

Assistive Technology Innovation Grants Notice of Opportunity 2024

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) is currently accepting proposals from qualified providers to expand Assistive Technology (AT) resources and capacity, thereby elevating the overall quality of life for individuals accessing DDS services in Connecticut.

The intent of this Notice of Opportunity (NOO) is to fund and support the development and implementation of cutting-edge Assistive Technology solutions.

Background

Assistive Technology (AT) is one of the core components of Supporting Transformation to Empower People (STEP). AT is defined as any item, piece of equipment, software, or product that is used to increase, maintain, or improve a person's ability to live more independently including at school, at work, at home, and in the community. Assistive Technology ranges from low tech to high tech devices or equipment.

AT can be customized based on the person's goals, preferences, and needs. It can help enhance communication by providing access to devices and tools that can help people communicate effectively. AT is available to help across all areas of life, and can help with developing new skills, enhance independence, assist with safety, and provide support at work, and in the community.

As qualified providers of services, you have firsthand experience of the challenges faced by individuals with intellectual disabilities. Your valuable insights and expertise make you instrumental in identifying and implementing AT solutions that can significantly improve the lives of people with intellectual disabilities. DDS recognizes the importance of harnessing innovative technology to enhance inclusion, independence, and well-being.

DDS has allocated funds for the Assistive Technology Innovation Grant to encourage and support this development. This grant is open to DDS Qualified Providers who propose ideas and projects in the field of Assistive Technology. The primary goal is to foster innovation in this field and to provide improved services to individuals with intellectual disabilities across our state.

The general elements of an Assistive Technology Innovation Grant are as follows:

1. **Eligibility:** DDS Qualified Providers are invited to submit proposals for innovative Assistive Technology solutions that align with the department's mission and objectives. Providers must be qualified for Assistive Technology at the time of submission.
2. **Proposal Requirements:** Proposals should clearly outline the innovative concepts, demonstrating how they address the needs of individuals with intellectual disability. They should include detailed project plans, timelines, anticipated measurable outcomes, and a budget that justifies the requested funding. The proposals should emphasize collaboration and partnership with individuals supported by DDS, their families or guardians, and other relevant stakeholders.
3. **Selection Process:** A selection committee comprised of knowledgeable staff in the field of Assistive Technology will review all received proposals. Evaluations will be conducted based on innovation, potential impact, feasibility,

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and alignment with the DDS vision. The committee will make recommendations to DDS for final approval and funding.

4. Timeline: The announcement of this notice of opportunity marks the beginning of the application period. Proposals will be accepted effective immediately on a rolling first come, first served basis. All proposals will be reviewed and assessed within 3 weeks of the submission date. Applicants will be notified of the response to their proposal within 4 weeks of submission.

5. Funding Allocation: A total of up to \$900,000.00 will be awarded to eligible projects on a first-come, first-served basis until all funds are exhausted. The allocation of funds will not extend past June 30, 2024. Interested applicants are encouraged to submit their applications as soon as possible to ensure that they can secure funding before all funds are allocated. Please note that funding will only be awarded to selected projects that meet the eligibility criteria.

6. Covered Costs: DDS will cover the costs for equipment, products, devices, and software development that are innovative, provide effective solutions for issues such as transportation challenges, and promote the functional capabilities of individuals with developmental disabilities. The proposed equipment should comply with the relevant federal, state, and local regulations. DDS will give priority to proposals that feature equipment specifically tailored to the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities over items of general use, such as computers or iPads. The grant proposal should demonstrate how the proposed equipment, products, devices, or software will be used to maintain, increase, or improve the functional capabilities of an individual with developmental disabilities. DDS will evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of any technological solution or equipment item in the scoring process of the grant proposal.

We strongly encourage you to utilize your expertise and creativity to explore new possibilities in Assistive Technology across the lifespan and in all areas of life (home, work, transportation, and community) DDS firmly believes that through collaborative efforts, we can significantly impact the lives of those we support.

Please refer to Attachment A for evaluation criteria. If you have any questions or require further clarification, please send all inquiries to Kyle Fishbein at kyle.fishbein@ct.gov.

Together, we can drive innovation and transform the lives of individuals accessing services through the Connecticut Department of Developmental Services.

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to improving the lives of our community members.

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Funding Opportunity

The department will accept Assistive Technology Innovation Grant proposals until all resources have been committed or June 30, 2024, whichever comes first. Priority will be given to proposals that will have the maximum positive impact on the greatest number of people with intellectual disabilities prior to March 30, 2025.

Providers whose application is accepted will receive the following:

1. A payment for an approved start up budget to assist with recruitment, administrative, and legal costs associated with the development of the Innovative Assistive Technology service that is proposed.
2. Providers may include in their proposal staff dedicated to coordinating the development and oversight of the Innovative Assistive Technology service through March 30, 2025. DDS will reimburse actual costs up to \$100,000 for wages and benefits. No staff can be dually funded by DDS for the support awarded in this Notice of Opportunity (NOO).
3. Providers will receive a one-time award based on actual costs of Assistive Technology and smart home technology or appliances needed to increase each person's independence.

Current Assistive Technology Providers interested in this opportunity should submit proposals to Kyle Fishbein at Kyle.Fishbein@ct.gov.

Thank you for your consideration.

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This is a fillable form. Please write the submission details requested in the provided boxes below each item request. The boxes will expand to accommodate your replies. If you have any difficulty with the form, please contact Kyle Fishbein at kyle.fishbein@ct.gov.

Provider Name:

Provider Contact Name:

Contact Phone #:

Contact Email:

- 1. Brief Summary of the proposed Assistive Technology Innovation Project and the agency's experience in providing similar supports.**

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2. Briefly describe the best practice research that has occurred in the development of this proposal.

3. Description of Services to Be Provided

a. Innovative Service Description, Staffing Requirements, Areas/Scope of Impact (Transportation, Home, Work, Community), etc.

4. Identified Interest

a. How many individuals have you identified who have expressed interest in the Assistive Technology support that will be available should this project be awarded?

b. How many individuals have you identified who may be able to benefit from the Assistive Technology project you are proposing?

5. Budget – Please use the budget template attached (Attachment B).

a. Budget should include administrative costs associated with the Assistive Technology Innovation Project, and projected supports based on the timeline.

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b. **Budget Narrative:** Please explain your budget.

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6. **Timeline** – Please include a timeline from the start of the award through December 31, 2024.