



**New York State  
Developmental Disabilities  
Planning Council**

***Funding  
Announcement***

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**DDPC Funding Announcement – Request for Proposal**  
**Notice of Availability of Federal Funds and Requests for Proposals Under the New York State**  
**Developmental Disabilities Planning Council Grant Program**

**Project SEARCH**  
**Youth Transition & Employment Demonstration**

**Timelines for This Request for Proposal**

<b>RFP Release Date</b>	<b>November 10, 2008</b>
<b>Closing Date for RFP Questions</b>	<b>January 30, 2009</b>
<b>Questions Posted By</b>	<b>January 30, 2009</b>
<b>Letter Of Intent</b>	<b>February 2, 2009</b>
<b>Proposal Due Date</b>	<b>March 20, 2009</b>
<b>Award Announcement</b>	<b>June 2009</b>
<b>Tentative Contract Start Date</b>	<b>September 1, 2009</b>

**Intent of Proposal - Why is the DDPC Making This Investment?**

The New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC) is announcing the availability of funding in the amount of \$100,000 per year for each of two years, to implement two Project SEARCH youth transition and employment demonstration grants (at \$50,000 each per year). The intent of these model projects is to demonstrate the efficacy of implementing a business sector employment approach in increasing the quality and quantity of school-to-work transition outcomes for students with developmental disabilities. If additional funds become available, the DDPC reserves the right to approve additional projects under the authority of this RFP.

Project SEARCH is a high school transition program which provides training and education leading to employment for individuals with disabilities. The Project SEARCH approach was started in 1996 with Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center. It is a “business/employment sector” focused approach, targeting careers in a growth industry, such as the health care, environmental “greening, technology and higher education business sectors. The cornerstone of the Project SEARCH approach is industry immersion. The local education agency establishes a classroom site at the host employer. Students report to the host business to learn employability skills directly in the classroom and then develop job skills while participating in a variety of internships and work experiences. The business supervisors and

managers at the internship sites work with the Project SEARCH staff to support students during the day and students get continual feedback and support from the internship manager, co-workers, and the Project SEARCH staff. Each program has a certified special education teacher and job coaches that work with both the students and the business staff. Students end their day by reflection, problem-solving, planning and journaling their key learning. The ultimate goal is competitive employment at graduation, utilizing the skills learned on the internships and throughout the program. The DDPC would hope that demonstration of this model would lead to multiple replication and sustainability.

## **Project Description - What is the DDPC Seeking to Achieve?**

Since the development of this initiative by Cincinnati Children's Hospital, more than twenty (20) other states, involving eighty (80) project sites, have implemented Project SEARCH industry based initiatives. Consistent with and supportive of other transition initiatives occurring in NYS, most specifically the Model Transition Projects implemented by the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID), the DDPC seeks to implement a sustainable Project SEARCH demonstration.

The DDPC is therefore issuing this Request For Proposal (RFP) to establish a sustainable Project SEARCH demonstration project within NYS. Project SEARCH initiatives have been successful with a wide variety of lead agencies; the host business, a local education agency (LEA), or a community-based rehabilitation program. The key seems to be remaining true to the program model, approach and philosophy. Therefore, the successful applicant must include and agree to the following:

- Committed partnership with an identified growth industry (business/employer) to facilitating on-site training, mentoring, work experiences, employment and retention of youth/young adults with developmental disabilities. While Project SEARCH has particularly focused on the health care industry, other business sectors with demonstrated growth potential would also be considered.
- Committed partnership with a local school district(s) or Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) to provide on-site special education instruction and necessary related services and supports (i.e. transportation, etc.).
- Partnership and committed support from the local/regional Office of Vocational & Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID), the Commission for the Blind & Visually Handicapped (CBVH), and the Office of Mental Retardation & Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) Developmental Disabilities Services Offices (DDSO) for essential program coordination, planning and implementation.
- If applicable, coordination with local/regional VESID Model Transition Program (MTP) school districts and community partners.
- Connection with the local or regional One Stop Workforce Centers for additional employment related support services and assistance.
- A commitment to incorporate outreach and supports to families as partners in the workforce skill development and employment process.
- A commitment to participate in the national Project SEARCH Coalition and the national Project SEARCH data portal.
- A commitment to disseminate information about project experiences, strategies for addressing barriers, and achieving success for project participants.

- A commitment to a sustainability plan that includes specific steps/details on maintaining the project beyond the duration of the DDPC funding cycle

## **Who Is Eligible To Apply for This Request for Proposal**

There must be a clearly identified partnership amongst the identified employer(s), local education agencies (school districts, BOCES), community based organization and vocational rehabilitation agencies. An employer, school entity **or** community based non-profit organization may be the designated lead applicant for this RFP. Organizational roles and responsibilities must be clearly delineated. While the target population to be served is youth with developmental disabilities who are expected to graduate or exit school within eighteen months, other youth with disabilities may also be assisted through this model. In addition, all youth served must be referred to the appropriate NYS vocational rehabilitation agency (VESID or CBVH) at the beginning of their project participation.

## **Instructions for Completing This Request for Proposal**

Answer all questions in the order in which the instructions are presented. All questions must be answered succinctly and provide a clear understanding of the proposed plan for implementation, including timelines and expected outcomes. Applicants will be judged on the information presented. *Please do not submit any information that was not specifically requested.*

**The entire application should not exceed eleven pages (letters of commitment/support are in addition to the application eleven page limit) and must include:**

- Cover letter signed by the Chief Executive/Operating Officer of the organization;
- One-page Proposal Summary;
- Up to six pages of Project Narrative;
- One completed DDPC Budget Form (attached or available from DDPC Program Planner);
- One or two-page Budget Justification; and
- Letters of commitment from program partners as required within the RFP.

## **Proposal Application - What Return Will You Give the DDPC for Its Investment?**

**I. Proposal Summary** - Provide a one-page summary of your proposal which includes: identification of the requesting agency; agency/fiscal intermediary name and address; contact person, telephone, fax and email; project title; amount of funding requested; and a one or two paragraph description of the proposed project.

**II. Proposal Narrative** - Provide a complete but succinct description of the following:

### ***A. Plan of Action (40 points)***

- The proposal must clearly include commitments from all essential partners (business, education, community agency, vocational rehabilitation). The lead organization must be identified and all roles, responsibilities and partner relationships clearly delineated.

- The project design, approach, and commitment to the Project SEARCH transition model is clearly spelled out, including how eligible students will be identified, selected and served.
- The proposal must describe the process for matching students with work and identify potential work opportunities and career paths.
- The Plan must provide projections as to the impact of actions taken, including a description of the youth who will benefit, the number of youth who will benefit, how they will benefit, long-term outcomes, etc.
- The applicant must describe their commitment to participate in the Project SEARCH National Coalition.
- The Plan must describe specific timelines for implementation and completion of essential project activities, including detailed and specific performance milestones. (Put in table/chart, if possible.)

***B. Evaluation, Dissemination and Sustainability (20 points)***

- Describe the method(s) and criteria for evaluating the impact and success of this initiative for students, employer and educational agencies, as well as for other systems partners.
- Describe how the project will evaluate the satisfaction of all project customers (individuals, families, service providers, employers, etc. as appropriate).
- The applicant must describe their commitment to participate in the national Project SEARCH data portal.
- Describe the organizational commitment of the partners and include a Sustainability Plan to maintain this initiative, or the benefits of this initiative, past the completion of the DDPC grant funding cycle.
- Describe any proposed project products that will demonstrate the impact of the project and/or lessons learned (including presentations of project findings or outcomes) and the organizational plan to disseminate and share such products or findings with others.

***C. Applicant Capability, Personnel, and Resources (20 points)***

- Describe the organizational experience or expertise of the lead organization and project partners in training, preparing, and successfully transitioning youth with developmental and/or other disabilities into employment and career opportunities.
- Include letters of commitment from required partners including employer(s), educational entities, vocational rehabilitation, and or community based organizations), based on whoever is lead applicant.
- Describe the experience/expertise of the lead person(s) responsible for project implementation, and their commitment to administering and completing this project. In the event of their absence, please identify who will function as back-up(s) to this lead person(s).
- Describe the organizations' experience in building community coalitions or cross-systems collaborations with other organizations, as related to the proposed Plan of Action. In other words, what is the experience/expertise that will make this partnership succeed?
- If using contracted services or subcontractors, describe their roles and responsibilities.

**III. Proposal Budget and Cost (20 points)\***

Grant applications will also be evaluated and rated on the basis of budgetary reasonableness, which includes budget plans that are consistent with the proposed action plan; reasonable administrative costs (total administration and indirect not exceeding 10% of DDPC share); justification for each requested

budget line; clear identification and percentage of matching funds, cost benefit and best value for outcomes (reasonableness of cost). Complete the attached budget form and return with the proposal, being sure to note and address the following:

- The budget for the proposed project must be consistent with the intent of the RFP and provide a logical justification for all expenses, including itemized equipment.
- The budget narrative must include an explanation for each budget line and clearly supports the agency need for additional financial resources to achieve project outcomes.
- The budget must include the required matching funds necessary for implementing the project.
- The budget narrative must also describe how the agency will monitor expenditures during the life of the project to ensure that the project stays on each budget line and within overall budget.

\*Applicants should copy/paste the attached DDPC Budget form or request an electronic copy in MS-Word format directly from the DDPC. Complete the attached budget form and return with the proposal. **Please note that applicants should only submit an annualized one-year budget.** If there will be expected differences for subsequent year budgets, please note in budget narrative.

### **The Request for Proposal Review Process**

The DDPC will conduct a three-level review process for all submitted proposals:

- The first level entails a Pass/Fail DDPC Staff Review of the submitted proposals to ensure that the application is responsive to the conditions set forth in the RFP. **The DDPC will reject any applications that do not clearly and specifically address the purposes of this funding opportunity and/or fail to meet any one of the following criteria:**
  - 1. Submission by an eligible entity, as specified within the RFP;**
  - 2. Clearly meets the purpose(s) intended by the RFP;**
  - 3. Serves the population targeted by the RFP;**
  - 4. Submission of all requested RFP materials within the required timeframes;**
  - 5. Includes a budget and required budget match in format requested by the DDPC;**
  - 6. Submission of a complete application packet in the format requested by the DDPC, and**
  - 7. Required letters of commitment.**
- The second level consists of a scored Comprehensive Proposal Review that involves a thorough review of the submitted proposal specifically related to the project work plan, evaluation, organizational capability, commitment of partners, value of products and dissemination, overall strength of sustainability plan (if applicable), and/or the budget and corresponding budget narrative. The proposal review and rating will be conducted using the criteria stated in this DDPC Funding Announcement, and the DDPC reserves the right to conduct follow-up activities and discussions with applicants to clarify information in the submitted proposal. To comprise the review team, the DDPC will typically use staff, Council members, and peer/field expertise in the RFP topic area. No entity with an aggregate reviewer score averaging less than 80 points in the second-stage review will be considered for third-level review or funding.
- If necessary, all proposals scoring 80 points or above may be subjected to a third-level Panel Review that may add additional points for specific criteria, including a) fidelity to the intent of the RFP (the Project SEARCH model); b) impact on identified underserved populations; and c) sustainability. Applicants will also be screened for a history of prior performance implementing a DDPC grant; poor past performance may result in a reduction of overall score. A third-level review will be conducted by the appropriate DDPC Standing Committee and/or a DDPC

designated review panel. The final total score will be the cumulative total of second and third-level reviews, with the RFP awards going to the highest rated proposal(s).

## **Awarding of DDPC Grants & DDPC Reserved Rights**

The DDPC Standing Committee will recommend the highest ranked proposal(s) that *fully meet the intent of the RFP* as set forth by the DDPC. After reviewing proposals as outlined above, recommended awardees must be approved by the DDPC Executive Committee and by the Developmental Disabilities Planning Council. All costs associated with responding to this RFP are entirely the responsibility of the applicant. The contract process and final contracts are subject to the approval of the Office of State Comptroller (OSC). Upon such OSC approval, the grant process will begin, and all terms of the contract become public information.

As part of the grant award process, the grantee and DDPC must establish a mutually agreed upon Performance Agreement and a corresponding set of Performance Indicators, which become part of the formal contract deliverables. The DDPC reserves the right to:

- Reject any applications that do not meet the intent of this RFP;
- Based on quality of RFP applications, award less than the designated number of grant awards as set forth within the RFP;
- Negotiate with applicants regarding Performance Agreements, Performance Indicators, Budget line levels and other issues raised within the RFP review process to achieve the maximum impact from the grant award and serve the best interests of New York State, and
- If unable to negotiate the contract with the selected applicants within 60 days, the DDPC may begin contract negotiations with the next highest scoring qualified applicant(s).

## **Funding and Matching Requirements**

DDPC funds are intended to minimize gaps in service and to increase the independence, productivity, integration and inclusion into the community of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. These funds may not be used for activities that duplicate or supplant what is already available or required under existing laws and/or regulations. The issuance of this request for proposals does not obligate the DDPC to award grants.

Applicant agencies must supply at least thirty percent (30%) of the total cost of the project. For example, if the project total cost is approximately \$71,500, the DDPC funding will be \$50,000 and there must be a grantee matching amount of approximately \$21,500. This match may be derived from state, local, agency, and/or private sources in the form of cash or in-kind contributions. If the project is providing services within a federally designated poverty area, the match may be reduced to ten percent (10%). It is the responsibility of the applicant to document the justification for such a match request. Information about federally designated poverty levels by census tract can be located at [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov) . For additional information on DDPC Matching Requirements, as well as technical assistance in using the *factfinder.census* web-page, go to the RFP site at [www.ddpc.state.ny.us](http://www.ddpc.state.ny.us) . *Please note that Federal funds may not be used to satisfy the project matching funds requirement, nor may they be used for any lobbying activities*

## Grantee and DDPC Responsibilities

All grantees must be willing to commit to working with the DDPC to ensure the greatest potential for these resources to achieve successful grant outcomes. Grantee and DDPC responsibilities are noted on the Quality Assurance attachment, and will also include quarterly fiscal and programmatic reporting on milestones agreed upon in the approved Performance Agreement and Performance Indicators. Successful applicants will also be required to agree to:

- *Rights in Data* – The DDPC will remain owner of data and records provided as part of this project, and the grantee shall not use the DDPC data, records and reports for any purpose other than the conduct of this project without the consent of the DDPC.
- *Ownership of Work Product* – Materials and documents produced by the grantee in the fulfillment of its obligations under this DDPC contract become the property of the DDPC, unless prior arrangements have been made with respect to specific documents. **All** products or reports disseminated will credit DDPC as source of project work and original funding.
- *Product Distribution* – **All** curricula, presentations, articles and media products (print, internet, radio, TV) developed through DDPC grant resources must be submitted to the DDPC in advance of their public distribution, presentation or submission for publication, including those products developed after the completion of such grant funding.
- *Confidentiality* – The grantee shall treat all person-specific information related to this grant as confidential in nature. Grantees shall only disseminate person-related information for purposes related to this grant with the express approval of such identified persons.

Requests for any exemptions to these grant policies must be made in writing to the Public Information Officer, DDPC, 155 Washington Ave. 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Albany, NY 12210.

## Assurances

Each recipient of a developmental disabilities assistance grant will be required to assure certain provisions required by both Federal and State laws. These include, but are not limited to: assurances of non-discrimination and affirmative action in hiring and service provision; assurances of compliance with accessibility requirements; and health standards for appropriate and quality services for persons with developmental disabilities. Upon approval of a grant, these assurances will be included in the formal contract between the grantee and the Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.

## RFP Questions and Technical Assistance

Questions regarding this specific Request for Proposal must be submitted by mail to the DDPC Program Planner noted below, or by email to [nrose@ddpc.state.ny.us](mailto:nrose@ddpc.state.ny.us) by no later than January 30, 2009. All submitted questions should be identified as either Program or Fiscal related. A Questions and Answers summary will be posted to <http://www.ddpcb2b.com/rfp/default.aspx> and applicants are encouraged to go to that website first to see if their questions have already been addressed prior to the submission of such questions.

## Submittal Deadlines

All interested applicants should submit a one-page letter of intent by February 2, 2008. A letter of intent is requested to assist the DDPC in identifying the interest and potential applicant pool for this grant. In some instances, additional information may be made available to all potential applicants who have expressed interest in this funding opportunity. Letters of intent should be forwarded to Nicholas Rose, DDPC Program Planner, at the address listed below. Letters of Intent are preferred, but not required for applications to be accepted for this RFP.

All final grant applications must be delivered to the DDPC office by close of business (5:00pm) on March 20, 2008. No applications will be accepted after this deadline. By this deadline date, the applicant must deliver an original completed and signed application package, six hard print copies and an electronic copy on CD or Memory Stick format to the attention of:

**Sheila M. Carey, Executive Director**  
**NYS Developmental Disabilities Planning Council**  
**155 Washington Ave. 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor**  
**Albany, NY 12210**  
**Attn: Project SEARCH – Youth Transition & Employment**

**For More Information Contact** – Nicholas Rose, Program Planner or Karen Jackuback, Program Research Specialist, at 1-800-395-3372 (NYS only TDD/TDY), by Fax at 518-402-3505, or by email at [nrose@ddpc.state.ny.us](mailto:nrose@ddpc.state.ny.us) , or at the address noted above.

## Definitions for Purposes of This Request-For-Proposal

“The term “***Developmental Disabilities***” means a severe, chronic disability of an individual that: (A) is attributable to a mental or physical impairment or combination of mental or physical impairments; (B) is manifested before the individual attains age twenty-two; (C) is likely to continue indefinitely; (D) results in substantial functional limitations in three or more of the following areas of life activity; self-care, receptive and expressive language, learning, mobility, self-direction, capacity for independent living, and economic self-sufficiency; and (E) reflects the individual’s need for a combination and sequence of special, interdisciplinary, or generic services, individualized supports, or other forms of assistance that are of lifelong or extended duration and are individually planned and coordinated”. (PL 106-402)

“***Advocacy activities***” – Active support of policies and practices that promote self-determination and inclusion in the community and workforce for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

“***Capacity Building activities***” – A system for sustaining and expanding the successful delivery of services, supports and other assistance to individuals with developmental disabilities.

“***Systemic Change activities***” – Sustainable, transferable and replicable change in some aspect of service or support availability, design or delivery that promotes positive or meaningful outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

“***Sustainability Plan***” – The applicant’s plan to continue the goals, services, supports or other intended activity of the RFP beyond the end date of DDPC funding. The Sustainability Plan should be focused on continuance of intent, activities and outcomes through any combination of strategies, actions and resources.

**NYS Developmental Disabilities Planning Council – RFP Proposed Project One Year Budget**

**BUDGET:** Annualized for period from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill in dollar amounts in the budget categories that are appropriate to the activities of your project. **TOTAL PROGRAM COST** must equal the sum of the matching share (cash and/or in-kind) plus the DDPC funds required. Include in the Proposal Application a brief narrative for each category for which DDPC funds are requested.

BUDGET CATEGORY	TOTAL PROGRAM COST	DDPC FUNDS REQUIRED	MATCHING SHARE	
			CASH	IN-KIND
Personal Service (Position/rate/salary) 1. 2. 3.				
Employee Fringe Benefits Total Rate _____% Includes:				
Staff Travel				
Contracted or Consultant Services (Specify: type, level & rate)				
Equipment (specify)				
Supplies a. Office Supplies b. Program Supplies				
Rent/Utilities (Specify)				
Miscellaneous a. b. c.				
Indirect Costs (DDPC share cannot exceed 10% of total funding request)				
<b>TOTAL</b>				

## NYS Developmental Disabilities Planning Council Quality Assurance Responsibilities

*Outlines DDPC and Grantee responsibilities that will foster successful project outcomes.*

<b>DDPC Responsibilities</b>	<b>Grantee Responsibilities</b>
Set up meetings with potential grantees to provide training on setting and writing project goals, objectives and targets.	Identify a key individual who is committed to the project.
Work with grantees to develop realistic work plans, milestones and outcome targets.	Develop a contingency plan in the absence of key individual(s).
Be sure realistic targets are set.	Specify how proposed actions will address needs expressed in the RFP.
Be sure targets are related to funding amount.	Clarify goals and objectives.
Track the progress and outcomes of grants to determine whether technical assistance is needed.	Identify milestones and performance indicators and attach them to a timeline.
Send reminders about when required reporting and documentation is due.	Use partnerships to maximize the likelihood of meeting project objectives.
Assist grantees in developing ties by brokering key partnerships and project support through cluster group assistance.	Establish partnerships and collaborations at or before the proposal development stage.
Work with grantees and potential funders on continuation funding issues.	Explain any failure to meet a timeline and identify corrective plans to achieve milestones in the near future.
Assist grantee to disseminate project lessons, products, lessons learned and replication information.	Link the project budget to project activities and outcomes at the proposal and contract stage.
	Identify one or more sources of potential continuation funding/support in the proposal and refine and implement continuation funding plans throughout the life of the grant.