

Autism Speaks Grants Program

Applicant Guidebook

Since 2013, the Autism Speaks Local Impact Grant Program has awarded over \$3.6 million to 750 organizations across the country and served tens of thousands of people with autism, their caregivers and families, teachers, therapists and neurotypical peers.

The Autism Speaks Local Impact Grant Program accepts applications from non-profit, 501(c)3 organizations for grant awards up to \$5,000.

The objective of the Autism Speaks Local Impact Grants is three-fold:

- to promote local services that enhance the lives of those affected by autism spectrum disorders
- to expand the capacity to effectively serve the ASD community
- to increase the field of national service providers

Autism Speaks places a significant emphasis on the product or deliverable of each proposal to benefit the autism community beyond those participating in the program. Deliverables include videos, manuals and curricula that may be shared on the Autism Speaks website for the broader community. In addition, Autism Speaks seeks to ensure proposals provide opportunities for individuals with varying levels of need. Careful consideration will also be given to applications that specifically address the needs of underserved communities - which can include rural towns, non-English speaking populations, and other vulnerable groups.

Beginning in early January, we will accept applications for programs to be funded in May. All information on the process can be found here:

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/grants-service-providers>

TIMELINE*:

- **January 15:** Application Process opens
- **March 9:** Final date for Applications
- **March 9 – April 20:** Review committees meet and make decisions on recommendations
- **April 20 - April 30:** Recommendations are reviewed, and grants approved
- **Week of May 4:** All applicants notified, and announcements made on social media
- **Starting May 15:** Funds disbursed upon receipt of contracts
- **March 2021:** Final Report from recipients due to Autism Speaks

*Dates subject to change

Frequently Asked Questions about the process are below:

1. Can individuals apply for an Autism Speaks Local Impact Grant?

Answer: No. Non-profit organizations with a 501(c)3 exempt status that have been in existence for at least ONE YEAR may apply.

2. Can organizations outside the United States apply?

Answer: No, only organizations in the 50 United States plus the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands may apply.

3. What type of organization can apply?

Answer: 501(c)3 exempt organizations with at least three staff members (either paid or volunteer) can apply. We do not fund an idea for an organization.

4. What requirements must an organization have to apply?

Answer: The non-profit organization must have a federal tax ID number, at least three volunteer or paid staff members and an established infrastructure which includes a physical location and a website.

5. Can school districts apply?

Answer: Yes, but we will not consider programs that should be legally funded by the school district under the IDEA. An example is the provision of assistive technology to students with autism.

6. Can an organization that was funded last year through the Local Impact Grants Program apply again in 2020?

Answer: Yes, if it's for a different program than the one that was funded last year, and if a final report has been submitted by March 2020.

7. Can funding go towards programs for individuals with other disabilities?

Answer: No. All funding MUST be spent on programs serving individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

8. What is the maximum amount an organization may request?

Answer: \$5,000.

9. How long is the grant period? Is it multi-year?

Answer: The grant period is seven-nine months, beginning once the check is received.

10. What type of funding do you provide?

Answer: We provide funding to support programs at existing organizations in the following categories:

- **Education/Training**

- *Building the field and scope of educators and other professionals who support individuals with autism, by providing continuing education and training*
- *Providing funding for consultation and hands on training to improve educational programs for individuals with autism*
- *Providing a specific service such as ABA, legal service, etc. to people with autism and the community*
- **Animal Therapy**
 - *Equine programs*
 - *Service Dogs*
 - *Other animal-related therapeutic activities*
- **Culture - Arts, Dance, Museums, Music, Theatre**
 - *Programs relating to the above activities*
- **Health and Fitness**
 - *Athletic and wellness programs*
- **Social Skills**
 - *Social skills training to provide peer modeling and inclusion with age-matched, typically developing peers; social learning; social relatedness; social awareness; and social communication. We fund both integrated and non-integrated programming.*
- **Summer Camp Scholarships**
 - *To offer tuition assistance for financially disadvantaged campers with autism ONLY for the summer of 2020*
- **Supportive Technology/Sensory Equipment**
 - *iPads*
 - *Smartboards*
 - *Sensory equipment (occupational therapy equipment, toys, etc.)*
- **Swimming and Water Safety**
 - *Scholarships, staff training and equipment for teaching swimming and water safety to individuals with autism*
- **Young Adult/Adult Services**
 - *Pre-vocational and vocational training*
 - *Transition planning*
 - *Residential services*
 - *Recreation programs specifically for adults*
 - *Life/Community integration skills*
 - *Health/Safety*

11. What are some things that you do not fund?

Answer: We DO NOT fund the following items:

- *Endowment, debt reduction, or fundraising activities*

- *Administrative salaries, i.e. those not directly working in the program for which you are requesting funding*
- *Food, apparel or equipment that can be donated in kind*
- *Rent or financing of buildings*

12. Do you fund staff salaries?

Answer: Yes, for new or additional staff (or staff hours) who work directly with individuals with autism in the new or expanded program.

13. Do you accept applications via email or mail?

Answer: No. We only accept applications using the online form:

<https://www.grantinterface.com/autismspeaksfs/Common/LogOn.aspx>

14. When and how will organizations be notified of the result of their application?

Answer: All applicants will be notified VIA EMAIL, prior to an announcement on Autism Speaks' social media platforms, the week of May 4, 2020.

15. What kind of reporting is required for awarded proposals?

Answer: An online questionnaire will be emailed to the grantee's main point of contact and is due to our Director of Grants by end of March 2021.

16. Will unsuccessful applicants receive feedback as to why their proposal was not chosen?

Answer: Yes, that information will be provided upon request by the Director of Grants.

17. How are applications reviewed?

Answer: All applications are reviewed first internally to make sure the program is eligible, and guidelines have been followed. Next, applications are reviewed by volunteer review committees who score each proposal and offer feedback to arrive at a final ranking. Applications are reviewed for quality of program, impact on individuals living with autism and local impact. The top proposals in each location are recommended to Autism Speaks leadership for final approval.

18. Will there be an opportunity to learn more about the process and ask questions of Autism Speaks staff?

Answer: Yes! Information will be posted on <https://www.autismspeaks.org/grants-service-providers>. The Director of Grants is available via email throughout the process.

