

**SD COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES
GRANT APPLICATION - - TITLE PAGE**

Applicant Organization Augustana University
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Type of Organization: **Non-profit** Tax Exempt? **YES**

Under "Type of Organization" indicate all of the following that apply: State, county, municipality, or other public institution; nonprofit or profit private institution. If "nonprofit" and/or "tax exempt", proof of status may be requested.

Title of Project 2025 Lighting the Way: Autism in Our
Community Conference – Pathways to Wellness

Project Begins June 6, 2025 Project Ends June 7, 2025

Total Council Funds Requested \$5,000.00

Total Project Budget \$21,163

Authorizing Official (please type name)

Dr. Joel Johnson, Provost

Joel Johnson 12/17/2024
Signature Date

FOR OFFICE USE

Date Application Received _____ Assigned Project Number _____

Approved Council Funding _____ Total Project Budget _____

PARAGRAPH SUMMARY

Augustana University, in collaboration with key partners including Sioux Falls Public Schools, USD Center for Disabilities, SD Parent Connection, LifeScape, and South Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation, proposes hosting the *Lighting the Way: Autism Spectrum in Our Community Conference*. The conference, aimed at educators, families, service providers, and individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), will attract approximately 200 participants from the Midwest region. The project focuses on providing professional development, raising ASD awareness, and fostering collaboration under the theme *Pathways to Wellbeing*. Sessions will address transitioning to adult services, post-K-12 opportunities, and behavioral strategies for individuals with ASD. Evaluation will include online surveys and the SD Council's Consumer Satisfaction Survey. The total cost of the project is \$20,340, with \$5,000 requested from the SD Council on Developmental Disabilities.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Statement of Need/Organization and Staff Qualifications: The prevalence of ASD in our community continues to increase. Service providers in the Sioux Falls area (including representatives from the Sanford School of Medicine USD Center for Disabilities, Sioux Falls Public Schools and area districts; McCrossan Boys Ranch, Southeastern Behavioral Health Care, SD Parent Connection, LifeScape, and Children's Home Society), who are serving individuals with ASD across the age spectrum, continue to experience increased requests for appropriate evaluation, identification, and programming at all age levels. During the past year, conversations with various adult service providers have indicated the increased needs for staff to have additional training in ASD. These service providers express grave concerns about the impact of ASDs for individuals and their families and the need to address the community as well as educators. Appropriate training for pre-K to post-secondary educators, adult service providers, employers, first responders, and community members continues to be a concern. Key areas of concern include: behavioral management, social thinking, early intervention, person centered thinking, transition services to post-secondary or other vocational experiences, and vocational and employment opportunities.

Autism is a complex neurobiological disorder that lasts throughout a person's lifetime. It occurs in all racial, ethnic, and social groups and is four times more likely to impact boys than girls. Autism affects a person's ability to communicate and relate to others. The demands for evaluation and training in South Dakota are increasing and collaborative efforts are needed from the standpoint of human and financial resources. The *Lighting the Way: Autism Spectrum Disorders in Our Community Conference* brings together the various facets of the community and provides the opportunity to learn together and develop collaborative strategies for meeting the diverse needs of individuals with ASD and their families.

Believing that awareness and education are important tools in serving individuals and their families, the sponsors are committed to bringing nationally recognized presenters to South Dakota. It is important to note that the keynote speakers are professionals who either have an ASD and/or are internationally recognized leaders in the field.

Presenters: During the conference, we will feature sessions in the following major strands: Supporting Families, Best Practices in Education, Health and Wellness, and Transitions across the Lifespan. Using *Pathways to Wellness* as a focus, Keynote presenters will provide information on methods for supporting individuals, service providers and families as they gain information for success. Specific breakout session topics will include disability rights, panel discussions from self-advocates, parents and families, early diagnosis of ASD, IEP process, supportive technologies, wellness, strategies to enhance learning, vocational opportunities, various mindfulness activities, strategies to promote learning, art therapies, supporting parents in the home with alternate communication, visual tools and resources, transitions and social emotional behavior. Additional sessions could include understanding the home/school dynamic, ISFP to IEP, Department of Labor and Vocational Rehabilitation sessions.

A national keynote(s) will focus on wellness, self-advocate perspective and support for individuals and families and caregivers. Other presenters will be from the local region.

Augustana University and conference partners are seeking grants to supplement speaker fees and expenses such as advertising and technology production costs. The conference is being marketed to educators, service/health care providers, parents, support staff, adult service providers, and communities in the region, particularly within South Dakota, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Iowa. The target goal for participation is 200 over the one-day conference. Marketing includes direct and mass mailing to individuals, school districts and agencies, placing information in various newsletters, media, multiple email lists from the collaborators, social media and a website. Expenses associated with a conference of this depth require cooperation and collaboration of time and resources. The co-sponsors have given generously of staff time to attend planning meetings, contact presenters, and serve as conference presenters. The project is requesting \$5,000 from the SD Council on Developmental Disabilities to help with the costs of convening this unique virtual conference. The fees and expenses for all presenters are estimated to be \$8,000.

Goals and Objectives: The ultimate goal of the *Lighting the Way* conference is both retention of attendees from previous years and attracting new conference participants, thus the goals are threefold.

The first goal is to raise awareness in the community of autism and autism spectrum disorders (ASD). "Community" is used in the broadest sense to include local, state, and regional communities. Expected registration is 200 participants. It is difficult to measure the impact that participants will bring to their workplace whether that workplace is in a school, job site, or at home.

As a result of the conference, educators, service providers, and families will have a better understanding of ASD and learn new strategies to support individuals with ASD. Improved communication and services across the life span will only serve to strengthen the community.

The second goal is to provide training for educators, families, support personnel, adult service providers, first responders, and community members. The training will assist professionals to develop more effective strategies and programs to meet the needs of individuals with ASD. Adult services providers will gain additional information and strategies to deal with the increasing number of individuals entering the adult system who will be part of our work and educational force.

The third goal is to continue collaboration among the various entities serving individuals with ASD and their families. Within sixty days following the conference, the co-sponsors and other interested providers will meet to review the evaluations of the conference and determine next steps for further collaboration. This multi organization partnership is helping to connect all stakeholders with experts in the field and useful resources for ongoing support of individuals impacted by ASD.

Action Plan: The conference coordinators first met in July 2024 to begin planning the 2025 conference. At that meeting, evaluations from the 2023 conference were analyzed and participant likes/dislikes, needs, and wishes were all considered as the coordinators began planning for the 2025 conference. In early October and again in December, the committee brainstormed and narrowed down the possible options for the conference and selected a face-to-face one-day format. The conference coordinators have met, and will continue to meet. Carla Miller from SD Parent Connection will lead the meetings. An agenda is sent out to all coordinators. By the end of January 2025, topics and presentations will be confirmed. The *Lighting the Way* website is currently active. All conference coordinators will be responsible for their contribution to the information and presentations. This year's focus was selected in response to a rise in requests from various agencies for support for mental health and stress related strategies for success.

Evaluation Plan: The evaluation plan includes participant post conference evaluations, the SD Council on Developmental Disabilities Consumer Satisfaction Survey, and the conference sponsors will provide a conference evaluation form as well. Evaluations will be shared with presenters and utilized in developing the conference for 2025. Participant evaluations will address awareness/knowledge, how goals of the conference were met, and how information from the conference will be used to improve services/lives of individuals with ASD and their families. Conference sponsors will conduct a follow-up review of the evaluations to design the 2025 conference and expand the list of conference cosponsors based on the feedback from the conference attendees in 2023. We look forward to a face to face format.

In addition, the LTW Conference continues to partner with The Autism Walk, also hosted at Augustana University. It will be held on Saturday, June 7, 2025. Vendors and participants from the conference often attend both and it is a tremendous opportunity for attendees to connect and receive information and scholarships.

BUDGET SHEET

2025 Lighting the Way: Autism in Our Community Conference - Pathways to Wellness							
Budget Item	Cost	Funds Requested	SD Council Match Description	Augustana Match	Augustana Match Description	Other Match	Other Match Description
PERSONNEL							
Becky Fiala (planning 100 hrs. @ \$40/hr.)	\$4,000			\$4,000	In-Kind hrs./absorb in salary		
Becky Fiala FICA (7.65%)	\$306			\$306	In-Kind hrs./absorb in salary		
Becky Fiala (conference stipend)	\$1,000					\$1,000	Registration fees
Becky Fiala FICA (7.65%)	\$77					\$77	Registration fees
Megan Wiessner (planning 12 hrs. @\$50/hr)	\$600			\$600	In-Kind hrs./absorb in salary		
Megan Wiessner FICA (7.65%)	\$50			\$50	In-Kind hrs./absorb in salary		
Catherine Davis (planning 6 hrs. @ \$50/hr.)	\$300			\$300	In-Kind hrs./absorb in salary		
Catherine Davis FICA (7.65%)	\$23			\$23	In-Kind hrs./absorb in salary		
Julie Ashworth (planning 6 hrs. @ \$50/hr.)	\$300			\$300	In-Kind hrs./absorb in salary		
Julie Ashworth FICA (7.65%)	\$23			\$23	In-Kind hrs./absorb in salary		

Business Office /Continuing Education (support 30 hrs. @ \$15/hr.)	\$450			\$450	In-Kind hrs./absorb in salary		
Business Office/Continuing Ed FICA (7.65%)	\$34			\$34	In-Kind hrs./absorb in salary		
CONTRACTUAL FEES							
Keynote Speaker/Travel/Hotel	\$5,000	\$5,000	Keynote with graphic translational word art				
Second Keynote/Travel/Hotel	\$1,000					\$1,000	Registration Fees
Other Presenters (\$125 presenter per session; 16 breakout sessions)	\$2,000					\$2,000	Vocational Rehab grant funding
OPERATING EXPENSES							
Advertising/Printing/Postage/Other Supplies	\$250					\$250	Registration fees
Door Prizes (books)	\$250					\$250	Autism Walk donation
Food and Beverages (150 attendees @ \$25/person)	\$3,750					\$3,750	Registration fees
Credit Card Processing (online payment)	\$750					\$750	Registration fees
Scholarships \$100 x 10 (attendees unable to pay)	\$1,000					\$1,000	SD Parent Connections funding
GRAND TOTAL	\$21,163	\$5,000		\$6,086		\$10,077	

BUDGET NARRATIVE

Personnel/In-Kind Match: Augustana University will cover personnel costs for the conference. This includes conference planning by faculty (Becky Hatch Fiala, Megan Wiessner, Catherine Davis and Julie Ashworth), \$5,602; account management, continuing education processing for registration \$484 and employee fringe benefits. Total personnel costs, including in-kind work and fringe benefits is \$6,086.

Stipend: Becky Hatch Fiala will receive a \$1,000 stipend for onsite coordination pre, during and post conference funded by registration fees.

Contractual Fees: The keynote speaker with experience in graphic translational word art design will receive \$5,000 for honorarium and travel expenses, funded by the grant. Other presenters for the breakout sessions include \$125 per presenter, per session, with 16 breakout sessions. The total of \$2,000 will be funded by the Vocational Rehab grant awarded to Augustana University.

Operating Expense: Advertising, printing, postage, and other supplies in the amount of \$250 will be funded by registration fees. Door prizes (books) in the amount of \$250 will be funded by the Autism Walk donation. The food and beverages with 150 attendees at \$25 per person, totalling \$3,750 will be funded by registration fees. A credit card processing fee of \$750 will be funded by registration fees. Ten scholarships totaling the amount of \$1,000 for attendees who are unable to pay will be funded by SD Parent Connections donation.

Program Income: Requested grant funds from the South Dakota Council on Developmental Disabilities in the amount of \$5,000.

Funding Timeline: The timeline for completing all conference financial obligations is June 30, 2025.

Future Funding: Future funding includes a mix of registration fees, expanding the base of co-sponsor donations, and seeking grants from foundations and businesses in South Dakota.

ASSURANCES

1. The applicant assures that grant funds made available under the South Dakota Council on Developmental Disabilities will not be used to supplant state or local funds, but will be used to increase the amounts of such funds that would be made available for other similar activities.
2. The applicant assures that grant funds made available under the South Dakota Council on Developmental Disabilities will be used to complement and augment rather than duplicate or replace services for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families who are eligible for Federal assistance under other state programs.
3. The applicant assures that fund accounting, auditing, monitoring and such evaluation procedures as may be necessary to keep such records as the South Dakota Council on Developmental Disabilities shall

prescribe will be provided to assure fiscal control, proper management, and efficient disbursement of funds received through the South Dakota Council on Developmental Disabilities.

4. A clear audit trail must be maintained for each source of funding. Receipts, expenditures and disbursements must be individually accounted for from each source of funds.
5. The applicant agrees to submit reports indicating activities undertaken, expenditures, match provided, program income and general progress of the project. Projects are required to submit a final report at the end of the grant funding period.
6. The applicant certifies that the program contained in its application meets all the requirements, that all the information is correct, that there has been appropriate coordination with affected agencies, and that the applicant will comply with all provisions of the South Dakota Council on Developmental Disabilities and all other applicable laws.
7. The applicant understands that although an effort will be made to continue the funding of projects of proven effectiveness or with a record of proven success, each project must stand on its own merit each year. No project will be guaranteed continued funding. NOTE: Projects/programs must reapply annually for funding.
8. This agreement depends upon the continued availability of federal funds and expenditure authority from the Legislature for this purpose. This agreement will be terminated by the State if the Legislature fails to appropriate funds or grant expenditure authority. Termination for this reason is not a default by the State nor does it give rise to a claim against the State.
9. The applicant also understands and agrees: 1) that funds received are to be expended only for the purpose and activities covered by the applicant's approved application and budget, and 2) that the grant may be terminated at any time by the South Dakota Council on Developmental Disabilities if the applicant fails to comply with the provisions of the South Dakota Council on Developmental Disabilities legislation or any of the certified assurances listed above and in the grant agreement.

CERTIFICATION - I certify that I have read and reviewed the above assurances and will comply with all provisions of the South Dakota Council on Developmental Disabilities legislation and all other applicable federal and state laws.

Carol Spillum

01.07.25

Signature of Authorizing Official

Date

Carol Spillum, Associate Vice President/Controller & AOR

Typed Name and Title

2001 S. Summit Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57197, (605) 274-4090

Address and Telephone Number

