

Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities

Executive Committee

Date: 4/4/2014

Review of Proposed Activities & Budget

ITEM: B

Grantee: Educational Programs Inspiring Communities

Year: 3 of 5

Project Title: Enabling Technology

Project Location: Houston

Website: www.heartprogram.org

TCDD RFP Intent: The project intent is to assist Texans with developmental disabilities in attaining competitive employment opportunities. Grantees will develop and implement a plan to demonstrate to employers, people with developmental disabilities, and/or family members ways in which available assistive technology can enhance job performance and increase employment options. TCDD has approved funding up to \$225,000 per year for up to five years.

Authorized Funding: TCDD has approved up to \$225,000 per year for up to three years with an option of funding years four and five.

Expected Results: By accessing the iPads and the customized software, participants will gain valuable skills and be able to work more independently. Participants will be able to obtain more competitive employment and be more fully included in their communities and more fully connected to the growing online community.

Project Goals and Accomplishments for Year(s) 1 & 2:

Goal: To design, develop, deploy, and evaluate an interactive customized mobile tablet solution that will increase the employability of low-income adults with developmental disabilities in the H.E.A.R.T. Program.

Accomplishments per goal: In year one, the grantee administered a survey to program participants to gauge technology proficiency; Modules for the app were defined and designed. An evaluation was developed to solicit feedback from pilot participants once testing began. In year two, the project partner fully coded and deployed all aspects of the app which were designed and defined in the first year. The app was tested and de-bugged first by project staff. The requisition flow, vending run flow, and return from run were coded and deployed for testing. Participants were provided with training on how to use the iPads per needs assessment. Testing of the entire application by pilot participants began in the last quarter of year two.

Proposed Goals and Objectives for Year 3:

Goal: Same as above

Objectives: Design two new features for the app; Add capabilities to support new vending machine platforms for participant testing; Coding of change requests and/or money handling, Reconciliation, Shopping, Return modules; Completion of the deployment, fine tuning, testing and evaluation by May 31, 2015. Input from the technology partner, the grantee, the PAC, and the program participants will be incorporated into the evaluations. Participant wages will be compared to determine and document whether there was an increase in employment following implementation of this project. Participant timesheets will be compared to determine if there was an increase in efficiency on certain tasks. A formal evaluation will be submitted to TCDD.

Staff Recommendations:

Public Policy Considerations: The grantee identified the lack employment assistance as a barrier to employment for persons in the HCS waiver program. As a result of a broader advocacy effort, all Medicaid waivers will soon include both supported employment and employment assistance. Also, the successful use of accessible technology to improve employment outcomes may be of interest to state agencies involved in employment of people with disabilities or accessible technology, including DARS, TWC, and the Accessibility Council of Texas, a workgroup through DIR. **Grant Management Considerations:** No concerns; high risk monitoring (awards within awards) **Staff Recommendation:** TCDD staff recommends Council to consider continuation funding for this project and recommends discussion about expectations for considering funding for years 4 and 5.

Continuation Budget Detail Summary			
	Federal	Match	Totals
Expended Year 1 (Consultant: \$175,000)	\$225,000/\$225,000	\$75,000/\$100,456	\$300,000/\$325,456
Expended Year 2 (7 months) (Consultant: \$175,000)	\$225,000/\$193,943	\$85,000/\$128,046	\$310,000/\$321,989
Amount requested for Year 3 budget:			
I. Personnel Services	40,018	0	40,018
II. Travel	0	0	0
III. Purchased Services (\$175,000 consultants)	177,000	90,000	267,000
IV. Property/Materials	863	0	863
V. Rental/Leasing	759	0	759
VI. Utilities	6,360	0	6,360
VII. Other (Indirect Costs)	0	0	0
Budget period totals	\$225,000	\$90,000	\$315,000