

Conference Support Fund Guidelines

The purpose of the Conference Support Fund is to provide support to organizations providing conferences, meetings and workshops for education, training, policymaking, and advocacy activities in the developmental disability community. In accordance with GCDD's 2022-2026 Strategic 5-Year Plan, the focus of the Conference Support Fund is to assist organizations in supporting people with intellectual/developmental disabilities to attend conference and other advocacy activities (Registration fees/Scholarships) and to support accessibility efforts of conference content and materials (i.e. CART, ASL, Large Print documents, etc.)

Definition of Developmental Disabilities

A "developmental disability," as defined in federal law, is a severe, chronic, often lifelong disability that causes substantial limitations in several major life activities such as: self care, receptive and expressive language, learning, mobility, self-direction, the capacity for independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. It is attributable to a mental, emotional, sensory, and/or physical impairment that is apparent before the age of twenty-two.

Who Can Apply?

Eligible applicants and grant recipients are **Georgia-based organizations**, including for-profit corporations, non-profit entities, and state agencies. Organizations applying for a Conference Support Fund grant must have an active Employer Identification Number (EIN).

Individuals and family members with developmental disabilities **are not** eligible to receive Conference Support Funds directly; they should apply for funding through the **Dottie Adams Scholarship Fund** to attend conferences (see website for eligibility guidelines).

Organizational staff members are not eligible to receive Conference Support Funds for personal development, conference registrations or travel.

An organization may use their Conference Support award from GCDD to set aside **scholarships/registrations** for individuals with Developmental Disabilities to attend the conference. The award is to the organization not the individual (For example ABC organization receives a \$2,500 Conference Support Award from GCDD. ABC organization notifies its constituents that they have 10 (\$250) complementary registrations slots available to attend the conference. GCDD is not involved in the selection process of scholarship recipients.

How Much Can I Apply For?

- Up to \$2,500 per fiscal year
- An organization may receive only one Conference Support Fund Grant per fiscal year. (October 1 – September 30).

What projects are funded?

Funds are awarded to: Conferences, Workshops and Meetings which focus on:

- Education
- Advocacy Training
- Disability Policy
- Accessibility supports including ASL/ CART translation, resource material production in plain language, large text, audio and other media to make conference content accessible by people with I/DD.

What projects are NOT Funded?

- Operational costs (salaries or honorariums)
- Fundraising events, Capital campaigns
- Social Events: Dances, Block Parties, Community Days
- Recreational Activities: Walk-a-thons, Races, Sporting Events, Camps/Field trips
- Political Events and/or contributions to a political candidate or party

How Do I Apply?

Complete the Conference Support Fund Application and attach a copy of the brochure/application for the event and a brief summary describing how attending the conference or event will benefit the Disability Community. Applications must be received at least 30 days prior to the event (but no more than (6) six months prior to the event) in order to be considered for approval for reimbursement of expenses. The Council will respond to requests within 10 business days. Applications should be emailed to lisa.eaves@gcdd.ga.gov.

What Am I Required To Do? When Will I Get Reimbursed?

If you are approved for a reimbursement of expenses, an award letter (your notification), a W9, and a sample invoice will be sent to you. If you have not received a response within 15 business days of mailing in your application, please call to confirm that it was received. You will only be reimbursed up to the amount of your grant award. Requests for reimbursement **must be** submitted within 30 days following the event and cannot be submitted before the event has taken place. A Conference Fund Summary Report must accompany the reimbursement request. This report should detail how were GCDD's funds used and the support and impact on the IDD community. The report should also include the event's topic of discussions, number of participants, demographic data, and the events impact on people with I/DD.