Notice of Funding Opportunity

Application due Friday, July 10, 2026

HRSA
Health Resources & Services Administration

Maternal and Child Health Bureau
Division of Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Workforce Development

Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Other Related Disabilities (LEND)

Opportunity number: HRSA-26-019

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES · USA

Contents

Before you begin

If you believe you are a good candidate for this funding opportunity, secure your SAM.gov and Grants.gov registrations now. If you are already registered, make sure your registrations are active and up-to-date.

SAM.gov registration (this can take several weeks)

You must have an active account with SAM.gov. This includes having a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

See Step 2: Get Ready to Apply

Grants.gov registration (this can take several days)

You must have an active Grants.gov registration. Doing so requires a Login.gov registration as well.

See Step 2: Get Ready to Apply

Apply by the application due date

Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, July 10, 2026.

To help you find what you need, this NOFO uses internal links. In Adobe Reader, you can go back to where you were by pressing Alt + Left Arrow (Windows) or Command + Left Arrow (Mac) on your keyboard.

All activities proposed in your application and budget narrative must align with applicable law, including but not limited to statutes, executive orders, federal regulations and applicable judicial holdings. Accordingly, discretionary awards shall not be used to fund, promote, encourage, subsidize, or facilitate: racial preferences or other forms of racial discrimination by the recipient, including activities where race or intentional proxies for race will be used as a selection criterion for employment or program participation; denial by the recipient of the sex binary in humans, or the belief that sex is a chosen or mutable characteristic; illegal immigration; or any other initiatives that compromise public safety. If an application does not align, the application will not receive funding to the extent permitted by law and applicable court orders.

Step 1:

Review the Opportunity

In this step

Basic information

Health Resources Services Administration

Maternal and Child Health Bureau

Division of Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Workforce Development

Training health providers to work with children and youth with autism and developmental disabilities.

Summary

The LEND program improves the quality of care for children and youth with autism and other developmental disabilities (DD) by training health and related professionals to screen, diagnose, and provide services for them across the lifespan. Trainees in over 30 disciplines receive training on diagnostic tools, early intervention, and other topics to improve the quality of and access to care for this population. LEND programs also include individuals with lived experience, including family members and individuals with disabilities, as faculty and trainees.

Have questions?
Go to Contacts and Support.

Key facts

Opportunity name:
Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Other Related Disabilities (LEND)

Opportunity number:
HRSA-26-019

Announcement version:
Initial

Federal assistance listing:
93.877

Key dates

NOFO issue date:
June 8, 2026

Informational webinar:
Visit HRSA.gov for information.

Application deadline:
Friday, July 10, 2026

Expected award date:
September 30, 2026

Expected start date:
September 30, 2026

See other submissions for other time frames that may apply to this NOFO.

Funding details

Application types: New, Competing continuation

Expected total available funding in FY 2026: $38,300,000

Expected total number and type of awards: 60 grants

Funding range per award: Amount varies

We plan to fund awards in five budget periods for a period of performance from September 30, 2026, to June 30, 2031.

The program and awards depend on the appropriation of funds and are subject to change based on the availability and amount of appropriations.

Table 1: Tier funding levels

Tier	FY 2026 funding	Number of long-term trainees **	Number of disciplines: Trainees	Number of disciplines: Faculty
Tier 1*	Up to $460,000	9	7	7
Tier 2	Up to $550,000	12	8	8
Tier 3	Up to $641,000	18	10	9
Tier 4	Up to $734,000	29	12	10

* Please note that new applicants to LEND may only apply for Tier 1.

** Appendix A has trainee definitions and restrictions.

*** Appendix B has trainee and faculty qualifications and approved disciplines.

As part of the application for LEND program funding, you may also apply for up to two optional supplemental funding opportunities:

1. **LEND Pediatric Audiology Trainee supplement**
   Up to $150,000 per year for five years to support an increase in the number of LEND-trained pediatric audiology trainees and to support innovations to build workforce capacity and address emerging needs in the field.
   42 U.S.C. § 280g-1(a) (Title III, § 399M(a) of the Public Health Service Act)
   - We plan to fund up to 12 supplemental awards.
   - You need to apply for the base LEND program funding to apply for this supplement.
   - To apply for this supplement, follow the instructions in Attachment 7.
2. **LEND Emerging Issues supplement**
   A one-time, one-year supplement of up to $50,000 to support the LEND training programs' efforts to address emerging issues and further innovative practices to improve outcomes for children and youth with autism/DD.
   - U.S.C. § 280i-1(e)(1) (Title III, § 399BB(e)(1) of the Public Health Service Act)
   - You need to apply for the base LEND program funding to apply for this supplement.
   - This supplement may be awarded for any of the five one-year budget periods and is subject to the availability of funds.
   - To apply for this supplement, follow the instructions in Attachment 8.

Eligibility

Who can apply

You can apply if you are a public or nonprofit agency, including institutions of higher education.

Types of eligible organizations

These types of domestic organizations may apply:

- State governments.
- County governments.
- City or township governments.
- Special district governments.
- Public and state-controlled institutions of higher education.
- Native American tribal governments (federally recognized).
- Native American tribal organizations (other than federally recognized tribal governments).
- Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education.
- Nonprofits without 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education.
- Private institutions of higher education.
- Faith-based organizations.

“Domestic” means the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.

Individuals are not eligible applicants under this NOFO.

Other eligibility criteria

Trainee eligibility

To receive support under this program, a trainee must be one of the following:

- A U.S. citizen or non-citizen national.
- An individual lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States.
- Any other "qualified alien" under section 431(b) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Pub. L 104-193, as amended.

Please review other trainee support information in Appendix A.

Qualifications for principal investigator or project director

Your project can have only one recognized project director (PD), who should dedicate at least 30% of their time to the LEND grant. The dedicated time can be supported through in-kind contributions or by grant funds. The PD should be a faculty member employed by your organization when you submit the application. While your project can have co-directors, only one PD is formally recognized on the notice of award (NOA) and will receive key communications.

More information on LEND project director qualifications can be found in the faculty section of the program requirements and expectations.

Completeness and responsiveness criteria

We will review your application to make sure it meets these basic requirements to move forward in the competition.

We will not consider an application that:

- Is from an organization that does not meet all eligibility criteria.
- Requests funding above the award ceiling shown in the funding range.
- Is submitted after the deadline.

Application limits

You may not submit more than one application. If you submit more than one application, we will only accept the last on-time submission.

Cost sharing

This program has no cost-sharing requirement. If you choose to share in the costs of the project, we will not consider it during merit review. Recipients agree that once committed, cost sharing amounts are enforceable and subject to reporting and auditing requirements under 2 CFR 200.

Post-award requirements

Before you apply, make sure you understand the requirements that come with an award.

See Step 6: Learn What Happens After Award for information on regulations that apply, reporting, and more.

Program description

Purpose

The program goal is to increase the capacity of the workforce trained to meet the complex needs of children and youth with autism/DD by enhancing the expertise and leadership skills of students, practicing professionals, individuals with disabilities, and families dedicated to working with and improving the system of care for this population.

LEND programs meet this goal through a range of activities. The program objectives to be accomplished during the period of performance to support program goals include:

- Train graduate and postgraduate students, family members, individuals with disabilities, and practicing professionals.
    - Deliver training that includes a balance of academic, clinical, leadership, and community-based learning opportunities. Frame the training in an interdisciplinary and person-/family-centered manner.
    - Increase the number of current and future providers trained to screen, evaluate, diagnose or rule out, and develop and provide evidence-based interventions to the target population across their lifespan.
    - Engage trainees at varying levels of intensity through long-, medium-, and short-term training opportunities.
    - Engage cohorts of trainees that satisfy other legislatively mandated requirements.[1]
- Increase the number of diagnostic evaluations provided by LEND faculty and trainees.
- Include individuals with lived experience, including family members and individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities, as faculty and trainees.[2]
- Provide continuing education opportunities for practicing professionals.
- Provide technical assistance to local, state, and national programs and agencies to improve the system of care for people with disabilities.

The purposes of the two **optional** supplements are:

- **LEND Pediatric Audiology Trainee supplement:** To support the expansion of the pediatric audiology workforce with expertise in delivering care to deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) infants and young children with autism/DD and their families.
- **LEND Emerging Issues supplement:** To enhance the LEND training program's capacity to respond to emerging needs in the field of autism/DD and to support innovative training practices.

Background

Parent-reported data from the 2022-2023 National Survey of Children's Health documented that 1 in 25 children age 3 to 17 have a diagnosis of autism. Even though children can be diagnosed as early as age 2, on average, children identified with autism were not diagnosed until age 4.[3]

Additionally, health care systems do not have enough providers to meet the complex needs of children with autism/DD. The LEND program trains more providers to screen, evaluate, diagnose or rule out, and provide evidence-based care for children and youth with, or at an increased likelihood of developing, autism/DD.

In FY23, the 60 LEND programs trained over 24,000 trainees and provided continuing education to an additional 433,000 practicing health and other professionals to strengthen their ability to provide high-quality care for children/youth with autism/DD. That year, over 153,000 infants and children received diagnostic evaluations to rule out or confirm autism/DD through LEND programs.[4]

Program requirements and expectations

To achieve the goals and objectives stated in the purpose section, you are expected to complete the following activities.

Trainee recruitment and retention

- Recruit and train the indicated number of qualified long-term trainees (LTT) who demonstrate interest in a career serving children and youth with autism/DD, as shown in Table 1, Tier funding levels, and Appendix B: Trainee and faculty disciplines and qualifications.
- Recruit trainees in the number of disciplines corresponding to the selected funding tier, with similar disciplines for the core LEND faculty.
- Make sure that no single trainee discipline makes up more than 25% of a LEND cohort.
- Recruit trainees who represent various populations.

- Include at least one trainee with a disability in each annual LTT cohort.
- Include at least one family member trainee in each LTT cohort.
- Recruit medium- and/or short-term trainees to participate in a subset of LEND training.

Training and education

- Deliver an interdisciplinary curriculum that prepares trainees to address the full range of neurodevelopmental disabilities, with a focus on autism. This curriculum is in addition to their graduate or postgraduate training.
- Offer a balance of academic, clinical, and community opportunities.
- Provide short-, medium-, and long-term training opportunities, as stated in Appendix B: Trainee and faculty disciplines and qualifications.
- Training should:
    - Include clinical and experiential training in both institutional and community-based settings.
    - Involve hands-on, supervised clinical work for appropriate disciplines.
    - For non-clinical trainees, include opportunities to observe and participate, as appropriate, in clinics and other settings.
    - Include families and individuals with disabilities as trainees in all academic, clinical, and field activities.
    - Be based on a comprehensive, multidisciplinary clinical service model that is person-/family-centered and culturally and linguistically appropriate, as required in the authorizing legislation.
    - Prepare trainees to conduct autism/DD screening and provide diagnostic services and evidence-based interventions to children and youth with autism/DD, as appropriate to their discipline.
    - Offer field placements in educational settings, state/local agencies, or other environments in addition to or instead of clinical placements.
    - Build leadership skills for trainees. LEND curricula can be informed by the MCH Leadership Competencies.[5]
    - Engage trainees in one or more research, evaluation, or quality improvement projects.
    - Provide effective faculty mentoring for trainees that promotes reflective practices and facilitates personal and professional growth.

- Cover the following topics in the curriculum:
  - Theoretical concepts:
    - Various models of disability and the interaction of disability with other life experiences.
    - Critical thinking, science-based judgment, research methods, interdisciplinary care, evidence-based practice, performance measurement, and how to use data for continuous quality improvement in clinical and community-based practice.
  - Culturally and linguistically appropriate services.
  - Systems issues:
    - Systems of care for children and youth with special health care needs.
    - How to practice person-/family-centered care, use medical home concepts, support care transitions, and coordinate care.
    - Health care and community transitions from youth to adult services.
    - Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant Program and related MCH legislation, including policy-making processes.
  - Clinical issues:
    - Best practices for autism screening, diagnosis, and evidence-based interventions at various levels of support needs across the lifespan.
    - Effective tools for screening and diagnosing autism/DD; the social environment; transitions from youth to adult services; and services and supports for the autistic/DD population in adulthood.
    - Emerging needs and special interests in the field of autism/DD.
    - Innovative and alternative methods of providing health care, such as telehealth.

Partnerships

- Develop partnerships with community clinics, schools, and service agencies that can serve as training sites for LEND trainees.
- Partner and coordinate with community-based and other organizations to improve access to services and improve systems of care.
- Coordinate activities and collaborate with other federally supported training and research programs for children and youth with autism/DD, especially Autism CARES–funded programs.
- Share reports, products, or other project outputs with relevant audiences.

Faculty

- Identify a project director (PD) who will have day-to-day, direct responsibility for grant activities.
    - The PD is expected to be a board-certified pediatrician, a health professional with a doctorate in one of the disciplines in Appendix B, or a currently approved LEND PD.
    - LEND PDs are expected to have at least five, preferably seven or more, years of experience in programs serving children with autism/DD.
    - The PD is expected to:
        - Ensure that grant funds are used properly.
        - Attend LEND director and related meetings or designate another program representative.
        - Work directly with the federal project officer.
        - Be the steward of all funds under the LEND program, including the two optional supplements.
- Have faculty from at least the number of disciplines in your selected tier.
- Have core LEND faculty who, along with the PD, form the interdisciplinary program leadership team and commit a portion of their full-time equivalent (FTE) to LEND. Core faculty members:
    - Share responsibility for planning, designing, implementing, coordinating, and evaluating the LEND program.
    - Ensure supervision of all training and service elements of their discipline, with special emphasis on autism/DD.
    - Help select trainees and define criteria for recruiting trainees from their discipline.
    - Serve as mentors to LEND LTTs from their discipline or related disciplines, as practical.
    - Coordinate between the program and their professional associates, academic affiliates, clinical departments, and discipline counterparts in state and community programs.
- Have at least two dedicated faculty members with lived experience whose roles can include teaching, mentoring, coordinating experiential activities for trainees, advising other faculty on personal perspectives, and planning and developing curricula. See Appendix B for more details on these disciplines. This includes:
    - At least one dedicated faculty member with a disability.

  - At least one dedicated family faculty member with experience caring for a person with autism/DD.
- Have supporting faculty, as needed, to strengthen the LEND curriculum and provide mentorship beyond what the core faculty can provide.
- Provide grant support for faculty salaries to ensure that they can dedicate time to meet the objectives of the training program.
- Engage core and supporting faculty who:
  - Meet the standards of education, experience, and certification or licensure accepted by their professions.
  - Demonstrate leadership and scholarship.
  - Have teaching and clinical experience providing person-/family-centered, health, and related services to address the needs of children/youth with autism/DD.
- Assign faculty and staff to roles that help the LEND program work well. These roles may include a training director, training coordinators, evaluators, data coordinator, or others, and should be outlined in the organizational chart in Attachment 4.

Organization

- Be part of an organization with a mission and structure that enables it to successfully implement the program.
- Provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services, as required in the authorizing legislation.
- Have experience working with populations with limited access to services.
- Be able to recruit LEND trainees in the disciplines included in your application.
- Provide opportunities for trainees and faculty in different disciplines to interact with each other, both formally and informally, to enhance interdisciplinary practices. Trainee cohorts may be fully in-person, hybrid, or virtual, at your discretion.
- Use technologies such as e-learning systems, course management software, web-based conferencing, social media, and social networking tools to facilitate adult learning.
- Have the infrastructure to ensure that settings, materials, and curricula are accessible for all participants, including trainees and faculty with varying needs.

Technical assistance (TA) and continuing education (CE)

- Conduct at least three CE activities per year, such as conferences, workshops, or similar training activities, designed to enhance skills or share new information.
- Recruit CE participants—practicing professionals who take a seminar or course for professional development. CE participants are not enrolled in a formal degree or certificate program, though they may receive CE credits.
- Track and report CE participation in annual performance reports.
- Use the subject matter expertise of LEND faculty and trainees to provide TA to MCH partners and others, including Title V recipients. This may include providing clinical services, program development, program evaluation, needs assessments, and policy and guidelines formulation. It may also include site visits and review or advisory functions, and may be one-time or ongoing.

Performance measurement, evaluation, and continuous quality improvement (CQI)

We expect you to measure your performance, evaluate your program, and conduct CQI activities. Actions include:

- Measuring performance on key activities and program objectives, including but not limited to:
  - Number of long-, medium-, and short-term trainees.
  - Number of CE events and participants.
  - Number of TA activities and participants in your program, including those that are geared toward autism/DD topics.
  - Number of diagnostic evaluations your LEND program conducts each year.
- Collecting and reporting annually on measures that align with program goals and objectives, such as:
  - Details on subject matter expertise and technical assistance provided to the community.
  - Number of individuals taught to diagnose, screen, and/or provide evidence-based interventions on autism/DD.
  - Details on the impact of LEND activities on the system of care.
  - Progress on any supplements that your program receives.
- Evaluating your program:

- Assess the quality of the training experience using trainee, alumni, faculty, and partner feedback.
- Engage in continuous quality improvement, using data and findings from performance measurement or evaluation work to inform and improve processes and outcomes.
- Share project results and outputs with other awardees and the public.
- Participate in an evaluation of the Autism CARES Act awardees, which may inform federal reports to Congress.

Statutory authority

LEND Base Award 42 U.S.C. § 280i-1(e)(1) (Title III, § 399BB(e)(1) of the Public Health Service Act)

LEND Audiology Supplements 42 U.S.C. § 280g-1(a) (Title III, § 399M(a) of the Public Health Service Act)

Award information

Funding policies and limitations

Changes in HHS regulations

As of October 1, 2025, HHS has adopted 2 CFR Part 200, with some modifications included in 2 CFR Part 300. These regulations replace those in 45 CFR Part 75.

Policies

- To make an award, funding must be available and allocated for this program and purpose, at which point we will move forward with the review and award process.
- Have clear policies and good financial practices to avoid spending HRSA funds on unallowable activities. Like other award rules, we may audit your policies, procedures, and controls.
- Support beyond the first budget year will depend on:
  - Appropriation of funds.
  - Your satisfactory progress in meeting the project's objectives.
  - A decision that continued funding is in the government's best interest.
- If we receive more funding for this program, we may:
  - Fund more applicants from the rank order list.
  - Extend the period of performance.
  - Award supplemental funding.

General limitations

- For guidance on some types of costs we do not allow or restrict, see:
  - Project Budget Information in section 3.1.4 of the R&R Application Guide [PDF].
  - 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart E—General Provisions for Selected Items of Cost.
  - Allowable and Unallowable Costs and Activities in the HHS Grants Policy Statement.
- All costs must be reasonable, necessary, allocable to the award, and adequately documented (2 CFR 200.403).
- You cannot earn profit from the federal award. See 2 CFR § 200.400(g).
- Current appropriations law includes a salary limit of $228,000 as of January 2026 that applies to this program. You may pay salaries at a higher rate if the rate

beyond the salary rate limit (Executive Level II) is paid with non-HHS funds. For help calculating salaries under this limit, read more at "Salary rate limitation" in the R&R Application Guide [PDF].

Indirect costs

Indirect costs are costs you charge across more than one project that cannot be easily separated by project. For example, this could include utilities for a building that supports multiple projects.

As of October 1, 2025, per 2 CFR 200.414 indirect costs for training awards cannot exceed 8% of modified total direct costs. To calculate the MTDC, we exclude from the direct cost base:

- Direct cost amounts for equipment, tuition, fees, and participant support costs.
- Subawards and subcontracts exceeding $50,000.

For modified total direct costs, we use the definition at 2 CFR 200.1.

Consider your indirect costs when developing your budget.

Program income

Program income is money earned as a result of your award-supported project activities. You must use those funds to add to approved project activities. Find more about program income at 2 CFR 200.307.

Step 2:
Get Ready to Apply

In this step

Get registered

SAM.gov

You must have an active account with SAM.gov to apply. SAM.gov registration can take several weeks. Begin that process today.

To register:

- Go to SAM.gov Entity Registration and select Get Started. From the same page, you can also select the Entity Registration Checklist for the information you will need to register.
- You must agree to the financial assistance general certifications and representations [PDF] specifically. Those for contracts are different.

When you register, you will also receive your required Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

Once you register:

- You will have to maintain your registration throughout the life of any award.
- If your organization has multiple UEIs, use the one associated with your physical location.

If you need additional information about user roles in SAM.gov, see “Get registered: SAM.gov user roles” in the R&R Application Guide [PDF].

Grants.gov

You must also have an active account with Grants.gov. You can see step-by-step instructions at the Grants.gov Quick Start Guide for Applicants and How to Apply for Grants.

Find the application package

The application package has all the forms you need to apply. You can find it online. Go to Grants Search at Grants.gov and search for opportunity number HRSA-26-019.

After you select the opportunity, we recommend that you select the Subscribe button to get updates.

Application writing help

Visit HHS Tips for Preparing Grant Proposals.

Visit HRSA's How to Prepare Your Application page for more guidance.

See Apply for a Grant for other help and resources.

Join the webinar

For more information about this opportunity, join the webinar. More information on the webinar will be posted at a later date to the HRSA-26-019 opportunity page on HRSA.gov.

We recommend that you subscribe to the NOFO on Grants.gov to receive updates when we post documents.

Have questions? Go to Contacts and Support.

Step 3:

Build Your Application

In this step

Application checklist

There are two types of forms in Grants.gov.

- Some forms allow you to upload components of your application to the form. These include components like your project narrative, budget and budget narrative, and attachments.
- Other forms are more typical, fill-in-the-blank forms.

Make sure that you have everything you need to apply.

Narratives

See the instructions for the project narrative and the budget and budget narrative.

Form	Included in page limit*?
☐ Research & Related Other Project Information	Yes
☐ Research & Related Budget	Yes

Attachments

See instructions for attachments.

Form	Included in page limit*?
☐ 1. Work plan	Yes
☐ 2. Staffing plan and job descriptions	Yes
☐ 3. Agreements with other entities	Yes
☐ 4. Project organizational chart	Yes
☐ 5. Tables, charts, and syllabus/curriculum	Yes
☐ 6. Funding tier calculation	Yes
☐ 7. LEND Pediatric Audiology Trainee Supplement (optional)	No
☐ 8. LEND Emerging Issues Supplement (optional)	No
☐ 9-15. Other relevant documents	Yes

Other required forms

See form instructions.

Form	Included in page limit*?
☐ SF-424 (R&R)	No
☐ Project Abstract Summary Form	No
☐ R&R Subaward Budget Attachment(s)	Yes*
☐ Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile form	Yes
☐ Project/Performance Site Location(s)	No
☐ Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)	No

* Unless otherwise indicated, only what you attach to a form counts toward the page limit. The form itself does not count.

Application contents and format

This section includes guidance on each component found in the application checklist.

Application page limit: 75

Submit your information in English and express whole number budget figures using U.S. dollars.

Required format

Required format for project summary, project narrative, budget narrative, and attachments:

Font: A readable font like Arial, Courier, CG Times, or Times New Roman.

File format: We only accept the following document formats:

- .PDF - Adobe Portable Document Format
- .DOC/.DOCX - Microsoft Word
- .RTF - Rich Text Format
- .TXT - Text
- .WPD - Word Perfect Document
- .XLS/.XLSX - Microsoft Excel
- .VSD - Microsoft Visio

Size: 12-point font.
Footnotes, charts, graphics, and budget tables may be 10-point or higher.

Ink color: Black.

Spacing: Single-spaced, including all text and tables.

Alignment: Left.

Headings: Bold all headings and align left.

Size: 8.5 x 11. (Make sure the print area is set and allows printing to 8.5 x 11.)

Margins: 1-inch on all sides.

Footer: On each page as the footer, include your organization's name and page numbers. If a competing continuation or competing supplement, also include your 10-digit award number.

Page numbering:

- Do not number the standard OMB-approved forms.
- Number each attachment page sequentially (that is, 1, 2, 3).
- Reset the numbering for each attachment.
- Treat each attachment as a separate section.

File names: You can find guidance for naming your files in the R&R Application Guide [PDF].

Project narrative

Use the Research & Related Other Project Information form to attach the project narrative. In the project narrative, you will describe all aspects of your project.

Use the section headers and the order as listed.

Introduction

See merit review criterion 1: need

Briefly describe the purpose of your project.

Need

See merit review criterion 1: need

- Describe the unmet needs this training program will address.
- Describe the national, state, regional, and local need for professionals with expertise in autism/DD, including screening, diagnosis, and interdisciplinary service delivery.
- Identify unmet needs affecting children and youth with autism/DD and show how increasing workforce training will help meet those needs.
- Describe how the proposed project will address gaps in the system of care for children and youth with autism/DD.
- Use and cite demographic data whenever possible.

Approach

See merit review criterion 2: response

Overall methodology

- Tell us how you'll address your stated needs and meet the program requirements and expectations described in this NOFO.
- Develop goals and objectives that match the overarching goals of LEND.

- Include a brief plan to share reports, products, or other project outputs with relevant audiences.

Trainee recruitment and retention

- Describe how you will recruit and retain an interdisciplinary cohort of trainees, including LTTs, who satisfy statutory requirements and are committed to serving children and youth with autism/DD.
- Describe how the program will recruit at least the number of LTTs in the required number of disciplines for your funding level, as specified in Table 1: Tier funding levels.
- Describe how the program will recruit and retain at least one trainee with a disability and one family trainee in the LTT cohort each year.
- Describe your approach to recruiting and retaining medium- and/or short-term trainees, and how you will structure their training experiences.

Training and education

- Describe the academic, clinical, and community components of the curriculum and how they will meet interdisciplinary training needs to improve services for children and youth with autism/DD.
- Identify clinical, practicum, and field placement opportunities available to both clinical and non-clinical trainees.
- Describe how academic, clinical, and field activities will include families and individuals with disabilities as trainees.
- Describe how the training program will help trainees build the knowledge and skills they need to become future leaders in MCH.
- Describe how the academic training will address all the topics listed in the training and education section and present content in ways that are suitable for trainees with different knowledge, skill levels, and backgrounds.
- Describe training activities that will help trainees understand the lifespan developmental approach and address the needs of children and youth with disabilities as they grow and transition to adulthood.
- Describe how you will provide training on research, evaluation, and/or quality improvement concepts that are suitable for trainees with different knowledge, skill levels, and backgrounds.

Partnerships

- Demonstrate the commitment of partner organizations to enhance the training program. Include letters of support and formal agreements in Attachment 3.

Technical assistance and continuing education

- Describe the proposed CE activities that you will offer to practicing professionals, and how you will provide at least three CE activities per year.
- Describe the proposed plans to conduct outreach and provide TA to community organizations.

High-level work plan

See merit review criteria 2: response and 4: impact

- Describe how you'll achieve each of the objectives during the period of performance.
- Provide a timeline that includes each activity and identifies who is responsible for each. As needed, identify how key stakeholders will help plan, design, and carry out these activities.
- You will also include a more detailed work plan in Attachment 1.

Resolving challenges

See merit review criterion 2: response

Discuss challenges that you are likely to encounter in designing and carrying out the activities in the work plan. Explain approaches that you'll use to resolve them.

Performance reporting and evaluation

See merit review criteria 3: performance reporting and evaluation and 5: resources and capabilities

Performance measurement and reporting

See the reporting section for more information.

- Describe how you will track project-related processes, activities, and milestones, and use data to identify actual or potential challenges to implementation. Provide an initial list of measures (indicators, metrics) you will use to monitor progress.
- Provide your plan for measuring and tracking program goals and objectives, as outlined in the purpose section. The plan should include the measures outlined in the program requirements and expectations section and plans for the timely collection and reporting of all measures.
- Describe how you will collect and report performance data accurately and on time.
- Describe how you will manage and securely store data.

- Describe how you will track and report on former LTTs over five years. Include strategies to maintain contact with former trainees and methods to survey graduates and limit loss to follow-up.

Program evaluation

Describe a brief plan to evaluate the project, including:

- A commitment to participate in the Autism CARES Act evaluation of all CARES awardees.
- A description of your program evaluation plans and methods for completing the data collection and performance measurement activities outlined in the program requirements and expectations section. Include a timeline to implement evaluation activities, anticipated evaluation barriers, and your plan to address them.
- The evaluation capacity of your organization and staff. Include their experience, skills, and knowledge.

Continuous quality improvement

Describe your plans for using and incorporating information from performance measurement and evaluation to inform and improve processes and outcomes. Include:

- Efforts to ensure the program is meeting the evolving needs of the workforce serving people with autism/DD.
- Plans to assess the quality of the continuing education and technical assistance provided.
- Plans to assess the quality of long-, medium-, and short-term trainee experiences.
- How you will share project results and outputs.
- How you will assess whether your plan is effective at the local, state, regional, and/or national levels.

Sustainability

See merit review criterion 4: impact

We expect you to sustain key project elements that improve practices and outcomes for the target population. Propose a plan for project sustainability after the period of federal funding ends.

- Highlight key elements of your projects. Examples include training methods or strategies that have been effective in improving practices.
- Describe the actions you'll take to obtain future sources of funding.
- Discuss challenges that you'll likely encounter in sustaining the program. Include how you will resolve these challenges.

- Share information about your project to help other groups advance autism/DD training in other settings.
- Ensure that project results work to improve the system of care for children and youth with autism/DD.
- Use the LEND project to make a strong public health impact.

Organizational Information

See merit review criterion 5: resources and capabilities

- Briefly describe your mission, structure, and the scope of your current activities. Explain how they support your ability to carry out the program requirements. Include a project organizational chart as Attachment 4.
- Discuss how you'll follow the approved plan, account for federal funds, and record all costs to avoid audit findings.
- Describe how you'll assess and meet the unique needs of the trainees you serve.
- Include a staffing plan and job descriptions for key faculty and staff in Attachment 2.
- Describe the organizations you will partner with to fulfill the program goals and meet the training objectives. Include key agreements and letters of support in Attachment 3.
- You will also include biographical sketches for key staff using the Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile form. See Other required forms.
- Demonstrate that your organization has established training programs or documented access to training programs to recruit graduate students in the approved disciplines.
- Demonstrate your ability to carry out the project based on relevant past performance implementing a similar training program for interdisciplinary trainees and/or serving children and youth with disabilities, if applicable.
- Demonstrate adequate physical and technological resources to conduct the training, including physical or virtual space for the cohort to meet.
- Demonstrate that LEND curricular materials and physical settings are accessible for all participants.
- Demonstrate the organizational capacity to gather, manage, and use data to inform processes and advance outcomes.

Project director, LEND faculty, and staff qualifications

- Demonstrate that the proposed PD meets the qualifications for this position under the qualifications for project director and faculty sections of the program requirements and expectations.
- Demonstrate that core faculty and key personnel are qualified, are from the disciplines listed in Appendix B, and have experience and expertise in autism/DD.
- Demonstrate that faculty are well qualified to mentor graduate and postgraduate students and serve as leaders in the field.
- Describe how you will recruit faculty to meet the required number of faculty members and faculty disciplines for your selected funding level, shown in Table 1: Tier funding levels.
- Describe the roles of the faculty with a disability and family faculty member(s) on the project.
- Describe how individuals with disabilities and families will be involved with the trainee cohort. For example, they could act as speakers, family volunteers, committee members, or reviewers of program activities. Demonstrate that these individuals will be compensated.
- Describe faculty appointments and/or arrangements, including whether faculty come from other universities or settings.
- Describe project staff with the training and experience to carry out performance reporting and program evaluations.

Budget and budget narrative

See merit review criterion 6: support requested

Your **budget** should follow the instructions in the budget narrative section of the R&R Application Guide [PDF] and any specific instructions listed in this section.

HHS now uses the definitions for equipment and supply in 2 CFR 200.1. The new definitions change the threshold for equipment to the lesser of the recipient's capitalization level or $10,000 and the threshold for supplies to below that amount.

The total project or program costs are all allowable (direct and indirect) costs used for the HRSA award activity or project. This includes costs charged to the award and non-federal funds used to satisfy a matching or cost-sharing requirement (which may include maintenance of effort, if applicable).

Reminder: Indirect costs for training awards cannot exceed 8% of modified total direct costs.

The **budget narrative** supports the information you provide in the Research and Related Budget Form. The merit review committee reviews both. Your budget should show a well-organized plan.

The budget narrative includes an itemized breakdown and a clear justification of the requested costs. As you develop your budget, consider:

- If the costs are reasonable, allowable and allocable, and consistent with your project's purpose and activities.
- The restrictions on spending funds. See funding policies and limitations.

To create your budget justification narrative, see budget narrative detailed instructions in the R&R Application Guide [PDF].

Participant and trainee support costs

Please see Appendix A to review full information on trainee costs allowed under this program.

In your budget narrative:

- Identify the number of participants and trainees.
- Identify the expected number of long-term trainees. Make sure it meets the number of trainees for your funding tier.
- List tuition, fees, health insurance, stipends, travel, subsistence, and other proposed costs that will be provided to trainees from this award (as applicable).
- Separate these costs from others so we can identify them easily.
- Include a sub-total entitled "Total Participant and Trainee Support Costs" with the summary of these costs.
- Demonstrate that you have allocated funds to financially compensate trainees with disabilities and family trainees.

Faculty costs

Faculty members can be either your employee, contractor, or consultant. Faculty costs are unique and different than trainee costs, which are for your students. Allowable faculty costs may include:

- Stipends (other than to employees).
- Percentage (%) of salary (for employees).
- Continuing education, other training, and related fees.
- Travel.

Note: You cannot require students to pay faculty costs.

- If the faculty member is an employee, specify those costs under Section B, Other Personnel; Section D, Travel; and Section F, Other Direct Costs.
- If the faculty member is a consultant or contractor, lists those costs under Section F, Other Direct Costs.
- Include the number of faculty members in your budget narrative.
- Clearly indicate that one PD will commit to the expected 30% or more time/effort to the project (regardless of the source of funding).
- Demonstrate that other core faculty and key personnel are devoting enough time to the project to achieve project objectives. If faculty time for LEND will be supported by other funds, please indicate this in the budget narrative.
- Demonstrate that you have allocated funds to financially compensate faculty with disabilities and family faculty.

Consultant services

Identify each consultant, the services they will perform, the total number of days, travel costs, and the total estimated costs.

Other direct costs

Include the following costs:

- Costs of training short- and/or medium-term trainees.
- Costs related to providing CE and TA.
- Travel funds for at least one LEND program representative (project director, co-director, or training director) to attend these meetings:
    - Up to two LEND recipient meetings per year in the Washington, DC, area. One recipient meeting each year may be coordinated with the AUCD annual meeting held in the late fall.
    - The Autism CARES recipient meeting, which is usually held every other year in Washington, DC, and virtually in other years. In-person meetings are tentatively planned to occur in 2027, 2028, and 2030, but are subject to change.

Funding level justification

- Make sure the application clearly documents that the program will meet the number of trainees, trainee disciplines, and faculty disciplines determined by the funding tier.
- Note that new applicants can only request Tier 1 funding.
- For competing continuation applicants:
  - Demonstrate, using the calculation in Attachment 6, that you had the appropriate number of trainees for your proposed funding tier in the previous grant cycle.
  - You can move up a maximum of **one** funding tier, stay in the same tier, or move to a lower tier depending on the calculation in Attachment 6.

Attachments

See section 3.2 of the HRSA R&R Application Guide [PDF].

Place your attachments in this order in the Attachments form. See application checklist to determine if they count toward the page limit.

Unless the instructions below require it, do not submit organizational brochures or other promotional materials (for example, slides, films, clips).

Attachment 1: Work Plan

Attach the project's work plan. Make sure it includes all components of the project narrative section.

Attachment 2: Staffing plan and job descriptions

See Section 3.1.7 of the R&R Application Guide [PDF].

Include a staffing plan that shows the staff positions that will support the project and key information about each. Justify your staffing choices, including education and experience qualifications and your reasons for the time you request for each staff position.

For key personnel, attach a one-page job description. It must include role, responsibilities, and qualifications. Key personnel are defined as the PD and other individuals who contribute to the development or execution of a program in a substantive, measurable way, whether they receive compensation under the award or not.

Attachment 3: Agreements with other entities

Provide any documents that describe working relationships between your organization and others you refer to in the proposal. Documents that confirm actual or pending contracts or agreements should clearly describe the roles of subrecipients and contractors and any deliverables. It is not necessary to include the entire contents of lengthy agreements, so long as the portions you include describe the working relationship between you and the other organization. Make sure letters of agreement are signed and dated.

Attachment 4: Project organizational chart

Provide a one-page diagram that shows the full project's organizational structure.

Attachment 5: Tables, charts, and curriculum/syllabus

To give further details about the proposal, include tables, charts, or outlines that describe the program's syllabus, curriculum, workshop descriptions, field and clinical placements, and other elements of the training.

See the selection process section for information about how these documents are used.

Attachment 6: Funding tier calculation

This attachment is required for LEND programs that are competing continuations.

If you did not have a LEND award during the previous grant cycle, you only qualify for Tier 1 funding. Do not submit this attachment.

If you are a competing continuation applicant, you may move to a lower funding tier, stay at the same funding tier, or **propose to move up one funding tier**.

- To move to a higher funding tier, show that you can recruit and retain the number of trainees for that tier.
- To demonstrate this, calculate the average number of long-term trainees you recruited and retained over the first four years of the July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2026 grant cycle. Be sure the number of long-term trainees you use to calculate this average matches the number you report in official HRSA performance reports. However:
  - Do not include trainees supported by a past Pediatric Audiology Trainee supplement or by the undergraduate pilot in your calculation.
  - Trainees who participated in the LEND program for more than one year should be counted only once.

This chart provides a **sample** calculation.

LEND funding year	Number of long-term trainees reported in HRSA performance reports
July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022	18
July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023	16
July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024	18
July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025	17

Average number of LTTs for the first four years of the funding cycle: 17.25 trainees (You must round to 17 trainees and apply for a Tier 2 funding level.)

Tier funding level = Tier 2 (requires at least 12 long-term trainees)

Please refer to Table 1: Tier funding levels for tier information.

Attachment 7: LEND Pediatric Audiology Trainee Supplement (optional)

This attachment is only needed if you are requesting additional funding for this supplement. Applying for this supplement will not impact your base LEND application score.

Note: You need to apply for the LEND program to apply for this supplement.

If selected, you will train an average of two pediatric audiology trainees each year, for a total of at least 10 long-term pediatric audiology trainees by the end of the 5-year period of performance. This is in addition to the number of trainees for your tier for the base LEND grant.

Audiology trainees supported by this supplement should be doctoral students (including externs), postdoctoral candidates, post-doctoral/post-master's students enrolled in clinical fellowships, or practicing audiologists (post-master's, post-doctoral).

The objectives of the supplement are to:

- Increase the number of pediatric audiologists with clinical and leadership skills, and expertise in delivering care to infants and children with autism/DD and their families.
- Increase trainees' knowledge of diagnosis, enrollment in early intervention, treatment, and follow-up in infants and children who are DHH and have autism/

DD. The goal of this training is to support developmental outcomes such as language acquisition.

The activities of the supplement include:

- Recruit and train at least two long-term audiology LEND trainees for each year of the five-year project.
- Identify leadership opportunities, such as supporting projects with state Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) system stakeholders or presentations at national conferences.
- Develop curricula highlighting interdisciplinary clinical and leadership content to meet the needs of DHH children with autism/DD and their families.
- Support innovative projects designed to build capacity for the pediatric audiology workforce and/or to support emerging needs within the field.

Funding: Please refer to the funding details section.

Project narrative for LEND Pediatric Audiology Trainee supplement

Page limit: 10

This does not count toward the page limit for the base LEND program application.

The Pediatric Audiology Trainee Supplement narrative should include:

- **Background.** Provide brief background data on the need for this supplement. Detail the regional, state, or local need to support the clinical and leadership training of pediatric audiology trainees within LEND programs to serve children who are DHH with autism/DD.
- **Problem.** State the problem(s) that this supplement will address, including:
  - The need for graduate-level audiology doctoral candidates, students enrolled in postgraduate clinical fellowships at your institution, and practicing audiologists.
  - The need to support leadership and clinical training for pediatric audiologists serving children who are DHH with autism/DD.
- **Goals and objectives.** State the overall goals of the supplement and list the specific objectives that respond to the project's need.
  - Name the lead faculty member to oversee the supplement. This faculty member is expected to devote at least 5% effort to managing this supplement. Faculty under this supplement should be qualified to mentor audiology trainees.

- **Methodology.** Describe the activities you will use to address the stated needs and meet each of the program goals. Describe the curricula and opportunities to receive training on the EHDI system, including, but not limited to:
  - 1-3-6 recommended EHDI benchmarks.[6]
  - The need for hearing screening in young children up to 3 years old.
  - The benefits of a family-centered medical home, family support, and family engagement opportunities.
  - The importance of communicating accurate, comprehensive, up-to-date, evidence-based information to families to facilitate decision-making.
  - The role of a pediatric audiologist in supporting language acquisition for children who are DHH.
- **Recruitment.** Describe recruitment efforts to train an average of two pediatric audiology trainees each year for this supplement, and approaches to addressing the shortage of pediatric audiologists. If applicable, include the number of pediatric audiology LEND trainees your organization trained in the past grant cycle, and of those, how many currently work in the EHDI system.
- **Collaboration.** Describe how you will collaborate with state and national EHDI system partners on systems-level projects to improve outcomes, such as language acquisition, for children with autism/DD who are DHH. Projects could include interdisciplinary workgroups, expanding tele-audiology practices, or other innovative projects. Partners could include:
  - State EHDI program (awardees under HRSA-24-036).
  - EHDI National Network (awardees under HRSA-24-035).
- **Evaluation.** Briefly describe the evaluation methods you will use to assess program outcomes, including data collection and measures.
  - Describe how you will assess and measure trainee progress throughout the program.
  - Describe how you will track the outcomes of trainee participants two and five years after they complete their training. Outcomes could include leadership opportunities in the EHDI system or publications.
  - Detail how you will monitor ongoing processes and the progress toward the project's goals and objectives to support continuous quality improvement.
  - Note: You will be responsible for reporting annually on this supplement as a part of the base LEND reports.
- **Innovation.** Document one innovation or emerging need in the field of pediatric audiology that you will address. Examples include:

    - Identify and implement innovative activities to improve access to tele-audiology services to meet the needs of rural populations.
    - Identify areas with pediatric audiology shortages and develop innovative solutions to increase access to care and services for DHH children who have autism/DD.
    - Develop innovative strategies to strengthen partnerships between LEND, EHDI programs, and early intervention to increase enrollment in early intervention for DHH children who have autism/DD.
- **Budget and budget narrative.** Provide a separate line-item budget and budget justification for the LEND Pediatric Audiology Trainee Supplement. See Section 3.1.4, Project Budget Information in the R&R Application Guide [PDF]. You may request up to $150,000 per year, including indirect costs.
    - Submit one line-item budget and justification for the $150,000 per year for five years to support the audiology trainee supplement.

Note: Tracking and reporting on activities and expenditures are by topic area/funding streams/authority (Autism CARES Act Funding—42 U.S.C. § 280i-1 (Title III, § 399BB of the Public Health Service Act) and Pediatric Audiology (EHDI) activities—42 U.S.C. § 280g-1(a) (Title III, § 399M(a) of the Public Health Service Act)). Because this supplement is supported by different funding than that used for other LEND Program purposes, recipients are required to internally budget and track expenditures for these activities separate from activities under the base LEND notice of funding opportunity (NOFO). Reporting on the supplement activities will be part of the LEND reporting structures.

Attachment 8: LEND Emerging Issues Supplement (optional)

This attachment is only needed if you are requesting additional funding for this supplement. Applying for this supplement will not impact your base LEND application score. Supplements will be funded in the order of the objective review score for the LEND competition. This is a one-time, one-year supplement.

Note: You need to apply for the LEND program to apply for this supplement.

The supplement supports programs in addressing emerging and innovative issues in the field. Examples of proposal topics could include:

- Enhancing your current or proposed LEND curricula—for example, to increase the focus on lifespan issues or complex health care systems for people with autism/DD.

- Expanding the interdisciplinary nature of the trainee cohort—for example, by involving professionals from other disciplines, or involving practicing professionals in other disciplines.
- Expanding the LEND program's ability to respond to public health emergencies, such as by expanding the use of telehealth or training first responders.
- Expanding evaluation and quality improvement initiatives that inform the program and the broader network of programs serving children/youth with autism/DD.
- Expanding regional partnerships with other LEND programs to increase the reach of the LEND network to better serve those with autism/DD in each geographic region.

Funding: Please see the funding details section.

Project narrative for LEND Emerging Issues supplement

Page limit: 4

This does not count toward the page limit of the base LEND program application.

The Emerging Issues narrative should include:

- **Problem.** State the topic that you selected and why it is important. Explain how the supplement will address an emerging issue or innovative approach that will enhance the capacity of the workforce for children with autism/DD.
- **Goals and objectives.** Identify the major goals and objectives of this supplement. Briefly describe the anticipated outcomes and deliverables of the activities.
- **Methodology.** Describe the activities you propose to accomplish the objectives, and how the supplemental project will build on the base LEND grant.
  - Discuss how the trainees will be involved in the supplemental activities, if at all.
  - Describe any collaboration, coordination, and partnerships you will need to ensure the success of the supplement.
- **Evaluation.** Describe how you will evaluate supplemental outcomes, including data collection and measures. Discuss the strategies you anticipate using to share program results and project impact with the field.

Budget and budget narrative: Provide a separate SF-424 R & R budget and budget justification narrative for this supplement. See section 3.1.4, Project Budget Information of the R&R Application Guide [PDF]. You may request up to $50,000 for one year, including indirect costs.

Other required forms

You will need to complete some other forms. Upload the following forms at Grants.gov. You can find them in the NOFO application package or review them and any available instructions at Grants.gov Forms.

Forms	Submission Requirement
SF-424 R&R (Application for Federal Assistance) form	With application.
Project Abstract Summary form	With application.
Research & Related Other Project Information	With application.
Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)	With application.
R&R Subaward Budget Attachment(s) form	With application.
Project/Performance Site Location(s)	With application.
Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)	If applicable, with the application or before award.

Form instructions

The following are instructions for each of the other forms required by this NOFO. See the application checklist for a full list of all application requirements.

SF-424 (R&R) Application for Federal Assistance

This is your application for federal assistance. Follow the instructions in section 3.1.1 of the R&R Application Guide [PDF].

Important: public information

When filling out your SF-424 form, pay attention to Box 15: Descriptive Title of Applicant’s Project.

We share what you put there with USAspending. This is where the public goes to learn how the federal government spends their money.

Instead of just a title, insert a short description of your project and what it will do.

See instructions and examples [PDF].

Project Abstract Summary form

Complete the information in the Project Abstract Summary form. Include a short description of your proposed project. Include the needs you plan to address, the proposed services, and the population groups you plan to serve. For more information, see section 3.1.2 of the R&R Application Guide [PDF].

Research & Related Other Project Information

In addition to the requirements in the project narrative section, you will provide some additional information in this form.

- Complete sections 1 through 6.
- Upload a blank document in item 7: Project Summary/Abstract to avoid a cross-form error with your Project Abstract Summary form.
- Upload your project narrative in item 8.
- Leave items 9, 10, and 11 blank.

Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)

Include biographical sketches for people who will hold the key positions.

- Try to use no more than 1 page per person.
- Do not include non-public personally identifiable information.
- If you include someone you have not hired yet, include a letter of commitment from that person with their biographical sketch.
- Upload sketches in the Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile form.
- Include:
  - Name and title.
  - Education and training. For each entry include institution and location, degree and date earned, if any, and field of study.
  - Section A, Personal Statement. Briefly describe why the individual's experience and qualifications make them well-suited for their role.
  - Section B, Positions and Honors. List in chronological order previous and current positions. List any honors. Include present membership on any federal government public advisory committee.
  - Section C, Other Support. This section is optional. List selected ongoing and completed projects during the last three years. Begin with any projects relevant to the proposed project. Briefly indicate the overall goals of the projects and responsibilities of the person.
  - Other information. If they apply, include language fluency and experience working with populations that are culturally and linguistically different from their own.

R&R Subaward Budget Attachment(s) form

You will also complete the R&R Subaward Budget Attachment Form for each subaward you propose. These include subcontracts. You will do this using the R&R Subaward Budget Attachment(s) form.

Use the following instructions:

- Once you open this form, you can select "Click here to extract the R&R Subaward Budget Attachment."
- Save the file and then open it to complete it.
- Once you save the file, you can upload it within the form.
- Repeat the steps for each subaward.

If you have more than 10 subawards, you may upload the extra budget forms in the Research and Related Other Project Information form in Block 12, "Other Attachments."

Project/Performance Site Location(s)

Follow the form instructions in Grants.gov Forms. Use the "Next Site" option rather than "Additional Location(s)" to add more than one project/performance site location.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) form

Follow the form instructions in Grants.gov Forms.

Step 4: Understand Review, Selection, and Award

In this step

Application review

Initial Review

We will review your application to make sure that it meets eligibility criteria, including the completeness and responsiveness criteria. If your application does not meet these criteria, we will not fund it. If this is the case, we will notify your authorized official.

We will not review any pages that exceed the page limit.

Merit review

A panel reviews all applications that pass the initial review. You can find more about the merit review process in the R&R Application Guide [PDF]. The members use these criteria.

Criterion	Total number of points = 100
1. Need	10 points
2. Response	35 points
3. Performance reporting and evaluation	15 points
4. Impact	10 points
5. Resources and capabilities	20 points
6. Support requested	10 points

Criterion 1: Need (10 points)

See the project narrative introduction and need sections.

The panel will review your application for how well it:

- Describes the unmet needs this training program will address.
- Demonstrates understanding of the national, state, regional, and local need for professionals with expertise in autism/DD related to screening, diagnosis, and interdisciplinary service delivery.
- Describes how the proposed project will address gaps in the system of care and the workforce for children/youth with autism/DD.

Criterion 2: Response (35 points)

See the project narrative approach , high-level work plan, and resolving challenges sections.

The panel will review your application for the following.

Overall methodology (10 points)

- How well it responds to the program's purpose.
- How well your proposed goals and objectives match the goals of the LEND program.
- How well the activities described will address the problem and meet project objectives.
- The proposed CE activities for practicing professionals, including meeting the minimum of at least three events per project per year.
- The proposed plans to conduct outreach and provide TA to community organizations to improve services for people with autism/DD.
- The commitment from partner organizations to enhance the training program, as demonstrated by letters of support and/or formal agreements in attachment 3.
- How well the work plan describes how you will meet the objectives proposed in the methodology section, their timeframe, and the responsible staff or partner(s).
- How well you describe the obstacles and challenges you may face during project design and implementation.

Trainee recruitment and retention (10 points)

The strength of the proposed:

- Approach to recruit and retain a qualified interdisciplinary cohort of LTTs committed to serving children and youth with autism/DD.
- Recruitment of cohorts of trainees that are interdisciplinary and satisfy other statutory requirements.
- Approach to recruiting the number of LTTs and required number of LTT disciplines, as indicated in the selected funding level from Table 1: Tier funding levels.
- Methods to ensure participation of at least one trainee with a disability and one family trainee in the LTT cohort for each project year.
- Approach to recruiting and retaining medium- and/or short-term trainees.

Training and education (15 points)

The strength of the proposed:

- Academic, clinical, and community curriculum and training content designed to build LEND trainees' knowledge and skills in providing services to children and youth with autism/DD.
- Clinical, practicum, and field placement opportunities for both clinical and nonclinical trainees.
- Plan for clinical and practicum activities to include families and individuals with disabilities as members of interdisciplinary teams.
- Curriculum content to prepare graduates to take on future leadership roles.
- Didactic training curriculum to deliver content appropriate for interdisciplinary trainees on autism/DD, including all topics indicated in the training and education section.
- Training activities to address the lifespan developmental approach and transition to adulthood.
- Plan to provide training opportunities in research, evaluation, and/or quality improvement that are appropriate for a variety of trainees.

Criterion 3: Performance reporting and evaluation (15 points)

See the project narrative performance reporting and evaluation section.

The panel will review your application for the following.

Performance measurement

- Evidence of how well program goals and objectives will be measured.
- The strength of the plan and ability to collect data on the performance measures specified by HRSA in the program requirements and expectations section, and the proposed measures presented by the applicant in their narrative.
- The strength of the evaluation strategy to track and report on current and former LTTs for five years after training.

Evaluation

- Overall approach and methodology to evaluate project results against goals and objectives to measure program outcomes and impact.
- The strength of the data to be collected and to assess program performance.

- The skills of the personnel assigned to conduct the evaluation, as demonstrated by their training and experience in refining, collecting, and analyzing data.

Continuous quality improvement

- Plans to monitor progress and conduct quality improvement efforts to ensure the program meets the evolving needs of the workforce serving children and youth with autism/DD.
- Plans to assess the quality of the continuing education and technical assistance provided.
- Plans to assess the quality of the long-, medium-, and short-term trainee experiences.

Criterion 4: Impact (10 points)

See the project narrative high-level work plan and sustainability sections.

The panel will review your application for:

- How effectively it describes how it will increase and strengthen the workforce needed to serve children and youth with autism/DD.
- How likely the project results could improve the system of care for children and youth with autism/DD.
- How strong a public health impact the program is likely to have.
- How you justify that key elements of your project could be sustained beyond the federal funding period.
- Your discussion of the challenges you may encounter in sustaining the program, and how you will resolve these challenges.

Criterion 5: Resources and capabilities (20 points)

See the project narrative organizational information and performance reporting and evaluation sections.

The panel will review your application to determine the extent to which it does the following.

Organizational capacity (5 points)

- Demonstrate that your organization has established training programs and/or documented access to training programs to recruit graduate students in the disciplines you propose.
- Demonstrate your organization's capacity to carry out the project based on relevant past performance in implementing a similar training program for

interdisciplinary trainees and/or serving children and youth with autism/DD, if applicable.

- Demonstrate adequate physical and technological resources to conduct the training program, including meeting space (physical or virtual) for the cohort to meet.
- Demonstrate the organizational capacity to gather, manage, and use data to improve processes and advance outcomes.

Project director, LEND faculty, and staff (15 points)

The panel will review your application for the quality and extent to which you:

- Have a project director, LEND faculty, and project staff with the training or experience to carry out the project.
- Show that the proposed PD meets the qualifications for the position.
- Include project staff with training and experience to carry out performance reporting and program evaluations.
- Include qualified core faculty with experience and expertise in the disciplines listed in, and experience or interest in autism/DD.
- Demonstrate that the core faculty will work as a cohort to establish a curriculum that meets the needs of the trainees.
- Demonstrate that faculty and other key personnel are well qualified to mentor graduate and postgraduate students and serve as leaders in the field.
- Describe a recruitment approach that will ensure the program meets the number of faculty and faculty disciplines, as indicated in the selected funding level from Table 1: Tier funding levels.
- Clearly articulate the role of the faculty member with disabilities and the family faculty member on the project.

Criterion 6: Support requested (10 points)

See the budget and budget narrative section.

The panel will review your application to determine:

- How reasonable the proposed budget is for each year of the period of performance.
- How well the budget and budget narrative align with the requirements in the Budget and Budget Narrative section.
- Whether the proposal reflects that **one** PD will commit 30% or more of their time/ effort to the project (regardless of the source of funding).

- Whether the proposal demonstrates that other core faculty and key personnel will devote adequate time to the project to achieve project objectives.
- Whether the budget narrative clearly presents trainee stipend amounts.
- Whether the budget includes financial compensation for faculty and trainees with disabilities, and family faculty and trainees.
- Whether the budget and budget narrative allocate funds for attending recipient meetings.
- Whether the application includes any documentation needed to support the funding level for which you are applying.
- Whether the application clearly documents that the program will meet the number of trainees, and the number of trainee and faculty disciplines, indicated in the proposed funding tier for all five budget years.
- Whether competing continuation applicants have proposed to stay in the same tier, move up one tier, or move to a lower tier.
- Whether competing continuation applicants demonstrate, using the calculation in Attachment 6, that they have met the number of trainees for their selected funding tier based on their data from the previous grant cycle.

We do not consider **voluntary** cost sharing during merit review.

Risk review

Before making an award, we review your award history to assess risk. We need to ensure all prior awards were managed well and demonstrated sound business practices. We:

- Review any applicable past performance.
- Review audit reports and findings.
- Analyze the budget.
- Assess your management systems.
- Ensure you continue to be eligible.
- Make sure you comply with any public policies.

We may ask you to submit additional information.

As part of this review, we use SAM.gov Entity Information Responsibility/Qualification to check your history for all awards likely to be more than $250,000 over the period of performance. You can comment on your organization's information in SAM.gov. We'll consider your comments before making a decision about your level of risk.

If we find a significant risk, we may choose not to fund your application or to place specific conditions on the award.

For more details, see 2 CFR 200.206.

Selection process

When making funding decisions, we consider:

- The amount of available funds.
- Assessed risk.
- Merit review results. These are key in making decisions but are not the only factor.
- Alignment with HRSA Mission and Strategic Priorities

We may:

- Consider the larger portfolio of agency-funded projects, including project type and geographic distribution.
- Fund out of rank order.
- Fund applications in whole or in part.
- Fund applications at a lower amount than requested.
- Decide not to allow a recipient to subaward if they may not be able to monitor and manage subrecipients properly.

Additionally, we may not make an award if you are delinquent on two or more Single Audit Reports.

You cannot appeal a denial, or the amount of funds awarded.

Funding priorities

A funding priority adds points to merit review scores if we determine that the application meets the listed criteria. HRSA staff, not the merit review panel, will determine the funding priority.

Qualifying for a funding priority does not guarantee that your application will be successful. Applicants may qualify for one or both of the following:

Priority 1: Not currently funded by LEND (2 Points)

We will give you a funding priority if:

Your organization does not hold an active LEND award at the time you apply.

Priority 2: Never funded by LEND (2 Points)

We will give you a funding priority if:

Your organization has never received a LEND award.

Funding selection for the LEND Pediatric Audiology Trainee supplement

See Attachment 7 for application contents.

We will award supplemental funding to up to 12 of the possible 60 LEND grant recipients. The recipients for supplemental funds will be the highest-rated applicants for the LEND Pediatric Audiology Trainee Supplement by rank order, as scored by federal staff.

This funding selection method only applies if you are requesting additional funding under the supplement. Applying for this supplement does not impact the base LEND application score. Supplement applications will be reviewed and scored separately from the base LEND applications.

Supplements will be awarded based on the following criteria:

Project need and feasibility: 15 points

- How well you describe the need to increase the number of pediatric audiologists with expertise in delivering care to infants and young children with autism/DD and their families.
- The quality and reasonableness of the proposed goal(s) and objective(s).

Trainee recruitment and retention: 30 points

- The quality and feasibility of a recruitment plan. If applicable, we will consider how well the program has recruited LEND audiology trainees, especially trainees from previous grants who have continued to work with pediatric populations after completing the program.
- How well the application describes the competencies trainees are expected to acquire during the program.
- The strength of the professional development goals for each trainee.

Curriculum and trainee experience: 40 points

- The quality of the curriculum, focused on evidence-based practices, including 1-3-6 recommendations, and the role of pediatric audiologists in helping children who are DHH with autism/DD achieve developmental milestones, such as language acquisition.
- The quality and quantity of leadership opportunities offered to trainees to create systems change within the local, state, and/or national EHDI system.
- The strength of the professional development goals for each trainee.
- The quality of plans to support collaboration among EHDI systems partners to improve developmental outcomes for children who are DHH with autism/DD.

Implementation and evaluation: 15 points

- Clear demonstration that the lead faculty has the necessary and appropriate training, expertise, and experience to mentor audiology trainees and carry out the project.
- How well the evaluation plan addresses outcomes and impact of the project.
- The strength of the innovation effort to address the emerging needs.

Funding selection for the LEND Emerging Issues Supplement

See Attachment 8 for application requirements.

Each year, the LEND Emerging Issues Supplement funding may be awarded to recipients selected for the LEND training program. Supplemental funding may be awarded in any of the five project years. Supplements will be funded in the order of the objective review score earned by the applicant in the base LEND competition. These are one-time, one-year supplements.

This funding selection method only applies to applicants requesting additional funding under the supplement. Applying for this supplement does not impact the base LEND application score.

Award notices

We issue Notices of Award (NOA) on or around the start date listed in the NOFO. See "How we notify you of an award" in the R&R Application Guide [PDF] for more information.

Step 5:
Submit Your Application

In this step

Application submission and deadlines

Your organization's authorized official must certify your application. See the section on finding the application package to make sure you have everything you need.

Application deadline

You must submit your application by Friday, July 10, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. ET.

Grants.gov creates a date and time record when it receives applications.

If you need a deadline extension, see "Requesting a waiver" in the R&R Application Guide [PDF].

Submission method

Grants.gov

You must submit your application through Grants.gov. You may do so using Grants.gov Workspace. This is the preferred method. For alternative online methods, see Applicant System-to-System.

For instructions on how to submit in Grants.gov, see the Quick Start Guide for Applicants. Make sure that your application passes the Grants.gov validation checks, or we may not get it. Do not encrypt, zip, or password protect any files.

If Grants.gov rejects your application due to errors, you must correct and resubmit before the deadline.

If you want to know more about correcting errors or tracking your application, you can refer to the R&R Application Guide [PDF].

Have questions? Go to Contacts and Support.

Other submissions

Intergovernmental review

This NOFO is not subject to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. No action is needed.

Step 6:

Learn What Happens After Award

In this step

Post-award requirements and administration

Administrative and national policy requirements

There are important rules you need to know if you get an award. You must follow:

- All terms and conditions in the Notice of Award.
- The regulations at 2 CFR 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, modifications at 2 CFR 300, or any superseding regulations.
- The HHS Grants Policy Statement. This document is incorporated by reference in your Notice of Award. If there are any exceptions to the GPS, they'll be listed in your Notice of Award.
- All federal statutes and regulations relevant to federal financial assistance, including those highlighted in HHS Administrative and National Policy Requirements.
- See the requirements for performance management in 2 CFR 200.301.
- All anti-discrimination laws: By applying for or accepting federal funds from HHS, you certify compliance with all federal antidiscrimination laws and these requirements. Complying with those laws is a material condition of receiving federal funding streams. You are responsible for ensuring subrecipients, contractors, and partners also comply.

Required Alignment with HRSA Mission and Strategic Priorities

Recipients must use funds awarded under this NOFO to implement program goals or agency priorities in accordance with the HRSA vision, mission, core values, and strategic priorities, where authorized by law.

In administering programs under this and all funding announcements, HRSA prioritizes:

- **Evidence-based healthcare:** Funding activities supported by rigorous scientific evidence, particularly for programs serving children and adolescents, where HRSA is committed to approaches that reflect the highest standards of clinical care and child safety.
- **Biological and physiological integrity:** Recognizing the relevance of

biological sex to health outcomes, HRSA encourages applicants to account for sex-based health factors in program design, data collection, and service delivery where scientifically appropriate.

HRSA will implement these priorities consistent with applicable laws, regulations, court orders, and all required administrative procedures. Applicants are encouraged to describe how their proposed programs align with these priorities in their project narratives.

Funded activities must advance HRSA's vision of protecting and improving the health and well-being of Americans. The particular focus is on those who are medically vulnerable or live in areas with limited access to care. HRSA's duty is to serve wisely, effectively, and with measurable results that justify every taxpayer dollar invested.

Consistent with HRSA's priorities, in carrying out any project funded under this NOFO, the recipient must adhere to the following principles, where they are consistent with the authority and scope of the award and its activities:

- **Gold standard science:** Design and deliver services using gold standard evidence-based and evidence-informed approaches, establish measurable performance goals, and use data to monitor outcomes and drive continuous improvement.
- **Program integrity and fiscal stewardship:** Recipients must:
  - Administer funds in accordance with all applicable federal statutes, regulations, and award conditions.
  - Maintain strong internal controls.
  - Prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.
- **Partnership and local leadership:** Coordinate with state, tribal, territorial, local, and community partners, as appropriate, and tailor services to meet community-identified needs while respecting local decision-making authority.

Recipients must manage any project awarded under this NOFO in accordance with the following objectives in programs authorized to advance them:

Make America Healthy Again (MAHA): HRSA prioritizes the health and well-being of all Americans by supporting common-sense, evidence-based health policies that promote:

- Personal responsibility.
- Strong families and communities.
- Proper nutrition.
- The prevention and management of chronic disease, while ensuring access to high-quality, affordable physical and mental health care.

Child protections, biological integrity, parental rights, and lawful use of funds: HRSA prioritizes safeguarding children's health and safety by:

- Not supporting medical interventions for gender dysphoria in minors that lack a strong evidence base.
- Applying sex-based definitions grounded in biological reality.
- Supporting parental authority, transparency, and choice in education, including school-based health centers that respect parental rights and religious upbringing.
- Ensuring taxpayer funds are not used to promote or support elective abortions, consistent with federal law and the Hyde Amendment.

Advancing evidence-based, merit-driven, and ethically grounded health care: HRSA will prioritize unbiased, transparent science; merit-based workforce opportunities; and programs that demonstrate measurable outcomes, while deprioritizing organizations with:

- Conflicts of interest.
- “Harm reduction” models.
- Housing-first approaches.
- Activities that facilitate illegal drug use or unsafe medical practices.

Promoting public safety, lawful use of federal funds, and national health priorities: To the extent permitted by law, HRSA will align funding with administration priorities by:

- Supporting ending the HIV epidemic through authorized, evidence-based care.
- Reserving benefits for eligible individuals.
- Discouraging illegal immigration and unsafe community practices.
- Prioritizing recipients that enforce public safety, address serious mental illness and substance use through treatment and recovery, and reduce homelessness responsibly.

To the extent allowable by law, under awards, HRSA will give priority to states and municipalities for programs to:

- Enforce prohibitions on open illicit drug use.
- Enforce prohibitions on urban camping and loitering.
- Enforce prohibitions on urban squatting.
- Enforce, and where necessary, adopt, standards that address individuals who are a danger to themselves or others and suffer from serious mental illness or substance use disorder, or who are living on the streets and cannot care for themselves. The approach must be through assisted outpatient treatment or by moving them into treatment centers or other appropriate facilities through civil commitment or other available means, to the maximum extent permitted by law.

HRSA will implement these priorities consistent with applicable laws, regulations, court orders, and any required procedures.

The recipient must demonstrate ongoing compliance with these priorities, in all programs that are authorized to advance them, through program design, implementation, reporting, and evaluation.

Failure to meaningfully align funded activities with the applicable requirements may result in corrective action, additional reporting requirements, or other actions consistent with federal grant regulations at 2 CFR part 200 and the terms and conditions of this award. This includes termination under 2 CFR 200.340(a)(4) if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities.

Cybersecurity

If awarded, you must develop plans and procedures, modeled after the NIST Cybersecurity framework, to protect HHS systems and data. See details here.

Successful applicants under this NOFO agree that:

Where award funding involves:	Recipients and subrecipients are required to:
Implementing, acquiring, or upgrading health IT for activities funded by any entity.	Use health IT that meets standards and implementation specifications adopted in 45 CFR 170, Subpart B, if such standards and implementation specifications can support the activity. Visit 45 CFR 170, Subpart B to learn more.
Implementing, acquiring, or upgrading health IT for activities by eligible clinicians in ambulatory settings, or hospitals, eligible under Sections 4101, 4102, and 4201 of the HITECH Act.	Use health IT certified under the ONC Health IT Certification Program if certified technology can support the activity.

If standards and implementation specifications adopted in 45 CFR part 170, Subpart B cannot support the activity, recipients and subrecipients are encouraged to use health IT that meets non-proprietary standards and implementation specifications developed by consensus-based standards development organizations. This may include standards identified in the ONC Interoperability Standards Advisory.

Reporting

If you are successful, you will have to follow the reporting requirements in Section 4 of the R&R Application Guide [PDF]. The NOA will provide specific details.

- We will require annual progress reports and performance reports.
  - DGIS Performance Reports. Available through the Electronic Handbooks (EHBs), the Discretionary Grant Information System (DGIS) is where you will report annual performance data to us. You will submit a DGIS Performance Report annually, by the specified deadline.
  - To prepare successful applicants for their reporting requirements, the listing of administrative forms and performance measures for this program is available in the program manual [.DOC, 127 KB]. The type of report required is determined by the project year of the award's period of performance. You can see the full OMB-approved reporting package at Discretionary Grants Information System on our website
(OMB Number: 0915-0298 | Expiration Date: December 31, 2026).

Type of Report	Reporting Period	Available Date	Report Due Date
a) New Competing Performance Report	September 30, 2026 – June 30, 2031 (administrative data and performance measure projections, as applicable)	Period of performance start date	90 days from the available date
b) Non-Competing Performance Report	September 30, 2026 – June 30, 2027 July 1, 2027 – June 30, 2028 July 1, 2028 – June 30, 2029 July 1, 2029 – June 30, 2030	Beginning of each budget period (Years 2–5, as applicable)	90 days from the available date
c) Project Period End Performance Report	July 1, 2030 – June 30, 2031	Period of performance end date	120 days from the available date

- **Autism CARES Act Evaluation.** All recipients agree to participate in Autism CARES Act evaluation activities, which inform the federal report to Congress. We may also request other data collection annually, such as the number of diagnostic evaluations your LEND program has conducted.
- **Final report**. You are expected to submit a final report narrative after the project ends.

Contacts and Support

In this step

Agency contacts

Program and eligibility

LEND team
Attn: Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Other Related Disabilities (LEND)
MCHB DMCHWD
Health Resources and Services Administration
mchblendnofo@hrsa.gov
301-443-2170

Financial and budget

Travis Wright
Grants Management Specialist, Division of Grants Management Operations
Office of Financial Assistance and Acquisition Management (OFAAM)
Health Resources and Services Administration
twright@hrsa.gov
301-443-0676

HRSA Contact Center

Open Monday – Friday, 7 a.m. – 8 p.m. ET, except for federal holidays.
Call: 877-464-4772 / 877-Go4-HRSA
TTY: 877-897-9910

Electronic Handbooks Contact Center

Help with systems

Grants.gov

Grants.gov provides 24/7 support. You can call 800-518-4726, search the Grants.gov Knowledge Base, or email Grants.gov for support at support@grants.gov. Hold on to your ticket number.

SAM.gov

If you need help, you can call 866-606-8220 or live chat with the Federal Service Desk.

Helpful websites

- R&R Application Guide [PDF]
- HRSA Grants page
- HHS Tips for Preparing Grant Proposals
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Applicant Training

Appendix A: Standards for using LEND grant funds to support trainees

Definitions

- A **long-term trainee (LTT)** is an individual enrolled for 300 or more hours in the MCH training program. Trainees are qualified to participate if they are currently pursuing an advanced degree (predoctoral), are postdoctoral (including fellows), or are practicing professionals from the community with graduate degrees or commensurate work or leadership experience. The trainee does not need to be enrolled at the academic institution to qualify as an LTT in this program.
- An **advanced medium-term trainee** is an individual enrolled in the program for 150 to 299 hours of training. You may determine whether to provide stipends for advanced medium-term trainees. Trainee status is independent of a trainee's enrollment status at the academic institution (based on credit hours and/or academic units per term).
- A **stipend** is allowable as a cost-of-living allowance for trainees. A stipend is not a fee-for-service payment and is not subject to the cost accounting requirements of the cost principles. This is also known as a "participant support cost" per the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements of 2 CFR part 200.
- A **salary** is allowable for trainees who are considered employees by the institution and who are conducting activities necessary to the federal award. They are subject to the reporting requirements in [2 CFR part 200.430], and the costs of employing them must be treated as direct or indirect costs in accordance with the actual work being performed. All provisions detailed below in the Qualifications section also apply to salaries, unless stated otherwise.

Qualifications for receiving stipends, tuition, and salary support under the LEND program

- Trainees receiving stipends or salary under this program will generally be LTTs. Stipends for advanced MTTs are allowable, and you may decide whether to provide them.
- You may provide tuition support to trainees enrolled full-time or part-time for academic credits.
- In general, an LTT has at least a bachelor's degree and be enrolled in a graduate program, or participating as a family member, individual with a disability, or practicing professional. See exceptions below:
    - Undergraduate students may participate as long-term or advanced medium-term trainees and receive a stipend under the following conditions:
        - You have met the number of LTTs for the program tier annually before including undergraduate trainees.
        - The trainee is in, or has completed, the second half of their educational program and has career goals consistent with the training program.
    - After award, you may request that the federal project officer (PO) approve a trainee whose circumstances are not covered by these provisions.
- A trainee receiving financial support from grant funds under this program is a citizen of the United States, a noncitizen national of the United States, an individual lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States, or any other "qualified alien" under section 431(b) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Pub. L. 104-193 (PRWORA), as amended. Individuals on temporary or student visas, or with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status, are not eligible to receive financial support from grant funds.

Restrictions

- Only long-term and advanced medium-term trainees may receive stipends from the grant funds.
- **Concurrent support**—This program generally will not provide stipends or a salary to people already receiving a salary, fellowship, traineeship stipend, or other financial support related to the training or employment for the same hours counted toward the LEND-funded traineeship/fellowship. You may request an exception to these restrictions from the federal PO after award, and this will be considered on an individual basis.
  - Trainees may participate in multiple federally funded activities concurrently, so long as:
    - There is no duplication of hours or activities between the two programs.
    - The total of federally funded stipends received does not exceed the allowable threshold referenced in the Stipend and Salary Levels section.
    - If a federal notice of funding opportunity does not provide guidance on concurrent support, we advise you to consult with the project officer and/or grants management specialist to confirm that the terms of each federal program will allow this practice.
- **Supplementation**—Your organization may supplement stipends from federal or nonfederal funds. Each federal funding agency should approve or authorize this practice.
- **Non-related duties**—You may not use funds from this award to require trainees or fellows to perform any duties that are not directly related to the purpose of the training for which the grant was awarded.
- **Accommodations—**You may use grant funds for costs associated with reasonable modifications and accommodations for trainees with disabilities. However, you cannot deduct these costs from trainee stipends.
- Grant funds may not be used:
  - To support any trainee who you assess would not be able to use the training or meet the qualifications in the training plan.
  - To continue to support a trainee who has not shown satisfactory participation in the training program.
  - To support candidates for undergraduate or pre-professional degrees or credentials, except as indicated above.
  - To support individuals employed in any capacity by the United States government for their participation in activities supported through federal funding.

Trainee costs

Allowable costs include[7]:

- Stipends or salary (except as indicated above in Qualifications and Restrictions).
- Tuition and fees[8], if all of the following apply:
    - The individual is conducting activities necessary to the Federal award.
    - Tuition remission and other support are provided in accordance with the established written policy of the IHE and consistently provided in a like manner to students in return for similar activities conducted under Federal awards as well as other activities.
    - The student is enrolled in an advanced degree program at the IHE or an affiliated institution during the academic period and the student's activities under the Federal award are related to their degree program.
    - The tuition or other payments are reasonable compensation for the work performed and are conditioned explicitly upon the performance of necessary work.
    - The IHE compensates students under Federal awards as well as other activities in similar manners.
- Travel related to training and field placements. International travel requests should be submitted for prior approval.
- Stipends or salary for postdoctoral or post-residency fellows.
    - If supported on salary, fringe benefits are an allowable cost.
    - If supported via stipend, medical insurance is an allowable cost.
- Temporary dependent care costs that directly result from travel to conferences, if:
    - The costs are a direct result of the individual's travel for the federal award.
    - The costs are consistent with the recipient's or subrecipient's established written policy for all travel.
    - These costs are only temporary during the travel period.

Non-allowable costs include:

- Dependent or family member allowances, except as indicated in the list of allowable costs.
- Daily commuting costs.
- Fringe benefits or deductions that normally apply only to employees.

Programmatic restriction:

A LTT stipend is allowed for the completion of 300+ hours of training. For trainees approved to complete long-term training over two years, their stipend may be prorated over the course of their training.

Stipend and salary levels

We have adopted stipend levels established by Kirschstein-National Research Service Awards for LEND trainees and fellows (predoctoral and postdoctoral). Dollar amounts indicated in this NOFO are subject to update by the National Institutes of Health. All approved stipends indicated are for a full calendar year and prorated for the training period, as appropriate.

Stipends may be less than the amounts indicated but may not exceed them. However, if you provide lower stipends, you should have established, written policy that identifies the basis for such variation, and that ensures equitable treatment for all eligible trainees and fellows. You may develop policies and protocols for considering various factors, such as need, to distribute stipends more equitably.

These stipend levels were updated on May 16, 2025.

Undergraduate trainees

One stipend level cap is used for all undergraduate trainees.

Career level	Years of experience	Stipend for FY 2025	Monthly stipend
Undergraduate	All	$14,628	$1,219

Predoctoral trainees

One stipend level cap is used for all predoctoral candidates, regardless of the level of experience.

Career level	Years of experience	Stipend for FY 2024	Monthly stipend
Predoctoral	All	$28,788	$2,399

Postdoctoral fellows

The stipend level cap for the entire first year of support is determined by the number of full years of relevant postdoctoral experience** when the award is issued. Relevant experience may include research experience (including industrial), teaching assistantship, internship, residency, clinical duties, or other time spent in a health-related field beyond that of the doctoral degree.

Once the appropriate stipend level has been determined, you should pay the fellow at that level for the entire grant year. The stipend for each additional year of support is the next level in the stipend structure and does not change mid-year. You should use these stipend levels to guide support for postdoctoral and post-residency fellows whether they are supported by stipends or salary.

Career level	Years of experience	Stipend for FY 2025	Monthly stipend
Post-doctoral	0	$62,232	$5,186
	1	$62,652	$5,221
	2	$63,120	$5,260
	3	$65,640	$5,470
	4	$67,824	$5,652
	5	$70,344	$5,862
	6	$72,960	$6,080
	7 or more	$75,564	$6,297

**The years of relevant experience will be determined according to program guidelines. Years of experience will include experience gained before entering the grant-supported program and previous years of participation in the grant-supported program. The years of relevant experience will be determined as of the date when the individual trainee begins their training, rather than on the beginning date of the training grant. Stipends for subsequent years of support are at the next level on the stipend chart.

Appendix B: Trainee and faculty disciplines and qualifications

To effectively demonstrate, develop, and practice the interdisciplinary process, LEND programs bring together faculty and long-term trainees (LTTs) from multiple disciplines.

Ideally, programs would have a faculty mentor for each trainee discipline in the LTT cohort. The programs should strive to have a balance of trainees representing clinical and nonclinical disciplines. No single trainee discipline should make up more than **25%** of a LEND cohort. Each cohort should have the number of trainee and faculty disciplines represented, as described in Table 1: Tier funding levels. Participation of faculty from other relevant disciplines is encouraged but not required.

Table 2, column 1 shows the faculty and trainee disciplines approved for inclusion in LEND. Column 2 shows the educational level and other criteria for trainees and fellows in these disciplines.

Table 2: LEND approved disciplines

Faculty and long-term trainee disciplines	Trainee qualifications by discipline
Applied behavioral analysis Audiology Disability studies Human genetics/genetic counseling Health administration Nursing Nutrition Occupational therapy Physical therapy Physician assistant Psychology Public health Social work Special education/education Speech-language pathology	Master's or doctoral candidates, post-master's and postdoctoral fellows, or practicing professionals from the community with graduate degrees or commensurate work or leadership experience. While the emphasis of the program is generally providers serving children and youth, programs may recruit LTTs who intend to provide services to adults with autism/DD when they enter the workforce.

Faculty and long-term trainee disciplines	Trainee qualifications by discipline
School psychology/school counseling	
Medicine, pediatric providers	Medical students and those preparing for relevant pediatric medical specialties and subspecialties, including developmental-behavioral pediatrics, neurodevelopmental disabilities, medicine-pediatrics, child and adolescent psychiatry, pediatric neurology, and/or medical genetics. Practicing providers may also participate as trainees.
Medicine, adult providers	Medical students and those preparing for relevant medical specialties and subspecialties that will serve transition-aged youth and/or adults with autism/DD throughout the lifespan. Practicing providers also may participate as trainees.
Pediatric or adult dentistry	Dental students and those preparing for dental specialties and subspecialties with interest in caring for children/youth with autism/DD.
Family members **At least one family member LTT and faculty member is required each year.**	Parents and siblings of those with neurodevelopmental disabilities, including autism, demonstrated interest in developing leadership skills and sharing family perspectives with the trainee cohort. There is no educational requirement for participation for this discipline, nor a requirement for current enrollment in an academic program.
Individuals with disabilities (including those with intellectual disabilities) **At least one LTT and faculty member with a disability is required each year.**	Individuals with disabilities demonstrated readiness to develop leadership skills and share disability perspectives with the trainee cohort. There is no educational requirement for participation for this discipline, nor a requirement for current enrollment in an academic program.

After the award, you may consider other trainee and core faculty disciplines, in consultation with the assigned federal project officer. To obtain approval for trainees from other disciplines, the program must demonstrate that the trainee intends to work with disability populations in the future, and that the program has an appropriate faculty mentor and learning opportunities for the trainee.

Any specialties listed under "medicine, pediatric providers" will count as a **single discipline** toward meeting the interdisciplinary requirements listed in Table 1: Tier funding levels. The same applies to "medicine, adult providers." This will ensure that training cohorts include a wide array of clinical and non-clinical faculty and trainees.

Faculty academic appointments

Your programs must provide academic appointments for each core faculty member in the appropriate degree-granting school or department in your institution or an affiliated institution of higher learning. This appointment is in addition to the core faculty member's appointment in the employing institute or center program.

The appointing academic school or department is responsible for determining the basic qualifications, and the employing program is responsible for determining and documenting the additional specialized pediatric training and clinical experience required.

For the time they spend on the LEND project, core faculty members should report to the LEND PD.

Faculty members within the disciplines of family and individuals with disabilities do not need to have an academic appointment but may serve as faculty members for the purposes of the LEND grant only. Individuals from other disciplines who do not have academic appointments may participate as a LEND core faculty member with approval from the PO, after award.

Training levels

Long-term trainees (LTTs)

LTTs complete 300+ hours of LEND didactic and experiential training. LEND training is in addition to a trainee's graduate or postgraduate discipline-related training, including clinical and leadership requirements. LEND training provides additional disability perspectives to each trainee beyond what they would receive in their discipline's training program.

LEND LTTs are generally expected to complete their training within a 12-month period. However, trainees may complete a second year of long-term LEND training if the following criteria apply:

- If a trainee is unable to complete the long-term LEND training (300+ hours) in a 12-month period, they can spread out the requirements over two years. In these circumstances, we require the training program to provide a clear-cut completion plan that is flexible enough to enable the trainee to complete the program. You should determine the curriculum and level of engagement when the trainee is recruited and commits to the program.
- The federal PO must approve these accommodations, unless they are for a trainee who is a family member or individual with disabilities.

- The trainee (including family and individuals with disabilities trainees) may only count once toward the required annual number of LTTs required in Table 1: Tier funding levels.
- In this scenario, the trainee may receive a total of one LEND stipend over the two-year LEND training experience from these grant funds. The stipend can be prorated and disbursed at your discretion, and in accordance with institution policies. For maximum stipends, see Appendix A: Standards for using LEND grant funds to support trainees.
- In performance reports, these two-year trainees may be counted as MTTs in one year and LTTs in the other, at your discretion, to ensure they receive follow-up surveys after completion of the LEND program.
- At your discretion, certain long-term trainees may opt to complete an additional year of 300+ hour LEND training to enhance their leadership, clinical, teaching, or other skills. They must complete a different LEND curriculum (including new clinical and community placements or leadership and teaching opportunities) than what they completed in their first year as an LTT.
- In their additional year, these trainees may be counted as LTTs but cannot be used to meet the annual required number of LTTs for your awarded funding level stated in Table 1: Tier funding levels.
    - In performance reports, these LTTs are counted as LTTs each year but should only receive follow-up surveys in years 2 and 5 after completing the LEND program.

Medium-term, advanced medium-term, and short-term trainees

Medium- and short-term trainees are engaged in didactic or practical experiences through LEND as part of a formal course of study. This could include a residency program, rotation, internship, practicum, fellowship, or advancement in academic credentials through a course of study. These trainees generally do not include practicing professionals engaging in continuing education.

Medium-term trainees fall into two tiers: those who complete 40 to 149 hours, and those who complete 150 to 299 hours of training (known as advanced medium-term). Stipends for advanced medium-term trainees are at your discretion. Short-term trainees complete 1 to 39 hours of training per year.

Undergraduate students/trainees

LEND programs have the option to include a small number of undergraduate trainees in this program to increase the capacity of the future MCH workforce. Including individuals earlier in their training may expose them to MCH career paths they may not have otherwise considered and provide them with skills to serve the target populations with their undergraduate education. But because the primary goal of LEND is to prepare experts in the field, the focus of the training grant is to prepare graduates and/or postgraduate level trainees.

- Undergraduate trainees may participate as long-term or advanced medium-term trainees. You do not need to get prior approval to allow undergraduates to participate as trainees. However, please inform your PO of your intent and keep them informed of the outcomes.
- Undergraduate trainees must meet the same training requirements as all other LTTs or advanced MTTs. While the hours and training components should be equivalent for all trainees, including undergraduates, the content, experiences, and other components may be modified to ensure it is appropriate for the trainees' academic readiness. Undergraduate trainees must be able to complete the requirements of LEND in addition to their other coursework. Inclusion of undergraduate trainees should not reduce the level of academic rigor for graduate-level trainees.
- Undergraduate participation should be restricted to students who are in or have completed the second half of their educational training (for example, juniors and seniors in a four-year academic track or second year trainees in a two-year program) and who have career goals consistent with LEND goals and serving autistic/DD populations.
- Providing stipends to undergraduate trainees should not reduce the opportunity for graduate students to participate in the training program. You can consider providing support for undergraduate trainees only after the program has satisfied its requirements to support and train graduate/postgraduate students, as outlined Table 1: Tier funding levels.
- Undergraduate trainees participating in the LEND program as long-term trainees do **not** count toward the annual required number of LTTs for your funding tier.

Endnotes

1. See Section 399BB(e)(1)(B)(ii-iii) of the Public Health Service Act (42 USC 280i-1(e)(1)(B)(ii-iii)). ↑
2. Individuals with lived experience refers to individuals with knowledge and experience on health or social issues relevant to a particular program that is gained through direct, first-hand involvement in everyday events rather than through representations constructed by other people. ↑
3. Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative. 2022-2023 National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) data query. Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB). Retrieved 2/6/2026 from www.childhealthdata.org . ↑
4. Department of Health and Human Services. Fiscal Year 2026, Administration for a Healthy America, Justification of Estimates for Appropriations Committees. Microsoft Word - FY 2026 CJ AHA Final .docx . ↑
5. Maternal and Child Health Bureau. (2023). *MCH Leadership Competencies.* ↑
6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, EHDI 1-3-6- Benchmarks: EHDI 1-3-6 Benchmarks | Hearing Loss in Children | CDC . ↑
7. 2 CFR Part 200 - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards and the HHS Grants Policy Statement. ↑
8. See 2 CFR 200.466(c). ↑