Application Report

Applicant Organization: Alta California Regional Center

Project Name: ACRC's Language Access and Cultural Competency Plan

Application ID: App-22-273

FundingAnnouncement: FY 21/22 Regional Center Funding To Improve Language Access And Cultural Competency

Requested Amount: $1,164,196.00

Project Summary: ACRC will contract with organizations and/or entities to implement the activities under the Language Access and Cultural initiative. The contractor will host activities for regional center staff, listening sessions with family members, public meetings, and distribute surveys with advocates, professionals, community-based organizations, and general stakeholders. Listening sessions will be hosted in the Spanish language and we will prioritize the American Sign Language (ASL) for translations in the project's first year.

Project Director/Manager: Herman Kothe   hkothe@altaregional.org   916-978-6506

Project Manager/Coordinator: Helen Neri   hneri@altaregional.org   19169786621

Compliance/Fiscal Officer: Aiko Blancaflor   ablancaflor@altaregional.org   916-978-6658

Section Name: Regional Center Profile

Sub Section Name: RC Organization Profile

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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:

Alta California Regional Center (ACRC) serves a ten-county catchment area including the counties of Alpine, Colusa, El Dorado, Placer, Nevada, Sacramento, Sierra, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba. ACRC serves over 27,000 clients with nine primary language groups other than English (with 50 or more clients): American Sign Language (124), Arabic (50), Cantonese Chinese (83), Farsi Persian (62), Hmong (139), Other Asian (51) Russian (171), Spanish (1774), and Vietnamese (144). The ethnic diversity of the ACRC client population includes American Indian or Alaskan Native (120), Asian (2669), Black/African American (3116), Hispanic (4582), Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (114), Other Ethnicity or Race/Multi-Cultural (3360).

Attachment:

Copy of ACRC - Language Access Culture - Data and Allocation.xlsx - EXCEL DOCUMENT

fy_20-21_pos_exp_data_-_english_1_ACRC.pdf - PDF FILE

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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:

ACRC is actively engaged in an ongoing effort to increase language access and cultural competency for all its ethnically diverse populations. ACRC employs over 80 bilingual staff and pays a bilingual stipend to attract and retain bilingual staff. Whenever possible clients are assigned to a Service Coordinator who speaks their primary language. If an ACRC staff that speaks a client's primary language is not available ACRC provides language POS-funded translation as needed. At the beginning of the disparity grant cycle, ACRC implemented a grant to translate materials into threshold languages of Hmong, Korean, Simplified Chinese, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese. ACRC has a procedure in place to translate agency information as needs are identified and the translated materials are made available for future use by others. ACRC's Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) supports a subcommittee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and they have recently created a survey to assess the language capacity of vendors in the committee. They are now distributing the survey to the greater vendor community to evaluate the language capability and gather the language needs of each vendor/provider.

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:

ACRC will launch an information campaign within the organization letting the staff and managers know of the availability of the funding to facilitate more access to consistent information and services to multi-cultural, monolingual, and diverse cultural groups in our system. Sharing the language and cultural needs information contained in the data allocation sent by DDS will be critical in soliciting the participation and support of the service coordinators in ACRC's effort to design activities needing the input of the ACRC community. We will participate in culture-related events and share the data with specific groups hosting the event. We can utilize these opportunities to share our data with the groups and solicit their input on how we can best meet the population's language needs. We can assemble public meetings inviting client advocates, community-based organizations, and developmental system advocates to gather their input on the language needs of the client populations. ACRC can also host ethnicity-specific and language-specific (such as Mexico and Mexican Spanish, Puerto Rican Spanish, and others) sessions and encourage the participation of culturally diverse families by providing food for in-person meetings and offering gift or gas cards. ACRC will review the data with the Board members and families from different backgrounds. ACRC will present language and culture data during Provider Advisory Committee and Client Advisory Committee meetings.

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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
- Public meetings
- Surveys

Applicant Comment:

ACRC will first engage with its service coordinators and managers. The cultural specialist will attend unit meetings throughout the agency.

ACRC will coordinate and facilitate four listening sessions with clients and families who speak Spanish (the most populous non-English language group).

ACRC will conduct public meetings.

ACRC Will disseminate surveys

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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 family members
- Partner with CBOs to host a community meeting
- Host listening session(s) with self-advocates
- Host public community meetings
- Host listening session(s) with CBOs

Applicant Comment:

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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:

- Spanish

Applicant Comment:

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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
- Community Organizations

Applicant Comment:

N/A

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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

- For quality assurance, review draft language translations with community organizations, universities, and other community partners

- Identify distribution list

Applicant Response:

Survey will ask open ended questions intended to identify barriers to service access and obtain recommendations for improved access.
Surveys will be translated into the language of the recipient.
Responses will be aggregated to identify trends and priorities.

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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:
- Email
- In-person interview

Applicant Comment:

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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:
- Spanish

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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:

Currently, ACRC is collaborating with Valley Mountain Regional Center, and Central Valley Regional Center for our Hmong populations through the grant approved for the Hlub Hmong Center. Depending on the outcomes of the collaboration, ACRC may continue the collaboration for mutually beneficial resources for target population ethnicities, such as Hispanic, Vietnamese, or Russian.

Section Name: Cultural Competency Assessment

Sub Section Name: Cultural Competency Assessment

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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:

ACRC will launch an information campaign within the organization letting the staff and managers know of the availability of the funding to facilitate more access to consistent information and services to multi-cultural, monolingual, and diverse cultural groups in our system. Sharing the cultural needs information contained in the data allocation sent by DDS will be critical in soliciting the participation and support of the service coordinators in ACRC's effort to design activities needing the input of the ACRC community. We will participate in culture-related events and share the data with specific groups hosting the event. We can utilize these opportunities to share our data with the groups and solicit their input on how we can best respond to meet the population's needs specific to cultural diversity. We can assemble public meetings inviting client advocates, community-based organizations, and developmental system advocates to gather their input on the cultural needs of the client populations. ACRC can also host ethnicity-specific sessions and encourage the participation of culturally diverse families by providing food for in-person meetings and offering gift or gas cards. ACRC will review the data with the Board members and families from different backgrounds. ACRC will present cultural data during Provider Advisory Committee and Client Advisory Committee meetings.

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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
- Public meetings
- Surveys

Applicant Comment:

ACRC will first engage with its service coordinators and managers. The cultural specialist will attend unit meetings throughout the agency.

ACRC will coordinate and facilitate listening sessions with the identified nine language groups.

ACRC will conduct public meetings.

ACRC Will disseminate surveys

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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 public community meetings
- Host listening sessions with family members
- Host listening sessions with community organizations
- Partner with local CBOs to host a community meeting
- Host listening sessions with self-advocates

Applicant Comment:

ACRC will prioritize hosting listening sessions with clients and family members and community organizations that work directly with the ethnicity and culture identified in the DDS letter on April 6th. We will hold community public meetings for self-advocates, professionals working with the multicultural communities, and those interested in forwarding the interests of the culturally and linguistically diverse populations.

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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
- Hispanic

Applicant Comment:

The ethnicities chosen for this section are the primary ethnicities comprising Alta's communities, as indicated in the DDS letter on April 6th. These groups will be prioritized for listening sessions to collect cultural competency, humility, and sensitivity data. We will start the listening sessions in 2022 with the understanding that the completion of all listening session activities may go well beyond the current year.

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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 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
- Community Organizations

Applicant Comment:

Surveys will be used as a tool in conjunction with listening sessions to help collect, track, analyze and report data trends and identified priorities.

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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:

Survey will ask open ended questions intended to identify barriers to service access and obtain recommendations for improved access.

Surveys will be translated into the language of the recipient.

Responses will be aggregated to identify trends and priorities.

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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:

- Email
- In-person interview

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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 on. Check all that apply. If you select "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- English
- Spanish

Applicant Comment:

ACRC will focus on the nine languages that we identified in the dropdown box. In the beginning stages of the Language Access and Cultural Competency Initiative we will focus our attention and resources on the nine languages identified in the DDS Allocation letter.

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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:

Currently, ACRC is collaborating with Valley Mountain Regional Center, and Central Valley Regional Center for our Hmong populations through the grant approved for the Hlub Hmong Center. Depending on the outcomes of the collaboration, ACRC may continue the collaboration for mutually beneficial resources for target population ethnicities, such as Hispanic, Vietnamese, or Russian. ACRC is cognizant that this collaboration may be changed, expanded, or stopped altogether to give way to other meaningful collaborative partnerships.

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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:

ACRC will prioritize hiring and retaining staff that have the qualifications necessary to meet client language and cultural needs by offering a bi-lingual stipend to qualified staff. ACRC will outsource when needed to obtain translation services for public meeting and information sessions. ACRC will contract with a Language Access and Culture Specialist to facilitate conducting listening sessions and public meetings. Materials will be translated as needed through professional translation agencies. The Language Access and Culture Specialist will train on ACRC's intake and eligibility processes, individual program plan (IPP), service delivery related processes, and interagency collaborations with generic resources such as the Department of Rehabilitation, Medi-Cal, and other agencies relevant to client care.

Section Name: Language Access and Culture Plan

Sub Section Name: Language Access and Culture Plan

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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:

ACRC will provide a bi-lingual stipend for qualified staff meeting identified client language needs.

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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:

ACRC will contract professional consultants or agencies to fulfill the following:

Contract for a Language Access and Culture Specialist role inclusive of admin functions to work in conjunction with Alta's Cultural Diversity Specialist to implement the research and data analysis from public meetings and listening sessions. They will connect and collaborate with clients, families and community-based and cultural organizations.

Facilitate listening sessions and public meetings, gather data through recording and written reports and process the collected data.

Accessibility to telephonic and/or in person translation services with staff from the cultures who speak the nine primary languages identified for ACRC.
Staff will be trained on ACRC service-related processes and will later provide information/orientation sessions to the nine language groups inclusive of support with intake and eligibility.

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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:

Short-term goal #1) to contract with the Language Access and Cultural Specialist. This position should be hired before October 2022 and onboarded, trained, and mentored for the initiative's preliminary activities.

Short-term goal #2) hire and retain bi-lingual staff to meet the needs of the nine identified primary language groups of ACRC.

Long Term goals include holding public listening sessions and collecting the data to identify a priority for the agency to support our multi-cultural, multi-lingual, and monolingual communities. These activities will occur in eight primary languages and are expected to go beyond the first 12 months of the initiative.