

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**



**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & INDUSTRY**

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF GRANT AVAILABILITY (AGA)**

**AGA GUIDELINES**

**PUBLISHED: DECEMBER 12, 2013**

**RESPONSES DUE: JANUARY 30, 2014**

**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY  
OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION  
1521 N. SIXTH STREET  
HARRISBURG, PA 17102**

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
THOMAS CORBETT, GOVERNOR  
[WWW.STATE.PA.US](http://WWW.STATE.PA.US)**

**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & INDUSTRY  
JULIA HEARTHWAY, SECRETARY  
[WWW.DLI.STATE.PA.US](http://WWW.DLI.STATE.PA.US)**

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**ADDITIONAL MATERIAL REQUIRED FOR THIS AGA, INCLUDING ATTACHMENTS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE OVR WEBSITE:**

<http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/publications/17374>

### **SUBMIT APPLICATIONS TO:**

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & INDUSTRY  
OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION  
1521 N. SIXTH STREET  
HARRISBURG, PA 17102  
ATTN: CHRIS FORBRICH - OVR-LOCAL SYSTEMS CHANGE PROJECT –

**APPLICANTS MUST SUBMIT NO LATER THAN 3:00 PM ON: JANUARY 30, 2014**

- **ONE (1) ORIGINAL DOCUMENT;**
- **THREE(3) PAPER COPIES; AND**
- **ONE (1) ELECTRONIC COPY (VIA EMAIL) TO CHRIS FORBRICH AT [LYFORBRICH@PA.GOV](mailto:LYFORBRICH@PA.GOV).**

## SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

The Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and the Statewide Independent Living Council (PASILC) conducted public meetings with interested groups, organizations and individuals to provide an opportunity to comment on the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). As a result of public feedback, it was determined that Community Education about issues impacting people with disabilities and Community Partnerships/Coalitions need to be strengthened on the local level in order to identify local systems change activities, based upon gaps in independent living opportunities.

The State Independent Living Plan (SPIL) was developed as a result of the feedback from public meetings and has been approved for implementation by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). The State plan has earmarked funds for Centers for Independent Living to develop and operate a Local Systems Change Project to improve availability and access to Independent Living opportunities. These projects will be funded with federal Title VII, Part B funds and the required Pennsylvania State match. *Pursuant to the federal regulations governing Independent Living Services, OVR may grant funds for certain purposes: specifically, 34 CFR § 365.21 provides in pertinent part: In providing IL services as required under 704(E) of the ACT and 34 CFR § 364.43(b) a state may use funds provided under this part to provide directly or through grants or contracts, the following IL services\*\*\*\* (4) Individual and system advocacy.*

Pursuant to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the commonwealth announces the availability of Title VII, Part B funds for the development of Local Systems Change Projects to improve availability and access to Independent Living opportunities. Services provided under the Act should strengthen and integrate, not duplicate or replace, existing services. The commonwealth is seeking grant applications for Local Systems Change Projects that result in increasing independent living options and community access. Through community education these projects will develop and expand the network of strategic community building groups to advocate for systems change. PASILC's Disability Agenda identifies the following eight focus areas for grassroots advocacy: Assistive Technology, Emergency Preparedness, Employment, Home and Community Based Services, Housing, Medical and Dental Coverage, Transportation, and Voting. At least one significant local system change will be achieved each year by each project funded through this Grant Announcement.

## SECTION 2 – AWARD INFORMATION

- A. FUNDING AVAILABILITY:** Up to \$430,020.00 is available the initial year through this AGA. The number of projects and awards will vary based upon the responses to this AGA. Disbursement of grant funds is contingent upon availability and release of funds.

The commonwealth anticipates that funds will be distributed equally to the number of responses received. Eighteen Centers for Independent Living are eligible to apply for these funds. If all Centers for Independent Living apply, the individual grant award could be \$23,890.

- B. **MATCH REQUIREMENT:** None required. However, match/leveraged funds and resources are encouraged.
- C. **ESTIMATED AWARDS:** The commonwealth expects to award up to 18 grants depending upon the number of applicants.
- D. **PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:** The commonwealth anticipates making awards with a performance period for up to two and a quarter years or twenty-seven (27) months with a start date of July 1, 2014 and an ending date of September 30, 2016. The initial grant award will be for a 1 year (12 month) period with the option to renew for up to an additional 15 month period.

### **SECTION 3 – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

- A. **ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:** Eligible Applicants are all Pennsylvania Centers for Independent Living (CILs) established under the Pennsylvania Independent Living Services Act (Act 139) and/or Title VII of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended who are consumer-directed, and have a governing board that is comprised of fifty-one percent (51%) or more of people with disabilities. *Applicants are required to attach proof of non-profit status, proof of incorporation as a Center for Independent Living, and proof that the agency is consumer directed (51% of management and staff are individuals with disabilities) and has a principal governing board that is comprised of fifty-one (51%) or more of people with disabilities.*
- B. **ELIGIBLE PROJECTS:** Eligible projects must address the targeted activity noted in Section 4 of this AGA.

### **SECTION 4 – TARGETED ACTIVITY**

#### **A. LOCAL SYSTEMS CHANGE PROJECT**

Develop a project to empower individuals with disabilities to advocate for local systems change based upon gaps in independent living opportunities, as outlined in the PASILC Statewide Disability Agenda and State Plan for Independent Living. Services provided through this project should strengthen and integrate, not duplicate or replace, existing services. These Deliverables will be required for each year of the project. Some adjustments may be made for the final grant period.

Deliverable 1. Grantee will identify, organize and support at least one new or existing local empowerment group each year of the project.

Deliverable 2. Grantee will develop and implement a Communication Plan to collect and share educational or action alerts focused on local systems change activities to be distributed at least six times per quarter.

Deliverable 3. Grantee will empower local group members and CIL staff assigned to the project, to join or develop at least 20 local partnerships in support of the identified local systems change issue to insure successful implementation.

Deliverable 4. Grantee will empower local group members and CIL staff assigned to the project, to organize and/or participate in at least ten (10) public education activities per quarter, focused on a specific local systems change. Examples include: Public meetings, presentations at community agencies, etc.

Deliverable 5. Grantee will empower local group members and CIL staff assigned to the project, to organize and/or participate in at least ten (10) grassroots advocacy activities, focused on specific local systems change, for each year of the project. PASILC's Disability Agenda identifies the following eight focus areas for grassroots advocacy: Assistive Technology, Emergency Preparedness, Employment, Home and Community Based Services, Housing, Medical and Dental Coverage, Transportation, and Voting.

Deliverable 6. Grantee will empower local group members and CIL staff assigned to the project, to organize and/or participate in at least ten (10) oral or written public testimonies, statements or letters, focused on specific local systems change, for each year of the project.

Deliverable 7. Grantee will receive and share at least 20 educational or action alerts focused on statewide and national systems change to be communicated with local empowerment groups.

Deliverable 8. Grantee will share and communicate local systems change projects/activities with OVR, PASILC, and the network of Centers for Independent Living to identify needs for education and action at the state and national levels.

Deliverable 9. Grantee will develop a strategy to recruit volunteers to carry out systems advocacy and to facilitate communication with key stakeholders about local systems change for the duration of the Grant.

Deliverable 10. Grantee will recruit at least 15 volunteers to support the facilitation of communication with key stakeholders about local systems change and advocacy, each year of the project.

Deliverable 11. Grantee will be responsible for implementing at least 1 significant local systemic change in each year of the Grant Agreement that improves the independence, inclusion and integration of people with disabilities.

Deliverable 12. Grantee will present a clear project evaluation plan with a quantifiable approach to measure progress toward project goals, objectives and deliverables, including a timeline, start dates, tasks and responsible parties.

Deliverable 13. Grantee will complete data collection in line with established outcome criteria and submit Quarterly Reports and a Final Report to OVR. Specific instructions will be provided.

Deliverable 14. Grantee will comply with the Federal 704 Report Requirements by submitting quarterly systems data to OVR and SILC.

## **SECTION 5 – APPLICATION**

### **A. CRITERIA**

#### **1. INITIAL REVIEW CRITERIA**

Prior to comprehensive merit evaluation, the commonwealth will perform an initial review to determine that (1) the applicant is eligible for an award; (2) the information required by the announcement has been submitted; (3) all mandatory requirements are satisfied; and (4) the proposed project is responsive to the purpose of this AGA.

#### **2. MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA**

##### **CRITERION 1: PROJECT APPROACH AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

- Reasonableness of the proposed approach, as evidenced by clear goals, tasks, methods, and timeline to achieve all the Deliverables listed in Section 4 of the AGA. State the projected start date for the project. Applicants must describe how proposed services will strengthen and integrate, not duplicate or replace, existing services.
- Clear demonstration that the proposed project aligns with identified need. See Section 1 and Section 4 of this AGA.
- Degree to which the project ensures desirable project outcomes.
- Degree to which the application adequately describes successful implementation of the project.
- Applicant's ability to provide relevant data for measuring outcomes for each Deliverable leading to specific local systems change.
- Appropriateness, including accessibility, transportation availability, licensure, and/or program accreditations, of the facility/location at which the project will be provided.

##### **CRITERION 2: APPLICANT/TEAM CAPABILITIES**

- Degree to which the applicant successfully demonstrates experience with implementing projects of similar size, scope, and complexity.
- Applicant's prior track record related to the proposed project to be provided.
- Adequacy of the applicant's organizational structure including key personnel and existing accounting and monitoring systems.

- Adequacy of applicable key personnel experience to implement the proposed project. (*If new staff is being proposed, include job descriptions and experience requirements.*)
- Degree to which applicant leverages existing relationships, collaborations, or partnerships.
- Degree to which the roles and responsibilities of the project team have been identified and reasonableness of the applicant's ability to successfully coordinate and implement the proposed project utilizing identified partners.

### **CRITERION 3: POTENTIAL IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

- Clear demonstration that any equipment purchases proposed are identified with specific details and that the purchased equipment directly relates to the proposed program.
- Degree to which a clear project evaluation plan with a quantifiable approach to measure progress toward implementation of each Deliverable is presented.
- Evidence of lasting impact of the project to create local systems change
- Evidence that the project proposed will be sustained after this funding is exhausted.

## **B. *REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS***

### **DISCUSSIONS AND AWARD**

Applications will be scored by three reviewers and must receive at least a score of 70 by each reviewer to be considered for funding. Applicants not receiving a score of 70 will be given the opportunity to submit additional documentation.

The commonwealth may enter into discussions with a selected applicant for any reason deemed necessary, including but not limited to any issues that may be identified with the proposed project. Failure to resolve satisfactorily the issues identified by the commonwealth within a specific period of time determined by the commonwealth may preclude award to the applicant.

If awarded, all projects will be required to abide by the commonwealth's grant policies and procedures, the commonwealth's grant application agreement, the commonwealth's grant Terms and Conditions and commonwealth Travel Regulations. In addition, all final grants are subject to successful negotiation of a final statement of work. A UCC-1 Form will be filed with the Pennsylvania Department of State for all equipment costing \$5,000 or more and will be maintained for a period of 5 years from the date of final invoice for any equipment purchased through this grant program.  
<http://www.dos.state.pa.us/corps/lib/corps/20/7/UCC1.pdf>

## **C. *ANTICIPATED NOTICE OF SELECTION AND AWARD DATES***

Proposals must be received by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation no later than 3:00 PM, January 30, 2014 at the address listed on page 2. OVR anticipates notifying applicants

selected for award by March 1, 2014 and making awards by the end of March for a July 1, 2014 start date. All material required for this AGA is available on the OVR website: <http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/publications/17374>

## **SECTION 6 – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

- A. APPLICATION PACKAGE:** Application forms and instructions are available at the above referenced OVR web site.
- B. MANDATORY ATTACHMENTS:** You must complete all mandatory forms in accordance with the instructions on the forms and the additional instructions below. All forms must be submitted in the correct order and as one file. The file must be submitted in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) or Microsoft Word unless otherwise specified in this announcement. To facilitate application review, please provide the following forms and documents in the order in which they are listed. Failure to provide all of the documents and materials listed below could result in disqualification of the proposal.

### **1. APPLICATION FORM**

Complete all fields (typed, not printed) and have the Authorized Individual sign and date the Application Form. Attach documentation to demonstrate compliance with the requirement that the CIL is consumer directed, with a governing board that is comprised of fifty-one percent (51%) or more of people with disabilities. *Applicants are required to attach proof of non-profit status and incorporation as a Center for Independent Living.*

### **2. OVR GRANT AGREEMENT FORM**

Please read, complete and sign this form. Please note that all attachments to this agreement become legally binding documents. This agreement provides assurance that the applicant has read, understood, and agrees to abide by Department of Labor & Industry, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation's grant requirements. Upon a grant being awarded, this document will be fully executed by the Department of Labor & Industry and a copy provided to the grantee.

### **3. PROJECT SUMMARY/ABSTRACT**

The project summary/abstract must contain a summary of the proposed activity suitable for dissemination to the public. It should be a self-contained document that identifies the name of the applicant, the project director, the project title, the project service area (counties to be served), the objectives of the project, a description of the project, including methods to be employed, the potential impact of the project (i.e., benefits, outcomes), and major participants (for collaborative projects). This document must not include any proprietary or sensitive business information as the commonwealth may make it available to the public.

The project summary must not exceed one (1) page when printed using standard 8.5” by 11” paper with 1” margins (top, bottom, left, and right) [single or double spaced] with font no smaller than 11 point [Times New Roman or Arial].

#### **4. PROJECT NARRATIVE**

The project narrative must not exceed fifteen (15) pages, including cover page, table of contents, the statement of the project goal, Deliverables, charts, graphs, maps, and letter(s) of support when printed using standard 8.5” by 11” paper with 1” margins (top, bottom, left, and right) [single spaced and printed on one side of the paper]. **EVALUATORS WILL REVIEW ONLY THE NUMBER OF PAGES SPECIFIED IN THE PRECEDING SENTENCE.** The font must not be smaller than 11 point [Times New Roman or Arial]. Page numbers must be provided in the footer. Do not include any Internet addresses (URLs) that provide information necessary to review the application.

The project narrative must include:

- **MERIT REVIEW CRITERION DISCUSSION:** The section should be formatted to address each of the merit review criterion listed in Section 5.2. Provide sufficient information so that reviewers will be able to evaluate the application in accordance with these merit criteria. **EVALUATORS WILL REVIEW AND CONSIDER ONLY THOSE APPLICATIONS THAT ADDRESS SEPARATELY EACH OF THE MERIT REVIEW CRITERION.**

#### **5. BUDGET SPREADSHEET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION**

Applicants must submit a detailed Budget Spreadsheet and Budget Narrative Justification for the initial year of the Project. You must justify, in detail by line item, the costs proposed in each category (e.g., identify key persons in the personnel category and the estimated costs for each person and the percent of time allocated to the project, list Fringe Benefits by each staff person and the percent, list general categories of supplies, equipment, travel and amount for each category; and provide any other information you wish to support your budget. The budget will be evaluated in terms of cost reasonableness and the relationship to proposed activities. Budgets must be specific and complete. The budget will also become the financial basis for any grant award, including making cost reimbursement payments over the course of the project. The commonwealth reserves the right to modify application budgets, prior to, and/or after grant award.

#### **6. TIMELINE**

Provide a timeline of the project broken down by each Deliverable, task and/or subtask for the initial year of the Project. The timeline should include for each Deliverable or task a start date and end date. The timeline should show interdependencies between Deliverables or tasks and include quantitative milestones. Projects should be operational as quickly as possible.

## 7. AFFIRMATION

An authorized representative, an individual who can legally bind the applicant organization into a grant, must complete and provide signature and/or initials acknowledging the contents of the documents listed below, as appropriate.

- **ATTACHMENT H - RIDER B - GRANT AGREEMENT TERMS AND CONDITIONS**
- **ATTACHMENT I - NOTICE TO LANDLORD OR AUTHORIZED AGENT**
- **ATTACHMENT J - COMPLIANCE REVIEW FORM**
- **ATTACHMENT K – FEDERAL FUNDING ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY ACT SUB-RECIPIENT DATA SHEET**

## C. FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

### 1. ALLOWABLE COSTS

The commonwealth expects to award up to 18 grants depending upon the number of applicants and the availability of funds. Costs must be directly related to the development and operation of the proposed project. Applicants are strongly encouraged to build upon existing resources, including use of existing facilities to support the submitted application.

#### *Other Allowable Costs:*

- Administrative costs are limited to no more than 5%.
- Personnel costs and fringe benefits
- Equipment required for the operation of the new/expanded project
- Staff Travel
- Project supplies
- Consultation
- Other costs allowed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration and required for the operation of the project

### 2. DISALLOWABLE COSTS

- Building construction
- Renovations or alterations
- Indirect costs – costs that have been incurred for common or joint objectives and cannot be readily identified with a particular final cost objective
- Vehicles
- Customer wages or stipends
- Entertainment expenses
- Finance charges, fines or interest charges
- Projects supported during the fiscal year with other state or federal funds.
- Any costs associated with the development of this proposal
- Other costs disallowed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration

## SECTION 7 – AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

### A. *AWARD NOTICES*

Each applicant shall be notified in writing within 30 days after the decision is made of the approval or disapproval of the submitted application. The initial award letter shall contain language to the effect that the commonwealth cannot be held accountable for any costs incurred prior to the effective date of the grant agreement.

### B. *REPORTING*

Recipients must comply with all commonwealth and federal reporting requirements – including reporting information no later than 15 days after the end of each calendar quarter, or more frequently as directed by the commonwealth. Recipient agrees that in consideration of receipt of federal Title VII, Part B Funds, it will comply with all of the terms, conditions, requirements and limitations set forth in the Grant Agreement. Additional information on fiscal and programmatic will be supplied to each approved applicant.

### C. *QUALITY ASSURANCE AND MONITORING*

Recipients must comply with all commonwealth and federal quality assurance and monitoring activities that ensure transparency, accountability, and the reduction of fraud, waste, error and abuse.

## SECTION 8 – QUESTIONS/AGENCY CONTACTS

### A. *QUESTIONS*

A Pre-proposal Conference **will not** be scheduled. Therefore, questions regarding the content of this AGA must be submitted to Chris Forbrich at the following email address: [lyforbrich@pa.gov](mailto:lyforbrich@pa.gov).

The commonwealth will attempt to respond to a question within three (3) business days, and post the answer on the OVR web site listed below, unless a similar question and answer have already been posted.

Questions and comments concerning this AGA shall be submitted no later than five (5) calendar days prior to the application due date. Questions submitted after that date will not allow the commonwealth sufficient time to respond.

You can view all questions and answers on the following web site:  
<http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/publications/17374>