

Request for Applications
RFA #: 2018-19.2.1a

I Get Around – Improving Transportation Options

FUNDING AGENCY: North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCCDD), NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of the Secretary

ISSUE DATE: November 13th, 2017

DEADLINE DATE: January 31st, 2018

Receipt of applications online at www.ddsuite.org is preferred, but not required. All applications must be received by 5:00 pm EDT on January 31st, 2018. Please notify at least two weeks in advance of the due date if you need application materials in an alternate format or otherwise require accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Direct all inquiries concerning this Request for Applications (RFA) to:

Mailing Address:

NCCDD-RFA
North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities
3125 Poplarwood Court, Suite 200
Raleigh, NC 27604

Via Email: RFInfo@nccdd.org

Delivery Information:

Applicants for this RFA are strongly encouraged to submit the application electronically in the DD Suite online database found at www.ddsuite.org. Applicants that submit in hard copy are responsible for including all required elements in the submission packet.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The NCCDD makes funds available to fulfill its mission in accordance with the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act) and the Council's Five-Year State Plan. The NCCDD's major funding source is the United States Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. The NCCDD makes funds available primarily through competitive bids or Requests for Applications (RFAs). A general description of the current RFA is included in this document. The complete RFA package is available through DD Suite (www.ddsuite.org) or may be requested in alternate formats or by mail. Please complete and submit the [Notification of Intent to Apply](#) if your organization or agency intends to apply.

Applications are welcomed from any university, non-profit, for profit, or government agency that demonstrates that their agency is qualified, responsible, and capable of conducting the activities described. Eligible entities include any organization, agency, or non-profit demonstrating an expertise in the focus area of this initiative. To be eligible, the non-profit private entity that is awarded this contract must submit proof of 501(c)(3) status with a [current IRS determination letter](#). The Council will not consider applications submitted by agencies that do not meet eligibility to apply for funding.

Private non-profit and for-profit applicants must be registered with the North Carolina Secretary of State to conduct business in North Carolina, or be willing to complete the registration process in conjunction with the execution of the contract documents (see www.secretary.state.nc.us/corporations).

II. BACKGROUND

NCCDD

The North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities, authorized under Public Law 106-402, the DD Act, is one of 56 entities of its type in the United States and the territories. The NCCDD is an independent agency located in the NC DHHS. Its activities are governed by a 40-member body, appointed by the Governor, and comprised of at least 60 percent people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families. Other members include legislators and policymakers representing various agencies and organizations having a vested interest in people with I/DD. The Council's quarterly meetings are open to the public.

The mission of the NCCDD is to assure that individuals with I/DD and their families participate in the design of and have access to culturally competent services, supports, and other assistance and opportunities that promote independence, contribution, self-determination, integration and inclusion in the community. The NCCDD achieves this mission by promoting advocacy and leadership, community capacity building and systems change activities. It also serves in an advisory capacity, under state law, to the NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

The NCCDD has established goals and objectives in its Five-Year Plan (2017-2021). These goals represent the most pressing needs as identified by stakeholders in North Carolina. These goals are approved by the Council as the framework for its work within the context of the Five-Year Plan.

GOAL 1: By 2021, increase financial security through asset development for individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities.

GOAL 2: By 2021, increase community living for individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities.

GOAL 3: By 2021, increase advocacy for individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities.

This RFA will address **Goal 2**.

For further information on the work of the NCCDD, please see the NCCDD Five-Year State Plan at our website by clicking [here](#).

III. RFA BACKGROUND, DELIVERABLES, AND CONTRACTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Background

The North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCCDD) intends to fund an initiative to create systems change innovations that will expand transportation options for people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (I/DD). These innovations will enable individuals with I/DD to have greater access to safe, reliable, affordable, and accessible transportation, thereby leading to greater independence and integration into their communities.

Individuals with intellectual or other developmental disabilities (I/DD) need to build social capital¹ to enjoy full community integration and inclusion through employment, social opportunities, recreation, worship, and relationship building with members of the broader community. Having access to reliable transportation offers the promise of greater independence and control for individuals with I/DD. According to a 2010 report by the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC) and The Able Trust, “[the] availability of an extensive system of accessible public transportation or other mobility options is one of the most prevalent indicators of independent living for people with disabilities. . . . For people with developmental disabilities, there is a direct relationship between mobility and their quality of life.”² Furthermore, the “[the] lack of transportation for people with disabilities, particularly in rural areas, has a great human cost—sometimes even resulting in unnecessary institutionalization.”³ The FDDC report notes how creatively improving transportation options for individuals with disabilities reduces future costs incurred by the government by enabling those individuals to live independently.

However, many of North Carolina’s 185,000 citizens with I/DD experience barriers to full independence and community integration because they lack access to reliable, accessible transportation. Because some are unable to obtain a driver’s license to drive a car and others are unable to afford owning a vehicle, people with I/DD may be limited to walking, riding a bicycle, relying on family and friends to be transported, or using public transportation systems.

While transportation is a necessary element of connecting to one’s community, it remains a complex and costly endeavor for an individual with I/DD living at or below poverty level who may be considering vehicle ownership. As stated in NCCDD’s Five-Year State Plan for 2017-2021, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) reports that 99 transportation systems exist across the state, and the Small Urban and Rural Transit Center reports that 83 percent of its vehicles qualify as Americans with Disability Act (ADA)-accessible. However, these public transportation

¹ Dictionary.com defines social capital as “the interpersonal relationships, institutions, and other social assets of a society or group that can be used to gain advantage.”

² “Innovative Approaches for Increasing Transportation Options for People with Disabilities in Florida,” Florida Developmental Disabilities Council and The Able Trust, 2010.

³ National Disability Policy: A Progress Report, National Council on Disability, March 31, 2009.

systems do not offer the flexibility to serve all the needs of its ridership in terms of geographic coverage; hours of operation, especially for night/weekend shifts; ease of access, and timeliness of the trip. Rural areas present unique challenges with fewer options for public transportation and limited times of operation. Regional community transportation systems are composed of two or more contiguous counties providing coordinated/consolidated service, and more than one-fourth of North Carolina's 100 counties have rural transportation provided by a regional system, but the NCDOT Board of Transportation is encouraging more such systems to form as demand for medical, employment, and other non-medical trips will become more regional as the population increases.

The report, "Transportation for Adults with an Intellectual and/or Developmental Disability," introduces a variety of terms to describe the options available to people with I/DD who are unable to drive or afford owning a vehicle:

- ADA Paratransit Program
- Community Ride Programs and Workers Needing Transportation
- Commuter Connections
- Deviated Bus Routes
- Medical Transportation Programs
- Public Buses and Trains
- Ride Programs for Individuals with Disabilities
- Taxis
- Air Travel⁴

While public transportation works for some people, paratransit systems better meet the needs of many individuals with I/DD. The Amputee Coalition / National Limb Loss Information Center Fact Sheet on Paratransit Services defines paratransit as "a specialized, door-to-door transport service for people with disabilities who are not able to ride fixed-route public transportation."⁵

In the 2015 N.C. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) State Plan, the category of Transportation Services was the most frequently mentioned, with 56 percent of VR staff members indicating this need. Of those responses, 45.6 percent identified it as the most critical VR-related need, 32.5 percent identified it as the second most critical need, and 21.9 percent identified it as the third most critical need. Information from the DVRS State Plan identifies the following transportation barriers for North Carolinians with disabilities:

⁴ Susan D. Flynn, PhD., BCBA-D, Coastal Carolina University.

⁵ Amputee Coalition of America Fact Sheet by Dick Mooney with additional research by Bill Dupes, revised by the National Limb Loss Information Center (NLLIC) in 2008:
http://www.amputee-coalition.org/fact_sheets/paratransit.html.

1. There is a lack of private providers willing to provide transportation at a reasonable rate, and consumers do not have the money to pay someone to drive them to and from work.
2. Many individuals with disabilities do not have a driver's license and/or vehicle and have no family member or friend to provide transportation.
3. The current policy regarding the agency contribution toward the cost of vehicles for modification purposes is the major barrier to a VR client who needs to purchase a modified vehicle.
4. VR policy is not adjusted for geographical differences.
5. VR sponsorship of transportation is a short-term solution and is a time-consuming process that is sometimes unreliable.

These barriers demonstrate not only how transportation impacts an individual's ability to access the community but also the individual's ability to find and maintain competitive, integrated employment within the community. For individuals with I/DD, the ability to earn income through employment will increase the individual's community living and transportation options. As Cathy Haarstad stated in the 2008 report, "Transportation Voucher Programs: Facilitating Mobility in Rural Areas":

Transportation is critical for successful economic development. People who are able to access jobs and area services make long-term investments in their families and their communities.⁶

For individuals with disabilities who experience a financial barrier to transportation, "voucher programs represent a cost-effective way to provide access to transportation . . . but few studies have studied the effectiveness of these programs."⁷ According to Cathy Haarstad's report, at least 12 states throughout the United States have introduced transportation voucher programs, primarily in rural communities.⁸ From 2005 to 2008, the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council funded a transportation voucher program that 73 individuals participated in; 70 percent of them reported that their emotional well-being and community participation had improved, and 54 percent responded that participation in the voucher program increased their quality of life.⁹

A Shifting Automobile Market

All the major automobile manufacturers are investing in technology to produce a significant portion of their fleet to be fully autonomous by 2021. Ford estimates that the global car ownership market is approximately \$2.3 trillion, while the mobility services market retains a value of \$5.4 trillion. Emerging businesses and technologies such as on-demand transportation network companies like Uber and Lyft provide a service where users pay for the time using a car for a specific trip. This paradigm shift from

⁶ Cathy Haarstad, January 2008:

http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/articlefiles/Rural_Voucher_Programs.pdf.

⁷ Flynn.

⁸ Haarstad.

⁹ Flynn.

ownership to engagement presents new opportunities to address mobility options for riders with I/DD where ownership is not an option. However, a vehicle's physical accessibility and training for drivers on how to properly interact with people with disabilities remain important considerations in ensuring that any ride-sharing service is accessible to people with I/DD.

As an example of this ride-sharing shift, the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association is teaming up with Lyft in a nationwide partnership to provide patients with reliable rides to medical appointments.¹⁰ An estimated 3.6 million Americans who lack basic transportation access could benefit from this initiative. Gyre Renwick, Lyft's head of healthcare partnerships, explained, "An important piece is patients do not need to do anything else to get the benefit of the service. Many people we are transporting today for medical appointments do not have a smartphone or the technical capabilities, so our goal is to remove the barrier to individual consumers even having to call a ride."

Deliverables and Contractor Responsibilities

In releasing these funds, the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCCDD) seeks to promote systems change innovations that will enable individuals with I/DD to have greater access to safe, reliable, affordable, and accessible transportation, thereby leading to greater independence and integration into their communities. This initiative will foster a mutual learning opportunity for public and private transportation services and individuals with I/DD to learn from each other and create solutions to transportation barriers and accessibility challenges using emerging transportation technologies and concepts that will benefit all citizens of North Carolina.

The grantee will be responsible for activities including, but not limited to:

- Studying national trends in ride-sharing services, policies, and best practices as relevant to transportation services for individuals with I/DD and other disabilities. Specific attention must be given to best practices relevant to transportation services in rural areas. The Health Resources and Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services defines "rural" as encompassing "all population, housing, and territory not included within an urban area."
- Working with individuals with I/DD and their families to engage with ride-sharing services to create a pilot that will serve approximately 50 individuals with I/DD in both urban and rural areas of North Carolina.
- Utilizing lessons learned from smart applications / mobile apps (application software designed to run on a smartphone or a tablet computer) created for individuals with I/DD to identify further areas of development to make the rider

¹⁰ Heather Mack, MobiHealthNews, May 10, 2017: <http://www.mobihealthnews.com/content/blue-cross-blue-shield-association-taps-lyft-nationwide-ride-sharing-program>.

experience as accessible as possible to meet the needs of individuals with I/DD.

- Establishing partnerships with at least five agencies/organizations that will engage in the activities of training, research and development, and self-advocate engagement related to accessible transportation.
- Collecting data and stories that will demonstrate outcomes of barrier elimination, greater employment opportunities, more choices on where to live, and community integration and inclusion. The contractor shall develop a final report that must incorporate the data and stories gathered. The contractor shall translate the final report into Spanish or make key parts available in Spanish.
- Leveraging the work of other public and private efforts to increase the transportation options of individuals with I/DD and their family members in all areas of the state.

The applicant selected for the initiative **I GET AROUND – IMPROVING TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS** will be expected to establish and operationalize activities that facilitate the initiative’s established goals, outlined in Section III.

Also, the applicant selected for the **I GET AROUND – IMPROVING TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS** initiative will be expected to establish and operationalize activities to facilitate outreach to and inclusion of the Hispanic/Latino I/DD community. The 2017 – 2021 state plans of Councils on Developmental Disabilities must identify disparity among a subpopulation of the state’s I/DD community and address that disparity. The NCCDD identified a barrier to services and supports for the Hispanic/Latino community caused by language access issues in response to the Administration on Community Living’s (ACL) mandate. Outreach to, and collaboration with, the Hispanic/Latino community to increase engagement and involvement is the Council’s proposed intent.

In addition, the Council has identified **Collective Impact** as the model to be used during the 2017-2021 Five-Year Plan to develop, implement, and evaluate initiatives to produce systems change; therefore, the applicant selected for the **I GET AROUND – IMPROVING TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS** initiative will be expected to operationalize activities to facilitate the five essential elements to a Collective Impact project, including:

1. Common Agenda:
All participants **share a vision for change** that includes a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving the problem through agreed upon actions.
2. Shared Measurement:
All participating organizations **agree on the ways success will be measured and reported**, with a short list of common indicators identified and used for learning and improvement.
3. Mutually Reinforcing Activities:

A diverse set of stakeholders, typically across sectors, coordinate a set of differentiated activities through a **mutually reinforcing plan of action**.

4. Continuous Communication:

All players engage in **frequent and structured open communication** to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and create common motivation.

5. Backbone Support:

An **independent, funded staff dedicated to the initiative** provides ongoing support by guiding the initiative's vision and strategy, supporting aligned activities, establishing shared measurement practices, building public will, advancing policy, and mobilizing resources.

Examples of when communities are ready or near-ready for Collective Impact:

- There is a “champion” for this cause who has the ability to engage and encourage multiple sectors in the community and is willing to use that ability to help the community solve this problem;
- There is some local funding available to begin this effort or in-kind resources (protected time for selected staff members) to begin working to obtain funding;
- There is a history of other kinds of successful collaboration in the community among at least some of the relevant stakeholders;
- The general public is aware of this problem and cares about it, or can be readily made aware and will care if they are aware.

Priority will be given to organizations that offer:

- Clear evidence of the agency's capacity to carry out the proposed initiative.
- Evidence of a history of providing related services that are demonstrated to be person-centered.
- Documentation of collaborative relationships in the I/DD field. This should include letters of commitment from partnering organizations and other collaborating agencies.
- That their work and the response in the RFA demonstrates a clear understanding of the Collective Impact model of system change.

The funding for this RFA will be up to **\$150,000** per year with required minimum of 25% non-federal matching funds (minimum of **\$50,000**), for up to 3 years, with Year 1 beginning **July 1st, 2018** and ending **June 30th, 2019**. The intent of this RFA is to provide up to **\$450,000** over the course of the initiative's three-year period. Within these parameters, an applicant shall propose a three-year work plan clearly identifying the outputs and outcomes for each year. **The Year 1 budget is the only budget to be entered into the DD Suite application.** Continuation of funding after each funded year depends on contractor's performance, Council approval and continued funding from the United States Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Upon approval for continuation funding, the scope of work for upcoming year will be jointly

reviewed and revised by the NCCDD staff and contractor 90 days prior to the start of the upcoming year.

Definition of a Developmental Disability

Per the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act Amendments of 2000, section 102(8), "The term 'developmental disability' means 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 three or more of the following areas of major life activity;
 - (i) Self-care;
 - (ii) Receptive and expressive language;
 - (iii) Learning;
 - (iv) Mobility;
 - (v) Self-direction;
 - (vi) Capacity for independent living;
 - (vii) Economic self-sufficiency; and

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."

IV. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Applications are welcomed from any university, non-profit, for-profit or government agency that demonstrates that their agency is qualified, responsible, and capable of conducting the activities described. Eligible entities include any organizations, agencies, or businesses demonstrating an expertise in the focus area of this initiative. To be eligible, non-profit private entities must submit proof of current 501(c)3 status with a current IRS determination letter dated in the current year. The Council will not consider applications submitted by agencies that do not meet eligibility to apply for funding.

Non-profit applicants must be registered with the North Carolina Secretary of State to conduct business in North Carolina, or be willing to complete the registration process in conjunction with the execution of the contract documents (see www.secretary.state.nc.us/corporations).

Use of Funds

Contract funds may be used to support personnel services, operating expenses, and contracted services. Funds must be budgeted in the categories listed in the line item

budget. Applicants must develop a budget narrative to accompany the line item budget. The line item budget and the budget narrative must show a clear relationship between the proposed budget and the proposed activities stated in the initiative plan.

Funds may not support efforts to engage in any political activities or lobbying.

Performance Monitoring/Quality Assurance

To meet the requirements of the initiative, the contractor must collaborate with NCCDD staff to:

- participate in trainings and meetings;
- participate in initiative evaluation;
- participate in the NCCDD federally mandated Periodic Performance Review and;
- participate in other activities identified or conducted by NCCDD.

Performance and quality assurance of this contract will be conducted as follows:

- NCCDD will conduct monitoring activities during each contract period and will utilize the contractor's objectives as its assurance criteria for meeting outcomes.
- The contractor must submit a quarterly progress report through DD Suite, and a monthly expenditure report to NCCDD.
- The contractor must submit an Annual Performance Measure Summary form.
- The contractor must submit an End of Year Progress Report.
- The contractor must be available to present at the quarterly NCCDD meetings.

V. APPLICATION PROCUREMENT PROCESS AND APPLICATION REVIEW

The following is a general description of the process by which applicants will be selected for funding for this initiative.

- a. RFA announcements are sent to prospective agencies and organizations, via email, and/or posted on the NCCDD website, the DHHS website, and the NCCDD social media pages.
- b. Written questions concerning the specifications in this RFA will be received until **January 15th, 2018** via [email](mailto:RFAinfo@nccdd.org) at RFAinfo@nccdd.org. A summary of all questions and answers will be posted on the NCCDD website (www.nccdd.org) and DD Suite within 5 business days after the Bidders' Workshop on **January 24th, 2018** and e-mailed to all agencies and organizations completing the Intent to Apply Form.

- c. Applications are due by 5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time on **January 31st, 2018**. Electronic submission is required, except as otherwise noted. Complete application and attach/upload all necessary documents in DD Suite before submitting. The complete RFA package and instructions are available through the DD Suite electronic submission program (ddsuite.org/).
- d. Applications will be evaluated by an RFA Review Committee. The recommendations of this committee will be reviewed by the NCCDD, which reserves the right to accept or reject the Review Committee's recommendations.
- e. Agencies and organizations are cautioned that this is a Request for Applications, and the funding agency reserves the unqualified right to reject any and all applications when such rejections are deemed to be in the best interest of the funding agency.
- f. Application Process Dates Summary:
 - **November 13th, 2017:** Request for applications distributed to eligible applicants and posted on the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities website (www.nccdd.org).
 - **January 15th, 2018:** Deadline for written RFA questions.
 - **January 24th, 2018:** Interested applicants may attend a Bidder's Workshop. If feasible, NCCDD may schedule an additional Bidder's Workshop at a date and location to be determined. Check www.nccdd.org for announcements.
 - **January 31st, 2018:** Applications due to the NCCDD by close of business, 5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time.
 - **May 11th, 2018:** Award announced.
 - **July 1st, 2018:** Contract begins.

VI. ATTACHMENTS TO BE COMPLETED UPON AWARD

See DD Suite to download these attachments - all of these documents must be completed if your agency is awarded the contract for this RFA prior to the execution of the contract:

- Project Profile page
- NCCDD Assurances
- Notice of Certain Reporting and Audit Requirements
- Conflict of Interest Policy/Letter (Contractor's COI)
- Conflict of Interest Verification – Annual
- Indirect Cost Rate Letter – if applicable

- 501(c)(3) Status Determination Letter/Form (private non-profit agencies) (Note: Public organizations shall submit a document verifying their legal name and tax identification number.)
- IRS Tax Letter
- Annual IRS Tax Exemption Verification Form (private non-profit agencies)
- State Certifications
- Federal Certifications
- DUNS Letter
- Completed Letter to Identify Individual to Sign Contracts
- Completed Letter to Identify Individual to Sign Expenditure Reports
- Certification of No Overdue Taxes (applies to non-governmental entities)
- Proof of Insurance, if applicable

Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to submit the attachments along with their application. If attachments are not submitted and the applicant is selected to receive the funding for this initiative, the attachments must be completed and submitted with the contract. The NCCDD will not execute a contract until it is in receipt of all attachments. Failure to provide these timely may result in disqualification for funding.