



Maine Developmental Disabilities Council

Small Grants Program: Innovative Ideas

Purpose

Maine Developmental Disabilities Council's (MDDC) Innovative Ideas Grants provides funding to support innovative projects and initiatives that promote the full inclusion of Mainers with developmental disabilities.

MDDC uses the federal definition of developmental disabilities, which is provided on the last page of this document.

What can the funds be used for?

- Activities that provide individuals with developmental disabilities and their families with information and knowledge to better advocate for themselves and others
- Projects that increase the capacity of communities to fully include members with developmental disabilities
- Projects that decrease barriers for individuals with disabilities to live, work, and engage in their communities
- Other projects that advance the empowerment, self-determination, and inclusion of people with developmental disabilities and their families
- Projects that bring together diverse groups to solve problems that impact people with developmental disabilities
- Activities that expand knowledge about developmental disabilities

What do you mean by inclusive or inclusion?

MDDC believes that inclusion means having access to the same opportunities as do other members of the community. This means that people with developmental disabilities are welcome in the same places, at the same times and in the same ways, as other members of the community.

Innovative Ideas Grant funds **cannot** be used for:

- Projects that support programming that is intended primarily for people with disabilities.
- Fundraising
- Activities that only benefit one individual or family
- Direct services or support
- Ongoing administrative or operational expenses of existing programs
- Construction or equipment purchases

Projects must:

- Include, involve, and/or benefit individuals with developmental disabilities
- Be based in and of benefit to residents of the state of Maine

Who is eligible to apply?

Innovative Ideas Grant funds are available to:

- Individuals
- Advocacy groups
- Community groups
- Public organizations
- Non-profit entities
- For-profit entities

Preference will be given to

- Individuals with disabilities or groups led by individuals with disabilities
- Projects with potential for replication

What funding is available?

The Innovative Ideas Grant provides up to \$10,000 to support approved projects and initiatives. Funding may be provided on either a grant or reimbursement-only basis at the discretion of MDDC.

How do I apply/What information is needed?

Requests for Innovative Ideas Grant funding must be submitted using the official application form.

Included in the information you will be required to provide are:

- A description of the proposed project, its purpose, and intended goals and outcomes
- An explanation of why the project is needed
- A description of how the project will benefit individuals with developmental disabilities
- An explanation of how the project fits into MDDC's Five Year State Plan Goals & Objectives
- A detailed project work plan and timeline outlining strategies and activities that will be used to achieve the intended goals and outcomes
- Information on the individuals and/or organizations that will be conducting the project, including details on the involvement of individuals with developmental disabilities, and identification of the project director
- A description of the target population including estimates of the number of individuals with developmental disabilities that will be positively impacted by the project
- A detailed budget outlining anticipated expenses of the project
- A plan for tracking the effectiveness, measuring outcomes, and evaluating the success of the project
- As applicable, a plan for sustaining/replicating the project and/or sharing the results of the project with others

What are the requirements if the project is funded?

The requirements that will need to be met for a project funded by the Innovative Ideas Grant may vary depending on the nature of the project. The specific requirements assigned to an approved project will be detailed in a letter of agreement signed by both MDDC and the grant recipient. In general and as appropriate, requirements of a grant recipient will include, but are not limited to:

- Meeting with MDDC staff to review the project work plan, goals, deliverables, evaluation, etc. prior to the start of the grant
- Regular reporting on the status of the project, using a schedule and format agreed upon by MDDC and the grant recipient
- A final formal report at the conclusion of the project or grant funding
- Providing MDDC with updates on additional outcomes resulting from the project after the conclusion of the project or grant funding
- Recognition of MDDC support in project materials with MDDC approval

What is the process for reviewing applications and awarding grants?

When an Innovative Ideas Grant application is submitted:

- Designated MDDC staff review the application to verify that it is complete and all required information is provided. If an application is not complete or does not meet all requirements, the applicant will be notified and provided the opportunity to correct the application.
- Applications that meet all requirements will be reviewed and evaluated by a designated MDDC committee, typically the Executive Committee.
- The review committee reserves the right to approve an application at a different level of funding than requested or to offer provisional approval of an application.
- The review committee reserves the right to require the applicant to participate in an interview and/or provide additional information.
- In evaluating an application, consideration will be given, but not limited, to:
 - Availability of MDDC funds
 - The purpose of the project and how it relates to MDDC's mission and State Plan
 - The number of potential individuals who will benefit from the project
 - The degree of involvement of individuals with developmental disabilities
 - Previous funds awarded to the applicant by MDDC

Priority will be given to:

- Applicants who have not previously received funding from MDDC
- Projects with outcomes that directly relate to one or more goals and objectives within MDDC's State Plan
- The final decision to approve or not approve an application will be made by a majority vote of the review committee members.
- MDDC reserves the right to deny any application as it sees fit.
- Applicants who are not approved for funding will receive a notification of that decision and, when appropriate, an explanation for the decision.
- Applicants who are approved for funding will receive notification of the approved funding amount. A letter of agreement outlining the goals, activities and outcomes of the project will be drafted and signed by both MDDC and the funding recipient.

Other Important Information

MDDC retains the prerogative to make exceptions to any policy requirements or require additional provisions on a case by case basis.

Federal Definition of Developmental Disability

A "*developmental disability*" is a severe chronic disability of an individual that:

- Is attributable to a mental or physical impairment or combination of mental and physical impairments
- Is manifested before the individual attains age 22
- Is likely to continue indefinitely
- Results in substantial functional limitations in 3 or more of the following areas of major life activity:
 - self-care;
 - receptive and expressive language;
 - learning;
 - mobility;
 - self-direction;
 - capacity for independent living;
 - economic self-sufficiency
- 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.

An individual from birth to age 9, who has a substantial developmental delay or specific congenital or acquired condition, may be considered to have a developmental disability without meeting 3 or more of the criteria described above if the individual, without services and supports, has a high probability of meeting those criteria later in life.

Source: Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-402)

This project was supported, in part by grant number 2001MESD-02, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201. Grantees undertaking projects with government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official ACL policy.