

**Independent Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Ombudsman Program of New York
(IDDO):
Request for Proposals
October 7, 2024**

Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), the Community Service Society of New York (CSS) invites non-profit community-based organizations (CBOs) and parent and caregiver groups to participate in New York’s independent intellectual and developmental disabilities ombudsman program (IDDO). The IDDO is funded by the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) to educate and assist individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, caregivers and representatives successfully access OPWDD-funded services and supports. In 2023, Section § 33.28 of the New York State Mental Hygiene Law was enacted to establish the IDD Ombudsman to provide independent, conflict-free Ombudsman services to assist individuals with developmental disabilities and preserve their rights. The IDDO’s mission is to act as a resource and advocate for individuals and families as they navigate OPWDD’s programs.

CSS’s IDDO will be the single entity in charge of services and now seeks to develop a statewide infrastructure to deliver outreach and education services on a local level. This RFP offers two different funding outreach funding opportunities:

1. **5-Year Grants to Regional CBO Outreach Network**. Approximately five, to local CBOs, renewable for up to 5 years, to provide community outreach and engagement related to direct assistance with health insurance and access issues to individuals in their communities as well as education and outreach about the availability of IDDO services. The grant award is up to \$50,000 for a 3-month period during the first contract year (January 1, 2025, to March 31, 2025). In subsequent years, the grant award will be up to \$50,000 for a 12-month period (April 1 to March 31). The contract is expected to begin on January 1, 2025, and end on March 31, 2025, with the expectation of renewal for a 12-month period subject to performance. These contracts will likely be awarded to organizations serving areas of the State that coincide with the five Developmental Disabilities Regional Offices of OPWDD.
2. **4-Month Parent and Caregiver Groups Educational Grants**. In addition, CSS anticipates awarding up to five 4-month **only** educational mini-grants targeted to parent and caregiver groups statewide to conduct education about the launch of the IDDO during the first year of the program, which ends on March 31, 2025. These grants are expected to be in the amount of \$25,000 to run approximately from December 2, 2024 to March 31, 2025.

Organizations serving individuals with developmental disabilities are highly encouraged to apply. CSS seeks to fund organizations that serve people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, mental and physical disabilities, and serve diverse populations, including but not limited to: organizations that serve consumers from culturally,

geographically and linguistically isolated communities, as well as organizations that that have expertise in doing outreach and providing information and assistance.

CSS expects to announce the award on December 2, 2024, via the Community Health Advocates website, www.communityhealthadvocates.org.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must be non-profit organizations, membership associations, or other mission-driven organizations that have demonstrated experience serving individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

Important Dates

<u>EVENT</u>	<u>DATE</u>
Release of RFP	October 9, 2024
Questions about this RFP due	October 16, 2024
Answers posted	October 18, 2024
Application due	November 15, 2024
Award announcements	November 27, 2024
Projected contract start date	1. 4-month Mini-Grant December 2, 2024 2. Regional Outreach Network grants, January 1, 2025

Introduction

The Community Service Society of New York (CSS) has worked with and for New Yorkers since 1843 to promote economic opportunity and champion an equitable city and state. Through a strategic combination of data-driven research, direct services, and people-driven advocacy, CSS ensures New Yorkers have the power to create change in their lives and the life of our city and state. CSS works with around 50 local community partners throughout New York State to provide consumer assistance in every county.

Organizations funded under this RFP will increase awareness and utilization of IDDO Ombudsman services through education and outreach to individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, families of individuals with developmental disabilities, service providers, advocates, and/or priority populations as identified by OPWDD. Examples of education and outreach activities include: in-person events, online events, training and informational sessions, participation in community events, paid advertising, earned media, and/or use of social media marketing.

Organizations selected for this project must also ensure that all education and outreach materials, programs, and activities are designed to be accessible to individuals with developmental disabilities and meet the socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural needs and perspectives of the population being served, subject to review by CSS. CSS and its Specialist organization will provide intensive training, technical assistance, and support as the organization ramps up.

Services To Be Provided

Applicants for the **5-year Regional Outreach grant** will be expected to **conduct #1-3** in the activities listed below. Applicants for the **4-month mini-grants** **will only be required to conduct activity #1**, listed below, but are encouraged to participate in the learning sessions described in #2.

1. **Marketing and outreach activities:** Under **both grant** opportunities, the awardees will design and implement a local, community-based marketing and outreach plan to help their community members access OPWDD services through IDDO. Marketing and outreach activities will primarily address the need for outreach and education on OPWDD services, including Self Direction. Applicants will also support utilization of the “Front Door” for individuals in need of support accessing services and/or care coordination via education and outreach activities.

Types of education and outreach activities: Funding will be dedicated to marketing and outreach activities, such as: paid media advertising, transportation ads, post cards, text

messaging, social media, community newsletters, brochures, re-grants to support education activities conducted by local grassroots partners, and community presentations and other in-person engagement activities. Applicants may also seek to fund in-person outreach activities at venues that may include, but are not limited to religious institutions, community centers or groups, health centers, community health care providers, social service organizations, schools, and chambers of commerce.

CSS welcomes applicants to propose additional innovative marketing and outreach ideas. Presentations must be tailored to individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, their families, providers and advocates. All outreach and education materials will be subject to the approval of CSS.

2. **Learning collaborative and technical assistance support:** CSS will lead a learning collaborative for the IDDO Outreach Regional network of sub-grantees through bi-monthly interactive peer learning. Attendance is optional for recipients of the 4-month mini-grants.
3. **Sentinel function:** CSS expects that the sub-grantees will collaborate with CSS to identify successful strategies to engage with consumers. Sub-grantees should also be willing to help identify barriers that prevent OPWDD recipients from accessing support and services through the various programs such as Self-Direction.

Deliverables

1. **Specific deliverables** (for BOTH 4-month Mini-Grants and 5-year IDDO Regional Outreach Network): Participating organizations in **both** grant programs will be asked to prepare the following deliverables:
 - A marketing and/or outreach plan (that describes the content of the outreach).
 - A report on the number of people exposed to each marketing/outreach activity (e.g., number of people attending the health fair, size of the congregation, number of people engaging with social media posts, etc.).
 - The number of people referred to the IDDO as a result of the conducted marketing/outreach (if possible).
 - Accurate and timely reporting of services provided.
 - Participants in the mini-grants will be responsible for preparing a brief summary report at the end of the grant term.
2. **Additional responsibilities for participants in the 5-year Regional Outreach Network will include:**
 - A. **Staffing and Responsibilities**

Participants in the 5-year Regional Outreach Network will agree to designate an Outreach Coordinator who will be responsible for:

- attending bi-monthly outreach network meetings and other program meetings (via webinars) and disseminating materials and updates to their organizational teams, as appropriate;
- developing an annual outreach workplan and conducting outreach and marketing activities;
- collecting and reporting data as directed by CSS on a timely basis;
- collecting client stories during the contract period with appropriate media releases; and
- cooperating with CSS to ensure that any program staff at their organization is adequately trained and competent to conduct outreach and education services.

B. Reporting

Participants in the 5-year Regional Outreach Network will also agree to:

- collect and report data, via the cloud-based CSS database (Salesforce), about outreach and education activities performed and services provided, following CSS guidelines outlined in Policies and Procedures Manual. Organizations must currently have computers with internet access, printers, telephone, and email;
- cooperate with monitoring by CSS, which may include site visits, observations of community presentations, and reviews of education services reported through the database; and
- encourage consumer participation in any program evaluations, as deemed necessary by CSS, including client satisfaction surveys, presentation participant evaluations, and surveys.

Proposal evaluation criteria

Responses to this RFP will be evaluated based upon the following criteria:

- **Mission:** The mission of the organization aligns with this program.
- **Diversity and equity:** The organization itself adds to the diversity of the program network and promotes equity in access to OPWDD services.
- **Capacity:** The organization will be ready to provide services upon receiving the award.
- **Population served:** Organization's plan to target consumers with developmental disabilities, their families and providers in this area.
- **Outreach:** Organization's outreach plan strategy and proposed number of outreach events.
- **Reporting:** Organization's demonstrated ability to report services promptly.
- **Sustainability:** The organization expressed willingness to work for the program's long-term sustainability.

Directions/format for the content of your proposal

Applicants to participate in the **5-year Regional Outreach Network** grants must submit all sections (A-E below). Applicants to participate in the **4-month mini-grant** may submit only A, B1 and B6, C, and D to be deemed complete.

A. Cover Form (Form Attached)

Complete and submit the cover form, signed and dated by: (1) the organization's Executive Director; or (2) the President or Leader of the organization's Board of Directors or governing board (and of the organization's fiscal sponsor, if applicable). Include the organization's Employer Identification Number (EIN).

B. Financial Statements & Legal Documents

1. Proof of not-for-profit status (if applicable), such as a copy of your organization's 501(c) tax-exempt verification;
2. A copy of the organization's most recent audited financial statement with the management letter from the auditors;
3. A copy of the organization's most recent CHAR500;
4. A copy of the organization's most recent IRS Form 990;

C. Proposal Narrative (not to exceed 6 pages):

1. **Background About Your Organization.** Tell us about your organization's mission and experience helping individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, caregivers and representatives successfully access OPWDD-funded services and supports.
2. **Who do you serve?** Tell us about the consumers you will serve, for example:
 - A. Geographic service area;
 - B. Service population description, including: income status, primary languages, race/ethnicity, LGBTQ+ populations and other unique characteristics of the organization's service population (e.g. individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, rural populations).
3. **Outreach experience.** Tell us about your organization's experience conducting outreach, for example:
 - A. Please describe how you will market and outreach to consumers and providers about services available to people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and the IDDO, and otherwise promote services.

- B. Please describe any media (including social media) experience your organization may have.
4. Privacy and conflict of interest (if applicable) policies. Describe your organization's policy regarding confidentiality and protecting health-related information. Describe how your organization would prevent, mitigate or eliminate any potential conflict of interest in the provision of your services and education about the IDDO.
 5. Reporting experience. Does your organization have demonstrated experience reporting data about services provided to funders in a timely fashion? Describe current data tracking capacity.
 6. Advocacy experience. Describe any experience the organization has in identifying and advocating for systemic changes on behalf of the service population or constituency. Describe any experience using clients' stories to advocate for systemic changes in the OPWDD world.
 7. Equity experience. Describe any experience the organization has in reducing disparities and promoting equity in the community you serve, especially those with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.
 8. Deliverables and staffing. Please describe your proposed deliverables.
 - A. Number of outreach/training events the organization will provide each year and the number of potential attendees at these events.
 - B. Describe the target audiences for these events.
 - C. Describe the staffing that will be dedicated to the grant to provide these services, including the background, experience, and current duties of any personnel already on staff who will deliver or supervise services under this project.
 9. Accessibility. Please describe the accessibility of your outreach activities.
 - A. Will the organization provide in-person outreach presentations? Are sites where services will be provided accessible to most consumers by public transportation? If not, how will consumers access these services? Are sites where services will be provided accessible to people with disabilities? What reasonable accommodations are made for people with disabilities so they may access services? Please provide copies of written policies, if any.
 - B. Will your organization be conducting advertising or social media outreach? If so, please describe how those approaches will be made accessible.
 - C. Describe your organization's language access plan, if any.
 10. Sustainability. Please tell us about your organization's ability to participate in sustainability activities like educating community leaders about the need for IDDO services in your community.

D. Budget (1 page) & Budget Narrative (1 to 2 pages)

The information requested in this section will be used to evaluate your proposal’s cost-effectiveness, as compared to proposals from other applicants. CSS reserves the right to negotiate these terms with the awardee.

1. **5-year Regional Outreach Network grant budgets.** Please provide the following information if you are applying to participate in the 5-year regional outreach network.
 - A. Propose a grant amount for the project period.
 - B. Provide a line-item budget for a 3-month term, describing how the amount proposed will be used for this project. It is anticipated that the first month of the contract period will be dedicated to ramp up activities, such as contracting, planning and hiring. Budget narratives should also acknowledge that the grant amount for Y2 will be the same as Y1 and that the organization will be able to continue to conduct outreach in Y2 with the more limited budget.
 - C. The budget should include:
 - i. Personnel expenses (consistent with staffing listed above);
 - ii. Other than personnel expenses; and
 - iii. In-kind or other organizational contributions.
 - D. Provide a detailed budget narrative. If you propose a significantly higher or lower cost as compared to the typical grant in relation to services proposed, explain the cost difference.

2. **4-month Mini Grant budget.** Please provide the following information in you are applying to participate in the 4-month mini-grant program.
 - A. Propose a grant amount for the project period.
 - B. Provide a line-item budget for a 4-month term, describing how the amount proposed will be used for this project.
 - C. The budget should include:
 - i. Personnel expenses (consistent with staffing listed above);
 - ii. Other than personnel expenses; and
 - iii. In-kind or other organizational contributions.
 - D. Provide a detailed budget narrative. If you propose a significantly higher or lower cost as compared to the typical grant in relation to services proposed, explain the cost difference.

E. Two Letters of Reference (not to exceed one page, single-spaced)

Each applicant must provide two reference letters from persons or organizations familiar with the organization and its work.

Conditions

CSS reserves rights to postpone or cancel this RFP; reject all proposals; request additional information; negotiate with applicants individually; modify the number of awardees and dollar amounts of grants; amend specifications; eliminate requirements; accept only those proposals that serve the best interests of the program; terminate subcontracts for poor performance or in the best interest of the program; and amend terms of subcontracts to serve best interests of the program. The organization selected will be asked to provide evidence of general liability insurance, workers compensation, disability, and errors and omissions insurance upon signing a subcontract with CSS.

Organization subcontracts awarded through this RFP are contingent on the award and availability of funds provided by New York State.

Questions

Questions about this RFP should be **emailed** by 5:00 pm on October 14, 2024, to IDD@cssny.org. The subject line should be IDDO RFP Questions. Responses to common questions will be posted on the Community Health Advocates website, www.communityhealthadvocates.org, by 5:00 pm on October 18, 2024.

Instructions for Submission

CSS requests that all organizations submit their proposal electronically to CSS no later than 5:00 pm on October 30, 2024. Emailed proposals should be sent to IDD@cssny.org.

The proposal should be signed by the appropriate individuals (see Contents of the Proposal, Cover Form). Electronic signatures are allowed. Please use 12-point font, one-inch margins, and double spacing, unless otherwise indicated.

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All applicants should provide the following information:

- ___ Applicable Cover Form, signed and dated by organization's Executive Director or leader of its Board of Directors or fiscal agent.
- ___ Letter of Commitment from the organization's Executive Director or leader of its Board of Directors
- ___ Proof of Not-for-Profit Status (if applicable)
- ___ Organization's board-approved budget and actuals for the current fiscal year
- ___ Proposal Narrative (not to exceed 6 pages)

5-year Regional Outreach Network applicants shall additionally provide:

- ___ Organization's most recent audited financial statement(s) with the management letter from the auditors
- ___ Copy of the organization's most recent CHAR500 and proof of filing (if available)
- ___ Copy of the organization's most recent IRS Form 990 and proof of filing (if available)
- ___ Proposed 3-month program budget if you are applying for the **5-year Regional Outreach network grant** (not to exceed 1 page)

4-month Educational Grant applicants shall additionally provide:

- ___ Proposed 4-month program budget (not to exceed 1 page)

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Please note that this form must be signed by the organization's Executive Director or equivalent operational leader (and fiscal conduit, if applicable) and the President or Leader of the Board of Directors or governing board (and the fiscal conduit, if applicable). This form and the entire original application are due by the due date indicated in the Important Dates section.

NAME OF ORGANIZATION:

Address:

Telephone Number:

Fax Number:

Email Address:

EIN:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (or equivalent operational leader) print name and title:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

PRESIDENT OR LEADER OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS (or governing board) print name and title

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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*****Only fill out this form if organization uses a Fiscal Conduit*****

FISCAL CONDUIT (if applicable):

Name:

Address:

Telephone Number:

Fax Number:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (or equivalent operational leader) print name and title:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

PRESIDENT OR LEADER OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS (or governing board) print name and title

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Conflicts of Interest

Applicants that receive funding through this grant must disclose actual and potential conflicts of interest in its narrative.

Please describe how applicant would mitigate, eliminate, or prevent any potential conflict of interest. Indicate what policies and procedures will be followed to detect, notify CSS of, and resolve any conflicts.

Organizations or persons presently performing services for OPWDD, or that have provided consulting services for OPWDD, ***may still submit a proposal in response to this RFP*** by satisfying the conflict of interest description described above. Applicants that are chosen for this award will have an ongoing obligation throughout the duration of the contract to identify and bring to the attention of CSS actual or apparent conflicts of interest when they arise.

For example, a conflict of interest could arise when an OPWDD-funded entity conducts a presentation to a group of family members and a family member raises a complaint about the OPWDD-funded entity. It would be a conflict if the presenter discourages the family member from reaching out to the IDDO or otherwise filing a complaint about the OPWDD-funded entity.