



Developmental Disabilities Community Advocacy Coalition (DD-CAC)

NOFO NO. 27-37307-115

Pre-Bid Conference Notes

Agenda:

- DDC Background
- Project Background
- Q&A
- Closure

DDC Background

The Washington State DDC is a governor-appointed council working to ensure people with developmental disabilities (DD) and their families have access to the supports they need to live full, meaningful lives in their communities.

What is the DDC 5-Year State Plan?

The Council writes a **State Plan** every **5 years**. This plan is like a **roadmap**. It says what the Council will do to help people with developmental disabilities and their families in the state. Currently, we are finalizing our drafted 2027-2031 State Plan and will be submitting it to the federal government later this summer.

As per the DD and Bill of Rights Act of 2000, the federal law where the DDC exists states *“State Councils on Developmental Disabilities in each State to engage in advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change activities”* this is where this project comes in.

Project Background

Currently written in our drafted 2027-2031 State Plan, the DD-CAC program falls under:

Goal 1: Advocacy

Objective 1.5 — Advance Coordinated Advocacy Through the Community Advocacy Coalition

The Council will strengthen collaboration among advocacy groups through the Community Advocacy Coalition (CAC). The CAC will facilitate collaborations and initiatives through its work to align training, outreach, and legislative engagement. The CAC will create statewide alliances that bring together people with

developmental disabilities, families, and organizations to identify shared priorities and advance change through coordinated action that is intentional, time-bound, and focused on shared outcomes.

What is the DD-CAC?

The Community Advocacy Coalition (CAC) is a group of organizations from across Washington State that work together to support people with developmental disabilities. The coalition meets regularly to share information, learn from one another, and talk about issues that affect the disability community. By working as a group, members can identify what matters most to them and speak with a stronger, united voice.

The CAC also helps organizations coordinate their advocacy and legislative efforts so they can make a bigger impact at the state level. More than 60 organizations participate, and the group meets monthly online, with one in person gathering each year. The goal is to bring people together—individuals with disabilities, families, and organizations—to push for positive change in a way that is organized, accessible, and community driven.

Note to bidders:

While this is how things currently operate at the CAC, we encourage proposers to suggest ideas for how CAC could work in the future. Please note that CAC members will need to buy into changes and that accessibility is essential to the success of the group.

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

What are the minimum qualifications to apply—specifically the requirement for 5 years of experience with the developmental disabilities community?

Answer:

Experience with mixed populations *may* count if the applicant can clearly describe how that experience relates to the developmental disabilities community. Applicants are encouraged to explain the relevance of their background to the CAC’s work.

“We like to hear how you would describe your experience with the population... highlight that experience that you did have.”

“It’s your chance to explain to the scoring panel how your experience relates to the work.”

Why is the CAC contract being posted as a direct NOFO instead of continuing through the previous arrangement with the Arc of Washington? How will the new contractor work with legacy CAC partners?

Answer:

The CAC has always been funded by the Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC), and the Arc of Washington has historically hosted the coalition. As this work currently aligns with the DDC’s state plan, we run a competitive process. This NOFO follows that process. The CAC is a statewide grassroots coalition. The selected contractor will support the existing coalition and help continue its growth.

“The DD Council has always funded the Arc of Washington to host the Community Advocacy Coalition.”

“The goal is to find a company that can come in and support the work that’s already ongoing and really strong.”

Are CAC meetings expected to be virtual, hybrid, in-person, or a combination?

Answer:

Monthly CAC meetings are currently held online. Because the coalition is statewide and includes approximately 60 organizations, hybrid formats tend to increase accessibility and participation. The NOFO also requests ideas for at least one in-person annual gathering.

“Right now, the monthly meetings are all held online... Hybrid option would probably be the most suitable.”

“We also typically have a once-a-year in-person CAC retreat during the summer.”

Does DDC or Commerce engage contractors earlier in the process (e.g., RFIs, market research) to support program design or future NOFO development?

Answer:

DDC must follow state procurement rules and uses standardized competitive templates. They do not typically co-develop solicitations with external companies. However, DDC has engaged the community extensively to improve accessibility of the procurement process and has incorporated lessons learned from other programs.

“We have to abide by state policies... all of these RFPs are competitive documents.”

“We went through about 2 years of work to try and make this process more accessible.”

Is there incumbent work for this project? Is this a new line of work, and what is the vision for the successful bidder?

Answer:

This is not a new project. The successful bidder will work with DDC and the coalition to ensure a smooth transition. Onboarding and offboarding planning will be important.

“This project is currently ongoing. The Arc of Washington is currently holding this project, and that ends September 30.”

“We will pay special attention to the onboarding/offboarding process... that will be really key and essential.”

What is the history of the CAC project, and what changes would DDC like to see in the future?

Answer:

The CAC has existed since the 1980s and now includes about 60 organizations statewide. The coalition has strengthened its structure in recent years, including voting on a legislative agenda and electing a team of leaders. The NOFO format was chosen to encourage new ideas and approaches from applicants. Scoring prioritizes the technical proposal (80%) over organizational qualifications (20%).

“The CAC’s been going on since about the 80s... about 60 organizations across the state.”

“We’re more excited to hear the ideas of companies—how they’re going to do it—versus us saying how it must be done.”

How often is the contractor able to bill for services?

Answer:

The Department of Commerce allows contractors to bill as often as monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or at the end of the project cycle. We encourage all of our contractors and project partners to bill on a monthly basis. The frequency of billing can be discussed during the negotiation process.

Are the CAC meetings on the 3rd Monday of the month held during regular business hours, or evenings?

Answer:

Meetings are currently held during regular business hours, from 9:30am to 12:30pm on the first Monday of the month except for February, March and July. In September, the meeting is held on the 2nd Monday, instead of the first. We expect the awarded entity to work with the CAC on scheduling the meetings when the project begins.

Communication & Engagement Tools

- **What communication channels and online platforms is the coalition using currently?**

Answer:

The DDC manages and hosts the public facing webpage for CAC and the Google drive is maintained by the contractor for documents and information sharing. CAC does not have its own social media currently. The main communication channel is the email list of current members, which allows members to share information with the entire CAC membership.

- **What channels will the videos in this section be produced for (e.g., social media, website, other)?**

Video is one tool that is becoming more widely used to provide information, especially accessible information. The CAC does not have social media accounts; information is shared from the CAC to member organizations who then share information publicly through their platforms/social media accounts.

- **What pathways are currently being used for member input and feedback?**

Currently, yearly retreats have been a place for member input and feedback, as well as some of the workgroups. There is not currently a formal process for collecting member input and feedback, however the CAC group does discuss those types of elements at the yearly retreat and within some workgroups. Please propose how input and feedback could be gathered in your proposal.

Community Action & Advocacy Support

- **What channels are currently being used to distribute action alerts? Are the 'Action Alerts' part of this or LEIT?**

The email list is the primary method for information sharing as described above. The action alerts typically come via email and pertain to the legislative areas of concern and priorities that the group has identified. Action alerts may overlap within programs and audiences as these new contracts gain momentum in our community.

- **How much has been budgeted in the past for the in-person annual event?**
\$25,000 for a planning retreat and \$10,000 for a legislative breakfast

Reporting Expectations

- **What is currently used to monitor platform usage?**

The DDC monitors the public facing page via Google Analytics. Please include in your proposal any ideas on gathering this type of data or other parameters that may be important to collect.