

**Request for Proposal**  
to provide  
**Project Management and Website/  
Online Platform Creation**  
for  
**Ability Now Bay Area**  
and  
**Associated Service Providers**

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Date of Issuance: July 15, 2019

Letters of Interest/ Intent Due: August 15, 2019

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# I. General Project Description

## A. Introduction

Ability Now Bay Area (ANBA) has partnered with other providers (Ala Costa Centers, California Autism Foundation, Dungarvin, Harambee Community Services, Las Trampas, and Futures Explored), and was granted funding from the State of California and the Department of Developmental Services to create a **Communication and Training Modules Online Toolbox** to serve the greater Intellectual/ Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) community.

ANBA is leading this group of providers located in California's Alameda and Contra Costa Counties to develop a platform to improve the access to Person Centered Thinking and Planning for persons with communication challenges. Communication challenges to be addressed include, but are not limited to, individuals with limited or no verbal communication capacity, visual impairment, hearing impairment, auditory processing, etc. Service providers all over the state could benefit from additional tools and technology to better facilitate engagement and determination of personal choice and preference. This request for proposal is to cover the primary aspects of program management and website development.

## B. Purpose

The purpose of creating this online platform is to address a glaring need in the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) community, ensuring access to personal choice, and expression of preferences and desires for those with limited or no discernable communication abilities. Accessing what is important to an individual can often be challenging and can present barriers to independence, choice, and the accuracy of a person-centered plan. The aim of this project is to provide stakeholders, especially organizations supporting the I/DD community, as well as service recipients, the ability to direct their lives in meaningful ways, improve their access and means to inform the world around them, to highlight strengths, and to maximize opportunity and personal potential for their future, including employment.

The online toolbox will include topics that encompass four or five (perhaps more) modules of information and training to provide tools related to access for Person Centered Thinking and choice. These topics include but are not limited to, Alternative Augmentative Communication (AAC), Functional Communication Training, Reciprocal Language, Informed Decision Making, Person-Centered Choice Making, and/or AAC applications and assessment for users.

The recipient or awardee of this proposal will be working collaboratively with a few separate entities to provide direction and content review and gathering for the online platform. In addition to the service providers led by Ability Now Bay Area, additional expertise will be contracted out in the areas of Person-Centered Thinking, Speech and Language Pathology, Alternative Augmentative Communication, and/or Applied Behavior Analysis, as determined by the provider group. These Subject Matter Experts will serve as primary suppliers of content and reviewers of the site/ platform as developed, but the role of the contracted Project Manager will be the adherence to associated timelines and tasks related to the completion of this project.

All throughout the process, additional perspectives from the I/DD community (parents, self-advocates, participants) will have designated opportunities along the dedicated timeline to provide input, perspective, and suggestions in the area of product/ content development, ease of access and usage of

created modules, and other areas of interest. The contracted Project Manager will be responsible for gathering information, analyzing and assessing the feedback and making necessary adjustments from all groups of interest within the stakeholder community.

The ultimate goal is to create a resource rich, self- sustaining platform that can actively address the needs of a growing segment of the I/DD community that are currently underserved and provide resources and tools for service providers. This platform will be sustained by donation, user subscription, and other streams of interconnected revenue, and will ideally represent a minimal cost to the I/DD stakeholder community, and service providers. Any income generated will be used to maintain the site/platform, add additional content, develop additional resources, or to keep the information and practices current and progressive.

## **C. Background**

Ability Now Bay Area (ANBA) is a non-profit organization that has been serving the Intellectual and Developmental Disability community since 1939. Over the next 8 decades, operating initially as the Spastic Children's Society of Alameda County, then the United Cerebral Palsy Association of Alameda County, ANBA provides services to the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities community in Adult Education, Computer Learning, Health and Wellness, Small Business Development, and Community Integration. ANBA educates and empowers adults with disabilities and their families in the San Francisco Bay Area through advocacy, building independence, and wellness.

People with I/DD are provided many services in California because of the Lanterman Act. Many services people receive are paid for with state and federal money from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The state of California, and providers must comply with what is called the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Final Rule, which comes from CMS in order to receive federal funding. This rule sets requirements for HCBS settings, which are places where people live or receive services. Each state has until March 2022 to help providers comply with the HCBS Final Rule.

The goal of the HCBS Final Rule is to enhance the quality of services provided to the I/DD community by maximizing opportunities and choices for individuals, promoting that individuals have full access to the community, establishing that individuals have the opportunity to work and spend time with other people in their community who do not have disabilities, ensuring individual preferences are supported and rights are protected and developing person-centered service planning requirements, which includes a process driven and directed by the individual to identify needed services and supports.

Over the past three fiscal years (July-June), the State of California and the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) has had a pool of available funds to be awarded to providers who apply for funding promoting the system's and individual provider's adapting to the HCBS Final Rule. Individual providers have been accessing these resources, and through a larger discussion of overall community needs related to the Final Rule and the I/DD community at large, an opportunity to pool intellectual capital arose and like-minded providers chose to band together and collaborate toward a few targeted projects, this proposal being one of them.

A joint grant proposal was sent to the State of California and the Department of Developmental Services in December 2018 and was awarded to the provider group led by ANBA in May 2019, with funding that extends until March of 2021.

During the upcoming fiscal year-2019/2020, ANBA is partnering with the following service providers/agencies with the Bay Area: Ala Costa Centers, California Autism Foundation, Dungarvin, Harambee Community Services, Las Trampas, and Futures Explored. This group is charged with the task of implementing an awarded DDS grant proposal to address a glaring need for the greater service community, and specifically for those persons being served with communication challenges, including non-verbal individuals.

ANBA and the other participating service providers in the IDD community agreed to move forward with seeking proposals that would take into consideration the current and future models of services, specifically those for the training and teaching of adults with autism, intellectual/developmental disabilities, and cognitive delays, and the general service industry to promote practices aligned with Person-Centered Practices, Thinking, and Planning, and Home and Community Based Service federal guidelines that will go into effect in March 2022.

## **II. Summary- Scope of Work**

### **A. Project Structure**

The initial project shall consist of the following:

- Budget and Financial Projections for the Project
- Project Management
- Development of Platform for Content Delivery
- Coordination of Content Development and Subject Matter Experts
- Creation of Resource Library
- Video Demonstration and other mixed-use media throughout

### **B. Project Scope and Deliverables**

Upon completion of the aforementioned, the following services/ areas of expertise may need to be accessed, and subsequently negotiated/contracted. If there are additional required areas needed for project completion, those will be taken into consideration.

- Graphic Design
- Front-End Development
- On-Site SEO
- Content Strategy
- Quality Assurance and Testing
- Content Migration
- Visual Identity
- User Experience and User Interface (UX/UI) Planning
- Video Production and Layout
- Marketing/ Branding

### **C. Site Map Concept**

- Home Page- with login and payment entry options, and donation opportunity

- Training Modules for Individual Users
  - Person-Centered Planning
  - Person-Centered Thinking
  - Informed Decision Making
  - Using AAC
- Training Modules for Parents and Family Members
  - Person-Centered Planning
  - Person-Centered Thinking
  - Informed Decision Making
  - Using AAC
- Training Modules for Direct Support Professionals/ Service Providers
  - Person-Centered Planning
  - Person-Centered Thinking
  - Informed Decision Making
  - Using AAC
- Communication Templates and Tools
- Resource Library
- Tools/ Process for Self-Direction
- Donation Page
- Support
- FAQs
- Contact Us

## **D. Timeline and Milestones**

Timeline and milestones will be determined by the collaborative parties. All funding for this project will conclude by February 2021, and the project will need to be completed in totality by February 2021- including website/platform, content development and saturation, integrated feedback from stakeholders, collaboration with the provider group and content expertise provided by outside Subject Matter Experts.

Submitted proposals should include a tentative project calendar for web/platform-based components, and temporal benchmarks for content inclusion, beta testing, gathering feedback from stakeholders, and evaluation.

Regularly scheduled meetings will be conducted between the Awardee and the collaborative group of service providers to check progress, address issues/ concerns, and to execute areas of the project as appropriate. These meetings will be determined at the mutual convenience of the parties involved, but will be held either in-person or remotely on a monthly basis, at minimum.

## **E. Functional Requirements**

The website needs to have user login capability, payment processing, donation reception, the ability to update content easily- using Word Press for example. Access to APIs that access and reflect social media and other web based applications.

The Awardee will provide full web development services as outlined in the contract scope description. The website/ platform functions, features, layout, and user experience. Content within the site will either be developed, sourced, or drawn from additional external Subject Matter Experts in the areas of

Alternative Augmentative Communication, Speech and Language Pathology, Person Centered Thinking and/or Informed Decision Making, and the awardee will be responsible for coordinating the content and additional parties as needed. The website must conform to all applicable and appropriate laws, ordinances, and codes in the design and implementation phases, including the latest ADA practices, translation capabilities, and standards related to web design. The Awardee's services will initially be contracted for web platform development, project management, and coordination of any outside Subject Matter Experts included on the project. All other phases will be open to negotiation. Responses to the proposal should indicate any changes in the scope of services.

## **F. Budget**

The proposal should include prospective rates related to the range of services that can meet the parameters related to the project in specific areas, and those rates will be open to negotiation where appropriate. The entirety of the awarded funding budgeted for website design and program management will not exceed \$150,000 from the beginning of the contractual agreement to project conclusion in February 2021.

## **III. Submission of the Proposal**

### **A. Disclosures**

All costs for pursuit of this contract through the proposal process shall be at the Applicant's expense. Ability Now Bay Area (as the lead designee for the collaborative group of service organizations) reserves the right to stop the project at any time during the process.

### **B. Pre-Proposal Meeting**

Prior to submission of the proposal, interested Applicants may schedule a meeting with key members of the collaborative Online Toolbox providers, as determined by Ability Now Bay Area. The purpose of this meeting is to provide interested parties with an opportunity to review aspects of the RFP and proposal or obtain clarification on aspects of the project. A meeting can be done in-person, electronically, or telephonically.

Should Applicants be interested in a pre-proposal meeting, the following dates and times are listed below for conference calls. Please contact Leslie Visbal, Executive Director if there is interested in participating in a Pre-Proposal Meeting, find the contact information below.

*Monday, July 22, 2019 @ 10:30 am*

*Monday, July 29, 2019 @ 10:30 am*

### **C. Communications and Site Visits**

All communications and scheduled site visits prior to the submission of the proposal shall be conducted through the Executive Director of Ability Now Bay Area. All communication to the remainder of the collaborative providers will be sent as appropriate.

**Leslie Visbal, Executive Director**  
**(510) 531-3323**  
**LWEROSH@ABILITYNOWBA.ORG**

## **D. Proposal Submission**

The intent of this RFP is to encourage responses that clearly communicate the Applicant's understanding of Ability Now Bay Area's requirements and the planned approach to successfully provide a quality project on time, and within budget. The proposals will provide this information in a concise and well organized manner.

Proposing firms or parties shall submit their proposal and all required and supporting documents and information ELECTRONICALLY by the deadline date and time. This medium of delivery is required.

Proposing firms or parties who submit their proposals and supporting documents will do so to this email address: [proposals@abilitynowba.org](mailto:proposals@abilitynowba.org)

**Proposals must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time on August 15, 2019.**

Proposals received after this time, or delivered in any other medium will not be accepted.

### **Proposal contents will contain the following:**

1. Cover Letter - The cover letter shall introduce the Applicant and summarize its qualifications. Include all appropriate certifications and licensure for the firm, indicate that the Applicant agrees to the proposed scope of services and/or has included proposed amendments to the proposal. The cover letter shall also provide the name, address, phone, fax and e-mail for the designated contact person for all correspondence through selection of a Consultant for this project.
2. General Background Introduction - To facilitate comparisons during evaluation, the following information may be listed in the order as shown.
  - a. Generally describe the scope of services provided by the Applicant.
  - b. Your firm's organizational chart, current staff size, and qualifications (i.e. resume, CV, etc.) of your team, with indicators of which staff would be working on this project.
  - c. A brief representative listing of similar projects completed by the firm.
  - d. Identification of any current regional center vendorizations for developmental disabilities services in California.
  - e. Other information that might aid the selection committee in ascertaining the Applicant's qualifications.
  - f. List any lawsuit or litigation and the result of that action, resulting from any job undertaken by the firm or by its sub-consultants, which is still pending or has occurred on projects within the last five years.
3. Project Understanding and Approach - Describe your understanding of this project and your vision for the project based on the specification and desires outlined in this request.

4. Project Time Line and Budget - Please provide a basic schedule with major milestones for design deliverables for master planning and programming and associated line-item budget.
5. References - Please provide a minimum of 2 references for each completed project. The information shall include the following:
  - Client Identification
  - Project Title
  - Location
  - Name and Title of Contact Person
  - Contact Telephone Number
6. Fee Proposal/Fee Schedule - A fee proposal shall be included for the master planning and programming phase.

## **IV. Selection Procedures**

### **A. Interviews**

Following the initial review and screening of proposals, the most qualified candidates will be identified, and invited to participate in the final selection process, consisting of an oral interview/presentation.

### **B. Negotiations**

Ability Now Bay Area may enter into negotiations with the chosen firm. Should Ability Now Bay Area be unable to negotiate a fee with the highest ranked consultant, Ability Now Bay Area reserves the right to cease negotiations with the highest ranked consultant and proceed to open negotiations with the next ranked consultant. Ability Now Bay Area also reserves the right to approve each of the sub-consultants proposed.

### **C. Contract Award**

The collaborative Online Toolbox provider group will make a recommendation on awarding of a contract with Ability Now Bay Area, and ANBA will proceed through their organizational process of awarded contracts, which may include approval from the ANBA Board of Directors. No contract will be in effect until approved by the collaborative group of providers with Ability Now Bay Area as the acting agent, and the completion of the approval process for ANBA. This RFP does not commit Ability Now Bay Area to award a contract. The Board of Directors has absolute discretion in awarding a contract and reserves the right to waive informalities and irregularities in the proposals received. Ability Now Bay Area reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals or to modify or cancel in part, or its entirety, the RFP. Please note that at the conclusion of the awarding process, ANBA will be entering into a formal, contractual agreement with the Awardee outlining specifics related to the project. The selected Applicant is an Independent Contractor for ANBA and no employment relationship will exist outside the parameters of agreement or contract.