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Grants and Resources for Sustainability  
PREMIUM



## **Increasing Awareness and Access to Recreation Opportunities for People with Disabilities Through Assistive Technology and Training**

## Project Summary

The proposed project increase access to technology for people with disabilities will address barriers to recreation participation faced by adults with disabilities. Assistive Technology Partnerships, in collaboration with multiple organizations, will promote inclusion, access, and availability of assistive technology used for recreation in two rural communities. Project activities will include community mapping of local recreation resources, training related to assistive technology use, provision of assistive technology devices to community recreation sites, and information dissemination.

Duration: 1 year

Requested funds: \$ XXXXXXXXX

### Proposal Narrative- Statement of The Problem

Recreation activities are an important and desired aspect of life for people, but people with disabilities often face barriers to participation in such activities. The lack of knowledge about existing resources, inaccessible facilities, lack of training by community recreation providers, and a lack of appropriate adaptive recreation equipment are significant barriers to desired recreation and community participation. According to Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities found that around 69% of adults with disabilities report their disability prevents them in some way from getting around, attending cultural or sporting events, participating in recreation, or socializing with friends outside their home.

For individuals disabled living in rural communities these barriers are even more exaggerated. In the various studies and communication with people with disabilities and community organizations are conducted to discussed the barriers faced by peoples with disabilities.

Based on studies and survey the implementing agency selected two locations for this project implementation.

## **Why should participation in recreation be more difficult for people with disabilities?**

There often few existing adaptive recreation programs that provide accessible and inclusive facilities and even fewer facilities that have the assistive technology often required for many individuals with disabilities to participate in specific self-determined recreation activities. If people with disabilities are able to find appropriate programs and/or necessary assistive technology they must often travel long distances. By focusing efforts on increasing access to existing community resources, people with disabilities will not have to seek out specialized programs outside their home community - they can participate in their neighbourhoods with family and friends. This project seeks to equip consumers and recreation providers with access to assistive technology and the training necessary to achieve quality community recreation participation.

### **Description of the Community**

The project will target two rural communities - 1. XXXXXXXX and 2. XXXXXXXX.

- 1.XXXXXXX- The Data suggests that this community may include as many as XXXXXX residents and estimates indicate that XXXX residents may have a disability.
- 2.XXXXXXX- For this community the data shows XXXXXXresidents and estimates XXXXresidents with a disability.

### **Analysis of the Problem**

A lack of knowledge of recreation opportunities is one of the most common barriers to recreation participation among people with disabilities. Many people with disabilities simply don't know where to look for recreation opportunities, how to ask about accessibility or programs and when and how to assert their rights. This project will begin to address this knowledge barrier by identifying recreation opportunities through

the community mapping activities. Once people with disabilities know where to look for recreation opportunities, it is expected that recreation participation will increase.

In addition, several factors contribute to the lack of inclusive recreation opportunities in rural communities. First, recreation professionals and provider in rural areas are typically generalists with limited training and exposure to inclusive recreation for people with disabilities. Though it may seem that these professionals show less initiative to address the needs of people with disabilities and include them in community programs, it is often a lack of training and awareness of these needs that is the barrier. Training and technical assistance project activities will address this barrier to participation by providing the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to support inclusive recreation opportunities.

Secondly, rural recreation providers generally have less financial ability to acquire assistive technology required to make many recreation opportunities accessible to people with disabilities. Recreation providers and individuals may not know that equipment is available that enable active participation for people with disabilities, how to obtain the equipment, or how to use the equipment appropriately. Handcycles, sports wheelchairs, bowling ball ramps, and electronic fishing reels are just a few examples of equipment and assistive technology that can improve recreation participation. Funds provided by this project will bring the financial resources into these rural communities to purchase assistive technology for recreation that they would not otherwise be able to afford. This equipment will remain in the community and benefit the community for years to come.

## Project Vision, Mission, and Objectives

### Vision

The vision of the project is to increase recreation participation among people with disabilities.

### Mission

The mission of the project is to eliminate barriers to recreation participation for people with disabilities living in proposed project are(XXXXXXX and XXXXXX) and surrounding areas by increasing awareness and access to recreation through assistive technology and training.

### Objectives

Overall objectives for the project include the following:

- An increase in the awareness of existing community resources and the benefits associated with participation in traditional and non-traditional recreational opportunities and increased participation rates of disabled;
- An increase in the number of community recreational opportunities that are accessible, inclusive and have necessary adaptive equipment from which people with disabilities may choose;
- An increase of knowledge by community recreation providers, resulting in more responsive and inclusive service provision to consumers with disabilities;
- An increase in the availability of assistive technology for recreation activities with increased recreation participation by individuals with disabilities;
- The development of community commitment to sustain project outcomes through the maintenance of assistive technology at community sites and website.

## **Project Methods**

The target population for this project is people with physical or cognitive disabilities who have limited access to community recreation opportunities. Recreation providers and professionals are also a target population.

### **Mobilizing human and material resources**

The human and material resources are gained primarily from the project implementing organization, the project staff and collaborators. Together, they will implement the project. The implementing organization is a private non-profit organization, established in year xxxx. It operates with a xx members board of directors. Board members include individuals with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities in addition to representatives from state agencies, businesses, technology and the medical and education community.

The Project Manager will serve as the overall in charge for this project. The Project Manager Responsibilities will include budget oversight; hiring of inventory surveyors; marketing of the project including preparation of PSAs, newsletter articles, and presentations; coordination of site trainings; liaison with community network groups; oversight of contract employees; dissemination of information and reports; preparation of required reports; and coordination.

The community mapping coordinator will be responsible for the community mapping process including the training of surveyors, developing the survey instrument, developing format for the community resource web page, oversight of the programmer, data entry and web developer. The third member of the project staff is the training coordinator. Responsibilities of the training coordinator include identification of training needs based on community mapping results, identification of potential trainers, assisting with specific and generic training, reviewing training materials and serving as a liaison with existing community recreation providers.

Numerous key stakeholders have been identified as collaborators in the project. Much of the success and sustainability of the project depends on these collaborators. An initial list of collaborators and their role in the project is as follows:

- ABC Park has already begun building accessible facilities and has agreed to be a pilot site for training and placement of assistive technology.
- XYZ Senior Centre will provide space for staff who will complete the community mapping phase of the project.
- XYZ company will provide trainers, equipment for demonstrations, and training and discounts on purchase of recreation equipment.
- XYZ Program will disseminate information, identify participants and provide a recreation therapist for training.
- XYZ transporter will provide additional transportation to recreation opportunities.
- The Center for Disability Studies will provide in-kind training and staff support.

## Strategies for Project Intervention

The project activities will take place in four phases with each building upon the other to achieve the project goals.

**Phase 1:Community resource mapping.** Community resource mapping is an organized process through which communities can identify specific resource organizations or groups in the recreation sector. Approximately XX resources will be identified in each community. Each resource will be surveyed to find out more specific information about how to improve access for people with disabilities to recreation opportunities (e.g., through training, modifications and assistive technology).

The surveyors will be community citizens, three at each site, who will be hired and trained to collect information from identified recreation providers. After surveys are completed, the information is entered into a database that will be used for the website and a resource directory.

**Phase 2:Training and technical assistance.** Based on the information gathered during the community mapping, recreation providers will either be offered generic or



specialized training. Generic training many include education about the people with disabilities Act and access in recreation settings, disability awareness and best practices for inclusion. Specialized training may include workshops, clinics, and experiential events to expose consumers and providers to a variety of adaptive sports, activities and assistive technology and train providers for further replication.

**Phase 3:** Recreation providers identified during the community mapping phase will be given an opportunity to apply for funding to purchase assistive technology. Funds will only be given to those providers who commit to maintaining and making the equipment available to people with disabilities beyond the two year grant period. Training will be provided to all stakeholders to ensure proper use of the assistive technology.

**Phase 4: Information Dissemination.** Results from the community mapping, training, and grant process will be made available to community members to encourage recreation participation. A searchable database containing community recreation information will be placed on a website and a computer will be placed in each community in a central, accessible location. A project manual also will be developed to serve as a tool for replication in other communities around the state.



## **Project Action Plan**

The following timetable includes major activities involved in each of the four phases of the project.

Activities	Months																								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Community resource mapping																									
Training and technical assistance																									
funding to purchase assistive technology, Training																									
Information Dissemination																									

## **Evaluation**

The evaluation process will be initiated at the onset of the project and conducted throughout the two-year period to measure: (1) the effectiveness of project methods, (2) timeliness of services, (3) consumer satisfaction, (4) accomplishment of specific outcomes, and (5) replication potential.

Several evaluation strategies will be used including choice response and open-ended questionnaires in pre/post evaluation at all trainings, log of website usage, quarterly evaluation of use of assistive technology after community placement, and a review of record keeping. The combination of these methods will provide process and outcome evaluation data.

## **Plan for financial sustainability**

The involvement of collaborating organizations is the long-term plan for sustainability and replication of the project. The project fits within the long range goals and its plan to increase funding to support similar projects.

## **Budget**

<b>Particulars/ Budget Head</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Cost/Unit</b>	<b>Total</b>
Project Staff Salaries	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX
Consultant and professional fee	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX
Assistive technology items cost	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX
Travel	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX
Office Supplies	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX
Training cost	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX
Administrative cost and overheads	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX
<b>Total</b>			XXXXXXXX

## **Budget Justification**

Project Staff Salaries: Staff and fringe benefits are for the Project Manager and other Project staff -the responsibilities include budget oversight; hiring of inventory surveyors; marketing of the project including preparation of PSAs, newsletter articles, and presentations to diverse audiences; coordination of site trainings; serving as a liaison with community network groups, overseeing contract employees, dissemination of information and reports, preparation of required reports, coordination and oversight of grants and consumer and family stipends.

**Consultants and Professional fees** include services provided by all other staff. This includes the community mapping coordinator and evaluator responsibilities will include coordination of the community mapping process, training of surveyors, developing the survey instrument, developing the format for community mapping web page and resource guide, oversight of the programmer, data entry, web developing, and project evaluation. The training coordinator responsibilities will include identification of training needs based on community mapping results, identification of potential trainers, assisting with specific and generic training, reviewing training materials and serving as a liaison with existing community recreation providers.

**Travel budget** is required for community site visits for community mapping surveys and trainings, coordination and implementation of trainings, and collaboration. Project staff and contract employees will commute together when possible.

**Equipment cost:** Equipment is for the purchase of assistive technology items. Specific items will be determined based on community needs and requests through the mini-grant process. A computer also will be purchased and placed at each site so consumers and families will have increased access to the project website and Internet resources.

**Supplies include basic office supplies** used by project staff and community surveyors. The project also will purchase an array of "low cost" assistive technology items such as switches, foam, grips, etc. for use in each community as determined by specific needs.

Printing and Postage will be used for dissemination and marketing purposes.

**Administrative Overhead and otherCost:** This cost will cover organizations expenses to run this project and day to day additional and unforce expenses of implementing agency.

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