Youth Reentering the Community through, Opportunity, Networking, Navigation, Education, Collaboration and Transition Supports

FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT: COUNTY-LEVEL SUBGRANTS FOR REENTRY OF YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES (New York State)

APPLICATIONS DUE: OCTOBER 15, 2020

Cornell University’s K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan Institute on Employment and Disabilities is the recipient of the NYS Developmental Disabilities Planning Council’s (DDPC) Community of Practice: Reentry for Youth with Developmental Disabilities Grant. Cornell refers to this project as Youth Reentering the Community through Opportunity, Networking, Navigation, Education, Collaboration and Transition Supports (YReCONNECTS). As part of the grant, we are seeking to fund four (4) county level teams as sub-grantees of this larger initiative. Once selected, sub-grantees will begin working with the Cornell project team. Sub-grantees will be eligible to receive a total of $35,000 per team, each year, in years 3, 4, and 5 of the DDPC grant. This RFP first provides a description of the DDPC grant, followed by specific criteria and expectations of the county level sub-grantees, along with the sub-grant application.

The NYS DDPC Community of Practice: Reentry for Youth with Developmental Disabilities Grant is a 5-year grant that began on April 1, 2019. The purpose of the grant is to establish a community of practice (CoP) that has access to a web-based Technical Assistance (TA) Center of training and resources about promising and best practices for improving reentry outcomes for youth aged 14-24 with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD). The ultimate goal of this initiative is systems change through effective cross-agency/systems collaboration, leading to better educational, employment and community engagement outcomes for justice-involved youth with disabilities.

The selected sub-grantee teams will be the initial members of the CoP. The Cornell project team will support the development of expertise within two key stakeholder groups within the county teams: (1) professionals who are members of the teams and (2) individuals with disabilities and others who have experienced justice-system involvement, who will also serve on county teams. These groups are referred to as “Master Trainers” and “Reentry Ambassadors.” These individuals will participate in training that will equip them to help their teams to holistically address youths’ needs and to understand and implement promising and best practices in working with youth with I/DD to achieve positive outcomes. The Cornell project team will develop and deliver training that consists of theory-to-practice applications across seven integrated core modules. Participants can expect to commit to a minimum of 10 hours per month of online and field-based learning - applying new knowledge to their professional work and involvement on county teams - including live webinar instruction, over a six-month period. The county
teams will recommend 2-3 members to serve as “Master Trainers.” Master Trainers will be responsible for oversight of development and implementation of county level action plans, ensuring continuity and alignment with best practice principles. Furthermore, Master Trainers will be prepared to provide training for project replication/sustainability. Each team will also recommend 2-3 members as “Reentry Ambassadors”. Reentry Ambassadors are individuals with lived experience who serve as credible messengers and facilitators of strengths-based planning processes. These may be individuals with or without disabilities, including family members, directly impacted by justice system involvement. Further, Reentry Ambassadors will learn how to train other peers in person-centered transition/reentry processes. The Cornell project team will in consultation with the county teams, make the final selection as to which individuals will serve in these roles.

IDENTIFICATION OF SUB-GRAnteE COUNTY-LEVeL TEAMS

Empirical evidence suggests a number of best and promising practices which teams will be expected to employ in addressing needs of justice-involved youth in their respective counties. Justice-involved youth with developmental and other disabilities experience the best outcomes when provided with individualized, often more intensive services, during and following their justice system involvement. More positive outcomes are possible when the various systems with which they engage (i.e., educational, vocational, foster care, etc.) work collaboratively to address their needs and provide support. Thus, extensive, meaningful cross-system collaboration will be expected of all sub-grantee teams. Further, consistent with the principles of person-centered planning, teams will be expected to take a strength-based approach to how they perceive justice involved youth with disabilities emphasizing how they can support these individuals in maintaining valued roles in school, work, home and/or community settings and enable true community integration.

Four (4) county level team sub-grantees will be selected by December 2020. The teams’ work with Cornell will start upon selection. Beginning in April 2021, teams will be eligible to receive a total of $35,000 per team, each year, in years 3, 4, and 5 of the DDPC grant. These teams will be the first members of the YReCONNECTS Community of Practice and will have several responsibilities as described in this RFP.

Applicants for sub-grants may include existing youth justice teams looking to strengthen their ability to address the needs of youth with I/DD, as well as other cross-agency groups interested in establishing teams. (Please note that, minimally, teams should have representation from the following domains: legal system, educational system, foster care system, vocational/employment services, independent living/community-based services, mental health services; each team should include a social worker). Teams of no more than 15 members are recommended, although engaging with other individuals and systems, on an as needed basis, is expected.

With the intent of expanding capacity to meet the needs of youth with disabilities, once selected and throughout the remainder of the grant, sub-grantees commit to:

(1) Full engagement in the YReCONNECTS Community of Practice through

• Assisting with data collection for evaluation and documentation of project impacts – including a self-assessment of their organizations’ comfort and experiences with serving adjudicated youth and young adults with I/DD and other disabilities, as well as the policies and practices that
influence these interactions; submitting evidence of team impacts (at an individual and/or systemic level) on a quarterly basis; documenting successes and challenges throughout the grant; and providing the Cornell project team with data needed to complete a qualitative cost-benefit analysis

- Utilizing the TA Center resources, providing feedback about their usability, and contributing to the creation of additional TA products as warranted. This may include contributing content to brief videos, fact sheets, etc.
- Attending two individual team meetings with the YReCONNECTS project team, per year
- Attending an annual in-person networking/update meeting for the full CoP (all county teams, the Cornell project team, and the YReCONNECTS advisory council).

(2) Implement best and promising practices with guidance from the Cornell project team and the county team members serving as “Master Trainers” (described above).

(3) Meaningfully include “re-entry ambassadors” (described above) and budget for disability-related accommodations, travel related costs, etc., for members who require assistance.

Each sub-grantee team will have additional obligations as outlined by work plans and plans for sustainability, which the teams will create in collaboration with the Cornell project team. For example, each team will assist a another county (not funded by the grant) to better serve youth with I/DD and other disabilities, through at least one meaningful engagement (e.g., virtual or in-person meetings, developing action items together, or sharing success stories from the CoP that will assist them with their work), over the course of the grant.

THERE WILL BE AN INFORMATION SESSION ABOUT THIS RFP ON
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2020 @ 2 PM EASTERN
TO REGISTER, GO TO: HTTPS://FORMS.GLE/2LDEA7MHFQMSJG8LA

SELECTION PROCESS

As indicated in the application below, in selecting sub-grantees consideration will be given to:

- The appropriate, diverse composition of stakeholders
- The needs and resources of the county
- A demonstrated commitment to serve both in and out of school youth/young adults
- Evidence of an understanding of the experiences and needs of multiply marginalized individuals
- Demonstrated commitment to working in a collaborative manner – across agencies and systems

Top rated applicants will be offered a telephone interview, as part of the selection process.

APPLICATION: COUNTY-LEVEL SUBGRANTS FOR REENTRY
OF YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES (New York State)
APPLICATIONS DUE: OCTOBER 15, 2020
EMAIL TO: MARIA RIDER, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, AT MR2295@CORNELL.EDU

Each team seeking a sub-grant must submit:

(1) A fully completed application, including a detailed response to the case study (see page 6)
(2) Three letters of support from different stakeholder groups in their county, including at least one group representing the disability community.
(3) A letter confirming the fiduciary agent through whom the annual stipend will be provided and managed
(4) A budget indicating how the 35K per year beginning April 1, 2021 (in payments of $8,750 per quarter), will be used to meet the requirements of the sub-grant

Applications should include responses to all items and be no more than 20 pages total (not including the required budget, fiduciary agent confirmation, and letters of support).

Please use 12 - point font.

GENERAL QUESTIONS: (Maximum 10 pages)

Team Name:

Name of Requesting Agency:

Confirmed Partner Agencies:

Agency/Fiscal intermediary name and address:

Counties Served:

1. Describe the structure of your team, when and how it was created, and the organizations and resources represented on the team. Please note that, minimally, teams should have representation from the following domains: legal system, educational system, foster care system, vocational/employment services, independent living/community-based services, mental health services; each team should include a social worker. Teams should have no more than 15 members, although engaging with other individuals and systems, on an as needed basis is expected. (15 Points)

2. Describe your team’s efforts and success in addressing the needs of youth (both those in and outside of the school system) with intellectual, developmental, and other disabilities. Please include as part of your response any experience working with the Community Dispute Resolution Centers (CDRCs). (10 Points)

3. Describe your team’s efforts and success in (or plans for) including people with intellectual, developmental and other disabilities as team members. (5 Points)

4. Describe challenges faced by your team, including issues related to addressing the needs of youth with intellectual, developmental, and other disabilities, and how the team has dealt (or will deal) with these challenges. (5 Points)

5. Describe your team’s engagement with stakeholders from diverse/marginalized communities including people with disabilities, racial and ethnic minorities, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and others. (10 Points)

6. Describe the type of training, information, and assistance that would help your team to support the successful reentry of justice-involved youth with disabilities. Please include information
about any challenges and/or considerations that are unique to the county or counties served by your team. **(10 Points)**

7. Describe how the sub-grant will be used to initiate, improve, or expand your work. Please be specific about the potential benefits for your team of being involved in the YReCONNECTS community of practice, access to resources in the online technical assistance center, development of Master Trainers, and involvement of Reentry Ambassadors on your team. **(10 Points)**

CASE SCENARIO: *(Maximum 10 pages) 5 pts per question; 35 points total*

In responding to the questions that follow the scenario below, please describe the approaches and resources that your team would use to holistically address the needs of the youth in the scenario below. Please specifically state each youths’ perceived needs, as well as any identified gaps in services/resources, given their unique concerns. Be sure to include how you would engage and collaborate with other organizations, as needed. You do not need to include the scenario description in your application.

**Scenario Description**

Three youths, all of whom have developmental disabilities that affect their judgement, were hanging out on a Saturday night and decided they wanted to play video games. They ran out of money. John, the oldest of the group suggested that they break into the house of a schoolmate who lives in their neighborhood with a big screen TV and a large collection of video games. Kevin and Tina agreed.

They walked through the neighborhood and saw that no one seemed to be home. They found an open window and went into the house. They started playing video games until John got angry with Tina and threw a vase at her. The vase missed Tina but hit the TV and destroyed it. A neighbor heard the noise and called the police. The police came and arrested all three youth.

When the police arrived, the youth explained that they did not mean to break anything and explained the damage to the TV. They acknowledged that coming into the house uninvited was wrong and said they were sorry.

Scenario modified from  

**Background Information**

This situation occurred in the youths’ own suburban neighborhood.
John is 21 and has a certificate of completion from the local public high school. He has been unemployed since leaving the school system last year. He lives with his father and stepmother. He spends most of the day watching TV and playing video games. John occasionally helps with yardwork, when his father insists. He typically needs some supervision to fully complete tasks. John is white.

Kevin is 19 and in his final year of high school at the local public high school. Most of his peers he started high school with graduated last year, but he reluctantly agreed to stay one more year, as his mother thought it would be good for him to get more work experience before graduating. Kevin lives with his mother. He has an older brother who is away at college, and he visits his father every few months. Kevin used to run on the school’s track team but stopped after being bullied by his peers. Tina and John are his only friends. Kevin is working at a print shop through a school-work program and the employer has said that he may be able to hire Kevin for part-time work after graduation. Kevin is black and recently began presenting as gender non-conforming, wearing some clothing and make-up typically used by females.

Tina is 17 and a junior at the local public high school. She lives with her parents and younger brother. Tina volunteers at the local animal shelter every other weekend. She feels more comfortable around animals than she does around most people. She has some difficulties with speech, which she finds frustrating. Sometimes this causes her to avoid talking; at other times, she gets angry with herself and other people that she views as impatient. Tina is black.

Based on the available information, please respond to the questions below.

1. What systemic factors should be considered when developing a support plan with the youth and professionals with which they are in contact?

2. What role might age, race, gender, gender identity, disability and socio-economic status play in their encounter with authorities (police officers, courts, etc.)?

3. What strengths, assets, supports, and services does each youth have? What additional services and supports might be needed?

4. How could each youth get the additional services and supports they need?

5. What is an appropriate response to the youth’s behavior? What key stakeholders should be involved in this decision?
6. In what ways, if any, would your responses be different if this situation occurred in an urban neighborhood?

In what ways, if any, would your responses be different if the youth lived outside of the neighborhood where the situation occurred?