentive Practitioner Credential (WIP-C) certification in 2027. If Goodwill does not need to re-certify all staff as WIP-C's, Goodwill plans to have two additional staff trained as WIP-C's. If there are remaining training funds available, the funds will be used to further enhance benefits specialists' knowledge by attending NABWIS or NENA conference sessions.

Navigating the employment and benefits world is complex and individuals and their families do not need to do this alone. Hearing about the impact of working on your benefits and work incentives once is not enough for individuals and their families to feel comfortable working. It's important to provide knowledge throughout the pre-employment and employment phases to increase knowledge and confidence. Squashing misinformation for spreading is an essential piece as individuals will trust who they know best and that's often their teachers, providers, service coordinators, friends, and family. The more education we can provide and knowledge we can build in the disability community, the better the employment opportunities and access people will have.

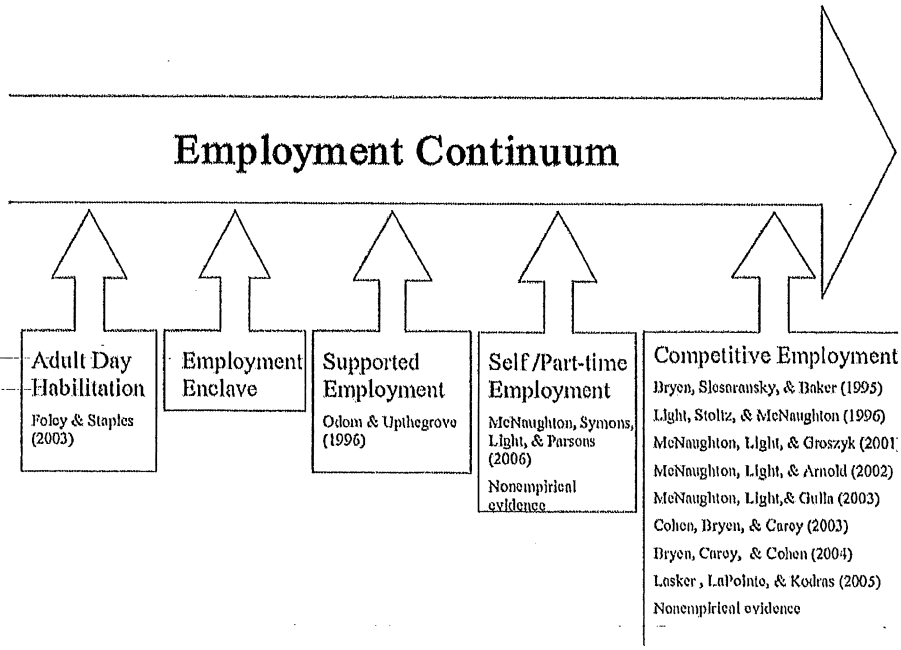
Expected Outputs and Outcomes

The expected outputs for this project include: 2 family sessions, 2 service coordinator sessions, provider sessions, employment data sample, and retention and potential certification of additional benefits specialists. The survey data and feedback will also be compiled to include what was learned and what additional related training topics are needed.

To help aid individuals, families, service coordinators, and agencies understand the employment and benefits services available, a visual aid will be developed and distributed to explain the flow of service delivery. To further help service coordinators have employment discussions, an additional handout on exploratory questions to help guide employment conversation will be shared along with Donald Super's stages of career development. A demonstration of Super's stages are seen below along with an employment continuum that can be incorporated to demonstrate that "everyone is ready for something" and using the stages or continuum to help guide the questions and available services for each stage.

Goodwill
Industries of Greater Nebraska, Inc.





Expected Outcomes and Accomplishments

The expected outcomes are more individuals connecting with Nebraska VR, more individuals accessing benefits and employment waiver services, and same or more benefits specialists to serve. This grant will help ignite inspiration of more individuals with DD/ID to join the workforce with more supports on their side to help them be successful. It helps meet Goal 1 by strengthening the system of community inclusion for employment. It brings employment to the forefront of discussions in planning for individual's adult life and services. It gives individuals, families, service coordinators, and providers additional knowledge and tools to make informed choices about work or help individuals navigate employment and benefits.

The short-term goals achieved will be more people in the systems understanding and knowing how to access employment and benefits supports. A short survey will be provided at each workshop to assess satisfaction, increased knowledge, and increased confidence in accessing services with a goal of 80% in each category. Another short-term goal achieved is benefits specialists remaining certified to continue the essential benefits counseling work. The long-term impact will create a more supportive system encouraging individuals to consider work and a larger stronger benefits counseling system to support individuals entering or returning to the workforce. Working is a great way for individuals to spend time gaining more skills and independence, contributing to their community, and having more meaning through work relationships and success.

We specifically are expecting:

- To host 2 virtual family/teacher sessions reaching at minimum 30 family members and education professionals total.
- To host 2 virtual sessions reaching at minimum 20 service coordinators total in Central/Western NE.
- To educate or have a training session with at least 4 DD providers and produce a sample employment data collection.
- Maintain 6 certified benefits specialists and potentially certify 2 more.

Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska, Inc.

WORK PLAN

Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska, Inc.
Benefits Navigator Project
January 1st, 2027 – December 31st, 2027

	Goal: Maintain and enhance certified benefits specialists capacity.				
	Objective: Have CPWICS transition to new credential and certify additional staff.				
#	**Activity**	**List What Your Measure of Success Will Be**	**Responsible Staff/Party**	**Start Date**	**End Date**
	Identify benefits counseling certification pathway	A new certification pathway is created and accepted for contracts	Goodwill and Nebraska VR leadership	January 1st, 2027	February 15th, 2027
	Registration	Register staff for re-certification and initial certification through new entity	Goodwill – Megan and team	February 15th, 2027	March 15th, 2027
	Complete re-credentialing and preparation.	Staff receive new credentialing	Goodwill – Megan and team	March 15th, 2027	June 30th, 2027
	New staff registration and coursework.	New staff register and complete training series to obtain provisional certification.	Goodwill team	February 2nd, 2027	March 30th, 2027
	Goal: Host 2 virtual family/teacher sessions to educate families and education professionals.				
	Objective: Increase knowledge on how to access employment and benefits supports, what services are available, and share success stories to inspire.				
#	**Activity**	**List What Your Measure of Success Will Be**	**Responsible Staff/Party**	**Start Date**	**End Date**

Goodwill
Industries of Greater Nebraska, Inc.

	Create presentation	Completed presentation	Goodwill Megan & Marketing Team	February 1st, 2027	March 15th, 2027
	Contact ESU's and schools to schedule, develop marketing materials, and market trainings	Dates identified for training/Completed marketing materials	Goodwill Megan & Goodwill Marketing team	March 1st, 2027	April 1st, 2027
	Provide trainings	2 trainings complete	Goodwill Megan & Team	April 15th, 2027	November 15th, 2027
	Get feedback on training and future training topics	Training topics for future and achieve 90%+ satisfaction rating	Goodwill Megan	April 15th, 2027	November 30th, 2027
	Goal: Host 2 virtual sessions for Central and Western Nebraska service coordinators.				
	Objective: Educate on how individuals can access employment and benefits supports, provide basic education on what these services provide, and share success stories to inspire service usage.				

#	Activity	List What Your Measure of Success Will Be	Responsible Staff/Party	Start Date	End Date
	Create presentation	Completed presentation	Goodwill Megan & Team	January 1st, 2027	February 15th, 2027
	Contact DHHS Service Leadership to schedule trainings, develop marketing materials, and market trainings	Dates identified for training/completed marketing materials	Goodwill Megan & Goodwill marketing team	February 1st, 2027	March 1st, 2027
	Provide trainings	2 trainings complete	Goodwill Megan & Team	March 15th, 2027	November 15th, 2027
	Get feedback on trainings and future training topics	Training topics for future and achieve 90%+ satisfaction rating	Goodwill Megan	March 15th, 2027	November 30th, 2027
	Goal: Provide education and/or training for interested DD provider agencies and collect an employment data sample.				
	Objective: Enhance their knowledge of how to access employment and benefits services, the benefits of these services, their role in these services, and share success stories to inspire.				

#	Activity	List What Your Measure of Success Will Be	Responsible Staff/Party	Start Date	End Date
	Create presentation	Completed presentation	Goodwill Megan & Team	February 1st, 2027	March 15th, 2027
	Develop marketing materials, contact large DD organization leaders and share in NASP	Completed marketing materials, List of interested DD agencies	Goodwill Megan & Goodwill marketing team	March 1st, 2027	April 1st, 2027
	Provide trainings	Several completed training sessions	Goodwill Megan & Team	April 15th, 2027	November 15th, 2027
	Get feedback on trainings and future training topic needs	Training topics for future and achieve 90%+ satisfaction rating	Goodwill Megan	April 15th, 2027	November 30th, 2027
	Collect employment data sample from willing providers to aggregate.	A sample data size of 250+ individuals accessing DD waiver programs. (Includes all individuals served, employed and not employed.)	Goodwill Megan and Nicole	April 15th, 2027	November 30th, 2027
	Goal: Sustain project resources and benefits counseling capacity beyond the grant period.				
	Objective: Integrate project tools, educational resources, and certification planning into ongoing Employment and Career Services operations.				
#	Activity	List What Your Measure of Success Will Be	Responsible Staff/Party	Start Date	End Date
	Develop Sustainability Plan.	Completed plan.	Goodwill Megan & VP of Mission.	July 1st, 2027	September 15th, 2027
	Create reusable educational materials.	Materials developed.	Goodwill Megan & Goodwill marketing team	March 1st, 2027	December 15th, 2027

	Incorporate project tools into ongoing service delivery	Project tools incorporated into Employment and Career Services operations and staff trained.	Goodwill Megan & Goodwill team	July 1st, 2027	November 30th, 2027

Program Evaluation

As a grantee, Goodwill would be able to meet the requirements and program evaluation activities required. Goodwill will submit a quarterly and annual report timely reflecting on expenditures, program narratives, key performance indicator numbers, all supporting program documents, and general ledger.

Project Sustainability

Throughout the grant year, Goodwill will evaluate project outcomes and develop a sustainability plan. Following the grant period, Goodwill will sustain a certified benefits counseling workforce, benefits education materials, community resource information, employment discussion tools, stakeholder education resources, and provider relationships. Goodwill will assume responsibility for maintaining these activities, resources, and practices through its Employment and Career Services department. Goodwill views Comprehensive Benefits Services, along with education and outreach regarding employment and benefits supports, as important components of our Employment and Career Services and as essential to helping individuals with disabilities make informed decisions about work and achieve their employment goals.

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DD Council RFA 7572 – Applicant's Budget and Narrative Form 4

FY 2027 Budget

SUMMARY BUDGET

Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska, Inc.
Benefits Navigator Project
January 2027-December 2027

	Requested Funds	Matching Funds	Total Project Budget
A Personnel	$8367.81	$3396.54	$11764.35
B Fringe Benefits	$ 0.00	$2823.44	$ 2823.44
C Travel	$0	$444.60	$444.60
D Equipment	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$0.00
E Supplies	$ 0.00	$ 100.00	$ 100.00
F Consultants/Contracts	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00
G Other Direct Costs	$10,625	$0.00	$10,625
H Total Direct Costs	$18992.81	$ 6764.58	$ 25757.39
I Total Indirect Costs	$0	$0	$0
J Total (Sum H+I)	$18992.81	$6764.58	$25757.39

Budget Narrative

Personnel costs include time and effort of the benefits team for preparing for, delivering, and completing follow-up requirements for presentations with families, service coordination, and provider agencies. It also includes time and effort towards full-certification for 3 benefits staff. The other 4 staff's time (approximately 22 hours each) preparing for and completing the recertification will use matched funds. It is approximated that the benefits team will spend 110 hours on the presentations project, 193.5 hours (64.5 hours/each) on the certification process and CEUs, and 88 hours (22 hours each) for recertification and CEUs. Additionally, 37 hours of support time was included for administrative, marketing, accounting, and information technology. Support time includes development of marketing materials, technology support, fiscal tracking, production of educational materials, data collection, analysis and reporting. The total time committed to this project is 428.5 hours.

The Other Direct Costs above include the costs of the certification, recertification, and CEUs for 5 months for each person for the benefits specialists. Fringe benefits will be matched funds that Goodwill will cover and request no budgeted line-item for these. Fringe benefits are calculated at 24% of personnel wages.

Travel costs will include costs of traveling for any in-person presentations for service coordination or provider agencies, 585 miles at the current Nebraska mileage rate of $.76 per mile. Travel costs will be matched by Goodwill. Any printing required for this project will be matched funds provided by Goodwill.

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					Personnel Costs			Other Direct Costs			
Personnel & Other Costs	Description	Presentation Hours	Certification Hours	Admin Hours	Presentation Cost	Certification Time Cost	Total Personnel Costs	Certification Cost	CEU Cost	Matching Funds	Total
Megan Boss	Benefits Program Manager	50.0	64.5	0.0	$1,479.00	$1,907.91	$3,386.91	$1,575.00	$100.00	-	$5,061.91
Kylee Carstens	Benefits Specialist	22.0	0.0	0.0	$538.78	-	$538.78	$1,300.00	$100.00	$538.78	$2,477.56
Michelle Ernst	Benefits Specialist	16.0	0.0	0.0	$393.17	-	$393.17	$1,300.00	$100.00	$540.54	$2,333.71
Beverly Trotta	Benefits Specialist	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	-	-	$1,300.00	$100.00	$541.20	$1,941.20
Nicole Weaver	Benefits Specialist/Clinical	11.0	64.5	0.0	$302.94	$1,776.33	$2,079.27	$1,575.00	$100.00	-	$3,754.27
Nicole Olson	Employment Specialist/Program	5.0	64.5	6.0	$130.20	$1,679.58	$1,809.78	$1,575.00	$100.00	$156.24	$3,641.02
Darlyn Ortez	Program Manager	6.0	0.0	0.0	$159.90	-	$159.90	$1,300.00	$100.00	$586.30	$2,146.20
Other Direct Support Hours	Marketing, Accounting, IT, Administrative	0.0	0.0	31.0	-	-		-	-	$1,033.48	$1,033.48
Fringe Benefits	Calculated at 24% of personnel costs									$2,823.44	$2,823.44
Travel	585 miles X $.76 per mile									$444.60	$444.60
Supplies	Marketing materials									$100.00	$100.00
Total		**110.0**	**193.5**	**37.0**	**$3,003.99**	**$5,363.82**	**$8,367.81**	**$9,925.00**	**$700.00**	**$6,764.58**	**$25,757.39**

Goodwill
Industries of Greater Nebraska, Inc.

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Operating Board

Officers
Chair:
Justin Pfeil
Vice Chair:
Vince Ryan
Secretary/Treasurer:
Mitchell Thompson
Past Chair:
Kyle Boysen

Board of Directors
Jim Fields
Ryan Grubbs
Heidi Isley
Ashley Kool
Sherry Kropatsch
Sara Selm
Kevin Walsh
Mike Young

Chief Executive Officer
Curtiss L. Dill

October 26, 2026

Nebraska Developmental Disabilities Council
Attn: Grant Review Committee

RE: Commitment to Sustain Comprehensive Benefits Services Beyond Grant Funding

Dear Grant Review Committee:

On behalf of Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska, I am pleased to provide this letter of commitment in support of the proposed project to expand and strengthen Comprehensive Benefits Services and to increase awareness and understanding of employment and benefits supports among individuals with disabilities, families, guardians, service coordinators, educators, provider agencies, and community partners.

Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska recognizes that access to accurate benefits counseling and planning is essential for individuals seeking competitive integrated employment. Many individuals and families face uncertainty regarding the impact of earned income on public benefits, creating unnecessary barriers to employment, career advancement, and economic self-sufficiency. Comprehensive Benefits Services help address these concerns by providing individualized guidance, informed decision-making support, and education about work incentives and benefits programs.

Our organization is fully committed to sustaining this work beyond the grant period. We view Comprehensive Benefits Services, along with education and outreach regarding employment and benefits supports, as important components of our Employment and Career Services and as essential to helping individuals with disabilities make informed decisions about work and achieve their employment goals.

Following the grant period, Goodwill intends to sustain this work through ongoing investment in staff expertise, established community partnerships, continued sharing of information and resources, pursuit of funding opportunities, and the organizational infrastructure necessary to support service delivery.

This project aligns with Goodwill's mission to promote independence, inclusion, and economic opportunity for individuals with disabilities. Although educational activities may change over time, Goodwill will continue sharing accurate information, connecting stakeholders with resources, and promoting access to employment and benefits supports.

We appreciate the Nebraska Developmental Disabilities Council's investment in opportunities for Nebraskans with disabilities. If funded, Goodwill is committed to advancing the project's long-term success and sustainability beyond the grant period.

Sincerely,

Curtiss Dill
CEO

Employment

FORM 1: APPLICATION COVER PAGE

Instructions: This form must be signed and returned, along with the application materials, before the Application Due Date, to the POC or designated email address, as applicable.

RFA #	RELEASE DATE
7572	September 14, 2026
APPLICATION DUE DATE	**POINT OF CONTACT**
October 26, 2026	DHHS.DDCouncil@nebraska.gov

CERTIFICATION AND GUARANTEE OF COMPLIANCE

By signing this Application Cover Sheet, the Applicant guarantees compliance with the provisions stated in this Request for Application and certifies that all information contained in this Application is accurate. This Application is submitted pursuant to the terms of the RFA, and if the Applicant is awarded funding, it will be incorporated into the Subaward between the parties. I understand that if anything in this Application conflicts with the RFA or with the subsequent Subaward, the Subaward and RFA shall govern as set forth in the Subaward.

Application Requirements The following information **must** be included in the application in order for it to be considered for review:

- The target population - individuals with developmental disabilities
- Must address one of the four goals in the Council's 2022-2026 5-year State Plan of the applicant's choice
- Applicants who have been disbarred by the US Federal government are not eligible to receive funding under this RFA

ORGANIZATION LEGAL NAME*: Madonna School & Community-Based Services

ORGANIZATION DBA NAME (IF APPLICABLE): Madonna Ability Alliance

ORGANIZATION UEI NUMBER: QDYXKLMEP3M4 ORGANIZATION EIN NUMBER: 47-0491332

ORGANIZATION TYPE:
- ☑ Non-Profit Organization
- ☐ For- Profit Organization
- ☐ Other:
- ☐ Institution of Higher Learning
- ☐ State, Local, or Tribal Government

COMPLETE ADDRESS: Madonna Ability Alliance
7197 Pine St.
Omaha, NE 68106

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: NE 2

TELEPHONE NUMBER: (402) 556-1883 EMAIL ADDRESS: jburt@madonnaalliance.org

✓ I CERTIFY THAT THIS ORGANIZATION IS AN "ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATION" AS DEFINED BY THIS RFA

✓ I CERTIFY THAT THIS ORGANIZATION IS NOT PRESENTLY DEBARRED OR SUSPENDED.

SIGNATURE:

TYPED NAME & TITLE OF SIGNER: Jon Burt, President

**Name must match UEI Number*

RFA 7572 NCDD Employment Subaward – Madonna School & Community-Based Services (dba Madonna Ability Alliance)

Organization Overview

Organization information: Madonna School & Community-Based Services (dba Madonna Ability Alliance)

UEI number: QDYXKLMEP3M4

EIN number: 47-0491332

Summary of Federal Grants Experience: Madonna School & Community-Based Services was the recipient of an Opportunity Grant through NCDD in 2024 with an extension through 2025.

Summary of Programmatic Experience: Madonna School & Community-Based Services (SCBS) has served individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities since its inception in 1960. In 2016 Madonna SCBS, became an authorized provider of Medicaid Home and Community Based Services through the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Division of Developmental Disability and an authorized provider of Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation Supported Employment. Madonna School & Community-Based Services currently serves nearly 250 participants across both its Education Programs (PK-Transition) and Adult Services (DD & VR). Madonna SCBS is an across-the-life-span service, serving adults through Medicaid HCBS waivers and Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation and youths through an inclusion special education partnership in five Omaha area nonpublic schools. Madonna has touchpoints with nearly 250 Omaha area families with a loved in active service with Madonna as well as a network of hundreds of alumni and families.

Personnel and Management: Madonna is a 501c3 governed by its Board of Directors and operated by a lead executive and program directors who each possess advanced degrees, training, and/or leadership experience in their respective fields of special education, vocational rehabilitation and/or home and community-based waiver services.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="7">BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OFFICERS
Tate Fitzgerald – Chair David Langenberg – Vice Chair Drew Blossom – Treasurer Jon Burt – Secretary Joe Schwaller – Immediate Past Chair
DIRECTORS
Sr. Marie Angele - Nancy Crawford - Julie Lazure - Amelis Long - Michaela O'Kane - Fr. John Pietramale - Wendy Prosser - James Tews - Dan Vacek</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="7">PRESIDENT
Jon Burt
MS Ed. Leadership, M.Ed, BA</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">General Administration & Advancement</td><td colspan="3">Education Programs
Elementary, Secondary & Young Adult</td><td colspan="2">Adult Services
Day, Residential & Employment Services</td></tr>
<tr><td>Director of Administration
Tabitha Keating</td><td>Director of Advancement
Toody Moffatt</td><td>Director of Elementary
Rachael Zabokytsky
MS Ed. Leadership, M.Ed, BA</td><td>Director of Secondary
Sarah Struckman
M.Ed, BA</td><td>Director of Young Adult
Darian Stout
M.Ed, BA</td><td>Co-Director of Adult Services
Ian Froemming
CESP, CWIC</td><td>Co-Director of Adult Services
Chris Miller
CESP, MAT, BA</td></tr>
</table>

Agreements Terminated or Costs Disallowed: Madonna SCBS has not had any agreements terminated or costs disallowed in the last 5 years.

2

Work Plan & Narrative

Project Title: Practical Assessment Exploration System (PAES) Lab at Madonna

Primary Applicant: Madonna School & Community-Based Services (dba Madonna Ability Alliance)

Program Partners:

- Madonna School & Community-Based Services (Madonna SCBS)
  - Jon Burt, President
  - Ian Froemming, Director of Adult Services
  - Darian Stout, Director of Young Adult Program
  - Barbara Thompson, Young Adult Program Teacher Assistant
  - Diane Vaiskunas, Secondary Teacher
  - Jody Hubschman, Secondary Teacher Assistant
  - Whitney Jackson, Employment Specialist
  - Kris Vejvoda, Employment Specialist
- Practical Assessment Exploration System (PAES)
  - Tanner Amaral

Budget Summary:

- $83,881.70
  - Personnel & Fringe Benefits - $22,225.70 – Requested NCDD Award
  - Equipment & Supplies & $61,656 – Matched by The Leland J. and Dorothy H. Olson Charitable Foundation (secured June 9, 2026) for
    - Practical Assessment Exploration System 2024 Edition & PAES Scan App - $44,875
    - PAES Lab Specialized Supplies (Furniture, Tools & Materials) - $16,781

Project Summary:

The goal of this project is to strengthen systems for community inclusion by bringing the renowned job skill training and assessment tool – Practical Assessment Exploration System (PAES) – to the local school/provider level to better determine if local adoption of PAES can increase the employment potential of the young adults and adults served by Madonna SCBS by simulating the jobs they might actually have in the future. Through this project, Madonna aims to increase the number of Nebraskans with intellectual and developmental disabilities who have access to PAES, are prepared for and engage in competitive integrated employment (CIE), and in the process Madonna SCBS will both add to the national PAES data set and collect targeted data to inform local employment practice.

Agency Qualifications:

Madonna SCBS's mission is to serve students and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, autism, and other health impairments and provide them with a foundation to achieve their full potential at school, work, home and in the community. Madonna SCBS, being a provider of special education services, an approved Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation provider with one of the largest supported employment caseloads for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities over the last five years, the operator of the Project SEARCH site located on the campus of the University of Nebraska Medical Center/Nebraska Medicine, and an approved Nebraska Home and Community Based Services provider, is uniquely positioned to advocate for, inform, and activate provider-led initiatives to help increase the number of Nebraskans with intellectual and developmental disabilities who pursue, earn, and sustain CIE. Madonna SCBS employs the following leaders in their respective fields: Jon Burt (MS Educational Leadership, M.Ed, BA) Sarah Struckman (M.Ed, BA), Darian Stout (M.Ed, BA), Chris Miller (MAT, BA, CESP), and Ian Froemming (CESP, member of NASP executive board, former CWIC), the latter two served on Dr. Mill's State Action Plan Community of Practice Committee.

Coordination and Collaboration:

Madonna SCBS is truly an alliance, partnering each year with cumulatively over 100 schools (including Yutan, Mount Michael Benedictan, Roncalli Catholic, Holy Name, St. Pius/Leo, St. Robert Bellarmine) non-profit organizations (including UNMC/Nebraska Medicine, Munroe-Meyer Institute, Siena Francis, CHI Bergan, CHI Immanuel, College of St. Mary, Special Olympics Nebraska) and employers (including Boys Town, Cardinal Health, Certified Transmissions, City of Omaha, City of Papillion, CRCC, Nebraska Early Childhood Care @ Kennedy, NEI Global, NP Dodge, North Star Foundation, Sodexo, The Farnam Hotel) Madonna is a very active member of the disability community and has successfully partnered with leading organizations on effective employment initiatives. For instance, from January of 2015 to July of 2026, Madonna SCBS partnered with Omaha Public Schools, Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation, University of Nebraska Medical Center, Nebraska Medicine, Cardinal Health and Sodexo to execute the state's only Project SEARCH site that has served both adults and transition aged youths, with 85% of program completers achieving CIE. Through Madonna SCBS's supported employment programs, Madonna has helped well over 130 adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities gain CIE at over 80 area employers, including some of the highest profile businesses listed above. Through Madonna SCBS's special education programs suburban and rural school districts have been able to execute school contracts to serve individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including students from Bennington, Blair, Gretna, Springfield-Platteview, Weeping Water, and Yutan. Currently Madonna SCBS partners with St. Pius X/Leo, Holy Name, St. Robert Bellarmine, Mount Michael Benedictine Roncalli Catholic High School to provide inclusive special education services and unified sports and activities. Madonna is a proven champion for inclusive education, employment, and community-based services in Nebraska.

Project Detailed Narrative:

The PAES Lab at Madonna project responds to NCDD State Plan Goal 1, Objective C. – Employment: Through September 30, 2031, the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities will, in collaboration with related state agencies and organizations, monitor and advocate for systemic changes that increase the number of Nebraskans with intellectual and developmental disabilities who engage in competitive integrated employment (CIE). NCDD will also support the improvement, collection, and sharing of employment data necessary to measure progress toward achieving this increase.

Describe the need for the project and how it will address the stated need: During the 2022 – 2026 State Plan period, NCDD engaged national subject matter expert Lisa Mills to complete a comprehensive study of employment outcomes for Nebraskans with IDD, to examine the history of policy and practice leading to current

day, and to identify strategic recommendations that the State of Nebraska and other key stakeholders could implement to improve employment opportunities and outcomes for Nebraskans with IDD. This study resulted in a February 2023 report with eleven recommendations and, eventually, a Nebraska Supported Employment Summit Action Plan that included the involvement and effort of nine state agencies, organizations, and other stakeholders. Madonna leaders Ian Froemming and Chris Miller served on Dr. Mill's State Action Plan Community of Practice Committee that helped inform her study, report, and recommendations. Dr. Mills' Recommendation 9, Identify available short-term funding that can be invested in the provider network and workforce which can support increased opportunities for competitive integrated employment for people with IDD. As stated in Recommendation 9, the project will leverage short-term funds to increase opportunities for competitive integrated employment for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Because Madonna a) garnered a private foundation grant as matching funds and b) will be able to work this project into its sustaining, go-forward annual budget at the conclusion of the grant period, this short-term investment in a provider will result in an ongoing program that will serve as a Madonna core offering available to hundreds of students and adult services participants.

Project Accomplishments:

Explain why this approach will be successful in achieving the project's goal: PAES is an incredible tool, but it is currently not available to all Nebraska students with intellectual and developmental disabilities nor Nebraska adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who qualify for home and community-based waiver services. By investing in PAES, over time, Madonna will be able to unlock this important resource for the majority of the 250 youths and adults it serves annually, and in doing so will provide Nebraska with invaluable data set on the impact of PAES at the individual school and provider level. Because PAES is a research-based and validated assessment already utilized by our local University Center of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, Munroe-Meyer Institute, NCDD can be confident in the efficacy of PAES and the value of this project.

Expected project outcomes:

- Execute PAES with not less than 25 and no greater than 50 cumulative students and adult participants in 2027.
- Train six (6) staff members to execute PAES and accurately collect PAES data for not less than 300 hours in 2027.
- Utilize PAES individual and aggregate data to inform CIE discussions held at Individual Transition Plan and Person-Centered Planning meetings, advance CIE outcomes for PAES participants, and inform Madonna's Employment Practice.
- Utilize PAES aggregate data to help inform Madonna's Employment Practice and the NCDD State Plan.

Describe products and deliverable that will be developed:

- *Individual PAES reports will be utilized to inform Individual Transition Plans and Person-Centered Plans.*
- *Aggregate PAES report with perception data and CIE data will be utilized to recommend process or systems changes.*
- *Presentation deck on PAES will be utilized to inform students, adult participants, and their parents/guardians about the PAES opportunity at Madonna.*
- *PAES Training Materials will be provided by PAES and will be kept on file for additional staff to access as needed or desired.*

Project Work Plan:

Describe activities, why the activities are necessary, and what these Primary Project activities will achieve: The PAES Lab at Madonna will bring PAES to the local school and provider level, providing access to PAES to students and adult without access to the resource, and creating an important opportunity to study the local impact of PAES on CIE outcomes for students and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Activity 1 – Purchase PAES for Madonna & Convert a Classroom at Madonna's Home Campus into a PAES Lab: As reflected in the budget, Madonna has already been awarded a grant from the Olson Foundation to purchase PAES, cover core expenses to convert a classroom at Madonna's home campus in Aksarben Village into a PAES Lab – namely furniture and tools – and cover the annual PAES user fee for five years.

Activity 2 – Train All Staff who will Execute the PAES Assessment – As reflected in the budget, Madonna will train two teachers, two teacher assistants, two employment specialists to execute PAES for Madonna Secondary, Young Adult Program, and Adult Services. Each staff will complete 10.5 hours of training - 2.5 hours via asynchronistic videos and 8 hours in person.

Activity 3 – Hold Information Meetings for Madonna Students, Adult Services Participants, and their Parents/Guardians regarding PAES – Madonna will hold two 1-hour information meetings to promote PAES and explain opportunities to participant in PAES. One session will be held for Secondary and Young Adult Program students and their parents/guardians, and one session will be held for Adult Services participants and their parents/guardians.

Activity 4 – Execute PAES and Collect: PAES Data, Perceptional Data for PAES Participants and their Parents/Guardians on their PAES experience, 3-Year CIE Outcome Data for PAES Participants – Given PAES is an assessment, the execution of PAES will necessitate the collection of individual PAES data, which will be reviewed in PAES participants Individual Transition Plan or Person-Centered Plan meetings. In addition, Madonna will collect perception data from PAES participants and their parents/guardians on their experience with this resource and their perceptions of its impact on CIE planning and outcomes. Finally, Madonna will track the CIE outcomes of PAES participants, including but limited to their interest in CIE, ability to identify specific career fields or jobs, initiating job search, and securing/starting/sustaining CIE.

Activity 5 – Aggregate and Analyze Data to Inform and Improve Madonna's Employment Practice and share data with NCDD, wherever able, to inform the State Plan. Madonna will prepare an impact report based on aggregated data to share internally to inform and improve its Employment Practice and to share externally with NCDD to inform its work.

#	Activity	Measure of Success	Responsible Staff	Start Date	End Date
1	Purchase PAES for Madonna & Convert a Classroom at Madonna's Home Campus into a PAES Lab	PAES Purchased and Classroom Converted	Jon Burt	1/01/2027	6/01/2027
2	Train All Staff who will Execute the PAES Assessment	All Assigned Staff Fully Trained and Certified to Execute PAES	Jon Burt	1/01/2027	6/01/2027
3	Hold Information Meetings for Madonna Students, Adult Services Participants, and their Parents/Guardians regarding PAES	Two Information Meetings Planned & Held	Ian Froemming	1/01/2027	6/01/2027

4	Deliver PAES and Collect: PAES Data, Perceptional Data for PAES Participants and their Parents/Guardians on their PAES experience, 3-Year CIE Outcome Data for PAES Participants	PAES Delivered with not less than 25 Students and Adult Clients in 2027 and not less than 300 hours in 2027. All Data Collected Accurately	Jon Burt Ian Froemming Darian Stout, Barbara Thompson Diane Vaiskunas Jody Hubschman Whitney Jackson Kris Vejvoda	6/01/2027	12/31/2027
5	Aggregate and Analyze Data to Inform and Improve Madonna's Employment Practice and share data with NCDD, wherever able, to inform the State Plan.	Impact Report Created with Aggregated Data and Recommendations Distributed Internally and to NCDD	Jon Burt Ian Froemming	12/31/2027	6/01/2028

Project Sustainability:

Because start-up costs for the PAES are one-time expenses, including the conversion of a classroom into a PAES Lab, and have been covered by a grant from the Olson Foundation, and because ongoing PAES expenses are manageable, Madonna will be able to build into its sustaining, go-forward annual budget the expenses covered by the NCDD grant at the conclusion of the grant period, namely funds to train staff on PAES and buy-out their time to execute PAES. The funds needed to sustain this project will be covered by a conservative 2%-3% annual increase in Madonna's fundraising revenue, which Madonna has accomplished nearly every year over the past decade.

Project Budget

SUMMARY BUDGET

Madonna SCBS

PAES Lab at Madonna

January 1, 2027 – December 30, 2027

		Requested Funds	Matching Funds	Total Project Budget
A	Personnel	$ 18,521.42	$ -	$ 18,521.42
B	Fringe Benefits	$ 3,704.28	$ -	$ 3,704.28
C	Travel	$ -	$ -	$ -
D	Equipment	$ -	$ 44,875.00	$ 44,875.00
E	Supplies	$ -	$ 16,781.00	$ 16,781.00
F	Consultants/Contracts	$ -	$ -	$ -
G	Other Direct Costs	$ -	$ -	$ -

H	**Total Direct Costs**	$ -	$ -	$ -
I	**Total Indirect Costs**	$ -	$ -	$ -
J	**Total (Sum H+I)**	**$22,225.70**	**$61,656.00**	**$83,881.7**

Project Budget Justification

A Personnel

- Jon Burt, President – Principal Investigator ~4% FTE 80 hours = $6,551.35
- Ian Froemming, Director of Adult Services – Subject Matter Expert ~4% FTE 80 hours = $3,000.00
- Darian Stout, Director of Young Adult Program – Trained Staff to Deliver PAES ~3% FTE 60 hours = $2,130.53
- Barbara Thompson, Young Adult Program Teacher Assistant – Trained Staff to Deliver PAES ~3% FTE 60 hours = $1,397.4
- Diane Vaiskunas, Secondary Teacher – Trained Staff to Deliver PAES ~3% FTE 60 hours = $1,282.90
- Jody Hubschman, Secondary Teacher Assistant – Trained Staff to Deliver PAES ~3% FTE 60 hours = $1,130.4
- Whitney Jackson, Employment Specialist – Trained Staff to Deliver PAES ~3% FTE 60 hours = $1,514.42
- Kris Vejvoda, Employment Specialist – Trained Stafff to Deliver PAES ~3% FTE 60 hours = $1,514.42

B Fringe Benefits @ 20% of Personnel Budget
C Travel – NA
D Equipment – Assessment & App – Paid by Matching Grant
E Supplies – Furniture, Tools, Materials – Paid by Matching Grant

- 5 standing height desks
- 2 seated desks (for computer assessment)
- 3-5 iPads (or Android tablets)
- 2-4 computers (for the computer assessment)
- 1 printer
- 1 small table for a check in station
- Powerstrip with surge protector
- Bulletin board (at check in station)
- Tool cabinet to hold tools
- Locks for toolbox
- Lanyards to create "Employee Badges"
- Employee Shirts (i.e. polo, lab coat, neon vest, etc)

F Consultants/Contracts – NA
G Other Direct Costs – NA

PAES PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT EXPLORATION SYSTEM

Sales Quote S-QUO2215

October 9, 2026
Page 1 / 1

C35570
Madonna Ability Alliance
Jon Burt, President
7197 Pine Street
Omaha, NE 68106

jburt@madonnaalliance.org
402-556-1883 +110

Submit Purchase Orders to:
orders@paesauthor.com
Include Quote # on PO

Valid to	Salesperson	Payment Terms
April 9, 2027	Tanner Amaral	Net 30 days

No.	Description	Quantity	Line Amount
1004	Practical Assessment Exploration System 2024 Edition Curriculum Components with PAES: • Business/Marketing Component • Computer Technology Component • Consumer/Service Component • Processing/Production Component • Construction/Industrial Component 7 Shelving Units for Storage 1 Heavy Duty Workbench Lab unpack & One-Day On-Site Training First Year Software License Included	1	39,875.00
1027	PAES Scan App - Prepaid 5-Year Annual Renewal	1	5,000.00
	Subtotal		44,875.00
	Total Tax		0.00
	Total $ Incl. Tax		**44,875.00**

PAES-Scan App Notes:
PAES-Scan is a cloud-based program that requires a yearly renewal.
Each Renewal License is $1,500.00 per year.
OR Pre-Purchase up to 5 years at $1,000.00 each

Software is compatible with the following devices (Not included with purchase of app license)
- iPad with minimum IOS version 15.5
- Android Tablet version must be 6.0 (Marshmallow) or greater
- Requires a 9.7" Screen or Larger

THE LELAND J. AND DOROTHY H. OLSON CHARITABLE FOUNDATION
GRANT AGREEMENT

THIS GRANT AGREEMENT ("Agreement") is made by and between The Leland J. and Dorothy H. Olson Charitable Foundation ("Olson Foundation") and Madonna Ability Alliance ("Recipient") on June 9, 2026.

1) Grant: Olson Foundation awards a grant in the amount of $61,656 to Recipient subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement. Olson Foundation reserves the right to discontinue, modify, or withhold any payments to be made under this Agreement or to require a total or partial repayment of any grant funds if, in Olson Foundation's sole discretion, such action is necessary (i) because Recipient has not fully complied with the terms and conditions of this Agreement; (ii) to protect the purpose and objectives of the grant or any other charitable activities through Olson Foundation; or (iii) to comply with the requirements of any law or regulation applicable to Recipient, Olson Foundation, or the grant.

2) Project; Use of Funds: The purpose of this grant is detailed by Recipient pursuant to the written grant application submitted to Olson Foundation, which grant application is incorporated into this Agreement. Recipient will use the grant funds only for the Project as detailed in the grant application and for no other purpose. To the extent the grant is less than the amount requested, Recipient acknowledges that the Project is still viable and that all other monies required to fund the Project will be obtained from other sources and Olson Foundation will not be requested to commit resources beyond those described in this Agreement.

3) Publicity: Both the Olson Foundation and the Recipient may publicly disclose information about the award of the grant under this Agreement, including the other party's name, the total amount awarded, and a description of the Project. Provided, the Recipient shall only use "The Olson Foundation" as the name and only on its website or in written pamphlets, press releases or reports - Recipient shall obtain prior written consent for any other use. Recipient shall obtain prior written consent of use of the logo of the Olson Foundation for any purpose. The Olson Foundation and the Recipient shall work in good faith to mutually agree on recognition of the Funds at the Project.

4) Reporting Requirements: The grant funds must be spent within twelve months of date of this Agreement ("Term"). Within 60 days following the end of the Term, the Recipient will provide a certified report to the Olson Foundation that the grant received from the Olson Foundation has been used for the purpose described herein. The report shall include the following information: (i) Recipient's identifying information; (ii) a discussion of the purpose(s) of the grant and how the grant has been spent/used; (iii) an identification and discussion of all Project milestones; (iv) a summary of Recipient's compliance with this Agreement and progress in accomplishing the purpose of the grant; (v) a summary of the results of the Project funded by the grant; and (vi) a full financial accounting of all grant funds and related expenditures (i.e., provide a complete narrative explanation of how the grant was spent).

5) Accounting Requirements: Recipient agrees to maintain its annual accounting on a consistent basis and in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. Recipient further agrees to maintain records of receipts and expenditures with respect to the Project funded by this grant and shall make such documents available to Olson Foundation, its agents or representatives upon request. These records must substantiate the use of the grant

exclusively for the purposes described herein. Unless a longer record retention period is specified by state or federal law, Recipient shall retain all records relating to the grant for at least seven (7) years following the termination of the grant.

6) Change in Recipient Status: Recipient will notify Olson Foundation immediately if there is a change in Recipient's status as an Exempt Organization or if the Project is changed, cancelled or delayed. If the Recipient's status changes or the Project is changed, cancelled, or delayed, then, upon notice from Olson Foundation, the remaining funds from the grant shall be immediately segregated for distribution to an Exempt Organization designated by Olson Foundation.

7) Representations by Recipient: Recipient represents that (i) it has been determined by the Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") to be exempt from income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code ("Code") and not to be a private foundation under Section 509(a) of the Code ("Exempt Organization"), (ii) that this grant and the uses made thereof will not cause Recipient to lose its status as an Exempt Organization, (iii) determination letters from the IRS that Recipient is an Exempt Organization are still valid and have not been revoked, and (iv) Recipient has all requisite power and authority, corporate and otherwise, to conduct its operations as presently conducted, and to execute, deliver and perform all of its obligations under this grant agreement. Prior to funding of the grant, Recipient will provide Olson Foundation a copy of documentation from the Internal Revenue Service recognizing Recipient as a 501(c)(3) organization.

8) Prohibited Uses: Recipient shall not use any of the grant funds: (i) To carry on propaganda or otherwise attempt to influence legislation within the meaning of Code § 4945(d)(1); (ii) to influence the outcome of any specific public election or to carry on, directly or indirectly, any voter registration drive within the meaning of Code § 4945(d)(2); (iii) to make any grant which does not comply with the requirements of Code § 4945(d)(3) or (4); (iv) to undertake any activity for any purpose other than one specified in Code § 170(c)(2)(B); or (v) To undertake any activity for any purpose other than one specified in Code § 170(c)(2)(B).

9) Notices: Except as expressly provided herein, any notice required or permitted to be given shall be in writing and shall be (i) personally delivered with receipt, (ii) sent by first-class United States mail, postage prepaid, or (iii) transmitted by electronic mail with a copy by first-class, United States mail, postage prepaid, addressed as follows:

If to Olson Foundation:

The Leland J. & Dorothy H. Olson
Charitable Foundation
c/o Mark L. Brasee
Fraser Stryker PC LLO
500 Energy Plaza
409 S 17th Street
Omaha, NE 68102
Email: mbrasee@fraserstryker.com

If to Recipients:

Madonna Ability Alliance
7197 Pine St.
Omaha, Nebraska 68106-2811
Attn: Catiana Urrutia
Email: currutia@madonnaalliance.org

\\

10) Amendments: This Agreement may be amended or modified from time to time by written agreement signed by both of the parties hereto.

11) Entire Agreement: This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement and understanding of the parties hereto relating to the subject matter contained herein and supersedes all prior agreements and understandings, whether oral or written, between them.

12) Governing Law; Venue: This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Nebraska, without giving effect to its choice of law principles. The parties agree that any action brought by either party to interpret or enforce any provision of this Agreement shall be brought in, and each party agrees to, and does hereby, submit to the jurisdiction and venue of, the state and federal courts in Douglas County, Nebraska.

13) Counterparts: This Agreement may be executed in multiple counterparts, each of which will be deemed an original, but all of which together will constitute one and the same instrument. This Agreement may be executed and/or delivered by electronic signature, facsimile transmission or electronic mail, shall be binding and shall be construed as an original.

In witness whereof, the parties have executed this Agreement as of the date first above written.

Madonna Ability Alliance

By:_____

Name/Title:_____

The Leland J. & Dorothy H. Olson Charitable Foundation

By:_____
Christian Olson, President

PAES

October 23, 2026

Dear [Grant Review Committee],

PAES is pleased to offer our **full support for Madonna Ability Alliance as it adopts a PAES Lab.**

In the 30+ years of supporting transition and career development, PAES has seen firsthand how a hands-on approach to career development changes what is possible for students and adults with disabilities.

Madonna Ability Alliance's website says they seek to *"empower individuals with diverse abilities to learn and grow throughout their lives"* and a PAES Lab compliments just that. The individualized structure of the PAES Lab will allow participants to explore their vocational interests, build foundational workplace skills, and receive individualized feedback on their strengths and aptitude.

PAES is committed to Madonna Ability Alliance's success with the lab. Specifically, PAES will provide:

- Staff training on lab use, assessment, and interpreting results
- Curriculum set-up and initial implementation support
- Ongoing technical assistance for as long as the lab is in use

As the main point of contact between PAES and Madonna Ability Alliance, I will make sure training and support are always available, along with the resources needed for the lab to be used well and consistently.

PAES shares Madonna Ability Alliance's commitment to preparing individuals for meaningful work and greater independence, and we strongly encourage your support of this initiative.

Sincerely,

Tanner Amaral

Sales & Marketing Coordinator

805-904-3656 | tanner@paesauthor.com

PAES

PAES© 2026

Self-advocacy

FORM 1: APPLICATION COVER PAGE

Instructions: This form must be signed and returned, along with the application materials, before the Application Due Date, to the POC or designated email address, as applicable.

RFA #	RELEASE DATE
7573	September 14, 2026
APPLICATION DUE DATE	**POINT OF CONTACT**
October 26, 2026	DHHS.DDCouncil@nebraska.gov

CERTIFICATION AND GUARANTEE OF COMPLIANCE

By signing this Application Cover Sheet, the Applicant guarantees compliance with the provisions stated in this Request for Application and certifies that all information contained in this Application is accurate. This Application is submitted pursuant to the terms of the RFA, and if the Applicant is awarded funding, it will be incorporated into the Subaward between the parties. I understand that if anything in this Application conflicts with the RFA or with the subsequent Subaward, the Subaward and RFA shall govern as set forth in the Subaward.

Application Requirements The following information **must** be included in the application in order for it to be considered for review:

- The target population - individuals with developmental disabilities
- Must address one of the four goals in the Council's 2022-2026 5-year State Plan of the applicant's choice
- Applicants who have been disbarred by the US Federal government are not eligible to receive funding under this RFA

ORGANIZATION LEGAL NAME*: People First of Nebraska

ORGANIZATION DBA NAME (IF APPLICABLE): NA

ORGANIZATION UEI NUMBER: L4BCYJZHD621 ORGANIZATION EIN NUMBER: 36-3435509

ORGANIZATION TYPE: ☒ Non-Profit Organization ☐ Institution of Higher Learning
☐ For- Profit Organization ☐ State, Local, or Tribal Government
☐ Other: _____

COMPLETE ADDRESS: PO Box 5292, Grand Island, NE 68803

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 402-559-4892 EMAIL ADDRESS: PeopleFirstNebraska@outlook.com

X I CERTIFY THAT THIS ORGANIZATION IS AN "ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATION" AS DEFINED BY THIS RFA

X I CERTIFY THAT THIS ORGANIZATION IS NOT PRESENTLY DEBARRED OR SUSPENDED.

SIGNATURE:

Kellie Ellerbusch

TYPED NAME & TITLE OF SIGNER: Kellie Ellerbusch

Name must match UEI Number

FORM 2: PEOPLE FIRST OF NEBRASKA ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Organization Information

People First of Nebraska, Inc.
UEI Number L4BCYJ2HD621

Summary of Federal Grants Experience

Since its reorganization in 2012, People First of Nebraska has successfully completed 15 years of self-advocacy and leadership activities funded by the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities. We have met all reporting requirements, including programmatic, evaluation, and financial management required by the Uniform Grant Guidance, HHS Grants Guidance, and requirements of the Nebraska Secretary of State for registered non-profit entity.

Kellie Ellerbusch, the state coordinator of People First of Nebraska, has 28 years experience writing and working on federal grants in both Nebraska and Missouri. She has been the lead grant writer for six successful federal LEND (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities) training grants equaling more than $22 million in grant funding and serves as the Nebraska LEND Director of Training and Programs. She has also served as the lead or on the team of writers for five federal UCEDD grants (University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities). She collaborated with the Missouri UCEDD and People First of Missouri to write the federal grant that funded the development of the Heartland Midwest Advocacy Network, the precursor the regional SOAR organization. Since becoming a PFN state advisor in 2012 (and state coordinator in 2014), Kellie has written every annual grant proposal from PFN to the Nebraska Council on DD and has been responsible for quarterly and end of year reports and reporting survey data. As an independent contractor, Ms. Ellerbusch will reconcile the PFN accounts and produce monthly balance sheets and quarterly and end of year financial reports for this proposal.

Summary of Programmatic Experience

PFN has a long history of successful programs and activities These include developing the regional self-advocacy network (SOAR), developing and delivering self-advocacy, leadership, and civil rights training, developing awareness campaigns about community inclusion, and sponsoring focus groups for multiple agencies and programs wanting to hearing the voices of individuals with disabilities. We have also supported local chapters in recruiting new members and have developed new chapters. We have a strong social media presence and were the lead organization too found a Disability Pride event in Nebraska. We have successfully hosted an annual convention since 1978, including a virtual convention in 2020. In-person conventions average around 120 people, the great majority of whom are adults with developmental disabilities. At these conventions, all presentations and breakout sessions are facilitated by at least one person with a disability.

Personnel and Management

The Board of PFN is comprised of adult self-advocates who are in leadership positions with and appointed by our local chapters. The Officers are elected by the full membership and serve 3-year terms. The board serves as the directing entity of PFN and meets quarterly. The agenda is set by the President with the assistance of the coordinators. The five officers serve as the decision-making group between Board meetings. All are supported by the coordinators at the Officers and Board direction. Please refer to Figure 1. Organization Chart.

PFN contracts with several individuals and organizations to provide the personnel needed to complete the Goals and Objectives of this proposal. Kellie Ellerbusch (MMI contract) serves as the State Coordinator for PFN. She will assist the Officers and Board of PFN in achieving the goals and objectives outlined in this proposal. Sherry Stansberry contracts with PFN to serve as the Central Nebraska Outreach Coordinator. Independence Rising contracts with PFN to provide one of their staff, Kristin Maag, to serve as the Western Nebraska Outreach Coordinator. PFN contracts with Julie Stahla to provide bookkeeping services that include receiving all U.S. mail, depositing funds, writing and signing checks with the PFN Treasurer, ensuring all tax reports are submitted in a timely manner, and processing convention registrations. By dividing the financial management of the organization between Ms. Ellerbusch, Ms. Stahla, and the PFN Treasurer, we have created a system of checks and oversight to protect PFN assets. Please see the Agency Qualifications section of this proposal for more detail on roles and responsibilities within PFN.

Agreements Terminated or Costs Allowed

As noted above, PFN contracts with the Munroe-Meyer Institute, Independence Rising, Sherry Stansberry, and Julie Stahla to provide program coordination, outreach, and financial management services. The contracts run for a 12 month period beginning July 1 through June 31 of each year

FORM 3: WORK PLAN

Project Summary

People First of Nebraska will support Nebraskans with disabilities to speak for themselves, know their rights and responsibilities, and support disability advocacy and leadership. We will educate elected officials and policy makers about issues important to people with disabilities through our Disability Policy training program. We will support our PFN chapters and members with outreach training and technical assistance to identify potential community partners and organize events and activities in their communities. The goal of this grass roots outreach is to build long-lasting connections and sustainable supports in the chapter's community. We will build our members' advocacy and leadership skills at our annual PFN convention with presentations and breakout sessions, each of which are presented by at least one individual with a disability. These educational and skill building activities help prepare our membership to successfully advocate for themselves and for others. We will collaborate with other disability organizations and programs in Nebraska and the region to develop training or support activities to build leadership and self-advocacy skills. Finally, we will update and expand the PFN website and social media presence to promote our statewide activities, support initiatives and resources from other disability projects, and provide each local chapter a webpage to promote their activities in their communities. All of these activities and the general administration of People First of Nebraska are led by our state Officers and Board members, all of who are individuals with developmental dishabilles and supported by our team of experienced coordinators and advisors.

Agency Qualifications

The mission of People First of Nebraska is to teach people with disabilities how to speak out for themselves and others, make them aware of their rights and responsibilities as citizens, and to support their self-advocacy and their development as leaders in the disability community. We will achieve this mission in the upcoming grant cycle by focusing our efforts on supporting our local chapters, creating and implementing a state-wide but community-specific awareness and outreach campaign, and providing policy advocacy training.

Since its reorganization in 2012, People First of Nebraska has successfully completed 15 years of self-advocacy and leadership activities funded by the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities. These activities included developing the regional self-advocacy network (SOAR), developing and delivering self-advocacy, leadership, and civil rights training, developing awareness campaigns, and serving as a focus group of adults with disabilities for multiple agencies and programs wanting to hearing the voices of individuals with disabilities. These include an MMI initiative to develop a disability studies program, a LEND initiative to develop information on alternatives to guardianship, UCEDD program to develop disability-specific training for women's health, and Vanderbilt University focus groups on accessible housing) We have also supported local chapters, developed a social media presence, and were the

founding organization of Disability Pride events in Nebraska. This event began in 2021 in Lincoln with approximately 80 people in attendance and has expanded to six communities across Nebraska with an estimated attendance of over 1500 people!

The Board of PFN is comprised of self-advocates who are in leadership positions within our local chapters. Most are long-time members who have received extensive leadership training. Most have also attended national conferences, self-advocacy conferences in neighboring states, and the regional SOAR self-advocacy conferences. We have also added new Board members who bring fresh ideas and energy to our leadership. Emerging leaders also attend Board activities as Alternates to gain experience and knowledge. New officers are provided an orientation to PFN and to their fiscal responsibilities and role in fulfilling organizational and grant objectives. Board members review activities as they pertain to the Goals and Objectives of this grant proposal, handle administrative tasks, and review all expenditures and income of PFN, particularly the NCDD grant budget. Officers, Board members and Alternates take the lead in planning and executing activities through our many standing committees and work groups. PFN coordinators and advisors have decades of combined experience supporting self-advocacy for people with disabilities as disability professionals, service providers, family, and self-advocates. We are contracted with partner organizations that provide the core support network for PFN and have a strong commitment to seeing the success of this organization and to provide resources and support to PFN. All coordinators work to train new advisors, provide start-up assistance, as well as assisting in work related to the goals and objectives of this proposal. Please see Figure 1. Organization Chart

PFN contracts with several individuals and organizations , to provide the personnel needed to complete the Goals and Objectives of this proposal. Kellie Ellerbusch (MMI contract) serves as the State Coordinator for PFN. She will assist the Officers and Board of PFN in achieving the goals and objectives outlined in this proposal, this includes producing quarterly and end of year narrative reports for this proposal. She will also write the grant proposal to the NCDD for the 2028 Fiscal Year. Ms. Ellerbusch has 28 years experience writing and working on federal grants in both Nebraska and Missouri. She has been the lead grant writer for six successful federal LEND (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities) training grants equaling more than $22 million in grant funding and serves as the Nebraska LEND Director of Training and Programs. She has also served as the lead or on the writing team for five federal UCEDD grants (University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities). She collaborated with the Missouri UCEDD and People First of Missouri to write the federal grant that funded the development of the Heartland Midwest Advocacy Network, the precursor the regional SOAR organization, and has served on the planning committees for 4 regional SOAR conferences. Since becoming a PFN state advisor in 2012 (and state coordinator in 2014), Kellie has written every annual grant proposal from PFN to the Nebraska Council on DD and has been responsible for quarterly and annual reports and reporting survey data. Her primary role is supporting the PFN Board and Officers, managing logistics, providing technical assistance as needed, identifying resources (such as securing the ongoing funding of our Disability Policy training by the Nebraska LEND program) and helping the local

chapters to achieve the goals of this grant. She also coordinates the annual PFN convention and helps the board to develop training materials and other resources and identifies other organizations that can partner with PFN to meet our goals and mission.

Kellie Ellerbusch also balances the PFN bank accounts and produces monthly balance sheets and quarterly and end of year financial reports for PFN and this this proposal. Ms. Ellerbusch will provide these financial management services as an in-kind contribution this year.

Sherry Stansberry contracts with PFN to serve as the Central Nebraska Outreach Coordinator. She will serve as the primary contact and coordinator for events and activities between PFN and other disability organizations and the community. She also identifies and organizes new chapters in the central section of the state. Sherry has served in this role since 2014 and has over 35 years of experience in the disability community as a direct service provider and as the retired executive director of the Arc of Buffalo County, for whom she has written and coordinated the activities of multiple local and state grant projects. She has served on the boards of several disability organizations including the Arc of Nebraska, the Nebraska Council on Independent Living Centers, and the Community Advisory Board of the Nebraska UCEDD.

Independence Rising has contracted with PFN to provide one of their staff to serve as the Western Nebraska Outreach Coordinator for several years. Since July of 2024, we have contracted with IR to support Kristin Maag as our Western Nebraska Coordinator. Ms. Maag lives and works in Scottsbluff, Nebraska and has raised several children with developmental disabilities. She works as a case worker with IR and a Parent Resource Coordinator with MMI. She has developed a diverse network of disability and other community-based organizations and agencies in her area of the state. Kristin provides support to self-advocates in the western half of the state and has organized and identified a local chapter advisor for People First of Scottsbluff. She also assisted that new chapter in securing funds to develop a hands-on training session that has been presented locally in Scottsbluff and at the SOAR conference in 2025. She is in the process of organizing another chapter in western Nebraska in the Alliance area.

PFN contracts with Julie Stahla to provide bookkeeping services that include receiving all U.S. mail, depositing funds, writing and signing checks with the PFN Treasurer, ensuring all tax reports are submitted in a timely manner, and processing convention registrations. Ms. Stahla has over 40 years accounting experience in her family's business in Grand Island. She has experience as the president of her local Arc chapter and the Arc of Nebraska and has been the advisor of the Grand Island People First Chapter for nearly 20 years. Ms. Stahla's contract fees and mileage expenses will be paid by PFN as a cash match.

We again propose to support PFN members to serve as Disability Policy Specialists (DPS) during the 2027 Nebraska legislative session. We are in preliminary discussions with The Capitol Crew, a group of self-advocates from People First of Lincoln who are active at the state unicameral to see how we can support and expand their policy advocacy training and activities. PFN will partner with the Nebraska

Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) training program to support two self-advocates who will serve as Disability Policy Specialists, as well as an additional two self-advocates recruited through Disability Rights Nebraska. These self-advocates will learn about legislative process and how to analyze legislation, review and recommend action on legislation important to people with disabilities, meet with elected officials and their staff, produce and deliver testimony to the state senate, and assist other self-advocates to successfully testify. They will also work on activities related to this grant proposal. We see the ongoing support for these positions as a systems change action in and of itself, as it models the highest values of self-advocacy and social role valorization.

Coordination and Collaboration

People First of Nebraska has long-existing ties with several disability-related organizations in our state, including the University Center of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI-UCEDD), the Nebraska Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) training program, Disability Rights Nebraska, and Independence Rising. We have established newer collaborations that are producing quality outcomes, including the UNO/MMI Trailblazers Program. These community partners have committed their continued support to building and promoting PFN, its activities, and its local chapters.

Over the last decade, we have developed a strong collaboration with Kansas self-advocates by attending each other's state conventions and through the SOAR collaboration. This grant cycle, we will explore a partnership with the Arc of Douglas County, Kansas and the Self Advocacy Coalition of Kansas (SACK) to develop a virtual support group for men with developmental disabilities. SACK has several men in their organization that are strong self-advocate and mentors that attended our 2026 annual PFN convention. They are well-known and well respected within our PFN community. At convention, they facilitated a breakout session to assess the interest of men in our organization to develop a virtual support group of men with disabilities from Kansas and Nebraska. The idea was well received and we will meet with our Kansas partners early in the 2027 grant year to investigate this idea and hopefully launch this virtual group.

PFN members serve on several Boards, including the Nebraska Council on DD, the Arc of Nebraska, the MMI University Center of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities' Community Advisory Board, the Governor's Advisory Board on Developmental Disabilities, and the Nebraska Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities. They also serve on Human Rights Review Committees within service provider agencies. Please see the Supporting Documents section of this proposal for letters of support from our partners.

Detailed Narrative

This proposal was developed to address NCDD Goal 2A: Increase the influence of self-advocates and leaders with disabilities by strengthening, supporting, and funding at least one self-advocacy organization led by people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We will address this goal through the following Goals and Objectives and related activities:

GOAL ONE: People First of Nebraska, Inc. engages with its chapters and the community to promote leadership, inclusion, and self-determination and enhance sustainability of chapters at a local level

People First of Nebraska believes that advocacy begins at home. Most of the challenges we face in our daily lives happen where we live and work and receive services. People with disabilities need the courage, knowledge, and skills to advocate for themselves and want to know that they are supported by a strong local People First chapter and state organization. Building strong local chapters and their connections with their community are imperative to sustain self-advocacy at a local level regardless of state funding.

Objective 1.1. By March 1, 2027, PFN will create a web page on our website for each of our active and developing chapters across the state.

Each chapter web page will include information about when and where the chapter meets,how to contact the chapter for more information. It will also include regularly updated information about past and upcoming activities of the chapter, PFN, and the larger disability community. Chapters can also include their own goals and mission, and photographs depicting membership in action. These pages can be used to inform potential new members about the organization and potential community partners about the value in collaborating with our organization. Local chapters will determine the content of their page at their monthly membership meetings. Advisors will forward that information to the state coordinator, who will update web pages as new information is received.

Objective 1.2. By June 30, 2027, PFN will create web pages to support information dissemination by at least one other disability related organization or project.

The PFN web site will also be used to disseminate information from other disability projects and initiatives without an internet "home". For example, an interdisciplinary group of legal professionals, self-advocates, and parents are developing materials to provide attorneys, judges, and families with information about alternatives to full guardianship in Nebraska. PFN has agreed to provide this group space on our website to disseminate these materials.

Objective 1.3. By December 31, 2027, PFN will offer project funding to up to six of our locals chapters to develop a training or community outreach activity in their community.

The successful chapters will submit a request detailing the activity and what allowable expense this funding will cover. The five officers of PFN and state coordinators will review the requests for suitability, completeness of the plan and budget, and the impact of the project proposal. They will submit their recommended proposals to our NCDD grant officer for final approval. Upon approval, PFN will reimburse the successful chapters up to $200 for allowable expenses, with the appropriate documentation provided. PFN proposes that half the budget for these projects ($100 each) be paid with funds from NCDD grant and the second half ($100 each) be paid for from PFN funds.

GOAL TWO: People First of Nebraska, Inc. is a strong and engaged leader in disability advocacy and leadership training in Nebraska.

Objective 2.1. By January 31, 2027, two PFN members will be selected to serve as PFN Disability Policy Specialists and by June 30, 2027, two other self-advocates will be selected to serve as DRN Disability Policy Specialists

Policy advocacy continues to be a priority this year. In addition to the critical legislation surrounding the development of an Olmstead plan for the state, there remains the ever-present threats of legislation that will allow seclusion and restraint in schools, cut funding for and further restrict access to vital services and supports, and that threaten the security of our civil and human rights. It is imperative that people with disabilities learn more about the legislative process, how laws and policies are developed and processed through the Unicameral, and how to educate elected officials and policymakers about how their decisions affect our lives. Past PFN Disability Policy Specialists (DPS) have been very successful in developing relationships with many of our state senators and educating the relevant senate committees about the possible impacts of legislation on our lives. These Specialists increase their advocacy skills, expand the profile of people with disabilities at the state capitol, and strengthen the policy impact of disability advocacy across organizations. For this grant cycle, the Nebraska Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) will again provide funding to support a total of 4 self-advocates (2 selected by PFN and 2 selected by Disability Rights Nebraska). The LEND program will also pay the salary of their Self-Advocate faculty member, Mary Angus, to develop training modules, supervise, train, and mentor these Disability Policy Specialists. PFN will also work with Disability Rights Nebraska, whose staff have also committed to serving as supervisors and mentors. PFN candidates will be interviewed and selected in January of 2027 and will begin soon after. DRN specialists will be selected by the end of June. We will coordinate our policy advocacy activities with the Arc of Nebraska, Disability Rights of Nebraska, and other disability advocacy organizations.

In addition, PFN is in discussion with The Capitol Crew, a group of policy self-advocates in Lincoln to see how PFN and the LEND program can support their training and advocacy work.

Objective 2.2. By October 31, 2027, PFN will sponsor a three-day statewide convention.

Our annual convention consistently focuses on providing leadership and advocacy training to approximately 120 participants each year. Approximately 75% of participants are individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities. We consistently recruit keynote speakers who are people with disabilities and feature10 – 14 breakout session that are all facilitated by at least one person with a disability. Training content includes sessions on self-advocacy, developing leadership skills, advocating for self-determined lives, policy advocacy, and improving health and quality of life. Organizations from around the state set up information tables to educate participants about their services and outstanding self-advocates and their chapters are recognized for their advocacy, volunteerism, and leadership accomplishments. We are requesting NDDC support to provide $100 scholarships for each self-advocate and support staff to register for the event. PFN will provide $25 per person to match for a total scholarship of $125 per person. This will help off-set the increase in registration fee for the event and encourage more self-advocates to attend. Registration fees for members, staff or family members supporting them, and chapter advisors are determined by the actual costs for the event.

GOAL THREE: People First of Nebraska, Inc. is a strong and engaged leader in disability advocacy in the region and nationally.

Objective 3.1. By June 30, 2027, PFN will collaborate with the Self Advocacy Coalition of Kansas or another disability organization to investigate the feasibility of developing a state or regional support group for men with intellectual or developmental disabilities or to address another issue of importance to self-advocates.

Collaboration with other self-advocates in the region continues to be one of the most powerful ways for self-advocates in Nebraska to develop their skills and confidence as leaders. Networking with self-advocates across the region has provided PFN with many new ideas for self-advocacy and leadership activities in our home state and inspiring self-advocate role models. One idea that has been discussed with our partners in Kansas at this summer's SACK conference and again at the PFN convention in October is the need for men with intellectual or developmental disabilities to have strong role models and a safe place for them to discuss their lives. The great majority of people they interact with as staff or advisors in the disability community are women, and even if they have a strong male mentor in their lives, they likely do not have the unique experience of being a disabled man in the world. We would work with SACK and the Arc of Douglas County, Kansas to recruit men to participate in a monthly virtual group where they can discuss issue important to them. The LEND Self-Advocate Trainee this year, a young man on the autism spectrum, will participate on the bi-state planning team as part of his Community Learning and Leadership project. Self-Advocates from Kansas could begin facilitating the group and PFN coordinators will work to recruit participants and identify guest speakers to lend their expertise to the group discussion. This project is currently in the discussion phase.

Accomplishments

GOAL ONE: People First of Nebraska, Inc. engages with its chapters and the community to promote leadership, inclusion, and self-determination and enhance sustainability of chapters at a local level.

Objective 1.1. By March 1, 2027, PFN will create a web page on our website for each of our active and developing chapters across the state.

> **Outputs:** One or more web pages for each active and developing chapter that are updated at least quarterly and will contain information about the chapter meetings, activities, and upcoming events
>
> **Outcomes:** Chapters can use this website to promote their organization, activities, goals and mission. This information can be used to recruit new members and develop collaboration with new and existing community partners

Objective 1.2. By June 30, 2027, PFN will create web pages to support information dissemination by at least one other disability related organization or project.

> **Outputs:** One or more web pages for other disability organizations disability projects and initiatives without an internet "home". For example, the alternative to guardianship materials be produced by a coalition of professionals, self-advocates, and parents, or small groups like the Nebraska CP group or The Capitol Crew.
>
> **Outcomes:** Organizations without the resources can have a web page to promote their organization or project and to disseminate materials. This will strengthen our collaboration with other groups by providing a valuable service to them.

Objective 1.3. By December 31, 2027, PFN will offer project funding to up to six of our locals chapters to develop a training or community outreach activity in their community.

> **Outputs:** Project proposals and budgets, materials developed, collaborations developed, training or outreach events hosted and the number of participants.
>
> **Outcomes:** Local chapters will raise awareness about the mission of People First, participate in community events, and develop partnerships with organizations or businesses in their community. This will raise their profile in the community and strengthen their local support system to help sustain them into the future. Self-advocates will gain the experience of planning a project or activity and working with partners for success.

OBJECTIVE TWO: People First of Nebraska, Inc. is a strong and engaged leader in disability advocacy and leadership training in Nebraska.

Objective 2.1. By January 31, 2027, two PFN members will be selected to serve as PFN Disability Policy Specialists and by June 30, 2027, two other self-advocates will be selected to serve as DRN Disability Policy Specialists

> **Outputs:** The Disability Policy Specialists will learn about the legislative process and review and recommend legislation important to people with disabilities, produce and deliver testimony to the state senate, and assist other self-advocates to successfully testify. The DPS will represent PFN in meetings with other disability organizations and committees, such as the Nebraska Consortium of Citizens with Disabilities.
>
> **Outcomes:** The Disability Policy Specialists will gain experience and confidence in interacting with elected officials and their staff and more legislators and policy-makers will hear directly from disability advocates about how policies affect them. People with disabilities will develop ongoing relationships with elected officials and other policymakers and be more effective in educating them on important policy issues. Self-advocates and disability advocacy organizations will have a skilled, coordinated, and constant presence at the state capitol as decisions are made that will have far-reaching and long-lasting impact.

Objective 2.2. By October 31, 2027, PFN will sponsor a three-day statewide convention.

> **Outputs:** Self-advocates will share their knowledge and expertise on issues important to them, including employment, health, relationships, living independently, self-determination, policy advocacy, and citizen advocacy. People with disabilities will have more information and access to resources about how to advocate for themselves and others.
>
> **Outcomes:** People with disabilities will become better community advocates for themselves and others. They will be better able to advocate for their and other's civil and disability rights and their responsibilities to respect the rights of others. People with disabilities will be better prepared to lead successful, fulfilling, and self-determined lives.

GOAL THREE: People First of Nebraska, Inc. is a strong and engaged leader in disability advocacy in the region and nationally.

Activity 3.1. By June 30, 2027, PFN will collaborate with the Self Advocacy Coalition of Kansas or another disability organization to investigate the feasibility of developing a

state or regional support group for men with intellectual or developmental disabilities or to address another issue of importance to self-advocates.

Outputs: Planning meeting notes, Monthly Zoom meeting/agenda of men with disabilities, list of issues addressed and guest speakers, feedback/satisfaction data

Outcomes: Men with disabilities from Nebraska and Kansas will have mentors and peers who understand their unique experience and can share their support and expertise. This activity has the potential of developing into a new disability network that promotes healthy, happy, and strong men in self-advocacy.

Project Sustainability

In past years, PFN has earned some funds through our convention T-shirt sales, program ad sales, vendor table fees, and sponsorships. In this grant cycle we have budgeted some our own funds to purchase consumable office supplies, support local chapters with project funding, and match the NCDD's scholarship funds. We will also use our own funds to support operational expenses of the organization, including a paid bookkeeper and our web site domain. Finally, we leveraged our Disability Policy Specialist project with the Nebraska LEND program, who is providing funding for all four self-advocates each year and salary and travel expenses for their LEND Self-advocate faculty member to mentor and supervise our DPS team. The MMI-UCEDD and LEND programs supplement the UNMC contract for the state coordinator and assistant coordinator's hours and provides office space, computer, and phone. NCDD funds enable us to continue to effectively advocate with policy makers, collaborate with other NCDD grantees, educate in the community, support our chapters, and to develop important initiatives that are created for and by people with all types of disabilities.

The PFN Board and Officers met at our quarterly meeting in October, 2026 to address the reduction of grant funding from the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities. After much discussion, the Board voted to take the following actions to reduce expenditures: 1) Reduce the number of in-person meetings to two each year (May and October). This would require us to pay for hotel rooms only in May, as chapters pay for their own rooms in October at convention. 2) Reduce the number of hours for each of the coordinators, and 3) Kellie Ellerbusch has agreed to provide financial management service as an in-kind match. The Board and Officers also voted to take the following actions to generate additional funds: 1) Deposit $10,000 of PFN funds into a one-year Certificate of Deposit, which will earn interest with minimal risk. We will assess our post-convention finances at the January Board meeting to determine if additional funds can be invested, and 2) each chapter has committed to raising $2,000 each through fundraising in their communities. Coordinators will also fundraise to supplement the chapters' efforts.

PFN has acquired the fundraising plan used by the SACK organization in Kansas and will use that plan to raise funds in Nebraska. Sherry Stansberry, our Outreach

Coordinator, is currently researching disability-specific organizations and private business to develop a list of potential community partners. At our January Board meeting we will review these resources and those brought by local chapters. We will prioritize those we think are most likely to support our organization and set a timeline for contacting them. We will also use our website and existing awareness materials to promote PFN. At the January meeting we will also have a guest speaker to help our Board develop a script to use when approaching potential community partners. They will also discuss preparing for a visit or phone conversation, professional dress and preparation, and follow-up.

We have discussed other potential grants or scholarships that we may apply for to support our convention in October. The State Coordinator will investigate these opportunities and inform the Board of what is available.

People First of Nebraska is grateful to the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities for their long-time support of our organization. We understand that in difficult times, much more is expected from us as an integral part of the Nebraska Disability Network. We are ready to take up the challenge to generate more of our own resources with the help of NCDD and our community partners.

Work Plan				
GOAL ONE: People First of Nebraska, Inc. engages with its chapters and the community to promote leadership, inclusion, and self-determination and enhance sustainability of chapters at a local level				
Activity	**Measures of Success**	**Responsible People**	**Start Date**	**End Date**
Objective 1.1. By March 1, 2027, PFN will create a web page on our website for each of our active and developing chapters across the state.				
Create Chapter Web Pages	At least one page per chapter created	* State Coordinator	January 1, 2027	March 1, 2027
Update chapter pages at least quarterly	All chapter pages accurate and up to date	* Local Chapters * Chapter Advisors * State Coordinator	January 1, 2027 and at quarterly Board meetings	Updated quarterly through December 2027
Objective 1.2. By December 31, 2027, PFN will create web pages to support information dissemination by at least one other disability related organization or project.				
Develop pages for Alternative to Guardianship materials	At least one organization utilizes the PFN web site to disseminate disability-related materials	* Alternative to Guardianship team * State Coordinator	January 1, 2027	March 31, 2027
Reach out to other groups to offer web pages for their materials	More organizations partnering with PFN	* Other organizations * PFN Board/Officers/ Advisors *State Coordinator	January 1, 2027	June 30, 2027
Objective 1.3. By December 31, 2027, PFN will offer project funding to up to six of our locals chapters to develop a training or community outreach activity in their community.				
Develop procedure for chapters to apply for project funding	Written procedure to guild requests	*Local Chapters *State Officers *State Coordinator *NCDD Grant Officer	January 1, 2027 at Quarterly Board Meeting	March 30, 2027
Disseminate instructions for applying for funding	Information disseminated to all PFN chapters	*Local Chapters *State Coordinator	April 1, 2027	April 15, 2027
Receive and review proposals from Chapters	At least four local chapters submit project proposals	*Local Chapters *State Officers *State Coordinator *NCDD Grant Officer	May 1, 2027	November 1, 2027
Project is completed	At least four chapters complete their project	*Local Chapters *Coordinators (if requested)	May 1, 2027	November 1, 2027

Review requests for reimbursement and supporting documents	All funded chapters submit complete and appropriate documentation	*Local Chapters *State Officers *State Coordinator	May 1, 2027	November 1, 2027
GOAL TWO: People First of Nebraska, Inc. is a strong and engaged leader in disability advocacy and leadership training in Nebraska.				
Activity	**Measures of Success**	**Responsible People**	**Start Date**	**End Date**
Objective 2.1. By January 31, 2027, two PFN members will be selected to serve as PFN Disability Policy Specialists and by June 30, 2027, two other self-advocates will be selected to serve as DRN Disability Policy Specialists				
Recruit PFN Members for DPS positions	2 PFN members are recruited and contracts executed	* LEND Self-Advocate faculty * State Coordinator * PFN State Board	January 1, 2027	February 29, 2027
PFN-DPS are trained and supervised in Policy Advocacy	2 PFN-DPS develop Policy Advocacy skills and experiences	* LEND Self-Advocate faculty * DRN Legislative Director * PFN State Board	March 1, 2027	June 30, 2027
Recruit Other self-advocates for DPS positions	2 Individuals are recruited	* DRN Legislative Director * LEND Self-Advocate faculty * PFN State Board	May 1, 2027	May 31, 2027
DRN-DPS are trained and supervised in Policy Advocacy	2 DRN-DPS develop Policy Advocacy skills and experiences	* LEND Self-Advocate faculty * DRN Legislative Director * PFN State Board	June 1, 2027	August 31, 2027
Objective 2.2. By October 31, 2027, PFN will sponsor a three-day statewide convention.				
Select Theme of convention, topic of keynote, convention agenda	Planning documents and meeting minutes	*Local Chapters/ Advisors *State Board and Officers *Coordinators	January 16. 2027 Board meeting	January 30, 2027
Compile costs for hotel, food, activities, entertainment	Comprehensive spreadsheet for all costs to determine per person cots for registration. Approval by Board	*State Coordinators *State Board and Officers	March 1, 2027	April or May, 2027 Board meeting
Disseminate Call for keynote and breakout sessions presentations Review and approve applications	Schedule Keynote and at least 10 breakout sessions	*Local Chapters *State Board and Officers *State Coordinators	May 1, 2027	July 31, 2027
Disseminate Convention announcement and registration information	E-mails and web pages providing convention information	*Local Chapters/ Advisors *State Coordinators *NCDD Grant Officer/Staff	June 1, 2027	September 1, 2027

Review nominations for state awards and select recipients	At least two people or chapters will be nominated for each of the four awards	*Local Chapters *State Board and Officers *State Coordinators	July 1, 2027	September 1, 2027
Host PFN Annual Convention Collect Satisfaction data	At least 100 people register and attend the annual Convention. At least 60 people complete the satisfaction survey	*Local Chapters/ Advisors *State Board and Officers *State Coordinators	October 8, 2027	October 10, 2027
GOAL THREE: People First of Nebraska, Inc. is a strong and engaged leader in disability advocacy in the region and nationally.				
Activity	**Measures of Success**	**Responsible People**	**Start Date**	**End Date**
Objective 3.1. By June 30, 2027, PFN will collaborate with the Self Advocacy Coalition of Kansas or another disability organization to investigate the feasibility of developing a state or regional support group for men with intellectual or developmental disabilities or to address another issue of importance to self-advocates.				
Planning meetings to develop goals of the program, assign duties	We will develop meeting notes, project outline, discuss how to determine meeting times and dates with participants	*SACK and Arc representatives *LEND Self-Advocate Trainee *Male PFN Officer *State Coordinator	February 1, 2027	March 15, 2027
Recruit men from PFN chapters, MMI Trailblazers program	Recruit at least 10 men from Nebraska to participate in the Men's Group Zoom Meeting	*Local Chapters * LEND Self-Advocate Trainee *Male PFN Officers *State Coordinator	March 1, 2027	December 31, 2027
Identify topics and guest speakers	At least 2 guest speakers present at monthly meetings	*Men's group members *LEND Self-Advocate Trainee *Male PFN Officers *State Coordinator	April 1, 2027	December 31, 2027

Budget and Budget Justification

Line Item	Hrs	Rate per Hr	NDDC	MATCH PFN	MATCH In-Kind Hrs	OTHER	Total
Consultants/Contracts							
Kellie Ellerbusch, State Coordinator	3	22.5	3,510	--	--	--	**$3,510**
Kellie Ellerbusch, Financial Mngmt	0.5	21.25	--	--	553	--	**$553**
Sherry Stansberry, Outreach Coordinator	1	22.5	1,170	--	--	--	**$1,170**
Kristin Maag, Western NE Coordinator	4	22.5	4,680	--	--	--	**$4,680**
Disability Policy Specialist 1	5	15	--	--	--	1,500	**$1,500**
Disability Policy Specialist 2	5	15	--	--	--	1,500	**$1,500**
Julie Stahla, Book keeper	1	22.5	--	1,170	--	--	**$1,170**
Officers/Board							
President	2	33.07	--		3,439	--	**$3,439**
Vice President	1	33.07	--		1,720	--	**$1,720**
Treasurer	1	33.07	--		1,720	--	**$1,720**
Secretary	1	33.07	--		1,720	--	**$1,720**
Sgnt-at-Arms	1	33.07	--		1,720	--	**$1,720**
Board Members (8 people x 4 Board meetings)	3	33.07	--	--	1,058	--	**$1,058**
Travel (mileage, meals, hotel)							
Travel-Officers/Board Members			2,000	--	--	--	**$2,000**
Travel - Coordinators/Bookkeeper			840	200	--	--	**$1,040**
In-Kind Donations							
Donations/Advisor Volunteer Hours from Chapters			--	--	1,500	--	**$1,500**
Other Direct Costs							
Office Supplies/Postage/Printing (consumable)			200	200	--	--	**$400**
New chapter grants			--	100	--	--	**$100**
Project support to Chapters (6 chapters @ $200 each)			600	600	--	--	**$1,200**
Web Site Domain/Host Site			--	500	--	--	**$500**
PFN Convention Scholarships (120 people @ $125 each)			12,000	3,000	--	--	**$15,000**
Totals			**$25,000**	**$5,770**	**$13,428**	**$3,000**	**$47,198**

Budget Justification

Consultants/Contracts Three Coordinators assist the Officers and Board of PFN in meeting the objectives of this proposal, including writing the 2028 grant proposal in this next grant cycle. Bookkeeper costs are paid by PFN as a cash match. Financial Management will be an in-kind match. Disability Policy Specialists will be paid by the Nebraska LEND program. All contracted individuals submit detailed monthly or quarterly invoices.

State Coordinator	3 hrs/wk x $22.50/hr x 52 wks = $3,510
Financial Management (In-kind match)	0.5 hr/wk x $21.25 /hr x 52 wks = $ 553
Outreach Coordinator	1 hr/wk x $22.50/hr x 52 wks = $ 1,170
Western Coordinator	4 hrs/wk x $22.50/hr x 52 wks = $ 4,680
Bookkeeper (PFN match)	1 hr/wk x $22.50/hr x 52 wks = $ 1,170
Disability Policy Specialists (LEND supported)	2 DPS x 5 hrs/wk x $15/hr x 20 wks = $ 3,000

* LEND contracts directly with DRN to support those Disability Policy Specialists so those funds are not included here

Officers and Board members volunteer their hours and provide them as in-kind match and will documented with quarterly reports.

Officers	6 hrs/wk x $33.07/hr x 52 wks = $10,318
Board Members	8 people x 4 Board Meetings x 3 hrs each x $33.07 = $1,058

TRAVEL EXPENSES PFN is requesting funds to pay for mileage for chapters to travel to two PFN Board meetings and hotel rooms for one PFN Board Meeting (the second Board meeting is at our annual convention, where individuals pay for their own rooms). Drivers submit mileage expense reimbursement forms and mileage maps.

Budget is divided between all the chapters. Coordinators provide transportation to some officers and Board members, so travel is often combined between this budget item and travel for coordinators. In addition, Officers and Board members from multiple chapters and Coordinators share hotel rooms to minimize costs

10 People First Chapters x $200 each = $ 2,000

Coordinator/DPS/Bookkeeper. Coordinators will travel to two quarterly board meetings, both in the Kearney/Grand Island areas (where one coordinator lives). The State coordinator will provide her mileage as an in-kind match. The majority of mileage reimbursement is set aside for the Western Nebraska Coordinator.

Coordinators 1,105 miles x $0.76 = $ 840
Bookkeeper (PFN cash match) 263 mi. x $0.76 = $ 200

OTHER IN-KIND DONATIONS In addition to the in-kind and cash matches described here, our chapters donate supplies and prizes for activities at our convention raffles. Several chapter advisors also volunteer their time to attend PFN Board meetings and convention In-kind match 10 chapters x $150 each = $1,500

OTHER DIRECT COSTS
Office Supplies / Postage / Printing This includes printing promotional materials
NCDD = $ 200
PFN (cash match) = $ 200

New Chapter Grants will be paid to every new chapter organized
PFN (cash match) = $ 200

Project support to Chapters 6 Chapters @ $200 each NCDD = $ 600
PFN (cash match) = $ 600

Website Domain/Host site. PFN (cash match). $ 500

Scholarships for 2026 PFN convention
NCDD 120 people x $100 each = $ 12,000
PFN (cash match) 120 people x $25 each = $ 3,000

October 26, 2026

Ms. Kristen Larsen
Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities
301 Centennial Mall South
P.O. Box 95026
Lincoln, NE 68509-5026

Dear Kristen:

The Nebraska LEND program is pleased to provide this letter of support for the grant application being submitted by People First of Nebraska, Inc. (PFN).

The mission of the Nebraska LEND program is to improve the health and well-being of children, youth, and adults with all types of disabilities by preparing trainees from diverse professional and community disciplines to assume leadership roles in their respective fields. The Nebraska LEND Interdisciplinary Leadership Education Program welcomes students, family members, and self-advocates to learn more about working with and advocating for individuals with disabilities and their families and becoming leaders not only in their own field of study but in the larger health and human services community. The mission of People First to train and support self-advocates to become leaders in disability policy parallels the LEND mission to develop self-advocate leaders in the community.

We have partnered with People First of Nebraska since 2018 to provide Policy Advocacy training to four self-advocates (two from People First and two from Disability Rights Nebraska) and provide our Self-Advocate Faculty member, Mary Angus, to mentor, supervise, and train these self-advocates. In the next grant cycle (January-December, 2027), the Nebraska LEND will continue to provide Mary Angus' services and will contract with People First of Nebraska to provide financial support for the contract payments for two People First members to serve as Disability Policy Specialists.

We are excited to continue and strengthen our collaboration with People First of Nebraska in this initiative.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Burt, PhD, Director
Nebraska Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disorders (LEND)
UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute

DISABILITY RIGHTS NEBRASKA

October 23, 2026

Kristen Larsen
Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities
Department of Health and Human Services
301 Centennial Mall South
Lincoln, NE 68509-5026

Dear Ms. Larsen,

Disability Rights Nebraska is pleased to write a strong letter of support for the grant proposal being submitted by People First of Nebraska, Inc. (PFN).

Disability Rights Nebraska has been designated by the Governor as the Protection and Advocacy Agency System (P&A) for the State of Nebraska. Each state has a P&A system. The focus of our program is to protect and advocate for the human and legal rights of vulnerable people with disabilities, especially those who learn, live, or work in isolated, segregated, or congregated settings. We are not a state or federal agency, but rather a private, non-profit organization. Disability Rights Nebraska approaches protection and advocacy through a four-tier system that includes legal advocacy, public policy, self-advocacy, and citizen advocacy. We are a long-time supporter and collaborator with PFN.

Our collaboration with PFN has been very successful and we look forward to continued shared interests and initiatives.

Sincerely,

Tania Diaz
Chief Executive Officer

2930 Ridge Line Rd., Ste. 205, Lincoln, NE 68516 info@disabilityrightsnebraska.org 402.413.2016> 1.800.422.6691
1517 Broadway, Ste. 101, Scottsbluff, NE 69361 disabilityrightsnebraska.org 402.474.3274

October 26, 2026

Ms. Kristen Larsen
Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities
301 Centennial Mall South
P.O. Box 95026
Lincoln, NE 68509-5026

The University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disability (UCEDD) at the Munroe-Meyer Institute is pleased to provide this letter of support for the grant application being submitted by People First of Nebraska, Inc. (PFN).

The goals of this grant are in close alignment with the mission of the Munroe-Meyer Institute and the goals of our UCEDD program, namely to increase the knowledge and skills of individuals with disabilities to live, work, and participate in accessible communities by a) building their capacity to make informed and self-directed decisions in their lives, and b) to lead community and policy advocacy efforts to expand the availability and diversity of services, self-direct services and supports, and advocate for inclusive and accessible communities.

The MMI-UCEDD has contracted with PFN to provide a state coordinator for this organization as they develop their leadership and advocacy skills and initiate new activities to promote self-advocacy and raise awareness in the state and region for individuals with disabilities. MMI-UCEDD staff will continue to work with PFN to support board meetings and their annual convention, develop training and awareness modules, support their policy advocacy and education efforts, and ensure the successful completion of grant related activities.

Sincerely,

Mark Shriver

Mark D. Shriver, Ph.D., BCBA-D
Director, University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities
Munroe-Meyer Institute for Genetics and Rehabilitation

Self-advocacy

FORM 1: APPLICATION COVER PAGE

Instructions: This form must be signed and returned, along with the application materials, before the Application Due Date, to the POC or designated email address, as applicable.

RFA #	RELEASE DATE
7573	September 14, 2026
APPLICATION DUE DATE	**POINT OF CONTACT**
October 26, 2026	DHHS.DDCouncil@nebraska.gov

CERTIFICATION AND GUARANTEE OF COMPLIANCE

By signing this Application Cover Sheet, the Applicant guarantees compliance with the provisions stated in this Request for Application and certifies that all information contained in this Application is accurate. This Application is submitted pursuant to the terms of the RFA, and if the Applicant is awarded funding, it will be incorporated into the Subaward between the parties. I understand that if anything in this Application conflicts with the RFA or with the subsequent Subaward, the Subaward and RFA shall govern as set forth in the Subaward.

Application Requirements The following information **must** be included in the application in order for it to be considered for review:

- The target population - individuals with developmental disabilities
- Must address one of the four goals in the Council's 2022-2026 5-year State Plan of the applicant's choice
- Applicants who have been disbarred by the US Federal government are not eligible to receive funding under this RFA

ORGANIZATION LEGAL NAME*: Kolb Foundation For Disability Education

ORGANIZATION DBA NAME (IF APPLICABLE):

ORGANIZATION UEI NUMBER: ORGANIZATION EIN NUMBER: 300222414

ORGANIZATION TYPE: ☑ Non-Profit Organization ☐ Institution of Higher Learning
☐ For- Profit Organization ☐ State, Local, or Tribal Government
☐ Other:

COMPLETE ADDRESS: 2041 N 66th Street
Omaha, NE 68104

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 2

TELEPHONE NUMBER: (402) 650-8728 EMAIL ADDRESS: kolbf.ne@gmail.com

☑ I CERTIFY THAT THIS ORGANIZATION IS AN "ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATION" AS DEFINED BY THIS RFA

☑ I CERTIFY THAT THIS ORGANIZATION IS NOT PRESENTLY DEBARRED OR SUSPENDED.

SIGNATURE:

TYPED NAME & TITLE OF SIGNER: Christi Crosby

*Name must match UEI Number

1

FORM 2 – APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Subaward Application: RFA #7573 NCDD Self-Advocacy Subaward

Funding Agency: Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) – Division of Public Health, Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCDD)

1. Organization Information

Field	Organization Details
Full Legal Name	Kolb Foundation for Disability Education
DBA / Abbreviation	KFDE / Kolb Foundation
Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)	
Parent UEI	N/A
Primary Contact	Christi Crosby, Executive Director
Secondary Contact	Melanie Davis, Assistant Director
Address / Location	2441 N. 66th St. Omaha, NE 68104
Phone / Contact	402-650-8738
Email	kolbf.ne@gmail.com

2. Summary of Grants Experience

The (KFDE) aligns its operations with all funding guidelines, building on a strong record of collaboration and compliance with the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities grant standards.

KFDE leadership and administrative personnel are familiar with the requirements regarding subaward compliance, financial tracking, allowable costs, and performance reporting. KFDE tracks all grant-related activities, project hours, and fiscal contributions.

3. Summary of Programmatic Experience

KFDE advances disability inclusion through systems-level advocacy, public education, and leadership development across Nebraska. Key program highlights demonstrating capacity for this subaward include:

- **Self-Advocacy Leadership Training (SALT):** KFDE's 3-day intensive curriculum equips adults with disabilities with leadership, peer support, and advocacy skills. The program is structured progressively across three days:
    - *Day 1: Advocating for Self* – Personal identity, disability rights, communication strategies, and personal leadership.
    - *Day 2: Advocating for Others* – Peer advocacy, allyship, storytelling, and navigating systemic barriers.
    - *Day 3: Advocating for System Change* – Policy influence, decision-maker engagement, and community mobilization.
- **Capitol Experience Day Collaboration:** Partnered with Civic Nebraska, Nebraska Capitol Crew, and Access Poynts to deliver an accessible Capitol Experience Day at the State Capitol, featuring legislative Q&A sessions, senator advocacy letters, and an accessible tour.
- **Durable Medical Equipment (DME) Access Project:** Collaboration with Enabl3d Mobility Solutions to conduct surveys assessing equipment barriers, insurance coverage gaps, and service quality for individuals with disabilities who utilize durable medical equipment.
- **Midwest Cerebral Palsy Group:** A conference for individuals with cerebral palsy 16+ that provides social connection and resources for a self-determined life

4. Personnel and Management

Name & Role	Background & Relevant Experience
Christi Crosby Executive Director	Serves as Executive Director of KFDE, Chair of the Midwest CP Group, Co-convener of NCCD, and L

Name & Role	Background & Relevant Experience
Melanie Davis Assistant Director, Board Member	
Karen Kolb Board Member	Board Member, KFDE.
Mary Angus Board Member	Brings extensive expertise in higher education alignment (UNMC/LEND) and AI technology accessibility initiatives.
Paulissa Kipp Board Member	Board Member, KFDE
Micheal Ekanem Board Member	Board Member, KFDE.
Cari Crosby Board Member	Board Member, KFDE.
Jessica Barret Board Member	Board Member, KFDE.
Steve Morris Board Member	Board Member, KFDE.
Lydia Stormberg Volunteer	

5. Agreements Terminated or Costs Disallowed

The Kolb Foundation for Disability Education has not had any agreements (grant agreements, cooperative agreements, subawards, or contracts) terminated for cause by any federal awarding agency or pass-through entity within the last five (5) years.No specific conditions have ever been placed on KFDE by a federal awarding agency or pass-through entity. KFDE, its principal officers, and its board members are not disbarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded from eligibility to receive federal funds under this RFA or any federal grant program.

Program Narrative and Project Workplan

Applicant Organization: Kolb Foundation for Disability Education (KFDE)
Funding Opportunity: Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCDD) Self-Advocacy Subaward (RFA #7573)
Target Population: Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) across Nebraska

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1. Summary of Programmatic Experience & Organizational Capacity

The Kolb Foundation for Disability Education (KFDE) advances disability inclusion across Nebraska through systems-level advocacy, public education, and individual leadership development. KFDE brings proven capacity and grassroots leadership to execute self-advocacy programming across the state. Key organizational initiatives demonstrating KFDE's capacity include:

- **Self-Advocate Leadership Training (SALT):** An intensive 3-day leadership curriculum that equips adults with disabilities with practical peer support, personal leadership, and civic advocacy skills.
- **Capitol Experience Day Collaboration:** Partnered with Civic Nebraska, Nebraska Capitol Crew, and Access Points to deliver accessible legislative immersion at the State Capitol, featuring senator Q&A sessions, letter writing, and accessible statehouse tours.
- **Durable Medical Equipment (DME) Access Project:** In collaboration with Enabl3d Mobility Solutions, conducting statewide survey research to identify insurance coverage gaps, equipment barriers, and service quality issues for mobility device users.
- **Midwest Cerebral Palsy Group:** An annual regional gathering providing individuals with cerebral palsy (ages 16+) with resources, social connection, and tools for self-determined living.

Project Leadership

- **Christi Crosby (SALT Coordinator / Executive Director):** Oversees program administration, partner outreach, and organizational operations.
- **Melanie Davis (Lead SALT Facilitator / Board Member):** Certified SALT Trainer, Paralegal Certificate holder, former UCEDD Advocate Mentor at Munroe-Meyer Institute, and experienced self-advocate trainer with extensive background in leadership development and policy advocacy.

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2. Project Narrative & Program Strategy

Statement of Need

Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in Nebraska frequently encounter systemic obstacles to active civic participation, self-determination, and policy representation. Program Components

Component 1: Self-Advocate Leadership Training (SALT)

SALT is a replicated, evidence-informed 3-day intensive curriculum delivered in twice-yearly cohorts (spring and fall). The course builds advocacy competencies progressively:

- **Day 1: Advocating for Self** – Focuses on personal identity, understanding disability rights, self-determination, communication strategies, and personal leadership assets.
- **Day 2: Advocating for Others** – Teaches peer advocacy, allyship, personal storytelling, mentorship, and identifying systemic barriers.
- **Day 3: Advocating for System Change** – Explores public policy, engaging with decision-makers, navigating legislative processes, and community mobilization.

Component 2: "Faces of the Waiver" Advocacy & Storytelling Project

To translate leadership skills into tangible advocacy, KFDE will integrate the "Faces of the Waiver" project. SALT participants and alumni who navigate Nebraska Medicaid Waivers—including the Family Support Waiver, DD Comprehensive Waiver, Developmental Disabilities Waiver, and Aged & Disabled Waiver—will be recruited and supported to share their lived experiences.

This component directly bridges training and real-world impact by:

1. **Honoring Lived Experience:** Providing $25 gift card stipends to self-advocates for contributing their personal waiver stories, ensuring equitable compensation without negatively impacting Medicaid asset/income thresholds.
2. **Educational Publishing:** Creating and publishing the *"Living...Not Just Surviving"* newsletter, distributed to SALT graduates, waitlisted individuals, and community leaders across Nebraska.
3. **Public Awareness Campaign:** Generating brief, accessible social media educational posts that explain the history of Medicaid Waivers, the Olmstead Act, supported services, DHHS policy updates, and personal impacts.
4. **Data Analysis & Recruitment Strategy:** Hiring a part-time staff assistant ($2,500 stipend) to analyze past SALT outcome data, evaluate recruitment approaches, and streamline participant intake for future funding sustainability.
5. **Other Direct Costs (In-Kind / Operational Justification):** Accounting for essential operational contributions, including office space ($1,000.00), phone expenses ($240.00), internet costs ($120.00), personal computer allocation ($175.00), and volunteer facilitation hours for SALT training ($3,024.00).

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3. Comprehensive Project Workplan

The following 12-month workplan outlines key project phases, activities, responsible personnel, and measurable deliverables:

Project Phase & Timeline	Activity & Description	Responsible Lead	Target Deliverables & Milestones
Phase 1: Setup & Data Analysis*(Months 1–3)*	• Onboard Part-Time Staff Assistant.• Analyze historical SALT participant data to refine recruitment strategies.• Finalize venue arrangements (Nonprofit Association of the Midlands) and order training supplies.	• Christi Crosby/Melanie Davis • Part-Time Staff Assistant	• 1 Data Analysis Report on past SALT cohorts.• Refined recruitment flyer and intake materials distributed across state networks.• Venue confirmed for Spring session.

Project Phase & Timeline	Activity & Description	Responsible Lead	Target Deliverables & Milestones
Phase 2: Spring SALT & Story Collection*(Months 4–6)*	• Conduct 3-Day Spring SALT Training (May 2027).• Launch "Faces of the Waiver" story collection with SALT participants/alumni.• Distribute $25 participant stipends for story submissions.	• Melanie Davis • Christi Crosby• Media Specialist	• Self-advocates completed 3-day SALT course.• Minimum 8 personal waiver stories collected across all 4 Nebraska Medicaid Waivers.
Phase 3: Educational Dissemination*(Months 7–9)*	• Design & publish the *"Living...Not Just Surviving"* Newsletter.• Roll out weekly educational social media posts highlighting Olmstead Act, waiver history, and DHHS updates.• Present findings at statewide conferences (e.g., People First, Nebraska Disability Pride).	• Media Specialist • Melanie Davis• Christi Crosby	• 1 Newsletter edition published & mailed/emailed to SALT listserv and other partners.• 12 Social media educational posts released.• Participation in 2 state conference presentations.
Phase 4: Fall SALT &*(Months 10–12)*	• Conduct 3-Day Fall SALT Training.• Evaluate grant outcomes, participant pre/post survey data, and narrative impacts.• Draft final subaward report for NCDD.	• Melanie Davis• Christi Crosby• Part-Time Staff Assistant	• 10–12 Additional self-advocates trained.• Final evaluation report & grant summary submitted to NCDD.

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4. Key Performance Indicators & Measurable Outcomes

- **Self-Advocacy Training:** Up to 20 adults with I/DD will complete the intensive 3-day SALT curriculum across two cohorts.
- **Knowledge Gains:** 85%+ of SALT participants will demonstrate increased confidence and measured skill growth in self-advocacy, legislative understanding, and peer support on pre/post evaluations.

- **Lived Experience Collection:** At least 12 personal stories collected from individuals navigating Nebraska's Medicaid Waivers.
- **Educational Outreach:** Distribution of the *"Living...Not Just Surviving"* newsletter to over 200 self-advocates, family members, and waitlisted individuals across Nebraska.
- **Public Engagement:** Outreach reaching statewide audiences through social media educational campaigns and presentations at 2 state disability conferences.

FORM 4 – APPLICANT'S BUDGET and JUSTIFICATION

Kolb Foundation for Disability Education
SELF-ADVOCATE LEADERSHIP TRAINING (SALT)
ONE YEAR (2027)

Role/Activity	Requsted Funds	In-Kind funds	Total Project Budget
Project Director	$5,000		
Assisant Director/Teacher	$5,000		
Media Staff	$2,500		
Self Advocate Graduate Stipends	$1,000		
Faces of Waiver Stipends	$200		
Self Advocate Transportation (SALT)	$800.00		
Conferences	$1,100		
Supplies (2 classes of SALT	$1,000		
Equipment/software	$ 1,400.00	**0.00**	**0.00**
Other direct costs		**4,459.00**	
Project total	**18,000.00**		

5. Budget Justification Summary

The requested subaward funding directly supports personnel, participant stipends, operational materials, and regional outreach:

FORM 4 – APPLICANT'S BUDGET

- **Part-Time Program Staff Assistant ($2,500):** Provides dedicated administrative support to evaluate historical SALT outcome data, support recruitment, and coordinate story gathering for the "Faces of the Waiver" project.
- **Storyteller Stipends ($25/participant gift cards):** Directly reimburses self-advocates for contributing their personal waiver experiences, respecting their expertise while preserving benefit program compliance.
- **Course Facilitation & Facilities ($300):** Rental of accessible training space at the Nonprofit Association of the Midlands ($100/day x 3 days per course).
- **Curriculum Materials & Printing ($850):** Printing of full-color SALT student workbooks, binders, cardstock, markers, and sensory focus fidgets to support diverse learning styles.
- **Travel & Conference Outreach ($2,000):** Travel costs for project leaders to present training outcomes and conduct recruitment at 2 major statewide conferences in Nebraska.
- **Marketing & Flyers ($150):** Printing and distribution of recruitment flyers across cross-disablity networks.

Other Direct cost include

- $1000.00-200 Ofice space Square footage x5
- $240.00 - Phone cost 20% of use cost x12 months
- $120.00 - Internet cost 20% of use cost x 12 months
- $175.00 - Personal computer used for project $700 cost x 25%
- $3,024.00 - Volunteer hours for SALT training 84 hours per 2 training sessions @ $18/hr

DISABILITY RIGHTS NEBRASKA

October 23, 2026

Disability Rights Nebraska is the designated Protection and Advocacy organization for people with disabilities in Nebraska. We are pleased to support the Kolb Foundation's grant application to continue the SALT advocacy trainings and create the "Faces of Waiver" project to collect the lived experiences of Nebraskans with disabilities.

The SALT project provides an opportunity for people with disabilities to build or strengthen their advocacy skills. For over two decades Disability Rights Nebraska has led numerous self-advocacy and systems advocacy trainings for people with disabilities. Our history affirms the power that advocates with disabilities have to spur social change and how their leadership can realize public policy changes. People with disabilities can affect systems change when they possess the advocacy skills and confidence to speak up — qualities inherent to the SALT curriculum.

Expressing the lived experiences of people with disabilities is a critical tool to educate policymakers and the public. We are keenly interested in the proposed "Faces of Waivers" project. Our agency's work with Nebraska legislators and other state officials continually reminds us that relaying personal stories and narratives is often the most effective means of education and public policy reform. We are confident that the "Faces of Waivers" will be an effective tool to not only humanize disability policy but center the voices of people with disabilities who, due to a variety of factors, would otherwise be silent. Since people with disabilities are the true experts on living with disability, this silence speaks volumes.

Disability Rights Nebraska strongly supports the Kolb Foundation's proposal, and we suggest that it receive a grant award from the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Sincerely,

Tania Diaz

Chief Executive Officer
Disability Rights Nebraska

2930 Ridge Line Rd., Ste. 205, Lincoln, NE 68516 info@disabilityrightsnebraska.org 402.413.2016> 1.800.422.6691
1517 Broadway, Ste. 101, Scottsbluff, NE 69361 disabilityrightsnebraska.org 402.474.3274

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1517 Broadway, Ste. 101, Scottsbluff, NE 69361 disabilityrightsnebraska.org 402.474.3274



1402 Jones St. Suite 115
Omaha, NE 68102

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to write this letter in strong support of the Kolb Foundation for Disability Empowerment (KFDE) and its mission to empower individuals with disabilities to become effective self-advocates, leaders, and active participants in their communities.

The work being done by KFDE is important because true disability empowerment goes far beyond providing services. It means giving people with disabilities the knowledge, confidence, tools, and opportunities to speak for themselves and influence the systems that affect their lives.

One of KFDE's most impactful initiatives is its Self-Advocacy Leadership Training (SALT) program. This intensive three-day curriculum provides adults with disabilities with practical leadership, peer support, and advocacy skills. Participants progress from advocating for themselves, to advocating for others, and ultimately to advocating for systemic change. This approach helps individuals develop not only confidence in their own voices, but also the skills necessary to become leaders and advocates within their communities.

KFDE also recognizes the importance of giving people with disabilities direct access to the legislative process. Through its Capitol Experience Day, in partnership with Civic Nebraska, Nebraska Capitol Crew, and Access Poynts, participants have the opportunity to visit the Nebraska State Capitol, engage with elected officials, participate in legislative Q&A sessions, write advocacy letters to senators, and experience an accessible tour of the Capitol. These experiences demonstrate that people with disabilities should not simply be represented in policy discussions—they should have a seat at the table and a voice in creating the policies that impact their lives.

I am particularly proud of the collaboration between the Kolb Foundation and Enabl3d Mobility Solutions through the Durable Medical Equipment (DME) Access Project. Access to appropriate mobility equipment can be life-changing. Unfortunately, individuals with disabilities often face significant barriers involving insurance coverage, equipment availability, repairs, service quality, and the ability to obtain equipment that actually meets their individual needs.

By conducting surveys and gathering information directly from individuals who utilize DME, this project helps identify the real-world barriers people face. This information can provide valuable insight into how providers, insurers, policymakers, and communities can improve access to appropriate equipment and services.

KFDE's work also extends to building community and creating opportunities for people with disabilities to live self-determined lives. The Midwest Cerebral Palsy Group provides individuals with cerebral palsy age 16 and older with opportunities for social connection, education, resources, and personal empowerment. Creating spaces where people can connect with others who share similar experiences is an important part of building confidence, independence, and community.

What makes the Kolb Foundation particularly valuable is its comprehensive approach. It addresses disability advocacy from multiple perspectives—individual empowerment, peer support, civic engagement, systemic advocacy, access to essential equipment, and community connection.

I strongly believe that people with disabilities should have the opportunity to determine their own futures and participate fully in the communities where they live. Organizations like the Kolb Foundation help make that possible by providing individuals with the knowledge, relationships, and platforms necessary to advocate for meaningful change.

I am proud to support the Kolb Foundation for Disability Empowerment and its continued efforts to empower people with disabilities throughout Nebraska and the Midwest. I believe its programs have the potential to create lasting change not only for the individuals who participate, but also for the systems and communities they influence.

I encourage you to support the Kolb Foundation and its mission to empower people with disabilities to become leaders, advocates, and agents of change.

Sincerely,

Corey Minchow, ATP



Enabl3d Mobility Solutions, LLC

October 8, 2026

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCDD)
Department of Health and Human Services
301 Centennial Mall South
P.O. Box 95026
Lincoln, NE 68509

RE: Letter of Support for the Kolb Foundation for Disability Education's (KFDE) Continued Replication of the University of Miami Mailman Center's Project Self-Advocate Leadership Program (SALT)

Dear Kristen Larsen,

On behalf of the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine's Mailman Center for Child Development, I am pleased to write this letter of support in response to the Kolb Foundation for Disability Education's (KFDE) interest in continuing to replicate the Project Self-Advocate Leadership (SALT) program.

The University of Miami Miller School of Medicine's Mailman Center for Child Development developed our three-day intensive leadership skills curriculum so individuals with disabilities can learn strategies to advocate for themselves, and others and effect larger systems change. Our vision is to produce an ever-growing cadre of individuals with the capacity for self-determination, independence, and meaningful participation in their communities.

Melanie Davis applied to our SALT program, traveled to Miami, FL, completed the training, and returned to Nebraska and replicated SALT. Christi Crosby participated in Melanie's first cohort, became a trainer, and they trained two more cohorts, while also adjusting the program to the specific needs of their local communities and making additions they deemed necessary to improve the Project SALT program.

Melanie Davis and Christi Crosby embody SALT's purpose and success: producing an ever-growing cadre of leaders.

We write with confidence in Melanie Davis and Christi Crosby as they continue their efforts and receive the resources the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCDD) can provide to support their work with Nebraska's disability community and further train future disability leaders.

Best Regards,

Shelly Baer, LCSW
Director, Leadership Training Initiatives
Lead, Social Work Discipline
Emerging Transformational Leadership Program (ETLP)
Self-Advocate Leadership Training (SALT)
Student Emerging Leaders Program (SELP)
Clinical Social Worker
University of Miami Miller School of Medicine
Department of Pediatrics, Mailman Center for Child Development
(O) 305 689-7058
rbaer@med.miami.edu

October 22, 2026

UCP United Cerebral Palsy of Nebraska
Life without limits for people with disabilities

Kolb Foundation for Disability Education
Re: Letter of Support for Self-Advocacy Sub Award

On behalf of United Cerebral Palsy of Nebraska (UCP of Nebraska), I am pleased to offer our support for the Kolb Foundation for Disability Education (KFDE) and its application for the Self-Advocacy Sub Award. KFDE's commitment to empowering individuals with disabilities through self-advocacy, leadership development, education, and community engagement aligns closely with our mission to advance the independence, productivity, and full citizenship of people with cerebral palsy and similar disabilities.

The programs KFDE plans to highlight in its application demonstrate a thoughtful, comprehensive approach to ensuring individuals with disabilities have the knowledge, skills, and opportunities to advocate for themselves and influence the systems that affect their lives.

The **Self-Advocacy Leadership Training (SALT)** is particularly valuable in its approach to developing advocacy skills at multiple levels. By helping participants understand their personal identities and rights, support and advocate for others, and engage in broader systems change, SALT equips individuals with practical tools to become confident leaders and active participants in their communities.

KFDE's **Capitol Experience Day** further demonstrates the importance of making civic engagement accessible and meaningful. Through collaboration with community partners, participants have opportunities to interact with legislators, communicate their priorities, and experience the legislative process firsthand.

The **Durable Medical Equipment (DME) Access Project** addresses another critical issue facing individuals with disabilities: access to the equipment and services necessary for independence and participation in everyday life. By gathering information about equipment barriers, insurance coverage gaps, and service quality, KFDE and its partners can help identify areas for improvement and elevate the experiences of those who rely on these essential resources.

Additionally, the conference by the **Midwest Cerebral Palsy Group** provides an important opportunity for individuals with cerebral palsy ages 16 and older to build relationships, share experiences, access resources, and explore what it means to live a self-determined life.

The proposed *Faces and Stories of the Waiver* component offers another meaningful opportunity to elevate the voices and lived experiences of people with disabilities. Personal stories can help decisionmakers and the broader community better understand the impact of disability services and the importance of policies and support that promote choice, dignity, and independence.

UCP of Nebraska recognizes that meaningful self-advocacy requires more than simply providing information. It requires creating opportunities for individuals with disabilities to develop leadership skills, build supportive relationships, and influence decisions that affect their futures. KFDE's programs reflect these principles and demonstrate a strong commitment to ensuring that people with disabilities are heard, respected, and empowered to shape their own lives. We are pleased to support the Kolb Foundation for Disability Education's application for the Self-Advocacy Sub Award and believe its proposed programming will make a meaningful contribution to advancing self-advocacy and disability inclusion throughout Nebraska and the surrounding region.

Sincerely,

Anne Brodin

Anne Brodin
Executive Director

16

combined health agencies drive
MEMBER CHARITY

Kathy Hoell
4604 Victoria Ave.
Papillion, NE 68133
(402)677-6662 or khoell@cox.net

October 20, 2026

To Whom It May Concern:

As a members of ADAPT NE, we are writing in support of the Kolb Foundation for Disability Education's grant proposal, "Faces of the Waivers." ADAPT NE is a grassroots organization committed to ensuring that people with disabilities have access to the community-based supports and services they need to live independently and participate fully in their communities.

In Nebraska, challenges within the Department of Health and Human Services have created barriers for people with disabilities who rely on Medicaid Waiver services. The "Faces of the Waivers" project would help bring these experiences to light by sharing photographs and personal stories of individuals who use Medicaid Waivers. By elevating these voices, the project can help the public, policymakers, and service providers better understand the real-life impact of waiver services and the importance of protecting access to them.

For these reasons, we strongly support the Kolb Foundation for Disability Education's proposal and believe this project will make a meaningful contribution to disability education, advocacy, and public awareness.

Sincerely,

Kathy Hoell

Kathy Hoell
4604 Victoria Ave.
Papillion, NE 68133
(402)677-6662 or khoell@cox.net

Member of ADAPT NE

Self-Advocacy

FORM 1: APPLICATION COVER PAGE

Instructions: This form must be signed and returned, along with the application materials, before the Application Due Date, to the POC or designated email address, as applicable.

RFA #	RELEASE DATE
7573	September 14, 2026
APPLICATION DUE DATE	**POINT OF CONTACT**
October 26, 2026	DHHS.DDCouncil@nebraska.gov

CERTIFICATION AND GUARANTEE OF COMPLIANCE

By signing this Application Cover Sheet, the Applicant guarantees compliance with the provisions stated in this Request for Application and certifies that all information contained in this Application is accurate. This Application is submitted pursuant to the terms of the RFA, and if the Applicant is awarded funding, it will be incorporated into the Subaward between the parties. I understand that if anything in this Application conflicts with the RFA or with the subsequent Subaward, the Subaward and RFA shall govern as set forth in the Subaward.

Application Requirements The following information **must** be included in the application in order for it to be considered for review:

- The target population - individuals with developmental disabilities
- Must address one of the four goals in the Council's 2022-2026 5-year State Plan of the applicant's choice
- Applicants who have been disbarred by the US Federal government are not eligible to receive funding under this RFA

ORGANIZATION LEGAL NAME*: The Novel Care Community Foundation

ORGANIZATION DBA NAME (IF APPLICABLE):

ORGANIZATION UEI NUMBER: N4YDHDD3F9U1 ORGANIZATION EIN NUMBER: 42-3694029

ORGANIZATION TYPE:
- ☑ Non-Profit Organization
- ☐ For- Profit Organization
- ☐ Other:
- ☐ Institution of Higher Learning
- ☐ State, Local, or Tribal Government

COMPLETE ADDRESS: 1427 N 20th Street
Omaha, NE 68102

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: NE-02

TELEPHONE NUMBER: (402) 517-5617 EMAIL ADDRESS: contact@novelcarellc.com

☑ I CERTIFY THAT THIS ORGANIZATION IS AN "ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATION" AS DEFINED BY THIS RFA

☑ I CERTIFY THAT THIS ORGANIZATION IS NOT PRESENTLY DEBARRED OR SUSPENDED.

SIGNATURE: Shanae Starks

TYPED NAME & TITLE OF SIGNER: Shanae Starks-President

**Name must match UEI Number*

Applicant Organizational Overview

Form 2 | The Novel Care Community Foundation

RFA 7573 Self Advocacy Subaward
Proposed project period January 1 through December 31 2027

Organization Information

The Novel Care Community Foundation (TNCCF) is a Nebraska nonprofit organized for charitable, educational and scientific purposes. Its purpose includes improving quality of life through health, education, research, innovation and community-based services that promote independence, opportunity and well-being. Foundation leadership reports that TNCCF has received its IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter.

Administrative address: 1427 N. 20th Street, Omaha, NE 68102. Congressional district: NE-02. Application contact: Shanae Starks, Executive Director; 402-517-5617; contact@novelcarellc.com.

Unique Entity Identifier (UEI): N4YDHDD3F9U1.

TNCCF has no doing business as (DBA) names or previous legal names. A parent UEI is not applicable.

Summary of Federal Grants Experience

TNCCF is pursuing its first federal grant applications and does not claim prior experience as a federal grant recipient or subrecipient. The Foundation will maintain project-specific accounting, payroll and activity records, expenditure documentation and nonfederal match records. It will reconcile grant and match costs and submit required financial and program reports.

TNCCF understands that Council funds reimburse actual, allowable project costs and may not generate a profit. Costs must be necessary, reasonable, allocable to the project and incurred within the authorized period. Staff time and donated effort must be supported by records, and the same cost or hour may not be charged twice. Shanae will coordinate DD Suite reporting. TNCCF works with an accounting firm specializing in nonprofit records and expenditures. DeBoer & Associates is the proposed provider of project financial review; the grant-specific scope and engagement will be documented in writing.

Summary of Programmatic Experience

TNCCF will draw on Shanae Starks's more than 25 years of experience working with people with developmental disabilities. She began as a Direct Support Professional and progressed through multiple roles into administration. Her experience informs the project's focus on helping participants express their priorities, ask questions and take a greater lead in service planning, healthcare and transition meetings.

The proposed project, My Voice, My Choices: Making Real Meetings Work, will combine six learning sessions, paid peer leadership, individual meeting preparation and follow-up. These are proposed grant activities; they are not presented as completed Foundation programs. Signed letters document Rosalie LLC's implementation and continuation role and Northwest High School's recruitment and coordination role. Other identified agency and school relationships remain verbal; the proposed second implementation host is not yet confirmed in writing.

Shanae Starks, Trenten Gunter and Anthony AJ Rollins represent different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and have worked extensively with individuals with developmental disabilities. All three have held paid residential support roles, with experience spanning Direct Support Professional positions, supervision and administration. AJ speaks Spanish, adding a language resource for outreach and communication with Spanish-speaking participants and families. These skills complement the project's planned professional interpretation and translation services.

AJ also brings personal experience from living in a household where his parents served as Shared Living Providers (SLPs) for individuals with developmental disabilities. This family experience complements his paid residential support experience and gives him an additional perspective on daily support and participation in household and community life.

Personnel and Management

Shanae Starks serves as Executive Director, Board President and proposed Project Lead. She will coordinate recruitment, partner communication, peer leadership, sessions, outcome tracking and reporting. The Board of Directors provides organizational oversight. Current officers are Shanae Starks, President; Tommie Frazier, Vice President; Felicia Merrit, Secretary; and Gina Gunter, Treasurer. The governing board also includes Ashley Short and Seth Smith as voting members. Shanae Starks and Felicia Merrit have both worked for nonprofit organizations and bring nonprofit leadership experience to TNCCF.

Trenten Gunter and Anthony AJ Rollins bring paid residential support, supervisory and administrative experience to their proposed roles supporting startup, individual participant preparation and follow-up. TNCCF will establish a separate program board for this grant that includes individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Four paid participant peer leaders will help select priorities, review accessible materials, co-teach and shape recommendations. Additional potential program members have been identified; participation and the program-board charter will be confirmed before activities begin. Ashley Short and Seth Smith, both self-advocates with I/DD, have been approved as voting members of TNCCF's governing board. They will also lead the program board for this grant. The governing Board of Directors retains fiduciary oversight. The attached chart distinguishes current governance from the planned program structure.

Independent volunteers Bryce Johnson and Talora Fulton have signed commitments for 40 project-support hours each. Bryce reports 20 years of DD experience in day reporting, day services and DSP supervision. Talora reports 11 years supporting communication of preferences, appointment preparation and follow-up. They will assist with preparation and follow-up under Shanae's direction; their contributions are separate from Trent and AJ's paid project hours.

Yolanda Gipson assists with selected grant applications in a background support role.

Agreements Terminated or Costs Disallowed

TNCCF is a new agency. It has had no agreements with federal awarding agencies or pass-through entities terminated for cause and no costs disallowed within the last five years.

No specific conditions have been imposed on TNCCF agreements during the last five years. TNCCF's authorized signer will confirm the required eligibility and suspension or debarment certifications by signing Form 1.

Work Plan and Narrative

The Novel Care Community Foundation
UEI N4YDHDD3F9U1

My Voice, My Choices: Making Real Meetings Work
January 1 through December 31 2027
Service area Omaha and Douglas County Nebraska

Project Summary

My Voice, My Choices will support 20 people with developmental disabilities in Omaha/Douglas County to take a greater lead in service-planning, healthcare and transition meetings. Four paid peer leaders, included in the 20 participants, will shape and co-teach six two-hour sessions. Participants will identify priorities, prepare questions and requests in their preferred communication method, practice, and choose an actual meeting in which to contribute. Two proposed implementation hosts will test participant-informed meeting procedures. The project aims to increase participant influence and leave reusable materials and documented improvements in how others listen and respond.

Agency Qualifications

TNCCF is a new Nebraska nonprofit whose charitable and educational purpose includes improving quality of life through health, education, research, innovation and community-based services that promote independence, opportunity and well-being. This project applies that purpose to self-advocacy, participant leadership and changes in meeting practices. TNCCF will draw on its affiliated team's experience; it does not present the proposed activities as a previously completed Foundation program.

Shanae Starks, Executive Director and Project Lead, has more than 25 years of experience working with people with developmental disabilities. She began as a Direct Support Professional and progressed through supervision and administration. She will coordinate recruitment, partner relationships, session delivery, accessible participation, outcome tracking and reporting. Trenten Gunter and Anthony AJ Rollins will support project startup, individual meeting preparation and follow-up. All three have held paid residential support roles, with experience spanning direct support, supervision and administration.

Shanae, Trent and AJ have accompanied members to appointments and attended service-related meetings in their DSP and supervisory roles. Their firsthand experience informs the project's focus on preparing participants to express priorities and ask questions. Independent volunteers Bryce Johnson and Talora Fulton will add 40 hours each. Bryce reports 20 years of experience, including day reporting, day services and DSP supervision; Talora reports 11 years, including helping people communicate preferences, prepare for appointments and follow up. Their signed letters define the project duties and proposed contribution.

The team represents different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. AJ speaks Spanish and brings personal experience from living in a household where his parents served as Shared Living Providers for people with developmental disabilities. His language skills will support outreach and communication alongside the project's planned professional language-access services. Shanae Starks and board Secretary Felicia Merrit also bring experience working for nonprofit organizations. TNCCF works with an accounting firm specializing in nonprofit records and expenditures; the proposed grant-specific financial review scope with DeBoer & Associates will be documented in writing.

TNCCF will establish a program board specifically for this self-advocacy project. The program board will be led by Ashley Short and Seth Smith, and will include individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Ashley and Seth have been approved as voting members of TNCCF's governing Board of Directors. The program board will be separate from that governing board. Four paid peer leaders with developmental disabilities, included in the participant cohort, will help determine priorities, review participant-facing materials, co-teach and shape recommendations through this program structure. Shanae will confirm participation with the identified potential members. TNCCF's governing board will retain fiduciary oversight; program-board authority and operating procedures will be documented before activities begin.

Coordination and Collaboration

TNCCF has signed commitment letters from Rosalie LLC and Northwest High School. Rosalie will serve as an implementation partner, support recruitment and coordination, test and adopt one participant-selected meeting procedure by November 30, 2027, document its use and designate a role responsible for continuing it within available resources. Northwest will share accessible recruitment information, support voluntary referrals, coordinate existing student supports and help participants identify opportunities to practice advocacy. These are distinct implementation and school-coordination roles; neither letter promises cash match or a minimum enrollment.

Rosalie LLC is the documented implementation partner. Hands of the Heartland remains the proposed second host based on a verbal relationship; its written implementation and continuation commitment has not been secured. TNCCF also reports verbal recruitment and coordination relationships with Central, Westside, Millard North and South high schools and with Integrated Life Choices, Mosaic and Vodec. TNCCF will seek a written second-host agreement by February 28, 2027. If a second host cannot be secured, Shanae will promptly consult the Council about an approved work-plan adjustment; TNCCF will not report an unimplemented procedure as achieved. The target remains two separately documented host procedures.

As a new agency, TNCCF currently has no subawards, contracts or memberships in community groups, teams or coalitions. The verbal partner agreements described above relate to the proposed project.

Shanae is responsible for partner coordination. Before recruitment, she will confirm a contact and task list with Rosalie and Northwest, coordinate accessible outreach and referrals, and maintain a register showing each partner's role, deadlines and progress. During recruitment she will resolve referral and access questions with the relevant contact. During implementation she will check host progress at least quarterly and before the November adoption deadline. Participant leaders will review recommendations and partner responses. Family members and supporters will participate with the individual's preference and consent; their views will be recorded separately. Agency and family rides are primary; grant-funded transportation will address documented gaps. The Root will provide six three-hour bookings at $45 per hour, paid by TNCCF as cash match, with an accessible-room agreement documented before use.

Detailed Narrative

State Plan Alignment

The project addresses the Council's 2027–2031 State Plan Goal 2, Strengthening Advocacy, Leadership, and Information Access, and Objective A, Self Advocacy. Its activities develop paid peer leadership, support transition-age youth, increase opportunities for self-advocates to teach others, and test participant-selected changes in real meeting practices. A program board including individuals with I/DD will guide this grant-funded program. Ashley Short and Seth Smith, self-

advocates with I/DD, are approved voting members of TNCCF's governing board. They will lead the separate program board for this grant.

Need and Participant Recruitment

The project team has observed that staff, family members and professionals often lead meetings while members respond mainly with yes, no or okay. The project will help members explain what they need and want and take more of a lead. At medical appointments, that includes communicating health concerns, describing symptoms and asking the doctor questions. These are practice-based observations, not results of a formal needs survey. Initial participant interviews will test which meeting barriers and decisions matter to the enrolled cohort.

Recruitment will seek 20 unique individuals meeting the federal developmental-disability definition. Proposed outreach goals are six youth ages 14-21 and six people using AAC or substantial communication supports; these groups may overlap. The numbers are recruitment goals, not claims about confirmed applicants. School enrollment or a learning disability alone will not be treated as proof of DD Act eligibility. Enrollment will include accessible consent, age-appropriate assent and any required permissions.

Participant Leadership and Learning Activities

TNCCF will adopt an accessible written charter for the program board by February 28, 2027. Ashley Short and Seth Smith will co-lead its discussions, and the charter will document how members with I/DD select session priorities, approve participant-facing materials and recommendations, and review what continues after the grant. The co-leads will help set agendas and present program recommendations to the governing board. Staff will explain budget or safety limits and seek an accessible alternative. Minutes will distinguish participant decisions from staff or supporter views. Communication support and additional response time will enable participation. The governing board retains fiduciary duties; the program board is a planned project structure and is not represented as already operating.

The six modules will cover rights and priorities; preferred communication; questions and requests; leading part of a meeting; reflecting on real experiences; and sharing recommendations and continued advocacy plans. Sessions will take place in March, April, May, June, September and November. Shanae and the peer leaders will facilitate. Each booking allows two session hours plus one hour for setup and cleanup.

Trent and AJ will coordinate individual preparation and follow-up, assisted by Talora Fulton and Bryce Johnson within their combined 80 donated hours. Each participant can choose a service, healthcare or transition meeting and the portion they want to lead. Preparation may include a one-page priority sheet, symptom description, question list, or practice communicating a request. Participation will not require speech or independent reading. Staff will provide response time, use participants' chosen methods and address them directly. Participant-chosen real meetings will occur by October 31 so that 30- to 60-day follow-up can be completed by December 31. The November session will focus on reflection, sharing recommendations and continuation plans.

Access and Participation

Existing communication devices and supports will be used where available. Shanae will verify access needs rather than assume current supports cover the project. Spanish interpretation and translated materials and ASL interpretation will be arranged according to need at no charge to participants. Accessible transportation and assistance gaps will be identified before enrollment commitments exceed the project's resources.

TNCCF will rent 20 participant-use computers, with one assigned to each of the 20 participants during the project. Computers will support self-advocacy learning, preparation of questions and

optional practice accessing participant-authorized medical or service information. Participants may use fictional practice examples instead of actual records. The project will not purchase agency-wide Therap access or assume that each participant has portal permissions. Participant privacy, secure access and removal of personal data before a device is returned will be addressed in the rental and use arrangements. Staff will support communication practice and will not interpret medical records or provide clinical advice. Meeting Tomorrow quoted $1,769.84 for all 20 computers for the project year, as confirmed by TNCCF. The written rental agreement will document availability, term, charges, support and return requirements. Intake will check connectivity, device access and support needs; offline preparation and session-based access will be available. No new home-internet subscription is included in the budget. Rental computers are tools for the advocacy activities, with use, assistance and return arrangements documented for each assigned device.

Changes in Meeting Practices

Each implementation host will be asked to test one participant-selected improvement, such as advance plain-language agendas, a participant-led agenda segment, communication response time, or a preference-and-response record. Participants will evaluate whether they were heard. The demonstration supplements participant influence; it does not pay for existing case management, clinical treatment or routine provider documentation. Rosalie has committed to this process; a written commitment for the second host is still sought. Each host will identify a responsible person and document the original procedure, the participant-selected change, its adoption date and evidence of use. The target is two separately documented agency procedures, one at each host; duplicate descriptions will not be counted as separate changes. Rosalie's signed commitment is attached; the second-host arrangement remains pending.

Accomplishments

The project will serve 20 unique participants with developmental disabilities, including four paid peer leaders. It will deliver six two-hour learning sessions, produce a reusable curriculum and participant handbook, and prepare a recommendations report. Its targets are 16 participants completing at least four sessions; 15 communicating a chosen preference, question or request in an actual meeting; 12 reporting greater influence; and two implementation hosts putting a participant-selected meeting procedure into use. Targets describe intended accomplishments, not guaranteed outcomes or existing commitments.

Measure	Target	Evidence
Unique people with DD enrolled	20 including 4 paid peer leaders	Enrollment and eligibility records; unique identifiers
Participants shaping program planning	At least 4 peer leaders	Accessible planning records and content decisions
Participants completing at least 4 sessions	16 of 20	Attendance by unique participant
Chosen preference question or request expressed in an actual meeting	15 of 20	Participant-confirmed practice and meeting records
Participants reporting greater influence	12 of 20	Participant-reported baseline and 30- to 60-day follow-up; show response denominator

Measure	Target	Evidence
Peer leaders co-teaching or presenting	4	Agendas and documented paid tasks
Organizational procedures put into use	2 across 2 hosts	Procedure versions and evidence of actual use; Rosalie commitment attached; second host pending
Final tangible products	Curriculum handbook and recommendations report	Council review; accessible electronic copies; at least four hard copies of tangible outputs

Short-term benefits sought are greater confidence, more effective communication of preferences and more participant-directed meeting interactions. Longer-term benefits sought are continued peer leadership, reusable accessible tools and sustained organizational practices that give participants more influence. TNCCF will document what the pilot demonstrates and what remains uncertain.

Shanae will submit an accessible survey and data-collection process to the Council Program Specialist for approval before use. Enrollment will establish baseline confidence and perceived influence, preferred communication methods and demographic information. Satisfaction feedback will be offered to everyone involved in planning or project activities, with participant, family/guardian and professional/other roles recorded separately. Follow-up will ask about actual use of advocacy skills and whether participants can better communicate their needs. Staff will record yes, no, unsure, declined and missing responses, using only the answered items in each measure's denominator. Supporter reports will be identified separately from participant responses. At least 16 of the 20 participants will be sought for follow-up; this is a response target rather than an assumption that everyone responds. A denied request can still demonstrate advocacy when the person expressed it and received a response.

The KPI crosswalk below uses the supplied Attachment 2. Project reach will remain 20 unique people with DD, including four paid peer leaders. An activity register will separately record session attendance and participant roles; a person will not be counted twice under the same performance measure. The manual contains different-topic counting guidance and older satisfaction-code labels that require reconciliation with the current DD Suite setup. Shanae will confirm the final codes and counting instructions with the Council before reporting. Staff attendance or receiving refreshments alone will not be treated as evidence that someone was trained. Existing governing-board appointments made before 2027 will not be reported as newly created project outcomes.

KPI Targets and Evidence

KPI	Proposed target	Evidence and counting rule
IFA 1.1	20 unique people with DD	Eligibility and participant register; four paid peer leaders are included
IFA 2.1.A	At least 16 follow-up respondents sought	Record actual follow-up responses, including negative responses
IFA 2.1.B	12 report increased advocacy	Positive responses among actual follow-up respondents
IFA 2.3IND	15 report improved ability to express wants or needs	Accessible follow-up question; separate from proof of an actual meeting action
IFA 2.4IND	15 report current use of advocacy skills	Self-report of actual advocacy activity, supported by participant-confirmed meeting records
IFA 2.5IND	4 paid peer leaders exercise project leadership	Program-board minutes, teaching roles and task records; no automatic credit for pre-2027 board seats
IFA 3.1B	At least 14 satisfied participants sought	Target 16 participant survey responses; record all answers and denominator. Code follows Attachment 2; confirm DD Suite mapping
SC 1.1	2 agency-specific procedures created or changed	Dated procedure versions and adoption records at two proposed hosts
SC 2.1.2	2 agency-specific procedures implemented	Evidence of actual use, responsible host and participant feedback; Rosalie committed; second host pending
IFA 1.2, 1.3 and SC 1.4	Actual counts only; no invented targets	Separate family and professional/other roles and training records. Do not count food servings as training reach

Work Plan

The following grid retains the six columns in the supplied work-plan template. Goal 1 addresses participant influence and organizational meeting practices. Goal 2 addresses sustainability, final products and transfer of ongoing responsibilities. The project serves 20 unique participants, including the four peer leaders; repeated attendance does not increase the unique participant total. Host implementation and continuation roles will be documented as partners confirm them. Quarterly program, KPI and expenditure packages will include a general ledger and supporting payroll, invoice and match records. Shanae will coordinate program reporting with the accounting provider's project-specific financial review. Planning dates are April 15, July 15 and October 15, 2027, then January 15, 2028 for the fourth-quarter program/KPI report, with final reporting targeted by January 30 and the RFA invoicing deadline of January 31, 2028. The executed award and DD Suite calendar will control any date differences. Work and costs charged to the project must fit the authorized period.

Project Sustainability

The project will sustain the curriculum, participant handbook, recommendations and meeting practices that participants find useful. Shanae will maintain editable files and a dated revision log for TNCCF. Ashley Short and Seth Smith will lead the program board's September review of what should continue. Rosalie's signed commitment provides for continuing its adopted procedure within available agency resources and naming the responsible staff role by November 30. The second host's continuation responsibility will be documented in its agreement when secured. Northwest's role supports continuing use of useful student advocacy materials; its letter does not promise a continuing funded program.

By November 30, Shanae will record each confirmed host's continuation role, adopted procedure, evidence of use and resource needs. By December 31, the program board will review a register identifying retained products and practices, owners, storage, intended use and funding gaps. Print and offline tools remain usable after device returns. Future paid sessions, rentals, transportation and language services depend on secured funding. Products will receive Council review before use or dissemination, carry its approved acknowledgment and be supplied electronically and in at least four hard copies per tangible output. The recommendations report will state achievements and evidence limitations.

Work Plan Grid

The Novel Care Community Foundation | My Voice, My Choices: Making Real Meetings Work
Project duration January 1 through December 31 2027

Goal 1 Increase participant influence and improve meeting practices
Objective Enroll 20 including 4 peer leaders; 15 use a chosen advocacy action; 2 hosts implement procedures

#	Activity	Measure of success and beneficiaries	Responsible staff or party	Start date	End date
1	Establish the program board led by Ashley Short and Seth Smith; adopt its charter, confirm four paid peer leaders, accessible decision procedures and partner roles.	Written program-board charter and membership; 4 peer leaders included in the 20 participants; documented participant authority over priorities, materials, access and recommendations.	Shanae; governing board; Ashley Short; Seth Smith; peer leaders	01/01/2027	02/28/2027
2	Recruit through Northwest, Rosalie and other outreach partners; verify eligibility, baseline and access needs; arrange rentals and participant use agreements.	20 unique people with DD; one rental computer assigned per participant. Outreach goals: 6 youth ages 14–21 and 6 people using AAC or substantial supports, overlapping as appropriate.	Shanae; Trent; AJ	02/01/2027	03/15/2027
3	Co-develop six modules and a handbook with peer leaders; obtain Council review before first use; agree the survey and KPI process.	1 curriculum and 1 handbook; four peer leaders shape content; review record; approved survey and proposed KPI crosswalk.	Shanae; peer leaders; reviewer	01/15/2027	03/15/2027
4	Deliver six two-hour sessions in March, April, May, June, September and November at The Root.	6 sessions; 20 enrolled; target 16 completing at least 4 sessions. Sessions include practice and participant-led teaching.	Shanae; peer leaders	03/16/2027	11/30/2027
5	Prepare for a participant-chosen real meeting by October 31; complete 30- to 60-day follow-up by December 31.	15 communicate a chosen preference, question or request; 12 report greater influence; seek at least 16 follow-up responses. Record attempts, nonresponse and barriers.	Trent; AJ; Talora; Bryce; participants	04/01/2027	12/31/2027
6	Test participant-selected meeting changes with Rosalie and a second host; document original practice, adoption and use.	Target 2 procedures at 2 hosts; Rosalie signed commitment attached. Second host agreement sought by February 28; Council consulted if adjustment is needed.	Shanae; peer leaders; Rosalie; second host	05/01/2027	11/30/2027

Goal 2 Sustain materials participant leadership and meeting improvements

Objective Complete accessible products and a documented continuation plan with named owners by December 31

#	Activity	Measure of success and beneficiaries	Responsible staff or party	Start date	End date
7	Program board selects continuation priorities; seek written host owners, responsibilities and resource needs.	September participant priorities; Rosalie names continuation role by November 30 under signed commitment; second host sought. Owners, resources and unresolved needs recorded.	Shanae; Ashley Short; Seth Smith; hosts	09/01/2027	11/30/2027
8	Finalize materials, recommendations report and continuation arrangements.	3 tangible products; at least four hard copies of tangible outputs for Council staff; accessible electronic source files. Beneficiaries: the 20-participant cohort and future users of the materials.	Shanae; peer leaders; reviewer	10/01/2027	12/31/2027
9	Complete accessible outcome follow-up and prepare the final evidence and financial reconciliation package.	KPI response denominators, satisfaction data and documented grant/match transactions; reconcile records by December 31. Beneficiaries: 20-participant cohort.	Shanae; DeBoer	10/01/2027	12/31/2027
10	Program board reviews continuation plan; assign material maintenance and document rental-device return arrangements.	Continuation register identifies TNCCF material owner, Rosalie procedure owner, any second-host agreement, device returns and unfunded 2028 needs. Beneficiaries: cohort and future users.	Shanae; Ashley Short; Seth Smith; peer leaders	12/01/2027	12/31/2027
11	Prepare quarterly and closeout reports in DD Suite; submit source records and implement Council feedback.	Quarterly reporting plan and general ledger/source evidence. Planned submissions: Apr 15, Jul 15, Oct 15 2027; Q4 Jan 15 2028; final Jan 30 and RFA invoicing Jan 31 2028, subject to executed award.	Shanae; project accounting provider	01/01/2027	12/31/2027

Trent refers to Trenten Gunter; AJ refers to Anthony AJ Rollins. The work-plan dates cover funded work through December 31, 2027. Required report delivery and financial closeout may occur afterward on the award calendar; no extension of grant-funded activity or chargeable costs is assumed. Reviewer selection and the second host's written implementation and continuation commitment remain pending; Rosalie's signed commitment is attached.

12

WORK PLAN

The Novel Care Community Foundation

My Voice, My Choices: Making Real Meetings Work

January 1 through December 31 2027

	Goal 1 Increase participant influence and improve meeting practices				
	Objective Enroll 20 including 4 peer leaders; 15 use a chosen advocacy action; 2 hosts implement procedures				
#	**Activity**	**Measure of success and beneficiaries**	**Responsible staff or party**	**Start date**	**End date**
1	Establish the program board led by Ashley Short and Seth Smith; adopt its charter, confirm four paid peer leaders, accessible decision procedures and partner roles.	Written program-board charter and membership; 4 peer leaders included in the 20 participants; documented participant authority over priorities, materials, access and recommendations.	Shanae; governing board; Ashley Short; Seth Smith; peer leaders	01/01/2027	02/28/2027
2	Recruit through Northwest, Rosalie and other outreach partners; verify eligibility, baseline and access needs; arrange rentals and participant use agreements.	20 unique people with DD; one rental computer assigned per participant. Outreach goals: 6 youth ages 14–21 and 6 people using AAC or substantial supports, overlapping as appropriate.	Shanae; Trent; AJ	02/01/2027	03/15/2027

3	Co-develop six modules and a handbook with peer leaders; obtain Council review before first use; agree the survey and KPI process.	1 curriculum and 1 handbook; four peer leaders shape content; review record; approved survey and proposed KPI crosswalk.	Shanae; peer leaders; reviewer	01/15/2027	03/15/2027
4	Deliver six two-hour sessions in March, April, May, June, September and November at The Root.	6 sessions; 20 enrolled; target 16 completing at least 4 sessions. Sessions include practice and participant-led teaching.	Shanae; peer leaders	03/16/2027	11/30/2027
5	Prepare for a participant-chosen real meeting by October 31; complete 30- to 60-day follow-up by December 31.	15 communicate a chosen preference, question or request; 12 report greater influence; seek at least 16 follow-up responses. Record attempts, nonresponse and barriers.	Trent; AJ; Talora; Bryce; participants	04/01/2027	12/31/2027
6	Test participant-selected meeting changes with Rosalie and a second host; document original practice, adoption and use.	Target 2 procedures at 2 hosts; Rosalie signed commitment attached. Second host agreement sought by February 28; Council consulted if adjustment is needed.	Shanae; peer leaders; Rosalie; second host	05/01/2027	11/30/2027
	Goal 2 Sustain materials participant leadership and meeting improvements				

	Objective Finalize accessible products and named continuation owners by December 31; deliver required reporting on the award calendar				
#	Activity	Measure of success and beneficiaries	Responsible staff or party	Start date	End date
7	Program board selects continuation priorities; seek written host owners, responsibilities and resource needs.	September participant priorities; Rosalie names continuation role by November 30 under signed commitment; second host sought. Owners, resources and unresolved needs recorded.	Shanae; Ashley Short; Seth Smith; hosts	09/01/2027	11/30/2027
8	Finalize materials, recommendations report and continuation arrangements.	3 tangible products; at least four hard copies of tangible outputs for Council staff; accessible electronic source files. Beneficiaries: the 20-participant cohort and future users of the materials.	Shanae; peer leaders; reviewer	10/01/2027	12/31/2027
9	Complete accessible outcome follow-up and prepare the final evidence and financial reconciliation package.	KPI response denominators, satisfaction data and documented grant/match transactions; reconcile records by December 31. Beneficiaries: 20-participant cohort.	Shanae; DeBoer	10/01/2027	12/31/2027

10	Program board reviews continuation plan; assign material maintenance and document rental-device return arrangements.	Continuation register identifies TNCCF material owner, Rosalie procedure owner, any second-host agreement, device returns and unfunded 2028 needs. Beneficiaries: cohort and future users.	Shanae; Ashley Short; Seth Smith; peer leaders	12/01/2027	12/31/2027
11	Prepare quarterly and closeout reports in DD Suite; submit source records and implement Council feedback.	Quarterly reporting plan and general ledger/source evidence. Planned submissions: Apr 15, Jul 15, Oct 15 2027; Q4 Jan 15 2028; final Jan 30 and RFA invoicing Jan 31 2028, subject to executed award.	Shanae; project accounting provider	01/01/2027	12/31/2027

Applicant Budget and Justification

The Novel Care Community Foundation
UEI N4YDHDD3F9U1

SUMMARY BUDGET				
Organization Name The Novel Care Community Foundation				
Project Title My Voice, My Choices: Making Real Meetings Work				
Project Duration January 1 through December 31 2027				
Category		**Requested Funds**	**Matching Funds**	**Total Project Budget**
A	Personnel	$12,600.00	$6,000.00	$18,600.00
B	Fringe Benefits	$1,008.00	$0.00	$1,008.00
C	Travel	$1,500.00	$0.00	$1,500.00
D	Equipment	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
E	Supplies and printing	$1,750.00	$1,524.00	$3,274.00
F	Consultants and contracts	$5,833.24	$0.00	$5,833.24
G	Other direct costs	$2,219.84	$810.00	$3,029.84
H	Total direct costs	$24,911.08	$8,334.00	$33,245.08
I	Total indirect costs	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
J	Total project	$24,911.08	$8,334.00	$33,245.08

Council request $24,911.08; nonfederal match $8,334; total project $33,245.08. Match consists of $6,000 proposed in-kind personnel support and $2,334 TNCCF cash expenditures. No indirect costs or program income are budgeted.

The standard 25% share is based on total project costs. The working request divided by three is $8,303.69; rounded up, the minimum is $8,304. The proposed $8,334 match exceeds that minimum by $30.31 before rounding and represents approximately 25.07% of total costs.

Budget Justification

A Personnel

Position	Calculation	Requested funds	Reference effort
Shanae Starks Executive Director and Project Lead	200 hours × $30	$6,000	9.62%
Four paid participant peer leaders	4 × 30 hours × $25	$3,000	1.44% each
Trenten Gunter project support	60 hours × $30	$1,800	2.88%
Anthony AJ Rollins project support	60 hours × $30	$1,800	2.88%
Total paid project wages	440 combined hours	$12,600	

Shanae will coordinate recruitment, partners, sessions, access arrangements, outcome tracking and reporting. Peer wages support planning, preparation, teaching and recommendations. Trenten and AJ will support startup, individual preparation and follow-up. Peer wages are compensation for project work, not attendance incentives. Ashley Short and Seth Smith's approved governing-board membership does not automatically assign either a paid peer-leader position.

Reference effort uses a 2,080-hour full-time work year: 200 ÷ 2,080 for Shanae; 60 ÷ 2,080 for each project support worker; and 30 ÷ 2,080 for each peer leader. These percentages describe planning effort rather than actual employment schedules. Payroll records and activity-based time records will support the rates and actual project hours. Nonfederal donated personnel support of $6,000 is explained under Matching Funds.

B Fringe Benefits

Requested employer payroll costs are $12,600 × 8% = $1,008. The 8% rate was supplied by TNCCF. No additional benefits or fringe on donated time are included. TNCCF's payroll or accounting provider must document the components of the 8% rate and reconcile charges to actual applicable employer costs.

C Travel

Requested supplemental transportation totals $1,500: 240 one-way bus tickets at an estimated $1.25 ($300), 30 Lyft trips at an estimated $20 ($600) and 30 Uber trips at an estimated $20 ($600). These annual quantities address gaps in agency and family rides for sessions and related project preparation or follow-up. Fares are planning estimates, not guaranteed vendor prices. TNCCF will retain trip purpose, ticket records and receipts and will not duplicate another funded ride.

D Equipment

No equipment purchases are requested. Computer rental is budgeted under G Other Direct Costs.

E Supplies and Printing

Cost item	Council request	TNCCF cash match
Meeting supplies and participant materials	$1,000	$0
Additional accessible printing and binding	$750	$0
Separately funded project printing supplies and accessible production	$0	$1,524
Total	$1,750	$1,524

Materials will support six learning sessions, preparation and follow-up, participant priority sheets, the curriculum, handbook and recommendations report. The following itemized schedules support $1,000 in meeting and project office supplies, $750 in contracted printing, and $1,524 in separate TNCCF cash-match materials. Office paper and toner support distinct project administration and reporting records; Office Depot printing includes its own paper and ink. These are planning estimates, not vendor quotes. Actual quantities and project use will support charges, and the same purchase will not be charged to both grant and match.

F Consultants and Contracts

Service	Calculation or allowance	Council request
Spanish and ASL interpretation and written translation	Project allowance; vendor hours and rates pending	$3,000
External accessibility and self-advocacy review	10 hours × $100	$1,000
DeBoer project financial review	12 months × $152.77	$1,833.24
Total		$5,833.24

The $3,000 language-access budget supports six sessions and necessary preparation or follow-up. The planning allocation is 24 Spanish interpretation hours at the reported $34.52 rate ($828.48), 36 ASL interpretation hours at the reported $40 hourly rate ($1,440), and $731.52 for written translation of selected recruitment, consent and priority learning materials. Hours are proposed budgeting assumptions based on anticipated access needs, not confirmed bookings. The Spanish hourly basis, vendor minimums, written translation quantities and prices require confirmation. Services will be arranged according to assessed needs at no participant charge. AJ's Spanish skills support outreach and coordination alongside professional services.

An independent accessibility reviewer will assess recruitment and participant materials, the meeting location, communication supports and participation procedures, and provide written recommendations and a follow-up review. The revised planning basis is 10 hours at $100 per hour, totaling $1,000, as itemized below. The reviewer has not been selected and the rate is not a confirmed quote. DeBoer's confirmed monthly rate is $152.77, totaling $1,833.24 for 12 months. Services will support project expenditure reconciliation, payroll allocation review, financial reporting and year-end review. A written

engagement and invoices will establish the project-specific scope and allocation; general Foundation services will not automatically be charged to this grant.

G Other Direct Costs

Computer rental: Meeting Tomorrow quoted $1,769.84 for all 20 participant-use computers for the project year, as confirmed by TNCCF. One rental computer will be assigned to each participant for self-advocacy learning, preparation of questions and participant-authorized practice with medical or service information. Retain the written quote or rental agreement documenting term, availability, charges, support and return arrangements. Rental dates must fit the approved award period. These are rental devices, not purchases or participant gifts. Individual assignment supports preparation and optional practice between sessions, with familiar access settings for each participant. Intake will check connectivity and support needs; offline materials and session-based access will remain available. Shanae will maintain an assignment and return register. The project will not fund agency-wide software access.

Refreshments: six meetings × 25 people × $3 = $450 requested. Modest snacks and water will be provided during the two-hour self-advocacy training sessions to support participant engagement. The attendance estimate includes participants, facilitators and necessary support people and will be checked against actual access needs. No alcohol or entertainment costs are included. TNCCF will retain itemized receipts showing the meeting date, attendance and project purpose. The RFA does not expressly address refreshments; this line is a transparent request for DHHS review, and reimbursement will follow the final award terms.

TNCCF will pay six three-hour bookings at The Root × $45 = $810 cash match. Each booking covers a two-hour session plus setup and cleanup. Paid invoices and booking records will support the charge.

Matching Funds

Source	Calculation	Match type	Amount
Yolanda Gipson background project support	80 hours × $45	In-kind	$3,600
Talora Fulton and Bryce Johnson independent volunteer project support	40 hours each × $30	In-kind	$2,400
TNCCF payment for The Root	18 hours × $45	Cash	$810
TNCCF additional printing supplies and accessible production	Itemized purchases to be documented	Cash	$1,524
Total			$8,334

Eligible donated project support totals $6,000. Yolanda Gipson will contribute 80 hours at a proposed $45 hourly value ($3,600) for background project documentation, coordination records and preparation of outcome-reporting materials under Shanae's direction. Grant application preparation is excluded. Signed commitments provide 40 hours from Talora Fulton and 40 from Bryce Johnson at a proposed $30 hourly value ($1,200 each). They will help prepare activities, support participant meeting practice and assist with follow-up. The $30 value matches the budgeted rate for comparable paid project-support duties. Separate records and reasonable valuation support will substantiate each contribution; the same hour will not be paid, donated or matched twice.

TNCCF will retain Talora and Bryce's signed commitments, actual service records and support for the reasonable $30 value. Yolanda's $45 valuation will be supported by comparable project duties and rate evidence. TNCCF will provide $2,334 in nonfederal cash match: $810 for The Root and $1,524 in separately identified materials. Match records will show funding source, purpose, invoices and payment; contributions may not also match another federal award. Only eligible, documented contributions will be claimed.

Allocation and Financial Controls

Each requested cost is intended to support the RFA 7573 project. Costs benefiting multiple activities will be allocated using documented actual project use or effort, without charging the same item both directly and indirectly. No general office rent, phone percentage, indirect cost rate or program income is included. DeBoer's grant-specific services will be distinguished from general organizational services. TNCCF will pay actual expenses before seeking reimbursement and maintain supporting expenditure, payroll and match records.

Detailed Grant Funded Supplies

Annual planning estimates for 20 participants, six learning sessions and related project preparation and reporting. These costs total $1,000 and exclude the separate contracted printing and cash-match materials.

Item	Quantity	Unit estimate	Annual total
Participant notebooks	20	$4.00	$80.00
Pens for participants and facilitators	40	$0.50	$20.00
Participant pocket folders	20	$1.00	$20.00
Assorted markers packs	4	$12.00	$48.00
Flip chart paper pads	4	$18.00	$72.00
Sticky note pads	10	$3.00	$30.00
Index card packs	10	$2.00	$20.00
Name badge packs	2	$15.00	$30.00
Copy paper reams for project records	10	$7.00	$70.00
Project share of ink or toner cartridges	4	$85.00	$340.00
Binders for project records	10	$6.00	$60.00
Divider sets	10	$3.00	$30.00
Sheet protector packs	4	$10.00	$40.00
Envelope boxes	2	$15.00	$30.00
Staples box	1	$10.00	$10.00
Paper and binder clip packs	2	$5.00	$10.00
Tape rolls	4	$4.00	$16.00
Scissors	2	$7.00	$14.00
Supply storage containers	2	$15.00	$30.00
Mailing and file label packs	2	$15.00	$30.00
Total			$1,000.00

Only the project share of shared office consumables may be charged. Toner compatibility, tax and actual prices must be checked before purchase. The annual quantities are estimates of project need, not authorization to exhaust a balance.

Detailed Contracted Printing

Office Depot is the proposed printing vendor. The following annual quantities support 20 participants across six sessions and related preparation. Unit prices are budget estimates pending vendor confirmation. Contracted printing includes its own paper and ink.

Printing item	Annual quantity	Unit estimate	Annual total
Session agendas and meeting information	20 × 6 sessions × 4 pages = 480 pages	$0.25	$120.00
Lessons and activity worksheets	20 × 6 sessions × 8 pages = 960 pages	$0.25	$240.00
Evaluations and feedback forms	20 × 6 sessions × 2 pages = 240 pages	$0.25	$60.00
Participant resource and rights packets	20 × 12 pages = 240 pages	$0.25	$60.00
Color visual learning materials	20 × 6 pages = 120 pages	$0.75	$90.00
Color recruitment flyers	100 flyers	$0.75	$75.00
Large print versions	300 pages	$0.25	$75.00
Completion certificates	20 certificates	$1.50	$30.00
Total			$750.00

Contracted printing includes its paper and ink. Routine session handouts are separate from the specialized instructional materials and participant-developed advocacy booklets funded by cash match. Large print copies will be produced according to assessed need.

Detailed Cash Match Materials

TNCCF will purchase these separate materials with eligible nonfederal funds as $1,524 cash match. They supplement the project-developed curriculum and handbook and are distinct from grant-funded office supplies and routine session printing.

Separate match item	Quantity	Unit estimate	Annual total
Purchased self advocacy workbooks	20	$25.00	$500.00
Purchased facilitator instructional guides	2	$75.00	$150.00
Reusable scenario and discussion card sets	4	$35.00	$140.00
Communication boards for group instructional use	4	$40.00	$160.00
Presentation boards for participant advocacy work	10	$12.00	$120.00
Mounting material packs for advocacy displays	4	$16.00	$64.00
Printing participant developed community advocacy booklets	100	$3.00	$300.00
Lamination of reusable rights reference card sets	20	$4.50	$90.00
Total			$1,524.00

Purchased instructional resources provide structured lessons beyond routine handouts. Communication boards are reusable teaching aids for expressing choices during project activities. Booklets present participant-developed advocacy recommendations for community sharing; they are distinct from the required participant handbook and recruitment flyers. Council review will precede use or distribution where required. Maintain itemized invoices, payment evidence and the source of nonfederal funds; no expense may be counted twice.

Detailed Transportation and Refreshments

Supplemental Transportation

Assistance	Annual quantity	Unit estimate	Annual total
Bus tickets	240 one way tickets	$1.25	$300.00
Lyft rides	30 one way rides	$20.00	$600.00
Uber rides	30 one way rides	$20.00	$600.00
Total			$1,500.00

Annual quantities support the six learning sessions and project-related preparation or follow-up where needed. Agencies and families remain the primary transportation source. The bus fare and rideshare amounts are unverified planning estimates; use actual fares, route availability and individual access needs. TNCCF will purchase or arrange documented rides or tickets, not distribute gift cards. Keep ticket issue records and ride receipts and prevent duplicate payment for a trip.

Meeting Refreshments

Item	Per meeting planning quantity	Per meeting	Six meetings
Water	25 servings	$6.00	$36.00
Coffee tea and condiments	Meeting allocation	$9.00	$54.00
Fresh fruit	25 servings	$15.00	$90.00
Packaged crackers or pretzels	25 servings	$10.00	$60.00
Cheese or comparable protein snack	25 servings	$15.00	$90.00
Vegetables and dip	Shared tray for 25	$20.00	$120.00
Total	25 people including support staff	$75.00	$450.00

The serving estimate is 20 participants plus five facilitators or support people, equivalent to $3 per person per meeting. Product choices and quantities will reflect dietary needs and available prices. This $450 request is disclosed as refreshments and is subject to the final award terms.

Detailed Payroll and Accessibility Review

Employer Payroll Costs

Employer cost	Calculation	Amount
Social Security	$12,600 × 6.20%	$781.20
Medicare	$12,600 × 1.45%	$182.70
Other applicable employer cost allowance	$12,600 × 0.35%	$44.10
Total planning allowance	$12,600 × 8%	$1,008.00

Employer Social Security and Medicare are calculated on covered project wages using the current 6.20% and 1.45% rates. The remaining $44.10 is a provisional estimate toward other applicable employer costs, not an asserted Nebraska unemployment or insurance rate. The payroll provider will establish actual applicability and coverage; only documented eligible costs will be charged within the approved budget. Source: IRS Topic 751, https://www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc751. Confirm applicable rates for 2027.

Independent Accessibility Review

Review task	Hours	Rate	Total
Recruitment forms and accommodation request procedures	1.5	$100.00	$150.00
Participant instructional materials and accessible formats	2.5	$100.00	$250.00
Meeting location and accessible travel paths	2	$100.00	$200.00
Communication supports and participation procedures	1	$100.00	$100.00
Written findings and prioritized recommendations	2	$100.00	$200.00
Follow up review of revisions	1	$100.00	$100.00
Total	10		$1,000.00

The independent review is estimated at 10 hours at $100 per hour, totaling $1,000. Deliverables are a written accessibility checklist, prioritized recommendations and review of revisions. The reviewer and price require confirmation. The scope covers assessment and recommendations; printing and accommodation implementation are separately budgeted.

Northwest High School

Date: October 23, 2026

Letter of Commitment for RFA 7573

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

Re: The Novel Care Community Foundation
My Voice, My Choices: Making Real Meetings Work

Dear Review Committee:

Northwest High School supports The Novel Care Community Foundation's application for its 2027 self-advocacy project. If funded, we commit to collaborating during January 1 through December 31, 2027, to help eligible students with developmental disabilities express their priorities and take a greater lead in meetings that affect their lives.

The project will serve 20 people with developmental disabilities, including four paid peer leaders. Six practical learning sessions will help participants prepare questions, communicate preferences and practice contributing to healthcare, service-planning or transition meetings. The program board will be led by self-advocates Ashley Short and Seth Smith. TNCCF will determine grant eligibility; school enrollment or a learning disability alone does not establish eligibility.

Northwest High School agrees to the following responsibilities:

1. Designate a school contact to coordinate recruitment and communication with Shanae Starks, TNCCF's Executive Director and project lead.

2. Share accessible project information with potentially eligible students and their families. Support voluntary referrals with applicable student and parent or guardian permissions. Enrollment will depend on eligibility, participant interest and available project spaces.

3. Coordinate with participating students, families and TNCCF on existing communication supports and transportation arrangements where available. Identify access barriers so TNCCF can consider available project resources.

4. Help participating students identify an appropriate opportunity to use their self-advocacy skills, such as preparing questions or presenting preferences in a transition or other student-selected meeting. Participation in school meetings will follow applicable permissions and school procedures.

5. Provide brief feedback on coordination and student participation when authorized, and identify practical ways to continue using useful self-advocacy materials after the project. Protect student information and share identifiable records only with applicable consent and authorization.

This commitment covers recruitment and coordination using existing school resources. It does not promise a cash match, a minimum number of students, payment for rentals or changes to legally required educational services. Additional financial or implementation responsibilities would require separate written agreement.

As an authorized representative of Northwest High School, I confirm our agreement to these responsibilities.

Signature Felicia Young Date: October 23, 2026

Printed name and title: Felicia Young/Special Education Coordinator

Rosalie LLC

Date: October 26, 2026

Letter of Commitment for RFA 7573

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

Re: The Novel Care Community Foundation
My Voice, My Choices: Making Real Meetings Work

Dear Review Committee:

Rosalie LLC supports The Novel Care Community Foundation's application for the 2027 self-advocacy project. If funded, we commit to serving as an implementation partner during January 1 through December 31, 2027. The project will help people with developmental disabilities express their priorities and take a greater lead in healthcare, service-planning and transition meetings. We agree to the following responsibilities:

1. Designate an agency contact to coordinate with Shanae Starks. Share accessible recruitment information with potentially eligible individuals and families, support voluntary participation, and coordinate existing transportation and communication supports where available.

2. Work with participating individuals and the program board led by Ashley Short and Seth Smith to select one change to our own meeting practices. Examples include a participant-led agenda segment, advance plain-language questions or a record of the participant's preferences and the agency's response.

3. Provide the existing procedure or describe the current practice, document the participant-selected revision, and test the change during the project. By November 30, 2027, put one agency-specific procedure into use and document its adoption date and actual use.

4. Provide brief implementation records and participant feedback to TNCCF for evaluation and the recommendations report. Obtain applicable permissions, protect confidential information and share only the information needed for the project.

5. By November 30, 2027, identify the staff role responsible for continuing the adopted procedure and document how it will be maintained after the grant. Continue the procedure within our available resources and identify any additional resources needed for continued use.

This commitment uses existing agency coordination and supports. It does not promise a cash contribution, a stated match value, a minimum enrollment or agency payment for project computer rentals. Any additional financial contribution would require a separate written agreement.

As an authorized representative of Rosalie LLC, I confirm our agreement to these responsibilities.

Signature _____ Date 10/26/2026

Printed name and title: Ben Addah

Contact email and phone: quality@rosaliellc.com 402-359-7257

Independent Volunteer Commitment for RFA 7573

The Novel Care Community Foundation
My Voice, My Choices: Making Real Meetings Work

Volunteer name: Bryce Johnson

Project period: January 1 through December 31, 2027

I, Bryce Johnson, agree to serve as an independent volunteer for this project if TNCCF receives funding. I will contribute unpaid project support to help participants with developmental disabilities prepare for learning sessions and take a greater lead in meetings affecting their lives. I have experience working with individuals receiving developmental disability services, summarized below.

Volunteer duties

• Help prepare session materials and practice activities under the direction of Shanae Starks and the participant leaders.

• Help participants identify their priorities, prepare questions and practice expressing preferences for a participant-selected healthcare, service-planning or transition meeting.

• Assist with participant follow-up, including documenting whether participants used their advocacy skills and what barriers they experienced. Respect each participant's communication method, choices, privacy and applicable permissions.

Hours and proposed match value

TNCCF budgets 80 combined volunteer hours from Bryce Johnson and Talora Fulton, valued at $30 per hour for a combined $2,400 in proposed in-kind match. The 80 hours are shared between us; they are not 80 hours per person. My individual commitment is recorded below and will be coordinated with the other volunteer so the combined planned contribution equals 80 hours.

My committed hours: 40 × $30/hour = proposed value: $1200

The $30 hourly figure is TNCCF's proposed value for comparable project duties, subject to documented support and applicable award requirements. It is not wages or compensation payable to me. TNCCF will count only eligible services actually provided and documented during the award period. Grant application preparation is excluded.

Experience relevant to these duties

Years working with individuals with DD: 20 years

Relevant roles and responsibilities: I have experience working in day reporting and day services and serving as a Direct Support Professional supervisor for individuals with developmental disabilities. This background prepares me to assist with session preparation, participant self-advocacy practice and project follow-up.

Volunteer records and acknowledgment

I will coordinate my schedule with TNCCF and maintain a signed record of dates, hours and specific project tasks. I will not claim the same hours as paid time or as match for another award. I confirm that this contribution is voluntary and that I am not providing these hours as paid TNCCF staff. I will notify Shanae Starks promptly if my availability changes.

Volunteer signature Bryce Johnson Date 10/26/2026

TNCCF acceptance by Shanae Starks Date 10/26/2026

Independent Volunteer Commitment for RFA 7573

The Novel Care Community Foundation
My Voice, My Choices: Making Real Meetings Work

Volunteer name: Talora Fulton

Project period: January 1 through December 31, 2027

I, Talora Fulton, agree to serve as an independent volunteer for this project if TNCCF receives funding. I will contribute unpaid project support to help participants with developmental disabilities prepare for learning sessions and take a greater lead in meetings affecting their lives. I have experience working with individuals receiving developmental disability services, summarized below.

Volunteer duties

• Help prepare session materials and practice activities under the direction of Shanae Starks and the participant leaders.

• Help participants identify their priorities, prepare questions and practice expressing preferences for a participant-selected healthcare, service-planning or transition meeting.

• Assist with participant follow-up, including documenting whether participants used their advocacy skills and what barriers they experienced. Respect each participant's communication method, choices, privacy and applicable permissions.

Hours and proposed match value

TNCCF budgets 80 combined volunteer hours from Talora Fulton and Bryce Johnson, valued at $30 per hour for a combined $2,400 in proposed in-kind match. The 80 hours are shared between us; they are not 80 hours per person. My individual commitment is recorded below and will be coordinated with the other volunteer so the combined planned contribution equals 80 hours.

My committed hours: 40 × $30/hour = proposed value: $1200

The $30 hourly figure is TNCCF's proposed value for comparable project duties, subject to documented support and applicable award requirements. It is not wages or compensation payable to me. TNCCF will count only eligible services actually provided and documented during the award period. Grant application preparation is excluded.

Experience relevant to these duties

Years working with individuals with DD: 11 years

Relevant roles and responsibilities:

My responsibilities have included helping individuals communicate their needs and preferences, preparing for and attending appointments or service-planning meetings, and documenting follow-up needs. This experience prepares me to assist with session preparation, participant meeting practice and project follow-up.

Volunteer records and acknowledgment

I will coordinate my schedule with TNCCF and maintain a signed record of dates, hours and specific project tasks. I will not claim the same hours as paid time or as match for another award. I confirm that this contribution is voluntary and that I am not providing these hours as paid TNCCF staff. I will notify Shanae Starks promptly if my availability changes.

Volunteer signature Talora Fulton Date 10/26/2026

TNCCF acceptance by Shanae Starks Date 10/26/2026

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities Youth Self-Advocacy Group Mini-Grant Application

The Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCDD) has set aside funding for the 2026-27 school year to provide $500.00 to twenty schools to support the development of youth self-advocacy groups. These federally funded mini-grants support opportunities for transition-age youth (14–21) with intellectual and developmental disabilities to form self-advocacy groups that build leadership and self-determination skills. Both public and private schools are eligible to apply. It is also permissible for small schools in rural areas to partner and submit one combined application. Please note that this funding is intended specifically for self-advocacy groups led by youth with I/DD. It is not intended for unified groups that include neurotypical peers. Funded groups must meet at least quarterly, strengthen youth voice, and support inclusion in age-appropriate community or school clubs and activities. Special consideration will be given to schools collaborating with other community organizations and programs (e.g., 4H Extension Office, local Arc chapters and People First of NE chapters). Please complete the following application sections. Feel free to provide this information in a separate document.

SECTION 1 – Applicant Information School/Program Name: ESU4 Lifeskills Collaboration
District: ESU4 4 Points Academy,

Applicant Name and Title: Lori Broady - Transition Teacher, 4 Points Academy
Email and Phone: lbroady@esu4.net
School Principal/Supervisor Name: Dani Niss

SECTION 2 – Proposed Youth Self-Advocacy Group
A. Group Description (Short Narrative)
The ESU4 Youth Self-Advocacy Initiative is designed around three primary pillars: student governance, community mentorship, and civic action.

A. Student Ownership and Leadership Development
Each participating school district within ESU4 will invite interested students to join the organization. To ensure complete student ownership:

- **Organizational Naming:** Student members will collaboratively select and vote on the youth self-advocacy group's official name during early orientation sessions.
- **Governance & Committees:** Students will hold elected leadership offices (e.g., President, Vice President, Secretary) and serve on functional committees.
- **Social Event Planning:** With teacher/sponsor support, dedicated student committees will plan, budget, and host social gatherings throughout the academic year to strengthen peer networks across school districts.

B. Mentorship Partnership: Southeast Nebraska People First

To ground their advocacy work in practical, real-world experience, the student group will partner with **Southeast Nebraska People First**.

- Students will participate in a structured session with People First officers, leaders, and adult sponsors.
- Members will review People First's historical accomplishments and gain insights into self-advocacy strategies, legislative awareness, and peer support.

C. Civic Action: Project Citizen Framework
During the program year, students will develop a deep understanding of the challenges the special needs community faces. Utilizing the evidence-based **Project Citizen** curriculum, students will:

1. Identify a specific, real-world accessibility or inclusion problem in their school or local community.
2. Gather data, analyze policy options, and develop a practical solution.
3. Formulate an actionable policy proposal and action plan to present to school boards or local community leaders.

5. Measurable Outcomes & Evaluation

The project's success will be measured by student engagement, governance execution, civic output, and public recognition:

- **Peer Connection & Network Expansion:** 100% of participating students will have regular opportunities to meet, collaborate, and form lasting social connections with peers across ESU4 member districts.
- **Leadership & Organizational Mastery:** Establish a fully functional student leadership board, active committee structures, and execute at least two student-planned social events.
- **Civic Problem-Solving Output:** Completion of at least one comprehensive Project Citizen portfolio and presentation targeting a verified school or community issue related to special needs advocacy.
- **Public Recognition & Community Awareness:** Student accomplishments and leadership milestones will be showcased across regional social media platforms and submitted to area news outlets (newspapers, local radio, and regional broadcasts) to promote awareness and celebrate student leadership.

B. Meeting Plan
Describe meeting frequency (minimum quarterly) and activities.
There will be at least 4 meetings each school year. The initial meeting dates will be set in collaboration with already scheduled social events for Life Skills students, organized by a collaboration of Life Skills teachers in the ESU4 region. (October - Halloween Party, November - Friendsgiving, December - Holiday Party, January - Cheer/Spirit Camp, February - Bowling, March - JCC All Star Track Meet, April - Prom, May - PC Track Meet.)

SECTION 3 – Work Plan (Short Narrative)

Phase	Timeline	Key Activities & Milestones
Phase I: Outreach & Launch	August – October 2026	Student recruitment across participating ESU4 schools; initial orientation meetings; official student naming of the organization; officer elections and committee assignments.
Phase II: Network & Mentorship	November 2026 – January 2027	Student-led planning and execution of mid-year social events; formal interactive meeting with Southeast Nebraska People First leadership and sponsors.
Phase III: Project Citizen Action	February – April 2027	Application of the Project Citizen model; selection of local community/school issue; research and development of policy solutions.
Phase IV: Presentation & Celebration	May 2027	Final presentation of student solutions; regional media campaign highlighting student achievements on social media and local news outlets.

SECTION 4 – Budget (Up to $500)

Resources for self-advocacy organizations to convene meetings, such as meeting materials, virtual platform subscriptions, or closed captioning services. Facilitator stipend, supplies, and printing. Resources to train youth self-advocacy members on advocacy, leadership, disability rights, or self-determination skills. Speaker fees, speaker travel costs, or venue fees. Organizational staff time to carry out grant activities

Budget Table: Facilitator stipend: $300____ (To be divided equally between school sponsors involved in organizing the events. This planning will be done outside of regular school contracted hours.)

Supplies/materials: $100____

Other allowable costs (describe): $_100___

- Travel expenses for People First organization to attend
- Speaker Fee for a minimum of one event (TBD)

Total Request (max $500): $_500___

In-Kind Match: Although in-kind match or support is not required, please indicate if your school plans to provide any (e.g., teacher special duty pay), demonstrating long-term commitment.

- At this time, there will not be any teacher special duty pay, once this organization is established, this will be an ask for the area schools and/or ESU4
- Schools will provide transportation to and from the meetings, as well as pay for any substitute teachers required to cover the educator's absence while accompanying the student.

SECTION 5 – *Project Sustainability NCDD's Youth Self-Advocacy Group Mini-Grants are awarded for one school year. Applicants must describe their plan to sustain the project once Council funds end (e.g., who will maintain the project). The sustainability plan should identify the activities, features, or practices that the applicant wants to sustain. A description of whether their school or other agencies or collaborators will assume responsibility for maintaining the project. Note: Schools who receive a mini-grant must reapply for additional funding through a competitive process.*

The Lifeskills teachers and area schools began collaborating during the 2025-2026 school year in order to provide opportunities for the students in the ESU4 area schools opportunities to socialize with their peers from across the 5 county region. These opportunities include a Halloween Party, Friendsgiving, a Holiday Party, Prom, All Star Track Meet and others organized throughout the school year. This collaboration has become so successful that a summer event professional development day was held in August for the educators to gather in order to collaborate and plan. The educators in this group are dedicated to expanding this program and have the support of their administrators. It is the belief of this group of educators that the establishment of this Self-Advocacy Group will only enhance the collaboration and build upon the work that People First of Southeast Nebraska has already been doing.

SECTION 6 – *Data and Reporting Commitments As a condition of this federal funding, applicants agree to collect and provide data to NCDD on Key Performance Indicators (KPI) in both the mid-year and final reports. (KPI guidance will be provided.)*

SECTION 7 – Signature I certify the information provided is accurate and that funds will be used for allowable purposes.

Applicant Signature: Jennifer Broady Date: 10-23-2024

Administrator Signature: [signature] Date: 10/26/2026

Applications are due Monday, October 26, 2026. Email completed application to DHHS.DDCouncil@nebraska.gov. The NCDD Grant Review Committee will review and score all eligible applications. The 20 highest-scoring applications will be selected. NCDD will notify applicants which schools are selected.

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities Youth Self-Advocacy Group Mini-Grant Application

Purpose and Guidelines

The Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCDD) has set aside funding for the 2026-27 school year to provide $500.00 to twenty schools to support the development of youth self-advocacy groups. These federally funded mini-grants support opportunities for transition-age youth (14–21) with intellectual and developmental disabilities to form self-advocacy groups that build leadership and self-determination skills.

Both public and private schools are eligible to apply. It is also permissible for small schools in rural areas to partner and submit one combined application. Please note that this funding is intended specifically for self-advocacy groups led by youth with I/DD. It is not intended for unified groups that include neurotypical peers.

Funded groups must meet at least quarterly, strengthen youth voice, and support inclusion in age-appropriate community or school clubs and activities. Special consideration will be given to schools collaborating with other community organizations and programs (e.g., 4-H Extension Office, local Arc chapters and People First of NE chapters).

Please complete the following application sections. Feel free to provide this information in a separate document.

SECTION 1 – Applicant Information

School/Program Name: *Johnson County Central Public School*
District: *Johnson County Central Public School*
Applicant Name and Title: *Amber Baehr*

Email and Phone: *amber.baehr@jccentral.org; 402-335-3328*
School Principal/Supervisor Name: *Dr. Laura Rademacher*

SECTION 2 – Proposed Youth Self-Advocacy Group

A. Group Description (Short Narrative)

PURPOSE

BUDS (Building an Understanding of Diversity among Students) Advocacy Group will be a new youth self-advocacy group at Johnson County Central Public Schools for individuals ages 14–21 with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The purpose of BUDS Advocacy Group is to build self-advocacy and self-determination, strengthen leadership skills, and elevate youth voice. As youth grow in confidence and leadership, the group will encourage greater inclusion in schools, clubs, groups, and activities, so that young people with disabilities are seen and valued as full participants. Johnson County does not currently have a self-advocacy group for youth, and this project will fill that gap.

GOALS

Self-Advocacy: Teach youth to understand their rights, explain their strengths and needs, and ask for the support they need.

Self-Determination: Help youth set personal goals, make informed decisions, and take an active role in their IEP and transition planning.

Leadership: Develop leadership skills through elected youth officers, meetings run by members, and planning of group projects and events.

Youth Voice: Create opportunities for youth to share their perspectives with schools, community organizations, and local leaders.

Inclusion: Increase youth participation in school and community clubs, groups, and activities.

ANTICIPATED PARTICIPANTS

In the first year, the group will serve 5+ youth aged 14–21 students with intellectual and developmental disabilities from Johnson County Central Public Schools. Participants will include high school students and young adults in transition programs. BUDS Sponsor, families, and community volunteers will take part as supporters, and youth will lead the group.

CONNECTING YOUTH WITH COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND PARTNERS

Nebraska Extension Office and Johnson County 4-H: Members will use 4-H leadership and public speaking curricula. The Extension office will also help members join 4-H clubs and connect the group with speakers, volunteers, and events.

People First of Nebraska and Nebraska Youth Leadership Council: Members will be mentored by adult self-advocates and invited to chapter meetings and statewide conferences. These connections will give youth a clear path into adult self-advocacy after graduation.

Additional partners: The project will also work with JCCHS, Vocational Rehabilitation, local employers, and community leaders to offer job shadowing experiences, guest speakers, and opportunities for youth to present at public meetings.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

By the end of Month 3: At least 5 youth will be enrolled and attending monthly meetings, as measured by attendance records.

By the end of Month 6: Members will have elected youth officers. They will hold monthly member-led meetings, measured by meeting minutes and attendance records.

By the end of Month 9: At least 75% of members will be able to describe their strengths, needs, and accommodations in their own words, measured by a self-advocacy skills checklist given at the introduction of the member and at the 9th month.

By the end of Year 1: Each member will attend at least one event or training held by partners, programs, or groups, measured by event sign-in sheets, rosters, or registration.

By the end of Year 1: Members will plan and carry out one community awareness event and the first annual inclusion t-shirt sale, measured by event records and sales totals.

SUPPORT OF NCDD's MISSION

Advocacy: Youth will learn to speak up for themselves in school, in the community, and with local decision-makers.

Capacity Building: The project will build leadership skills in youth, increase family knowledge of resources, and create a local partner network in Johnson County - a rural county with limited services.

Systems Change: When youth lead their own planning meetings and take part in school and community activities, schools and organizations shift from planning <u>for</u> youth with disabilities to planning <u>with</u> them. This rural, youth-led model can also be shared with other Nebraska districts to grow in friendships and the community.

START-UP AND LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

NCDD funding will cover start-up costs, including curriculum and training materials, meeting supplies, transportation to Arc and People First events, and a kickoff event. Several strategies will keep the group going after the grant ends:

Annual inclusion t-shirt sales: Members will design, market, and sell shirts each year. The profits will fund conferences, outings, and new activities, and the sales will give youth hands-on business and leadership experience.

Leadership succession: Officer roles will rotate each year, and older members will mentor younger members so leadership carries over from year to year.

Established home: The group will be based at JCCHS and linked to existing inclusion programs, which gives it a stable meeting place and a steady path for recruiting new members.

Ongoing partnerships and funding: Nebraska Youth Council, People First, Nebraska Extension Office, and other partnerships will continue providing training at little or no cost. Local business sponsors, t-shirt sales, and grants will support future growth.

B. Meeting Plan

Describe meeting frequency (minimum quarterly) and activities.

Meeting Format (30 minutes)

Every monthly meeting follows the same agenda so members always know what to expect:

1. *Welcome and Call to Order (5 min) - Officers (once elected) open the meeting and share the month's theme/observance.*
2. *Speaker or Lesson (15 min) - A guest speaker or member-led activity tied to the monthly theme.*
3. *Youth Voice Discussion and Action (7 min) - Members share ideas, make group decisions, and plan next steps.*
4. *Wrap-Up (3 min) - Members set a personal goal for the month, and officers preview the next meeting.*

SECTION 3 – Work Plan (Short Narrative)

Outline your planned project activities for the school year and describe your intended objectives. Include a brief overview of each activity, the timeline for implementation, and the outcomes you expect to achieve.

August: Celebrating Our Year

- *Theme/Observance: Johnson County Fair (local) and National Friendship Day (first Sunday in August)*
- *Speaker: Nebraska Extension 4-H educator*
- *Activity: Members host an inclusion awareness event during a 9th period study session. They also complete the self-advocacy skills checklist (pre-assessment), reflect on the prior year, set goals for the upcoming year, and invite new members and peer mentors to join.*

September: Know Your Rights

- *Theme/Observance:: Constitution Day (Sept. 17) and National Disability Voter Registration Week*
- *Speaker: Local Arc chapter staff member*
- *Activity: Group kickoff. Members choose the group name, create meeting rules, and complete the self-advocacy skills checklist (pre-assessment).*

October: My Strengths and Future Work

- *Theme/Observance:: National Disability Employment Awareness Month and National Bullying Prevention Month*
- *Speaker: Vocational Rehabilitation counselor or local employer*
- *Activity: Members complete a strengths inventory and share one job or career interest.*

November: Your Voice, Your Vote

- *Theme/Observance:: Election Day*
- *Speaker: Johnson County Clerk or election official*
- *Activity: Members learn how voting works and hold the group's first officer election.*

December: Sharing My Story

- *Theme/Observance:: International Day of Persons with Disabilities (Dec. 3)*
- *Speaker: People First of Nebraska self-advocate*
- *Activity: Members create a one-page "About Me" profile describing their strengths, needs, and accommodations.*

January: My IEP

- *Theme/Observance: - National Mentoring Month*
- *Speaker: School student services coordinator or an adult self-advocate mentor*
- *Activity: Members practice introducing themselves and sharing SMART goals at a meeting. The group votes for the top three inclusion t-shirt designs.*

February: Finding My Place

- *Theme/Observance: - Random Acts of Kindness Day (Feb. 17)*
- *Speaker: Nebraska Extension 4-H educator*
- *Activity: Members create sticky notes to place on lockers. The group votes on the final t-shirt design.*

March: Spread the Word for Inclusion

- *Theme/Observance:: Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, Spread the Word Day (first Wednesday in March), and World Down Syndrome Day (Mar. 21)*
- *Speaker: NCDD representative or Special Olympics Nebraska Unified Champion Schools staff*
- *Activity: Members launch the annual inclusion t-shirt sale and lead a school-wide inclusion pledge offered through Special Olympics.*

April: Giving Back

- *Theme/Observance:: Autism Acceptance Month and National Volunteer Week*
- *Speaker: Local nonprofit volunteer coordinator*
- *Activity: Members plan and organize a community service project.*

May: Taking Care of Me

- *Theme/Observance:: Mental Health Awareness Month*
- *Speaker: School counselor or local mental health provider*
- *Activity: Members build a personal coping and self-care toolkit. Graduating members are recognized and connected with People First of Nebraska, VR Services, ESU 4, or other appropriate programs.*

INTENDED OUTCOMES

1. *Launch the group and build the program, holding monthly meetings with intentional objectives, knowledgeable speakers, and activities centered around increasing self-advocacy, self-determination, and self-efficacy.*
2. *Increase self-advocacy skills as measured by knowledge and ability to describe personal strengths, needs, and accommodations.*
3. *Strengthen self-determination through setting personal goals and communication with their accountability person.*
4. *Grow personal self-efficacy by organizing events, gaining personal knowledge, tackling difficult things, and celebrating successes, both personally and that of others.*
5. *Develop youth leadership skills through electing officers, organizing meetings, planning projects, and hosting events.*
6. *Elevate youth voice through involvement in groups, organizations, and clubs.*
7. *Increase inclusion as seen by an increased involvement in sports, groups, organizations, and clubs*
8. *Connect youth with community resources as determined by the student's conversations with staff.*
9. *Ensure long-term sustainability through an annual t-shirt sale fundraiser, keeping the meetings organized and short, adjusting the times so that it fits the needs of most (lunch, 9th Period Study Session).*

SECTION 4 – Budget (Up to $500)

Federal rules prohibit spending on certain items, such as food, beverages, or entertainment.

The source of this guidance is The Code of Federal Regulations:
https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title- 2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200

Budget		
Item	**Description**	**Cost**
One Keynote Speaker	*According to his site, Chris Sund is about "Helping people, leaders, and teams become the best version of themselves - from a leader still building at scale, in real time". In opening discussion with him, Chris stated he is more than willing to not charge his usual $2,000 to $3,000 fee so that he can offer a great presentation that is focused on this project.* **https://chrissund.com/**	*$500*

Budget Table:
Facilitator stipend: $_*0*___

Supplies/materials: $_*0*___

Other allowable costs (describe): $__*500 for speaker*__

Total Request (max $500): $__*500*__

SECTION 5 – Project Sustainability

NCDD's Youth Self-Advocacy Group Mini-Grants are awarded for one school year. Applicants must describe their plan to sustain the project once Council funds end (e.g., who will maintain the project).

ACTIVITIES, FEATURES, OR PRACTICES WE WANT TO SUSTAIN

I want this group to keep going long after the first year, because self-advocacy isn't something students learn in one season. The practices I plan to sustain are:

- *Regular group meetings where students practice speaking up for themselves, setting goals, and making decisions about their own lives.*
- *Student-led leadership roles, so members run meetings, plan activities, and mentor newer members as they join.*
- *Youth voice in the school and community. Students will share their experiences with staff, clubs, and activity groups to encourage more inclusion across JCC.*
- *Annual inclusion t-shirt sale. Students will design, promote, and sell inclusion t-shirts each year. This funds the group and builds real-world skills like budgeting, marketing, and teamwork.*

WHO WILL ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAINTAINING THE PROJECT

I will continue to sponsor the group as a special education teacher and BUDS sponsor at Johnson County Central High School. The t-shirt sale will be our main source of ongoing funding, with profits covering supplies, activities, and travel to relevant programs. JCCHS administration has agreed to support the group, and I included it as a branch of the BUDS school organization. In planning to connect the group with BUDS, our existing inclusion program, members stay involved in a wider network of inclusive activities at school. As students take on leadership roles, they will help carry the group forward from year to year.

SECTION 6 – Data and Reporting Commitments

As a condition of this federal funding, applicants agree to collect and provide data to NCDD on Key Performance Indicators (KPI) in both the mid-year and final reports. (KPI guidance will be provided.)

I agree to collect and provide data to NCDD on the Key Performance Indicators in both the mid-year and final reports, and I will follow the KPI guidance once it is provided.

To make sure I have accurate information ready, I plan to track:

1. *Participation: number of students enrolled, ages, and attendance at each meeting.*
2. *Self-advocacy growth: short student surveys at the beginning, middle, and end of the year asking how confident they feel speaking up for themselves, setting goals, and making choices.*
3. *Leadership: number of students who take on leadership roles, such as leading a meeting, presenting to staff, or helping run the t-shirt sale.*
4. *Inclusion: number of students who join a new school club, group, or activity during the year.*
5. *Activities and outreach: a log of meetings, presentations, events, and community connections.*
6. *Student voice: quotes and reflections from students about what the group means to them, shared with their permission.*

I will keep these records throughout the year so reporting stays simple and reflects what students actually experienced. If NCDD's KPI guidance asks for different information, I will adjust my tracking to match.

SECTION 7 – Signature

I certify the information provided is accurate and that funds will be used for allowable purposes.

Applicant Signature: Amber Bacha **Date:** 10.23.2026

Administrator Signature: Lori Rademacher **Date:** 10.23.2026

Applications are due Monday, October 26, 2026.

Email completed application to DHHS.DDCouncil@nebraska.gov.

The NCDD Grant Review Committee will review and score all eligible applications.

The 20 highest-scoring applications will be selected. NCDD will notify applicants which schools are selected.