

# Application Report



**Applicant Organization:** NBRC

**Project Name:** NBRC Language Access and Culture Plan

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

**Requested Amount:** \$381,480.40

**Project Summary:** NBRC will continue to engage with the community through a series of meetings to identify barriers and reduce gaps. During previous meetings, the community has identified elements and areas that need improvement. Our regional center's plan was born out of that direct feedback and collaboration. NBRC is excited to continue to collaborate and implement these efforts.

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**Section Name:** Regional Center Profile

**Sub Section Name:** RC Organization Profile

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

Provide a description of your regional center that includes:

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

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

### Applicant Response:

North Bay Regional Center serves three counties, Sonoma, Solano and Napa. The three counties have a diverse geography that includes rolling hills, oak and redwood forest, agricultural valleys (vineyards, ranches), coastlines, estuaries, and deltas. During the past five years, the region has been greatly impacted by wildfires and severe drought. Fire destruction, lack of inventory and high costs, have created a housing crisis with little to no affordable housing. Housing costs in urban areas, has led to the migration of people to unincorporated areas, and in many cases they have been forced to move outside the state. Sonoma and Napa County have about 30-40% of their population living in unincorporated areas, while Solano County has about 5%. These unincorporated areas face challenges to access and service delivery. Without municipal government and taxes, these areas often lack sidewalks, transportation, and reliable services (water, sewage, internet, health).

Currently, 43.3 % of North Bay Regional Center's clients live in Solano, 43% in Sonoma, and 12.4% in Napa county. In terms of language, 17% of our clients identify as non-native English speakers, with Spanish constituting the largest group (16%). In terms of race and ethnicity, 54% of our client base is non-White including 25% Hispanic, 14% other, 9% Black, and 6 % Asian.

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

Provide a description of your regional center's prior and ongoing efforts to increase language access and cultural competency in your catchment area. Examples of language efforts may include but are not limited to:

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

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

**Applicant Response:**

- Hiring of bilingual staff, 26% of employees speak Spanish and 25% of NBRC's clientele identify as Spanish speaking.
- Self Determination Program (SDP) and Resource Development teams continuing to recruit diverse service providers and staff. As part of this grant, we propose creating a new position, Bilingual Diversity and Equity Resource Developer.
- Diversity and Equity Supervisor and 4 service coordinators with specialized caseloads.
- We have prioritized important forms and documents to be translated and will continue the translation process until all forms are available to our clients.
- The Website is available in all target languages.
- Education about NBRC's services through Lantinx radio program, attempting to demystify developmental disabilities.
- Ongoing all staff training for Cultural Competency, Linguistic Competency, Diversity, Equity and Belonging.
- Vendor training on cultural competency, linguistic competence and humility.
- SDP Independent Facilitation Training in Spanish.
- NBRC Board of Directors' Cultural and Linguistic Competence Committee (CLCC)
- NBRC Vendor Advisory Committee (VAC) Cultural Diversity Sub Committee
- NBRC will create a videoteca (video library) educate families about services.
- Ongoing public conversations with parents held via zoom and partnering with Matrix, DRC, and Parents CAN in Spanish.
- Ongoing outreach to increase participation. ASL and Tagalog interpretation will be added moving forward

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**Section Name:** Language Assessment

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

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**1. Applicant Question:** Language Data Review

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

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

**Applicant Response:**

NBRC will create an advisory committee comprised of approximately 15 members, who are comprised of the following: clients/families, NBRC staff, NBRC vendors, NBRC CLCC, advocacy groups, community based organizations and other key agencies that serve our population providing generic services to increase access among marginalized communities. This group will serve as a liaison to communicate the best approaches for Language and Cultural Competency. NBRC will focus on 2 data sources; POS data and participant data.

The participant data will be obtained through community engagement surveys and feedback obtained from our community. To obtain feedback, NBRC will organize focus groups and community conversations. Feedback will be capture via surveys. Surveys will be distributed a variety of ways including: mailed with a QR code, posted on our website, etc. During these meetings, we will engage in discussion of the data, actively listening to feedback and building a plan to incorporate recommendations. In addition, the data will be posted on our website, shared through PSAs, advertised on our social media accounts, and distributed to our community partners. The data will also be shared with other regional centers.

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**2. Applicant Question:** Gathering Stakeholder Input

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

**Applicant Response:**

- Listening sessions
  - Public meetings
  - Outreach events
  - Surveys
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**3. Applicant Question:** Listening Sessions and Public Meetings

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

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**Applicant Response:**

- Host listening session(s) with self-advocates
  - Host listening session(s) with family members
  - Partner with CBOs to host a community meeting
  - Host listening session(s) with CBOs
  - Host public community meetings
  - Host interagency meetings with local governmental agencies
  - Host meetings with nontraditional community partners
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**4. Applicant Question:** Language Focus in Listening Sessions

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

**Applicant Response:**

- American Sign Language
- Spanish
- Tagalog

**Applicant Comment:**

We will tap into the well of our Advisory Committee to create focus groups and to build relationships. Focus groups will be tailored to each language group, interpretation and translated materials will be included. Ideally, the focus groups will be comprising of: clients, families, NBRC staff, NBRC vendors, advocacy groups, community based organizations and agencies that serve our population. Participants will be given a gift cards. Meals and snacks will be provided as needed.

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**5. Applicant Question:** Survey Recipients

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

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

**Applicant Response:**

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

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

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

**Applicant Response:**

After reviewing the data and gathering input, survey drafts will be created using Survey Monkey. The survey will be reviewed by our Advisory Committee. Once finalized, the surveys will be translated into the target languages and distributed through community partners, stakeholders, email, mail, QR code, posted in our website, and on our web based application. We hope to use the surveys to gather information and identify other potential linguistic needs such as Mixteco, and Triqui languages.

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**7. Applicant Question:** Distribution of Survey

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

**Applicant Response:**

- Email
  - US Mail
  - Website Link
  - QR Code
- 

**8. Applicant Question:** Surveys - Language Focus

For surveys developed into videos or translated into Non-English languages, identify the language(s) your regional center

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will focus. Check all that apply. If you selected "Other", please identify what that will be.

**Applicant Response:**

- American Sign Language
  - Spanish
  - Tagalog
- 

**9. Applicant Question:** Coordinating with Other Regional Centers

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

**Applicant Response:**

Currently, we are collaborating with the following RCs: VMRC, RCEB, GGRC, and SARC. We share challenges and successes. We also brainstorm solutions, to better understand and reduce the barriers to accessing services across the diverse population we serve.

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**Section Name:** Cultural Competency Assessment

**Sub Section Name:** Cultural Competency Assessment

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

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

- Review data within the organization/staff
- Review with Board Members
- Review with families, community, and stakeholders
- Steps to improve data
- Steps to broadly share data
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**Applicant Response:**

NBRC will create an advisory committee comprised of approximately 15 members, who are comprised of the following: clients/families, NBRC staff, NBRC vendors, NBRC CLCC, advocacy groups, community based organizations and other key agencies that serve our population providing generic services to increase access among marginalized communities. This group will serve as a liaison to communicate the best approaches for Language and Cultural Competency. NBRC will focus on 2 data sources; POS data and participant data.

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## **2. Applicant Question:** Gathering Stakeholder Input

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

### **Applicant Response:**

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

## **3. Applicant Question:** Listening Sessions and Public Meetings

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

### **Applicant Response:**

- Host listening sessions with self-advocates
  - Host listening sessions with family members
  - Host listening sessions with community organizations
  - Host public community meetings
  - Partner with local CBOs to host a community meeting
  - Host interagency meetings with local governmental agencies
  - Host meetings with nontraditional community partners
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## **4. Applicant Question:** Ethnicity Focus in Listening Sessions

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

### **Applicant Response:**

- Black/African American
  - Deaf and Hard of Hearing
  - Hispanic
  - Asian
  - LGBTQ+
  - Other Ethnicity or Race / Multi-Cultural
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### **Applicant Comment:**

We will tap into the well of our Advisory Committee to create focus groups and to build relationships. Focus groups will be tailored to each language group, interpretation and translated materials will be included. Ideally, the focus groups will be comprising of: clients, families, NBRC staff, NBRC vendors, advocacy groups, community based organizations and agencies that serve our population. Participants will be given a gift cards. Meals and snacks will be provided as needed.

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### **5. Applicant Question:** Survey Recipients

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

### **Applicant Response:**

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

The Department will review all surveys before distribution.

### **Applicant Response:**

After reviewing the data and gathering input, survey drafts will be created using Survey Monkey. The surveys will be reviewed by our Advisory Committee. Once finalized, the survey will be translated into the target languages, and distributed through community partners, stakeholders, email, mail, QR code, posted in our website and our web based application. We hope to use the surveys to gather information and identify other potential cultural needs, such as Mixteco and Triqui indigenous cultures.

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### **7. Applicant Question:** Distribution of Survey

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- Email
  - US Mail
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**Applicant Response:**

- American Sign Language
  - Spanish
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**9. Applicant Question:** Coordinating with Other Regional Centers

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

**Applicant Response:**

Currently, we are collaborating with the following RCs: VMRC, RCEB, GGRC, and SARC. We share challenges and successes. We also brainstorm solutions, to better understand and reduce the barriers to accessing services across the diverse population we serve.

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**10. Applicant Question:** Culturally Competent Language Interpretation

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

**Applicant Response:**

Currently, NBRC has a Spanish language interpretation vendor that will be contacted and scheduled beforehand to attend meetings and provide interpretation services. In close collaboration with the resource development team, a proposal will be drafted to expand vendor capacity and offer other targeted languages such as Tagalog, and ASL. A Request for Proposals will be published on the NBRC website and made available to the community in order to further diversify access to services and information. Additionally, through community fairs and engagement, NBRC will improve our professional outreach.

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

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

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### 1. Applicant Question: Regional Center Staffing

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

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

#### Applicant Response:

NBRC has worked collaboratively with families, clients, board members, staff, vendors, advocacy groups and community partners. We have robustly engaged with our community through a series of meetings to identify barriers and reduce gaps. Our community has identified elements that need improvement such as community engagement, knowledge of NBRC services, and generic services. Based on their direct feedback, NBRC is proposing the creation of the following positions:

**Generic Resource Specialist:** building strategic relationships and act as a liaison with generic resource agencies.

Establishing points of contact with these agencies. In collaboration with community partners this position will support clients accessing key resources.

**Community Outreach & Engagement Coordinator:** building community relationships to support individuals and families. Coordination, and promotion of community meetings, listening circles, focus groups, resource fairs, and tabling events.

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### 2. Applicant Question: Consultants

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

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

#### Applicant Response:

Based on the feedback from community meetings and focus groups, clients have identified the need for education around regional center services and improving our website. NBRC is proposing the following:

-Developing 20, three minute videos, using culturally competent methods, such as a telenovela style videos. These videos will be part of a "videoteca" (video library), to be located on our website. It will also constitute a training tool that can be used by our service coordinators when welcoming new clients. NBRC has selected a highly experienced local consultant, Definition Films for this project.

-Many of our clients do not possess a computer, and accessing our website via smart phone does not provide the best user friendly experience. We propose creating an application that will load content faster and will be easier to use. Survey monkey will be built into the app and will feature enhanced translation. NBRC selected Project 2 RC Connect as consultant with 20 year of experience.

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### 3. Applicant Question: Language Access and Cultural Goals

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

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

**Applicant Response:**

**Long-term goals:**

- Establish ongoing focus groups, and public meetings organized by the Community Outreach & Engagement Specialist and the Coordinator. NBRC is proposing to host 12 focus groups throughout the year, 4 for Spanish speaking clients, 4 for Tagalog speaking, and 4 in English with a focus on our deaf/hard of hearing population with ASL interpretation. Additionally, we will host 3 public disparity meetings, one for each group.
- Host an Annual Congreso Familiar offering a diverse venue of workshops, professional speakers, vendors and community partners.
- Our Community Engagement Specialist will establish points of contact with generic resources agencies through in order to provide ongoing assistance and support to access key resources.
- Create linguistically and culturally competent materials such as videos and flyers, to build tools that will provide education about services.

**Short term goals:**

- Hiring the Community Engagement Specialist and Coordinator.
  - Forming the Advisory Committee
  - Identifying focus groups and scheduling first meetings.
  - Identifying community partners and allies.
  - Gathering feedback from clients and families on NBRC resource information gaps
  - Scheduling meetings with generic resource agencies to build strategic relationships and points of contact.
  - Identifying key community events in which we will participate
  - Designing surveys
  - Developing the videoteca curriculum.
  - Identifying additional materials that need translation.
-