

Application Report



Applicant Organization: North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Project Name: Language Access and Cultural Accessibility Proposal
Application ID: App-22-295
Funding Announcement: FY 21/22 Regional Center Funding To Improve Language Access And Cultural Competency
Requested Amount: \$1,067,816.00

Project Summary: NLACRC will improve and promote language access and cultural competency for individuals and families by hiring three Outreach Language Specialists and an LGBTQ+ Specialist. Priority languages include Armenian, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Spanish, and Farsi speakers; including the LGBTQ+, ASL, and Visually Impaired communities, to ensure regional center information is accessible, culturally and linguistically competent, technologically diverse, and in plain language.

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Section Name: Regional Center Profile

Sub Section Name: RC Organization Profile

1. Applicant Question: Description of the Cultural, Linguistic, Racial and Ethnic Diversity of the Catchment

Provide a description of your regional center that includes:

- Counties served
- Geography of the region
- Primary languages of the individuals/families
- Demographics of ethnicities and cultures
- Other relevant information to describe your communities

You may upload an attachment but you must provide a narrative here. Limit your attachments to no more than 3.

Applicant Response:

North Los Angeles County Regional Center (NLACRC) is one of 21 private, non-profit organizations under contract with the California Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to coordinate and provide community-based services to persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (consumers). NLACRC currently serves more than 29,000 individuals and has supported consumers and their families in the San Fernando, Santa Clarita, and Antelope Valleys for more than 45 years.

NLACRC, with integrity and transparency, provides lifelong partnerships and planning to persons with developmental disabilities by promoting their civil and personal rights, providing comprehensive information, advocating in cooperation with consumers, promoting and providing quality services, and supporting full participation of consumers and families in all aspects of community life.

NLACRC serves three valleys, San Fernando, Santa Clarita, and Antelope.

A. NLACRC Locations

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
San Fernando Valley (Main office)
9200 Oakdale Ave., Suite 100
Chatsworth, California 91311

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Santa Clarita Valley
25360 Magic Mountain Parkway, Suite 150
Santa Clarita, California 91355

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Antelope Valley Office
43850 10th Street West
Lancaster, CA 93534

Los Angeles County is one of the most populous counties in the United States and in the state of California.

2. Applicant Question: Description of Regional Center Efforts to Increase Language Access and Cultural Competency

Provide a description of your regional center's prior and ongoing efforts to increase language access and cultural competency in your catchment area. Examples of language efforts may include but are not limited to:

- Translation(s)
- Language interpretation
- Increase Bilingual staff
- Bilingual service provider recruitment
- Resource development to support those with a primary language other than English
- Other

You may upload a document (e.g. strategic plan or internal policy etc.) but you must provide a narrative here. Limit your attachments to no more than 3.

Applicant Response:

To ensure all information is linguistically, culturally, socio-economically, and technologically diverse; and to further our plain language efforts, NLACRC has taken the following actions:

- In 2021 NLACRC contracted with a plain language consultant to assist in the development of several plain language materials to ensure that they were meaningful resources for our community:
 - Guide for Consumer and Family Services: NLACRC developed a guide to help assist consumers and families with navigating the regional center system. The guide contains information about what services and resources are offered, who qualifies for services and resources, and how, when, and where to access what our community needs. Other topics include eligibility, services, resources, answers to frequent questions, etc.

This Guide was also reviewed by NLACRC's Disparity Committee, Community Based Organizations, and a group of individuals who serve families, including vendors, to provide recommendations.

Section Name: Language Assessment

Sub Section Name: Language Access and Culture Plan

1. Applicant Question: Language Data Review

Explain how your regional center will review, consider, and incorporate data provided by the Department on April 6th in your language assessment process. Examples of data analysis and consideration may include:

- Review data within the organization/staff
- Review with Board Members
- Review with families, community, and stakeholders
- Steps to improve data
- Steps to broadly share data
- Outreach/In-reach efforts to share data

Applicant Response:

A. The way NLACRC will review, consider, and incorporate data provided by the Department in our language assessment process is by analyzing the data and matching it to our internal figures. We will also review data with our staff, Disparity Committee, Language Access and Cultural Competency Committee, the Board of Trustees, Consumer Advisory Committee, families, and the community.

B. Our data analysis will include meticulous data organization, accurate data collection, relevance, readability, completeness, and timeliness.

C. The steps to improve data will include the following: Ask the right questions, understand which data is relevant and validate the information, interpretation of the data, so that the results are useful and meaningful, and create easy to understand visualize, so all constituents understand the results and see the big picture.

D. Steps to share data will include making it visible and easy to access at committee meetings, Board meetings, and quarterly report sessions.

E. Outreach/In-reach efforts to share data will include making the data available and accessible to our community partners and sister regional centers.

2. Applicant Question: Gathering Stakeholder Input

To better understand the language needs of your community, select what strategies your regional center will implement to gather stakeholder input. Check all that apply. Provide details for each selected strategy in the textbox. If you selected "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Listening sessions
- Surveys
- Public meetings

Applicant Comment:

We will conduct listening sessions and generate information, strategies, and tools to use the most appropriate, empowering, and inclusive language to better inform, communicate and support the following populations, Latino/Hispanic, Black/African American, Persian, Filipino, Vietnamese, LGBTQ+, ASL, and Visually Impaired.

1. Spanish
2. Armenian
3. Farsi
4. Tagalog
5. Vietnamese
6. LGBTQ+
7. ASL
8. Visually Impaired

3. Applicant Question: Listening Sessions and Public Meetings

One strategy to build trust with your community and learn about the language needs of individuals and families served by your regional center is to host listening sessions and/or public meetings. Check all of the types of listening sessions and/or meetings you plan to host to gather input on language needs. Detail may be added for each selected strategy in the textbox below. If you selected "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Host listening session(s) with self-advocates
- Host listening session(s) with family members
- Host listening session(s) with CBOs

Applicant Comment:

One strategy to build trust with our community and learn about the language needs of individuals and families served by your regional center is to host listening sessions and/or public meetings.

1. Host listening sessions with self-advocates or members of the Latino/Hispanic, Armenian, Persian, Filipino, Vietnamese, and LGBTQ+.ASL, and Visually Impaired Communities.

4. Applicant Question: Language Focus in Listening Sessions

If your language assessment includes hosting listening sessions or community meetings, identify the language(s) focus for each session planned. Check all that apply. If you selected "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Armenian
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese
- Other
- American Sign Language
- Spanish

Applicant Comment:

1. Spanish
2. Armenian
3. Farsi
4. Tagalog
5. Vietnamese
6. ASL
7. Visually Impaired

1. The focus of the Community Meetings is to improve the modes of communication for our ethnic communities, increase language access and cultural awareness, and also educate staff and the community in ways in which we can increase communication that is inclusive.
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5. Applicant Question: Survey Recipients

Surveying is one method to learn more about the needs of your community. Select individuals and/or group(s) your regional center will survey. Choose all that apply.

Regional centers including this in their plan will be required to include standardized survey questions that will be provided by the Department. Detail may be added for individuals and/or group(s) selected in the textbox below. If you selected "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Self-Advocates/Consumers
- Family Members
- Service Coordinators
- Intake Staff
- Management
- Regional Center Board Members

Applicant Comment:

Self-Advocates/Consumers, Family Members, Service Coordinators, Intake Staff, Board Members, Management, and Community Partners.

6. Applicant Question: Development of Survey

Explain how you will create the survey and include what steps you will take to store data received from the survey. Examples of steps to develop a survey:

- Review language data
 - Use professional language translation
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- For quality assurance, review draft language translations with community organizations, universities, and other community partners
- Identify distribution list

Applicant Response:

NLACRC will contract the consultant firm, Bridging Voices who will help design a survey. The consultants will craft the questions, the process for sending out the survey to participants to maximize responses, and the storage of the analysis. We will also explore contracting additional consultants with expertise in working with specific ethnic groups, ex: the Asian population

The steps may include the following:

- a. Review Culture, Ethnicity, and Race Data
 - b. Use professional language translation
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7. Applicant Question: Distribution of Survey

Select what method(s) you will use for distributing the survey. Choose all that apply. If you select "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- In-person interview
- Virtual Interview

Applicant Comment:

NLACRC will use the following distribution methods:

1. Virtual interview
 2. Phone interview
 3. In-person interviews
 4. Hardcopies will also be available for clients/consumers who do not have computer access and or prefer a hard copy or another method to participate in the survey.
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8. Applicant Question: Surveys - Language Focus

For surveys developed into videos or translated into Non-English languages, identify the language(s) your regional center will focus. Check all that apply. If you selected "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Armenian
- Farsi Persian
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese
- Other
- Spanish
- American Sign Language

Applicant Comment:

The survey translated into non-English language will focus on the following languages: Spanish, Armenian, Farsi, Tagalog, and Vietnamese, including various formats to support the ASL and Visually Impaired communities.

9. Applicant Question: Coordinating with Other Regional Centers

If you plan to coordinate with another regional center(s) who serve(s) a common diverse population (e.g., Cambodian, Hmong, and/or Slavic, etc.) or if you will consolidate efforts to meet common cultural needs within your catchment, state what steps you will take to coordinate efforts.

Applicant Response:

NLACRC has reached out to three neighboring regional centers, San Gabriel/Pomona, Lanterman, and Eastern Los Angeles. The objective was to connect, collaborate, and learn from these regional centers; strategies they have utilized to connect with clients/consumers from the Latino/Hispanic, Black/African American, Armenian, Persian, Filipino, Vietnamese, LGBTQ+, ASL, and Visually Impaired communities. From our initial meetings with the previously mentioned regional centers, we learned about the various efforts the Cultural Specialists have been working on to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion, but also efforts to improve language access and cultural competency.

Section Name: Cultural Competency Assessment

Sub Section Name: Cultural Competency Assessment

1. Applicant Question: Culture, Ethnicity and Race Data Review

Explain how your regional center will review, consider, and incorporate data provided by the Department on April 6th in your cultural competency assessment. Examples of data analysis and consideration may include:

- Review data within the organization/staff
- Review with Board Members
- Review with families, community, and stakeholders
- Steps to improve data
- Steps to broadly share data
- Outreach/In-reach efforts to share data

Applicant Response:

The way NLACRC will review, consider, and incorporate data provided by the Department in our language assessment process is by analyzing the data and matching it to our internal figures. We will also review data with our staff, Disparity Committee, Language Access and Cultural Competency Committee, the Board of Trustees, Consumer Advisory Committee, families, and the community. Additionally, we will contract a second consultant who will focus on Cultural Competency and conduct culturally competent reviews of documents and provide input in the website redesign.

- Our data analysis will include meticulous data organization, accurate data collection, relevance, readability, completeness, and timeliness.
 - The steps to improve data will include the following: Ask the right questions, understand which data is relevant and validate the information, interpretation of the data, so that the results are useful and meaningful, and create easy to understand visualize, so all constituents understand the results and see the big picture.
 - Steps to share data will include making it visible and easy to access at committee meetings, Board meetings, and quarterly report sessions.
 - Outreach/In-reach efforts to share data will include making the data available and accessible to our community partners and sister regional centers.
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2. Applicant Question: Gathering Stakeholder Input

To better understand community needs related to cultural competency, cultural humility, and/or cultural sensitivity etc., identify what strategies your regional center will implement to gather stakeholder input. Check all that apply. Provide details for each selected strategy in the textbox. If you selected "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Listening Sessions
- Other

Applicant Comment:

To better understand the community needs of the Latino/Hispanic, Black/African American, Armenian, Persian, Filipino, and Vietnamese communities and non-traditional underserved groups such as the LGBTQ+, ASL, and Visually Impaired communities. NLACRC will implement stakeholder input and survey participant input to learn straightforward ways to share culturally aware and sensitive information.

3. Applicant Question: Listening Sessions and Public Meetings

One strategy to build trust with your community and to learn about the cultural competency needs of your catchment area is to host listening sessions and/or public meetings. Check all that apply. Provide details for each selected strategy in the textbox. If you selected "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Host listening sessions with self-advocates
- Host listening sessions with family members
- Host listening sessions with community organizations
- Host public community meetings
- Other

Applicant Comment:

Two strategies to build trust with your community and to learn about the cultural competency needs of your catchment area are to host listening sessions and public meetings.

4. Applicant Question: Ethnicity Focus in Listening Sessions

If your cultural competency assessment includes hosting listening sessions or community meetings, identify the ethnicities and/or culture(s) for each session planned. Check all that apply. For example, if you will focus on the Middle Eastern community, check Other Ethnicity or Race/Multi-Cultural and provide detail of your efforts in textbox below.

Applicant Response:

- Black/African American
- Asian
- Hispanic
- Other Ethnicity or Race / Multi-Cultural
- Other
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- LGBTQ+
- Other Culture

Applicant Comment:

The small group Listening Sessions will provide an opportunity for NLACRC to connect, listen, and learn from the Latino/Hispanic, Black/African American, Armenian, Persian, Filipino, Vietnamese, LGBTQ+, ASL, and Visually Impaired communities as to what clients/consumers and families, and provide feedback on what has helped or not. The small group Listening Sessions will also suggest to NLACRC opportunities to improve its efforts to better support the unique needs of these ethnic groups.

5. Applicant Question: Survey Recipients

Surveying is one method to learn more about the needs of your community. Select individuals and/or group(s) your regional center will survey to complete your cultural competency assessment. Choose all that apply. Provide details for selected individuals and/or group(s) in the textbox. If you selected "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Self-Advocates/Consumers
- Family Members
- Service Coordinators
- Intake Staff
- Management
- Regional Center Board Members
- Community Organizations

Applicant Comment:

The individuals that NLACRC will survey will be Self-Advocates/Consumers, Family members, Service Coordinators, Intake Staff, Board Members, Management, and Community Partners.

We believe that surveying individuals from the Latino/Hispanic, Black/African American, Armenian, Persian, Filipino, Vietnamese, LGBTQ+, ASL, and Visually Impaired communities, will allow NLACRC to maximize the use of inclusive data collection and elevate the voices of these marginalized communities.

6. Applicant Question: Development of Survey

Explain how you will create the survey and include how you will store data received from the survey. Examples of steps to develop a survey:

- Culture, ethnicity and race data
- Identify distribution list
- Use professional language translation
- For quality assurance, review draft language translations with community organizations and partners

The Department will review all surveys before distribution.

Applicant Response:

NLACRC will contract the consulting firm, Bridging Voices, which will help design a cultural competency survey. The consultants will craft the questions, the process for sending out the survey to participants to maximize responses, and the storage of the analysis. We will also explore contracting additional consultants with expertise in working with specific ethnic groups, ex: the Asian population. Additionally, we will use professional language translation.

7. Applicant Question: Distribution of Survey

Select what method(s) you will use for distributing the survey. Choose all that apply. If you select "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- In-person interview
- Virtual Interview
- Phone
- Other

Applicant Comment:

NLACRC will use the following distribution methods:

1. Virtual interview
2. Phone interview
3. In-person interviews
4. Hardcopies will also be available for clients/consumers who do not have computer access and or prefer a hard copy or another method to participate in the survey.

8. Applicant Question: Surveys - Language Focus

For surveys developed into videos or translated into Non-English languages, identify the language(s) your regional center will focus on. Check all that apply. If you select "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Armenian
- Farsi Persian
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese
- Other
- American Sign Language

Applicant Comment:

NLACRC will develop surveys in Spanish, Armenian, Farsi, Tagalog, Vietnamese, ASL, and different print to support the Visually Impaired, ex: Large print. We will also make the survey available in hard copies for individuals who prefer this format; in addition, explore alternative formats that work best for clients/consumers, and families.

9. Applicant Question: Coordinating with Other Regional Centers

If you plan to coordinate with another regional center(s) who serve a common diverse population (e.g., Cambodian, Hmong, and/or Slavic, etc.) or if you will consolidate efforts to meet common cultural needs within your catchment, state what steps you will take to coordinate efforts.

Applicant Response:

NLACRC has reached out to three neighboring regional centers, San Gabriel/Pomona, Lanterman, and Eastern Los Angeles. Our goal is to connect, collaborate, and learn from these regional centers; the strategies they have utilized to connect with clients/consumers from the Latino/Hispanic, Black/African American, Armenian, Persian, Filipino, Vietnamese, LGBTQ+, ASL, and Visually Impaired communities. NLACRC will be able to identify the tools they have employed to build relationships with their communities to make resources and support available, accessible, and acceptable.

Takeaways from our initial collaboration include openness and willingness by the Cultural Specialists to work together and learn from each other strategies that can better support diversity, equity, and inclusion, but also improve the language access efforts.

The steps we will take to coordinate efforts are the following: 1. Connect with the three neighboring regional centers. 2. Identified the Cultural Specialists at the regional centers and connected with the individuals. 3. Learn from the centers the strategies they have utilized to support the Latino/Hispanic, Black/African American, Armenian, Persian, Filipino, Vietnamese, LGBTQ+, ASL, and Visually Impaired communities. 4. Hold monthly meetings to exchange information and strategies.

10. Applicant Question: Culturally Competent Language Interpretation

Describe how your Regional Center will provide consistent and culturally competent language interpretation in individual planning meetings and public meetings (e.g., Self-Determination Program, Local Advisory Committee meetings and activities etc.).

Applicant Response:

NLACRC places emphasis on providing fair, accurate, and impartial information and services in a manner that is culturally and linguistically appropriate to meet the needs of our consumers.

NLACRC currently provides Spanish interpretation for all public meetings, including meetings of the board and board committees, SDP, LVAC, and IPP/IFSP, upon request. NLACRC will continue to provide consistent and culturally competent language interpretation in other languages, for example:

Armenian, Farsi, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Spanish, including ASL, and various formats to support the Visually Impaired.

Section Name: Language Access and Culture Plan

Sub Section Name: Language Access and Culture Plan

1. Applicant Question: Regional Center Staffing

Funding for regional center staffing shall not exceed 50% of the total allocation received. If you plan to hire regional center staff to implement your Language Access and Culture Plans, explain what they will do and how they will support your efforts to improve language access and culture in your catchment. Include staffing in your budget.

All staffing requests must be approved by the Department. DDS will review and approve staffing requests within the GrantVantage system.

Applicant Response:

Our plan to hire regional center staff to implement the Language Access and Cultural Competency Plan is the following:

Create several Outreach Language Specialists to help with interpretation, translation, and connect with the communities identified in the plan, and support and provide increased awareness about the regional center: Armenian, Farsi, Tagalog, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Create an LGBTQ+ Specialist position -

Add two office Assistant positions - 1. Support the Language Access and Cultural Competency Plan 2. Provide direct support to the Public Information Dept

Attachment:

2. Applicant Question: Consultants

If your regional center proposes consultants to complete your assessment, planning process and/or implementation, provide a brief narrative as to the minimum qualifications of the consultant, provide a scope of work, and a budget. Include consultants in your budget.

All consultant requests must be approved by the Department. DDS will review and approve staffing requests within the GrantVantage system.

Applicant Response:

NLACRC will contract a Language Access Consultant to ensure that all Limited English Proficient (LEP), language impaired, deaf, and hard of hearing clients/consumers and families are able to understand the information being communicated. In addition, to interpretation and translation services.

The consultant NLACRC will contract will also be supporting our Cultural Competency efforts in conjunction with our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training; in alignment with the Cultural competency focus of this grant.

3. Applicant Question: Language Access and Cultural Goals

Timelines for completion of your language assessment and the development of your Language Access and Culture Plan will include short-term and long-term goals that may extend beyond a fiscal year. Provide at least one long-term goal and at least 2 short-term goals. All RC Language Access and Cultural Competency Plans and reports will be due as follows:

- Language Access and Culture Plan to be submitted by June 15
- Semi-Annual Progress Report due by October 1
- Semi-Annual Progress Report due by April 1

Applicant Response:

1. Contract with a Language Access Consultant to ensure that all Limited English Proficient (LEP), blind and visually impaired clients/consumers and families can understand the information being communicated. In addition, to interpretation and translation services.
 2. Bring onboard Outreach Language Specialists to help with interpretation and translation support, along with increasing awareness about the regional center in the following languages: Armenian, Spanish, Farsi, Filipino, and Vietnamese, including non-traditional groups like the Blind and Visually impaired.
 3. Redesign NLACRC website, make the website easier to access and navigate, and include culturally responsive/relevant content of the community the regional center serves.
 4. Create an LGBTQ+ position Provide support with working with the LGBTQ+ community and familiarity with issues of relevance to this marginalized community, particularly the intersections between disabilities and the LGBTQ+ community.
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