

Application Report



Applicant Organization: VMRC

Project Name: Language Access & Cultural Competency Plan

Funding Announcement: FY 21/22 Regional Center Funding To Improve Language Access And Cultural Competency

Requested Amount: \$659,403.00

Project Summary: VMRC will implement culturally competent language interpretation and training that will include: language traditions, customs, values, behaviors, and attitudes. A Diversity Equity and Inclusion Manager and Bilingual Language Access Specialist will lead efforts to support staff working effectively within diverse cultures and communities. VMRC will focus on improving website access and expanding diversity of language resource materials.

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Section Name: Regional Center Profile

Sub Section Name: RC Organization Profile

1. Applicant Question: Description of the Cultural, Linguistic, Racial and Ethnic Diversity of the Catchment

Provide a description of your regional center that includes:

- Counties served
- Geography of the region
- Primary languages of the individuals/families
- Demographics of ethnicities and cultures
- Other relevant information to describe your communities

You may upload an attachment but you must provide a narrative here. Limit your attachments to no more than 3.

Applicant Response:

Valley Mountain Regional Center (VMRC) serves individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tuolumne, Calaveras, and Amador counties.

General population in all 5 counties combined is 1,436,848. VMRC consumer population by county is San Joaquin (57.7%), Stanislaus (34.6%), Tuolumne (2.8%), Calaveras (2.3%), and Amador (2.2%).

The 2 primary languages spoken in all 5 counties are English and Spanish. Other languages spoken in these counties are Tagalog, Punjabi, Chinese, Khmer, Vietnamese, Arabic, Persian, and Hmong.

Amongst the individuals that VMRC serves, the top languages spoken are English (82%), Spanish (15%), Cambodian (.003%), Tagalog (.003%), and Vietnamese (.002%). The demographics of ethnicities and cultures served by VMRC are Hispanic (37.7%), Caucasian (32.6%), Other (11.9%), Asian (0.9%), Black/African American (0.8%).

2. Applicant Question: Description of Regional Center Efforts to Increase Language Access and Cultural Competency

Provide a description of your regional center's prior and ongoing efforts to increase language access and cultural

competency in your catchment area. Examples of language efforts may include but are not limited to:

- Translation(s)
- Language interpretation
- Increase Bilingual staff
- Bilingual service provider recruitment
- Resource development to support those with a primary language other than English
- Other

You may upload a document (e.g. strategic plan or internal policy etc.) but you must provide a narrative here. Limit your attachments to no more than 3.

Applicant Response:

VMRC is in the process of forming a sub-committee of the Board of Directors titled the “Diversity, Equity, Belonging, and Inclusion” (DEBI) Committee that will work closely with our in-house Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee.

Our Strategic Plan has a goal of “Organizational Culture” that promotes DEI. See attached. In 2019, VMRC began offering a bilingual stipend to Service Coordinators who demonstrated proficiency in another native language of our consumers served. Currently 62 staff are receiving the bilingual stipend. VMRC has 90 vendored interpreters and translators in 22 different languages. Case management document translation and meeting interpretation needs for monolingual speaking families are met through these vendors. The referral process for VMRC services can be done in either English or Spanish, by phone, email, fax, or through our website.

All public meetings are offered with Spanish and American Sign Language interpretation. Other language accommodations can be made by request.

The VMRC website, www.vmmc.net, is viewable in English. In addition, portions of the website are viewable in Spanish, and 8 other languages. Important documents that are not embedded on our website must be translated and added as an attachment or link.

VMRC has an awareness campaign, presentations at various community venues, as well as event participation.

We also purchased a translation equipment to translate Glossary to Spanish, Cambodian, and Hmong languages.

Attachment:

[210614VMRC-Strategic-Plan-Short.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

Section Name: Language Assessment

Sub Section Name: Language Access and Culture Plan

1. Applicant Question: Language Data Review

Explain how your regional center will review, consider, and incorporate data provided by the Department on April 6th in your language assessment process. Examples of data analysis and consideration may include:

- Review data within the organization/staff
- Review with Board Members
- Review with families, community, and stakeholders
- Steps to improve data
- Steps to broadly share data
- Outreach/In-reach efforts to share data

Applicant Response:

The LAC Plan Committee will review the data provided by the Department with the DEI committee for input and ideas on the strategic planning for the assessment. VMRC will consider the number of current staff who may be members of the cultures represented in the data, as well as staff who may speak the targeted languages. VMRC will provide a survey to all staff to determine what cultures and languages are represented among staff persons. This survey will be voluntary and thus, may not be an accurate reflection if staff choose not to complete the survey.

The data will be reviewed with the DEBI committee representing the VMRC board of directors. This committee is made up of representatives from the board of directors as well as individuals appointed by the board president.

Data will be reviewed with families, community partners and other stakeholders during an information session about the LAC. The participants in this session may share information about their data and thoughts on the accuracy of the data.

Educating VMRC staff on the dynamics and benefits of communicating with culturally diverse groups throughout the community and within the organization.

Data will be shared with families, community partners and other stakeholders throughout the LAC. The data will prompt conversations with community stakeholders, families, and others to provide more insight and teach others about how to interpret data, as well as provide visibility to underserved communities of color.

2. Applicant Question: Gathering Stakeholder Input

To better understand the language needs of your community, select what strategies your regional center will implement to gather stakeholder input. Check all that apply. Provide details for each selected strategy in the textbox. If you selected "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Listening sessions
- Public meetings
- Outreach events
- Surveys
- Other

Applicant Comment:

Listening sessions will be held with community partners such as Office of Clients’ Rights Advocacy and Family Resource Network,

Public meetings will be facilitated by Community Consultants that will help the Regional Center create trust with community.

Attend community events where we meet our community to engage.

Conduct surveys at each public meeting to learn about the needs in the community.

Collaborating with other regional centers in reaching out to our mutual target populations.

3. Applicant Question: Listening Sessions and Public Meetings

One strategy to build trust with your community and learn about the language needs of individuals and families served by your regional center is to host listening sessions and/or public meetings. Check all of the types of listening sessions and/or meetings you plan to host to gather input on language needs. Detail may be added for each selected strategy in the textbox below. If you selected "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Host listening session(s) with self-advocates
- Host listening session(s) with family members
- Host listening session(s) with CBOs
- Host public community meetings
- Partner with CBOs to host a community meeting
- Host interagency meetings with local governmental agencies
- Host meetings with nontraditional community partners

4. Applicant Question: Language Focus in Listening Sessions

If your language assessment includes hosting listening sessions or community meetings, identify the language(s) focus for each session planned. Check all that apply. If you selected "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Spanish
- Cambodian
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese

5. Applicant Question: Survey Recipients

Surveying is one method to learn more about the needs of your community. Select individuals and/or group(s) your regional center will survey. Choose all that apply.

Regional centers including this in their plan will be required to include standardized survey questions that will be provided by the Department. Detail may be added for individuals and/or group(s) selected in the textbox below. If you selected "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Self-Advocates/Consumers
 - Family Members
 - Service Coordinators
 - Intake Staff
 - Management
 - Regional Center Board Members
 - Service Providers
 - Community Organizations
 - Local Governmental Agencies
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6. Applicant Question: Development of Survey

Explain how you will create the survey and include what steps you will take to store data received from the survey. Examples of steps to develop a survey:

- Review language data
- Use professional language translation
- For quality assurance, review draft language translations with community organizations, universities, and other community partners
- Identify distribution list

Applicant Response:

Community Consultants will create surveys/recruit a planning group that represents the communities identified and mirrors the diversity of these communities. The surveys will be distributed to consumers/families identified as speaking the target language, community leaders, and organizations serving these communities.

Written/electronic surveys may be sent to people, given out at community gatherings. People may be surveyed by phone/in person and results documented.

Data stored in secured servers.

7. Applicant Question: Distribution of Survey

Select what method(s) you will use for distributing the survey. Choose all that apply. If you select "Other", please identify

what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Phone
- In-person interview
- Email
- US Mail
- Website Link
- Text Message Link
- Virtual Interview

8. Applicant Question: Surveys - Language Focus

For surveys developed into videos or translated into Non-English languages, identify the language(s) your regional center will focus. Check all that apply. If you selected "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Cambodian
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese

9. Applicant Question: Coordinating with Other Regional Centers

If you plan to coordinate with another regional center(s) who serve(s) a common diverse population (e.g., Cambodian, Hmong, and/or Slavic, etc.) or if you will consolidate efforts to meet common cultural needs within your catchment, state what steps you will take to coordinate efforts.

Applicant Response:

Through collaboration with CVRC we will participate in community outreach events. These events will target the common communities of Cambodian and Spanish languages and cultures. We will have regular communication to review and plan for events. These efforts will include sharing.

Section Name: Cultural Competency Assessment

Sub Section Name: Cultural Competency Assessment

1. Applicant Question: Culture, Ethnicity and Race Data Review

Explain how your regional center will review, consider, and incorporate data provided by the Department on April 6th in your cultural competency assessment. Examples of data analysis and consideration may include:

- Review data within the organization/staff

- Review with Board Members
- Review with families, community, and stakeholders
- Steps to improve data
- Steps to broadly share data
- Outreach/In-reach efforts to share data

Applicant Response:

The LAC Plan Committee will review the data provided by the Department with the DEI committee for input and ideas on the strategic planning for the assessment. VMRC will consider the number of current staff who may be members of the cultures represented in the data, as well as staff who may speak the targeted languages. VMRC will provide a survey to all staff to determine what cultures and languages are represented among staff persons. This survey will be voluntary and thus, may not be an accurate reflection if staff choose not to complete the survey.

The data will be reviewed with the DEBI committee representing the VMRC board of directors. This committee is made up of representatives from the board of directors as well as individuals appointed by the board president.

Data will be reviewed with families, community partners and other stakeholders during an information session about the LAC. The participants in this session may share information about their data and thoughts on the accuracy of the data.

Educating VMRC staff on the dynamics and benefits of communicating with culturally diverse groups throughout the community and within the organization.

Data will be shared with families, community partners and other stakeholders throughout the LAC to share meaningful stories about the data.

We will utilize outreach events to highlight the key takeaways from the data, including visual aids, to encourage further exploration and discussion for a reach out to these communities.

2. Applicant Question: Gathering Stakeholder Input

To better understand community needs related to cultural competency, cultural humility, and/or cultural sensitivity etc., identify what strategies your regional center will implement to gather stakeholder input. Check all that apply. Provide details for each selected strategy in the textbox. If you selected "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Listening Sessions
- Public meetings
- Outreach Events
- Surveys
- Other

Applicant Comment:

Listening sessions will be held with community partners such as Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy and Family Resource Network.

Public meetings will be facilitated by Community Consultants to help VMRC create trust with the community.

Attend community events where we meet our community and engage with them.

Conduct surveys at public meetings to learn about the needs in the community.

Collaborating with other regional centers to support each other in reaching out to the mutual target population.

3. Applicant Question: Listening Sessions and Public Meetings

One strategy to build trust with your community and to learn about the cultural competency needs of your catchment area is to host listening sessions and/or public meetings. Check all that apply. Provide details for each selected strategy in the textbox. If you selected "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Host listening sessions with self-advocates
- Host listening sessions with family members
- Host listening sessions with community organizations
- Host public community meetings
- Partner with local CBOs to host a community meeting
- Host interagency meetings with local governmental agencies
- Host meetings with nontraditional community partners

Applicant Comment:

One strategy to build trust with your community and learn about the language needs of individuals and families served by your regional center is to host listening sessions and/or public meetings.

4. Applicant Question: Ethnicity Focus in Listening Sessions

If your cultural competency assessment includes hosting listening sessions or community meetings, identify the ethnicities and/or culture(s) for each session planned. Check all that apply. For example, if you will focus on the Middle Eastern community, check Other Ethnicity or Race/Multi-Cultural and provide detail of your efforts in textbox below.

Applicant Response:

- Asian
- Hispanic

Applicant Comment:

Spanish
Cambodian
Vietnamese
Tagalog
African-American

5. Applicant Question: Survey Recipients

Surveying is one method to learn more about the needs of your community. Select individuals and/or group(s) your regional center will survey to complete your cultural competency assessment. Choose all that apply. Provide details for selected individuals and/or group(s) in the textbox. If you selected "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Self-Advocates/Consumers
 - Family Members
 - Service Coordinators
 - Intake Staff
 - Management
 - Regional Center Board Members
 - Service Providers
 - Community Organizations
 - Local Governmental Agencies
-

6. Applicant Question: Development of Survey

Explain how you will create the survey and include how you will store data received from the survey. Examples of steps to develop a survey:

- Culture, ethnicity and race data
- Identify distribution list
- Use professional language translation
- For quality assurance, review draft language translations with community organizations and partners

The Department will review all surveys before distribution.

Applicant Response:

Community Consultants will create surveys/recruit a planning group that represents the communities identified and mirrors the diversity of these communities. The surveys will be distributed consumers/families identified as speaking the target language, leaders in these communities, and organizations which serve these communities.

Written/electronic surveys may be sent to people, given out at community gatherings. People may be surveyed by phone or in person and the responses will be documented.

7. Applicant Question: Distribution of Survey

Select what method(s) you will use for distributing the survey. Choose all that apply. If you select "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Phone
 - In-person interview
 - Virtual Interview
 - Email
 - US Mail
 - Website Link
 - Text Message Link
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8. Applicant Question: Surveys - Language Focus

For surveys developed into videos or translated into Non-English languages, identify the language(s) your regional center will focus on. Check all that apply. If you select "Other", please identify what that will be.

Applicant Response:

- Cambodian
 - Tagalog
 - Vietnamese
 - Spanish
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9. Applicant Question: Coordinating with Other Regional Centers

If you plan to coordinate with another regional center(s) who serve a common diverse population (e.g., Cambodian, Hmong, and/or Slavic, etc.) or if you will consolidate efforts to meet common cultural needs within your catchment, state what steps you will take to coordinate efforts.

Applicant Response:

Through collaboration with CVRC we will participate in community outreach events. These events will target the common communities of Cambodian and Spanish languages and cultures. We will have regular communication to review and plan for events. These efforts will include sharing.

10. Applicant Question: Culturally Competent Language Interpretation

Describe how your Regional Center will provide consistent and culturally competent language interpretation in individual planning meetings and public meetings (e.g., Self-Determination Program, Local Advisory Committee meetings and activities etc.).

Applicant Response:

VMRC will provide ongoing training for culturally competent language interpretation. The training will include everything from language traditions and customs, as well as values, behaviors, attitudes, and our policies that enable us to work effectively in cross cultural interactions. Translators and Interpreters will learn to work effectively with regional center staff in order to deliver their service in a way that makes sense to the audience.

Participants who use language interpreter services will be asked for feedback on their experience. The interpreters will receive feedback and training, as needed, to improve the services provided.

Section Name: Language Access and Culture Plan**Sub Section Name:** Language Access and Culture Plan

1. Applicant Question: Regional Center Staffing

Funding for regional center staffing shall not exceed 50% of the total allocation received. If you plan to hire regional center staff to implement your Language Access and Culture Plans, explain what they will do and how they will support your efforts to improve language access and culture in your catchment. Include staffing in your budget.

All staffing requests must be approved by the Department. DDS will review and approve staffing requests within the GrantVantage system.

Applicant Response:

VMRC will hire a full time Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Manager and Spanish Language Access Specialist (SLAS).

The Manager will coordinate contracted community organizers who will help develop relationships with VMRC and our targeted communities. The Manager will learn about the needs of the targeted communities to develop an effective implementation plan. The Manager will strategically develop and conduct community access surveys and other tools for data measurement. In working with the Community Consultants, the Manager will obtain the qualitative data through focus groups and other engagements. Semi-annual reporting of data and outcomes will be documented and submitted by the Manager to DDS. The Manager, in working with the contractors, will adjust this plan based on the learnings and data obtained from the communities.

The SLAS will be available for immediate translation for website and social media postings to enable concurrent postings.

2. Applicant Question: Consultants

If your regional center proposes consultants to complete your assessment, planning process and/or implementation, provide a brief narrative as to the minimum qualifications of the consultant, provide a scope of work, and a budget. Include consultants in your budget.

All consultant requests must be approved by the Department. DDS will review and approve staffing requests within the GrantVantage system.

Applicant Response:

Community Consultants will be contracted to gather information and create meaningful relationships between VMRC and the identified communities. These consultants will be bilingual, trusted community leaders who were identified as experienced and trained organizers for the identified communities. The minimum qualifications for the Community Consultants will be successful implementation of a community initiative and demonstrated ability to listen to and address individual and group needs and concerns; the ability to assess, develop, and implement a community plan. The Community Consultants will be the field liaisons between the DEI Manager and the communities to assist with the assessment, planning process, and implementation of the plan once trustworthy relationships are established. Implementation of culture specific and Cultural Competency, Proficiency, Sensitivity, and Humility trainings for existing and newly hired regional center staff.

3. Applicant Question: Language Access and Cultural Goals

Timelines for completion of your language assessment and the development of your Language Access and Culture Plan will include short-term and long-term goals that may extend beyond a fiscal year. Provide at least one long-term goal and at least 2 short-term goals. All RC Language Access and Cultural Competency Plans and reports will be due as follows:

- Language Access and Culture Plan to be submitted by June 15
- Semi-Annual Progress Report due by October 1
- Semi-Annual Progress Report due by April 1

Applicant Response:

2 Short term goals:

- Recruit, hire and train.
- Introduction of DEI Manager, Spanish Language Access Specialist and Community Consultants to the DDS and ARCA cultural specialist groups
- Orientation and training about the disparity issue and its history
- Familiarizing them with existing partnerships with CBOs approved disparity grant projects
- Training the new DEI manager in GrantVantage reporting
- Introduction of the new DEI Manager, Spanish Language Access Specialist and Community Consultants to community partners

1 Long term goal:

- Conducting surveys and listening sessions with the Vietnamese, Tagalog, Cambodian and Spanish communities
-