**Request for Application (RFA)**

# PURPOSE OF THE TRANSITION DISCOVERIES: DESIGNING PATHWAYS TO COMPETITIVE INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT GRANT:

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), Bureau of Special Education is requesting applications from Local Education Agencies (LEAs) interested in using the [Transition Discoveries framework](https://www.transitiondiscoveries.org/our-framework/post-secondary-education) and Quality Indicators survey to create evidence-based systems that improve competitive integrated employment outcomes for transition-aged youth with disabilities. Through the use of the Transition Discoveries framework, school communities will co-design opportunities for youth, families, and stakeholders to build on their knowledge, skills, and relationships to prepare youth for life after high school. By utilizing the framework, school communities are empowered to identify transition practices and design new approaches that help youth with disabilities better reach their goals.

The purpose of the Transition Discoveries: Designing Pathways to Competitive Integrated Employment grant is to:

* Build a team to create and support engagement in the collection, review, and analysis of survey data
* Develop a customized approach to the transition planning process to improve inclusive transition services and supports for students with disabilities
* Empower youth, families, educators, and community members to serve as meaningful partners in the design and delivery of transition planning and systemic implementation of transition services
* Utilize available resources and supports to improve and increase cross agency collaboration

# APPLICATION CRITERIA AND GRANT PRIORITIES

1. **E LIGIBILITY**

Local Education Agencies, including approved private schools, career and technical centers, charters schools, cyber charter schools, intermediate units, and school districts are eligible to apply. Grant monies will be awarded to applicants with a full complement of Transition Change Agent Team members and who have evaluated and described their readiness to successfully implement Transition Discoveries and all required activities.

Funding of up to $45,000 over the two-year grant period will be available for each successful applicant from the date of the award through August 15, 2024.

# GRANT PRIORITIES

# The following essential program priorities must be addressed in the grant application.

1. **Review and report relevant data:** The grantee must review and report relevant data that will be used to begin identifying targeted areas in which the Transition Discoveries framework may be used to improve and enhance transition programming and practices specific to the LEA and surrounding community. Data to be reviewed and reported include:
   1. Special Education Data Report: Most recent Indicator 13 and 14 results
   2. Local High Priority Occupations
2. **Review, report, and describe current engagement levels of relevant stakeholders:** The grantee must review the nine Transition Discoveries Quality Indicators, rate the overall current level of engagement of each relevant stakeholder group, and describe how the Transition Discoveries framework will be used to increase engagement across stakeholder groups.
   1. Review the nine Transition Discoveries Quality Indicators. Links are provided directly within the application.
   2. Provide an overall rating of the level of engagement for each of the following stakeholder groups in the design and implementation of transition programming and practices according to the Quality Indicators:
      1. Young people
      2. Families
      3. School partners
      4. Agency/Community Partners
   3. Describe a plan to increase engagement of each stakeholder group in transition programming and practices using the Transition Discoveries framework.
3. **Identify Transition Change Agent Team (T-CAT) Members**: The grantee must identify by name and role, each member of the Transition Change Agent Team. Roles to be identified include:
   1. **Team Champion –** (Internal Coach) school-based or district staff who is well-organized with strong technology skills and commitment to transition efforts. With support and guidance from the external coaches, this individual will be responsible for becoming an internal coach to the LEA team on the Transition Discoveries process.
   2. **District Decision Lead** **–** District level administrator and/or special education coordinator; who has authority to give clearance on implementation of major activities such as collecting Transition Discoveries Survey data from youth with disabilities, families, and transition stakeholders; holding a community action planning event; and implementing district wide activities to improve transition practices, services, and opportunities as identified by a Transition Discoveries Community Action Plan.
   3. **Stakeholder with Transition Knowledge** **–** Special education teacher or transition coordinator who has the knowledge and connections to agencies and community partners.
   4. **Lead Young Person –** Transition-aged young person currently enrolled in the LEA who is committed to sharing the youth perspective and serving as a leader for other young persons.
   5. **Lead Parent or Family Member –** A parent or family member of a transition-aged young person currently enrolled in the LEA who is committed to sharing the parent/family member perspective and serving as a leader for other parents and family members.
   6. **Community or Agency Partner in Transition** (optional but encouraged)
      1. **Community Partner** **–** An individual who lives or works in the community and supports transition within the district (i.e., a local employer associated with a High Priority Occupation, organization, volunteer).
      2. **Agency Partner –** An individual who works at a state agency such as Office for Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), Office of Developmental Programs (ODP), or Health and Human Services (HHS).
4. **Report and describe readiness to implement:** The grantee must complete a self-assessment tool and describe the LEA’s readiness to implement the Transition Discoveries process and framework.
   1. Rate the LEA’s readiness in the following areas: Capacity, Needs, Fit, Resources, and Alignment.
   2. Describe the LEA’s readiness for:
      1. Implementing systems change for secondary transition programming and practices.
      2. Growing and improving practices in the nine Transition Discoveries Quality Indicators.
      3. Enhancing overall programming for students with disabilities.
5. **Describe sustainability plan:** The grantee must describe the vision for sustaining and/or continued expansion of the Transition Discoveries process at the end of the grant period.

# REQUIRED GRANT ACTIVITIES

# T RAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Grant awardees will receive support as follows:

1. Training in the Transition Discoveries framework and implementation process via Schoology course modules.
2. Technical assistance and networking opportunities supporting the following:
   1. Initial grant application training on required grant priorities;
   2. Online learning community; and
   3. Other assistance, as determined by the needs of the grantee.

# A SSURANCES/GRANT AGREEMENTS

In submitting a grant application, the Local Education Agency (LEA) agrees to the following to ensure quality and fidelity to the stated purpose of the grant.

1. Assurance that all activities and expenditures of funds conducted in association with the grant are in direct compliance with the provisions of the funding authorities.
2. Assurance that all required financial and program data is reported in a timely manner on a schedule established by the grantor.
3. Assurance that program staff will participate in all required PaTTAN/PDE training and technical assistance activities.
4. Assurance that all aspects of the Transition Discoveries grant - including records, communication, space for delivery of service, etc. will comply with regulations regarding student privacy and confidentiality.

Additionally, the LEA agrees to full participation in the following grant activities.

* **Year 1 – FUNDING PHASE 1**
  1. Establish a Transition Change Agent Team (T-CAT) and acquire board approval.
  2. Ensure Team Champion and T-CAT members, as appropriate, participates in TD Onboarding Webinar on 11/15/2022.
  3. Ensure Team Champion and T-CAT members, as appropriate, completes one module of TD Implementation Schoology course and CITI Training. The module contains three sub-modules:
     1. Empowering and Growing the T-CAT
     2. Transition Discoveries Data Collection
     3. Identifying Priorities for Action Planning from the Transition Discoveries Data
  4. Identify a representative sample of youth, families, and stakeholders who can complete the Transition Discoveries Survey, as well strategies to incentivize and recruit their participation.
  5. Begin distributing the Transition Discoveries Quality Indicator Survey to the identified representative sample of youth, families, and stakeholders within the district/community.
  6. Submit Monthly Implementation Updates for January and February 2023.
* **Year 1 – FUNDING PHASE 2**
  1. Collect completed responses on the Transition Discoveries Quality Indicator Survey from a minimum of 30 youth with disabilities, 30 family members, and 30 transition stakeholders (educators, agency staff, community partners).
  2. Ensure Team Champion and T-CAT members, as appropriate, participates in the online learning community scheduled for 2/21/2023, 3/21/2023, 4/18/2023 & 5/16/2023.
  3. Design and begin implementing the T-CAT’s Learning, Leadership and Empowerment Plan.
  4. Complete a facilitated data review using the TD What Works Datahub, resulting in the identification of strengths and potential priorities for improvement.
  5. Identify up to four priorities for community-driven action planning based upon a T-CAT review of the What Works Datahub and Transition Discoveries Quality Indicators (TDQI) data. Employment must be one of the priority areas.
  6. Complete The Nuts and Bolts of Job Coaching Schoology course (a minimum of one member per T-CAT).
  7. Submit Monthly Implementation Updates for March through June 2023.
* **Year 2 – FUNDING PHASE 3**
  1. Continue implementing the T-CAT’s Learning, Leadership and Empowerment Plan.
  2. Ensure Team Champion, and T-CAT members, as appropriate, participates in the online learning community scheduled for 9/19/2023, 10/17/2023, and 11/21/2023.
  3. Ensure Team Champion, and T-CAT members, as appropriate, completes 2 additional Modules of TD Implementation Schoology course:
     1. Community Action Planning Event
     2. Implementing a Systems-Level Transition Action Plan
  4. Host a community-wide action planning event, led by T-CAT team, focused upon the priorities identified from the TD data, and resulting in a systems-level transition action plan document.
  5. Collaborate to begin implementing the transition action plan. Collaborators include T-CAT and stakeholders across schools, agencies, and community partners.
  6. Submit baseline Employment data.
  7. Submit Monthly Implementation Updates for September through December 2023.
* **Year 2 – FUNDING PHASE 4**
  1. Continue to implement the transition action plan in collaboration with stakeholders across schools, agencies, and community partners.
  2. Ensure Team Champion, and T-CAT members, as appropriate, participates in the online learning community scheduled for 2/20/2024, 3/19/2024, 4/16/2024 & 5/21/2024.
  3. Ensure Team Champion, and T-CAT members, as appropriate, completes TD Evidence-Based Practices for Employment Schoology course plus up to two more of the TD EBP Schoology courses.
  4. Submit final Employment data.

# BUDGET

The funding available to each successful grant application is as follows:

1. A maximum of $45,000.00 is available and will be distributed over a two-year period.
2. The following terms will apply:
   1. Upon completion of Year 1 - Phase 1 activities, the grantee will receive a stipend disbursement of $7,500 contingent upon the completion of all required activities.
   2. Upon completion of Year 1 - Phase 2 activities, the grantee will receive a stipend disbursement of $7,500 contingent upon the completion of all required activities.
   3. Upon completion of Year 2 - Phase 3 activities, the grantee will receive a stipend disbursement of $15,000 contingent upon the completion of all required activities.
   4. Upon completion of Year 2 - Phase 4 activities, the grantee will receive a stipend disbursement of $15,000 contingent upon the completion of all required activities.
   5. Equipment costs, clothing (except work uniforms – not streetwear), gift cards, food and entertainment, and student salaries are not allowable expenses.
   6. General supplies must be purchased prior to May 31, 2024.

# APPLICATION SUBMISSION

The application can be accessed from the [Secondary Transition webpage of the PaTTAN Website](https://www.pattan.net/Graduation-Post-Secondary-Outcomes/Educational-Initiatives/Effective-Practices-for-Secondary-Transition/Transition-Discoveries) or using the following link: <https://fs25.formsite.com/3fHiZQ/vsowso53qh/index.html>

Applications must be received by Monday, September 12, 2022, at 3:00 PM.

Note: Use of the Google Chrome browser will allow for easiest navigation. Applicants have the ability to save and return to the application as needed. The online application platform will also enable applicants to provide electronic signatures.

Grant Overview: PaTTAN educational consultants will provide an informational webinar regarding the grant application process on Friday, August 5, 2022, at 10:00 AM. The webinar will be recorded and posted on the PaTTAN website.

Register for the webinar using the following link: <https://pattanpgh.zoom.us/j/91517662715>

For questions concerning Transition Discoveries: Designing Pathways to Competitive Integrated Employment contact:

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