

**Autism Speaks
Family Service Community Grants
Request for Applications**

Introduction

Autism Speaks invites grant applications that promote services that will enhance the lives of those affected by autism spectrum disorders. Recognizing that there are multiple needs in this expansive and varied community, the focus of these grants will be on proposals that are innovative and in some cases collaborative and serve to build the field of services for individuals with autism and expand the capacity to effectively serve this growing community. Autism Speaks will accept family services community grant proposals that address **one** of the following areas of need:

Education

- Building the field and scope of educators and trainers, by providing continuing education and training to those working directly with individuals with autism spectrum disorders
- Providing funding for consultation and hands on training to improve education for individuals with autism
- Providing funding to increase the capacity of service providers
- Sponsoring conferences that provide several sessions of training and hands-on opportunities to demonstrate knowledge
- Training professionals to interact more effectively with individuals with autism spectrum disorders

Recreation/Community Activities

- Social skills training that provides peer modeling and inclusion with typically developing peers
- Recreation and athletic programs for individuals with autism spectrum disorders

Equipment/Supportive Technology

- Augmentative communication devices (for schools or agencies, not individuals)
- Software to enhance communication (for schools and agencies, not individuals)
- Assistive technology (for schools and agencies, not individuals)

Young Adult/Adults Services

- Pre-vocational and vocational training
- Transition planning
- Residential services
- Recreation programs for adults
- Life/community integration skills

Funds can be applied to support new or the expansion of existing projects. **Autism Speaks will not award grants to individuals or fund an individual or family for participation in personal programs.** We encourage individuals to ask local providers and organizations to submit proposals that will meet our stated goals. The amount requested should be in the **\$5,000 - \$25,000 range**, and multi-year grants will not be awarded.

Autism Speaks Family Service Community Grants **do not fund scientific research projects**. For information about science grants funded by Autism Speaks please click on the following link:
<http://www.autismspeaks.org/science/research/grants/index.php>

Proposal Submission

Please Note

- Only applications submitted through the Autism Speaks Grants Administration system at <http://grants.autismspeaks.org/research/login.asp> will be accepted for review.
- **Online registration begins July 25, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. (EST).**
- New applicants must first register with the Grants system. The registration page is here: http://grants.autismspeaks.org/research/signup_form.asp. **Please be sure to choose the role “Investigator”.**
- The “Responsible Officer” is a financial officer or authorizing official who can approve the budget. **This role must be attributed to a person other than the Investigator.**
- **All files MUST be uploaded as a PDF (Adobe Acrobat) to the application.**
- Applications must not exceed the specified page limits.
- Font size must be at least 11 point Arial font with 1-inch margins all around.
- **Proposals are due by September 26, 2008 11:59 p.m. (EST).**

Webinar

- Autism Speaks will be hosting a webinar for applicants to learn more about the Family Services Community Grants application process and to ask any questions. The webinar is scheduled for August 12, 2008 at 1:00 p.m. (EST). If you are interested in participating in the webinar, please send your name and email address to FamilyServicesGrants@autismspeaks.org.
- Please note that it is not necessary to participate in the webinar in order to apply.

Completing the Proposal

1. **Register Your Project.** Click on Begin New Application. **While no letter of intent needs to be uploaded**, you do need to:
 - a. Enter the Title of Project (less than 128 characters, spaces included)
 - b. Choose Family Services Community Grant Summer 2008 (drop down menu for Award Type)
 - c. Choose **one** Keyword (Education, Recreation/Community Activities Equipment/Supportive Technology, or Young Adult/Adults Services)
 - d. Click on Submit Pertinent Project Information (at the bottom of the page)
2. **Project Abstract.** One (1) page maximum. Provides a summary of the project. Upload to “Lay Abstract” under “Keywords and Abstract”.

3. **Project Narrative.** Not to exceed six (6) pages. Upload to “Aims” under “Research Plan.” **The following questions must be answered in the order they appear below. If they are not answered, the proposal will not be considered. Please copy these questions into your narrative and answer them accordingly.**
- a. Description (suggested length 2 pages)
 - i. Which of the specified areas of need is the project addressing?
 - ii. What specific needs or problems would be addressed through this initiative?
Please include any supporting documentation of the methodology or activities used in the initiative in the “Exhibit” section of the application.
 - iii. Who are the primary beneficiaries of this project?
 - iv. Please **provide numbers** for the following.
How many individuals are currently being served by this program (if applicable)?
How many individuals would be served with funding from Autism Speaks?
If there are new participants as a result of funding, please explain how the individuals will be chosen.
 - v. What is the capacity of the applicant to carry out the project? Please include staff experience as it relates to the proposal.
 - vi. How will the project be announced to the community?
 - b. Project Objectives. (suggested length 2 pages)
 - i. What planning activities will take place before project startup?
 - ii. How will progress be monitored?
 - iii. What are the staff responsibilities?
 - iv. What is the role of collaborating organizations, if applicable?
 - v. List the project’s measurable objectives and activities.
 - c. Evaluation or Project Plan. (suggested length < 1 page)
 - i. How will the successes, challenges and impact of the project be evaluated?
(include how the project objectives will be evaluated and how participants input will be incorporated)
 - ii. Who will design and carry out the project evaluation?
 - d. Project Impact. (suggested length < 1 page)
 - i. How will the project make a difference in the lives of individuals with autism spectrum disorder?
 - ii. Describe the potential for sustainability beyond the funding period through alternate sources of funding or a change in organizational systems or procedures that will sustain the project’s impact.
4. **Budget.** Please complete the budget table, and provide written budget justifications to detail each item on the budget form. Include calculation(s) used to estimate costs. An amount not to exceed 10% (inclusive) of the total award may be used for Sponsoring Institution's indirect (overhead) costs. The total award including indirect costs cannot exceed the annual maximum award allowed. (See other Restrictions on next page.)

5. **Other Attachments.** No page limit (but limit each upload file to 1 MB).
 - a. Letters of Support or Letters of Arrangements from collaborating organizations delineating what their relationship will be with the project. (Upload in “Collaborative Arrangements”) ***Optional***
 - b. **Resumes of applicant(s) and a list of Board members and key staff** (Upload to “Biographical Sketches” – note: does **not** need to be in NIH format) ***Required***
 - c. **Other Funding** - Provide a list of other contributions and sources of support and matching funds for the project as well as any other applications currently being solicited for the project (Upload in “Current and Pending Support”) ***Required***
 - d. **A brief history of the organization, its mission statement, and a description of current activities** (Upload in “Exhibits”) ***Required***
 - e. Other supporting materials relevant to the proposed project. (“Exhibits”) ***Optional***
 - f. **The Profit & Loss statement** (aka Income Statement or Statement of Activities) from your agency’s two most recent audited financial statements. (“Exhibits”). Please do not send the entire audited financial statements. ***Required***

Endorsing & Submitting the Proposal

Before the proposal can be submitted online, it needs to be endorsed by your institution.

1. Enter a Responsible Official in “Institutional Info & Contacts”. A Responsible Official (RO) is someone at the grantseeker organization, other than the applicant/PI, who can endorse the proposal. On the RO line, click “View”. Enter in the contact’s email address and click “Look Up E-mail”. If they are not already in the system, click on Save Selected Contact and fill out their information.
2. Once you have finished uploading files for your proposal, click on “E-Mail Responsible Official” in “Approvals & Status”. The RO will receive an email notification with instructions on endorsing your proposal. It is recommended you call or email this person to ensure they received this notification.
3. The RO will be instructed to review the budget and proposal, and endorse in “Approvals & Status”. You will receive an email that endorsement is complete.
4. You can now go into “Preview and Submit Proposal” to complete your submission.

Restrictions

Family Services Community Grants cannot be used for:

- General operating costs of established organizations and agencies
- Salaries of administrative staff or contract persons not directly providing service to individuals with autism spectrum disorder
- Salaries of existing staff members, unless they will be working extra hours in order to provide direct services for the program being funded.
- Endowment or debt reduction
- Fund-raising activities

Applications may not be faxed or emailed. Applications should be submitted electronically using the Autism Speaks Online Grant Administration System. Applications that are late, are incomplete, exceed the maximum page limitation, or do not adhere to the required format will not be reviewed.

Announcement Information

Applicants will be notified by e-mail of the application's status no later than December 23, 2008. All grant awards shall be posted on the Autism Speaks website. All outcomes will be posted after the completion of the project.

Payment of Awards

The average grant award will be in the \$5,000 - \$25,000 range. Multi-year grants will not be awarded.

The recipient of any grant from Autism Speaks must use the funds awarded for the specific purpose for what they were originally intended. Autism Speaks requires that a detailed accounting of all funds along with a follow-up report on the activity or activities funded is submitted no more than a year from the date of the award. Any funds not used in the above manner specified must be returned to Autism Speaks.

If you have questions regarding the Autism Speaks Family Service Community Grants application please contact Lisa Goring, Director of Family Services at Lgoring@autismspeaks.org. If you have questions regarding the web-based grants administration system, please contact Serena Selkin at sselkin@autismspeaks.org.

**Autism Speaks
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Policies and Procedures

Autism Speaks will not award grants to individuals or fund an individual or family for participation in personal programs. We encourage individuals to ask local providers and organizations to submit proposals that will meet our stated goals.

Priority will be given to agencies or organizations that address the needs of those who have little access to services. Agencies that provide services to the underserved are encouraged to submit proposals.

Autism Speaks Family Services Community Grants may partner with other organizations to provide additional funding for projects that match our objectives.

Grant awardees are required to wait at least one year before submitting another application.

Autism Speaks would ask that all service providers or programs made available as a result of the Autism Speaks Community Grants be submitted for entry into the Autism Speaks Family Services Resource Guide.

Autism Speaks would like acknowledgement on materials produced by the grant recipient communicating the grant program based upon the terms outlined in the grant agreement and the Autism Speaks Family Services Community Grants logo must be used in all acknowledgements.

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Grant Review Process

Grants will be reviewed in a two-tiered process:

Tier 1 – Community Grants Review Committee

Each grant will be reviewed by a parent and an autism professional. All reviewers will rate the grants on a score of 1 – 5 (1 is the highest and 5 is the lowest) and provide comments. Every effort will be made to vary the reviewers as much as possible. No one individual will review more than four grants per review cycle.

Volunteer Parent Reviewer – Parent of an individual with autism spectrum disorders with knowledge of the area of the grant.

Volunteer Autism Professional – A professional in the autism community who has experience in running successful service entities.

Tier 2 – Family Services Committee Members

All grants that receive a final score of 2.5 or better will be forwarded to the Family Services Committee. The Family Service Committee will make the final recommendations for grant awards. The recommendations of the Family Services Committee will then be presented to the Autism Speaks Board of Directors. Final approval will be awarded at the December Autism Speaks Board of Directors meeting.

Tier 1 and Tier 2 reviewers will look for:

- Field building -- increasing services (new opportunities) and the capacity of service providers
- Number of individuals served; including the ability to serve individuals that had not previously been served by the organization
- Innovation and creativity
- Geography
- Ability to address the needs of the underserved
- Replicability
- Services provided for individuals across the spectrum
- Clarity of proposal with defined interim and outcome measures
- Organization/thought/presentation
- Reasonable/Detailed line item budget
- Qualifications of the organization/principals/advisors
- Sustainability/viability of the project and organization (based on history, income and expense info, and qualifications).

In some cases, our Volunteer Professional Advisory Committee members may provide guidance to grantees in order to increase the success or sustainability of the project or entity. The grant award may be contingent on the grantee working with a volunteer autism professional.

In some cases, we may request a site visit and/or an interview with the individual(s) supervising the project.

Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest include but are not limited to an entity that currently provides service for a family member of the Family Services Committee, Autism Speaks Board of Directors, Autism Speaks staff, Parent Reviewer or Volunteer Autism Professional Reviewer. All conflicts must be declared at the beginning of the process. Anyone with a conflict of interest is not permitted to participate in the discussion of the grant proposal for that entity, and will be asked to leave the meeting during the discussion. Solicitation of individual Autism Speaks Board of Directors or staff member, as well as any member of the Family Services Committee, Parent Reviewer or the Volunteer Autism Professional Reviewer by potential recipients for specific grant request is prohibited. All recommendations made by the Family Services Committee to the Autism Speaks Board of Directors are based on the merit and feasibility of the proposal as outlined. Final approval is required by the Autism Speaks Board of Directors before funding may occur.