

Request for Application: Regional Hub for Local Vaccine Outreach Responses Due September 17, 2021

This funding opportunity is limited to AUCD network members and is contingent upon CDC funding. Notices of award are expected to be announced by October 1.

Purpose

Through an upcoming single-source award from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD), a selection of up to four (4) centers or programs from the AUCD network members will lead regional hubs to coordinate local and regional COVID-19 vaccine outreach with the disability community as part of a larger effort, **Local Vaccine Outreach with the Disability Community**. Successful applicants will propose innovative strategies to rapidly share effective message delivery streams and local modalities to reach people with disabilities (including individuals not connected to service delivery systems), their families, and Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), with the overarching goal of boosting COVID-19 vaccination rates in the disability community.

About

The uneven and inequitable rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine has resulted in access, accessibility, and confidence barriers to the vaccine for people with disabilities. AUCD is launching the next phase of vaccine confidence and access efforts with this opportunity to conduct *Local Vaccine Outreach with the Disability Community*.

Up to four (4) Regional Hubs will support rapid identification and implementation of innovative strategies to reach the disability community at a local level. These Regional Hubs will engage with Trainees and Training Directors in the AUCD network to facilitate COVID-19 vaccine conversations among members, identify barriers to vaccine accessibility and vaccine confidence, share credible COVID-19 vaccination information, respond to misinformation, and share success stories and lessons learned. Trainees and Training Directors will participate in regional planning and update meetings virtually on a monthly basis throughout the project period. Regional Hub leaders will then share the Trainee experience by joining AUCD's national Community of Practice on vaccine confidence to share updates and successful practices to date. (Trainees and Training Directors are supported through a separate RFA.)

Goals

Up to four (4) Regional Hubs will coordinate and conduct activities in their region to:

- Act as critical regional navigators to engage selected Trainees and Training Directors in their region;

- Identify, train, and support known and trusted champions to increase interpersonal communication around vaccination with trusted and familiar messengers within their networks and offer a directory of local vaccine champions for local communications; Trusted champions may include people with disabilities across the lifespan, their families and family caregivers, and direct support providers to communicate with those who remain unvaccinated against COVID-19. Trusted champions will engage with unique interpersonal and innovative strategies to build confidence and improve vaccine uptake, such as direct calls about vaccine experiences, answer questions or address concerns, with approaches informed by motivational interviewing techniques. Regional Hubs may implement some of the tactics and strategies identified in AUCD webinars on COVID-19 vaccinations, such as provision of incentives for vaccination, facilitating small group discussions, talking with their doctor, pharmacist or other trusted healthcare professional about COVID-19 vaccination, conducting rapid needs assessment activities, and implementing accessible and accommodating vaccine administration strategies, clinics, or events;
- Support rapid implementation of innovative strategies to reach the disability community at a local and regional level; Report innovative strategies to AUCD's community of practice on vaccine confidence;
- Collaborate with regional partners on communications and policy strategies to reduce structural barriers, such as paid-time off after vaccination and assurances related to immigration concerns, as well as review and implement policy opportunities to support COVID-19 vaccination and other routine vaccinations, like the flu shot;
- Encourage timely outreach and engagement of families, DSPs, and people with disabilities through local chapters and affiliates of disability community including organizations, such as: The Arc, American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR), Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN), Autism Society, Autism Speaks, Family Voices, Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE), National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP), National Association for Home Care & Hospice (NAHC), and the Spina Bifida Association. This list is not exhaustive and other creative partnerships with local chapters and affiliates of disability organizations is encouraged;
- Build vaccine confidence and access across the disability community at the local level and to include a disability perspective in ongoing emergency preparedness and public health efforts.

Regional Hubs will promote use of AUCD's National Center on Disability in Public Health vaccine confidence (<https://nationalcenterdph.org/vaccineconfidence/>) and Prepared4ALL(<https://nationalcenterdph.org/our-focus-areas/emergency-preparedness/prepared4all/>) materials and messages locally and regionally; and/or

- Conduct assessments to evaluate reach to the disability community at a regional level.

Eligibility

All AUCD Network members affiliated with a UCEDD, LEND, and/or IDDR in any state or territory are eligible to seek assistance through this process. AUCD Network members that receive the training grant are also eligible for this opportunity. AUCD Network members that participate in our community of practice on vaccine hesitancy are eligible as well. Areas of low vaccine coverage will be prioritized.

Award

Up to four (4) centers or programs from the AUCD network membership that serve different regions will be selected to receive an \$85,000 subaward for a period beginning October 1, 2021 through September 29, 2022. No cost extensions may be granted and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. This is a flat-fee award, with payments anticipated as follows:

- \$21,250 upon contract execution (on or about October 1-15)
- \$21,250 upon successful submission of interim report (on or about January 1-15)
- \$21,250 upon successful submission of interim report (on or about April 1-15)
- \$21,250 upon successful submission of interim report (on or about July 1-15)

Award funds may be used (and not limited to) salary support, earned local or regional media placements, social media, or paid media placements like a radio media tour or social media ads.

A panel composed of AUCD and CDC staff will review all complete applications. Applications that leverage and build upon existing work to reach people with disabilities with vaccine confidence efforts are encouraged. Awardees must dedicate these funds to programmatically support local vaccine confidence outreach efforts.

Application Procedure

If you are interested in being considered for this opportunity, please submit all application materials no later than 5 pm on September 17, 2021 via this [Google Form](#).

Questions/More Information

If you have any questions regarding this opportunity, please contact Lauren Blachowiak at lblachowiak@aucd.org.

Appendix 1: Application Survey (50 points)

Note: * means a question is required

Email address*:

Your name and position*:

AUCD center name (UCEDD, LEND, IDDRC)*:

State*:

Do you commit to monthly short reports to share progress, strategies, and promote collaboration (format TBD, but may include short video, webinar, participation in Prepared4All Town Hall, participation in AUCD's Community of Practice on vaccine confidence, or short survey to share updates)? Who will represent your project in this capacity? **(5 points)***

Goals*

Provide an overview of your goal deliverables and a brief workplan for each. Use bullets to describe your work. Responses should describe who will do what by when. **(20 points)**

Additional Questions (25 points)

Please share how you plan to use your existing partnerships within the wider disability community in your area/state to inform your work on this project. **(10 points)***

Please attach any examples of your work in this area that would provide evidence of your expertise in the brief workplan that you have proposed. Include any existing dissemination efforts in the disability community to promote COVID-19 vaccine confidence, including the modes of dissemination used (e.g. website, webinar, fliers, newspaper, etc.). **(5 points)***

Regional Hub Focus Areas - Provide a summary which outlines the areas where you intend to coordinate and conduct local outreach and how this subaward builds on and extends existing vaccine outreach efforts, including engagement with local disability partners. Applicants can use a combination of Regional Consortium Framework, HHS Regions, or FEMA Regions, for the approach to what areas will be served in the Hub. **(10 points)***

If affiliated with a UCEDD, briefly outline how your work on this project will be coordinated with the CDC/ACL grant funding to promote access to COVID-19 vaccines for people with disabilities.

<https://acl.gov/news-and-events/announcements/partnership-cdc-increase-access-covid-19-vaccines>

(Not scored. Required for UCEDD applications.)