

12-6-16

To: Employment First stakeholders

From: Acacia McGuire Anderson, Statewide Employment First Coordinator

Re: [Employment First](#): Employment First Innovation Grants Launched

(Please forward to your local partners & stakeholders)

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I am excited today to announce an opportunity to increase capacity throughout the state by offering innovation grants.

Employment First is offering the opportunity for local providers and agencies to apply for grants to fund new, creative and innovative ideas to increase collaboration and capacity within a local area. Local Employment First teams, Vocational Rehabilitation branches, Community Developmental Disabilities Programs (CDDPs) and developmental disabilities program brokerages, local education agencies, family groups or networks, or employers are encouraged to apply.

The purpose of these grants is to expand the efforts to increase competitive integrated employment opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Oregon legislature awarded a Policy Option Package in the 2015-17 session to fund innovative Employment First projects to increase capacity throughout the state. A total of \$800,000 is available, which will be awarded in various amounts depending on the scope of the proposals.

Proposers for these grants must be agencies or entities in the communities they are proposing to serve and the grant proposal must affect the proposer's local I/DD employment network.

Grant proposals must be in one of the following areas:

- **Local Capacity and Collaboration:** Activities must focus on building capacity, or adding to the capacity, of local agencies or entities to provide services to individuals.
- **Provider Capacity:** Activities must focus on expanding the provider capacity to address the Employment First initiatives.
- **Family Outreach:** Activities must focus on outreach to family members and individuals currently receiving ODDS services.

- Training: Activities must focus on training opportunities for stakeholders on Employment First initiatives; and
- Statewide initiatives or other innovations: Focus on developing programs or initiatives which can be generalized, duplicated, or shared statewide with other Employment First Stakeholders, or used in more than one locality, region, or district.

While these grants are not limited to the following examples, some ideas for proposals include: training for teachers who want to become job developers; innovative ideas on helping with transportation barriers for people with disabilities; and employer or family networking events in local communities aimed at promoting employment for people with developmental disabilities. Many more examples are listed in the full Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP) DHS-4281-16 titled “Innovative Employment First Services” in the Oregon Procurement Information Network (ORPIN).

Interested parties can find more details and apply at: <http://orpin.oregon.gov>

Grant proposals are due by 3 p.m. March 2, 2017. Any questions about this Request For Grant Proposals (RFGP) must be directed to Lesley Erickson at: lesley.g.erickson@state.or.us or 503-945-6698.

~ Acacia