

**1. Provide a description of your funded project and how it aligns with the ADDPC Goal of Self-Advocacy, Integrated Employment or Inclusion. Explain why the ADDPC should consider renewing your contract.**

The Beacon Group (Beacon) Encore Project is dedicated to providing Customized Employment (CE) services to the underserved populations of Transition-aged youth with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (TAYIDD), with or without Arizona Long Term Care System (ALTCS) support. Youth are typically expected to meet the cultural norm of starting their employment history in high school or shortly after graduating high school. However, it is not uncommon for TAYIDD, with or without ALTCS support, to be overlooked during this critical time due to a perceived lack of abilities and/or a lack of access to proper service supports. The Encore Project addresses this gap by using theories from CE to personalize the job seeking experience for members served. By adapting these theories, Beacon has been able to fundamentally alter the relationship between job-seeker and employer by supporting the application, interview, and retention aspects of employment for TAYIDD served in Pima County. Our project strives to provide support to TAYIDD with obtaining minimum wage employment for at least 10 hours a week, working toward 20 hours a week, post-high school education. The Beacon Encore Specialist (BES) works closely with participants, their natural supports, and Pima County employers to establish customized jobs in the community that are compatible with the participant's abilities and the employer's needs.

The Beacon Encore CE approach to employment has allowed TAYIDD to begin developing their work experience on par with their non-disabled peers. This increases the likelihood of full time employment as the individual progresses through their career. Encore aims to provide the necessary supports to encourage participants to establish and develop community inclusive, employment goals. Beacon strongly encourages participants to embrace their individuality and to highlight their strengths. Participants strengthen their self-advocacy skills through the development of a positive understanding of self, as it relates specifically to employment, and through a deeper sense of self-awareness, thereby allowing the participant to identify the accommodations and environment needed to be successful in a competitive, integrated employment setting.

Over the course of the first grant year Beacon witnessed some examples of self-advocacy improvements amongst participants: improved skills when conversing with employers – in both interview and during day-to-day job performance settings, improved social skills displayed while relating to co-workers and customers, and in the ability to identify when and how to request additional supports.

According to the United States Department of Health and Human Services the TAYIDD population continues to grow. (<https://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/adolescent-development/physical-health-and-nutrition/chronic-conditions-and-disabilities/trends.html>), As more young job seekers with disabilities enter the workforce, the renewal of the ADDPC contract will help ensure, through Beacon Encore Project, that underserved TAYIDD in Pima County continue to receive an adapted and effective model of job seeking support at a critical juncture in their career, ultimately achieving and maintaining competitive integrated employment.

**2. Provide a summary of the program achievements for the current year. Include all key activities that have been undertaken based on the current implementation plan. Describe key barriers that were overcome. Also describe what activities are left to complete in the last quarter of your contract.**

The Beacon Encore Project provided services to twelve of the fifteen intended participants. There are currently five participants employed of the eight who have completed the Discovery Phase, and four participants actively participating in the Discovery Phase. Of our five currently employed members, three have achieved the target of working 20 hours per week, and all five have met the target of being employed for 90+ days. Beacon anticipates starting services with three more participants before the end of the grant year on July 31<sup>st</sup> 2020. Participants served have taken part in all aspects of the CE process including: vocational trainings, counseling sessions, informational-interviews, and trial-work experiences. All phases of the CE process have proven to be beneficial to participants' motivation and skill growth. By tactfully considering, and adjusting, the length of time that a participant is involved in the Discovery Phase, Beacon has been able to create job placements that are a better fit for each individual participant. For example, Encore has been particularly successful in tailoring the interview process to make sure that our job-seekers have a chance to be seen by prospective employers as individuals with talent, skill, and character who are worthy of consideration as employees. The BES has played a valuable role as liaison between job seekers and community employers. The BES has found that through skillful and subtle facilitation of the Informational Interviewing process, our CE has been able to create a space allowing job-seekers and employers to each better understand the needs of the other party.

Over the year, Encore has experienced some unexpected barriers. The most significant is the (novel) Coronavirus, COVID-19. As unemployment for everyone reaches unprecedented levels, many employers have experienced massive negative financial impacts. In order to prevent the spread of the virus, communities are closing off and businesses are going remote. In times of economic crisis, people with disabilities generally face higher levels of unemployment (<https://www.sourceamerica.org/covid19>). The events experienced have been extremely unusual and have especially impacted the motivation and direction of many current Encore participants, those already employed and those seeking employment. Encore participants are expressing feelings of anxiety and lack of motivation. As a result, some participants are spending more time in the Discovery Phase of the CE process, receiving additional emotional support and encouragement, from the BES, intended to address the individual needs of the participants specifically developed as a result of COVID-19. Employed participants have the additional stressor of being at a higher risk of losing their job due to the economic losses experienced by their employers. Encore has adjusted retention support to be more involved with employee-employer relations in order to anticipate if or when a participant is in danger of receiving a reduction of hours or a complete loss of job. Encore has been able to ensure employee retention for some participants by utilizing the allocated employee-reimbursement funds.

The Beacon Encore Project has also experienced barriers presented by specific disability-related needs of our participants. We expected the length of participation to vary within each phase,

based on the individual. However, Encore did not anticipate the accurate length of time needed to support those TAYIDD that are experiencing changes related to a developing aspect of a disability, such as a Serious Mental Illness (SMI) cycling. For those participants, we have adjusted their personalized employment plan to allow the appropriate, natural, home and workplace supports to be available to the participant as identified. Beacon Encore has also worked to overcome this barrier by increasing/extending the retention/follow-up supports, beyond the initial 90 days, to continue to ensure both the employer and employee maintain and/or increase job stability.

### **3. Describe who are the community partners that are supporting your project, and their role in your contract.**

Beacon's Encore Project is working closely with five Pima County schools and school districts, who continue to support the Encore Project. Those schools and school districts are: Baboquivari High School, Marana Unified School District, Vail Unified School District, Flowing Wells High School, and Ironwood Ridge High School. The BES works closely with these partners to develop effective accommodation tools and resources that match the employment-need of each participant. The participants' school teachers have proven to be very supportive. By reinforcing accommodation tools in the classroom they have provided time for additional training and development, specific to participants' employment needs. Their information provided to BES, and positivity in regard participants' abilities, have been of great value to the success of our CE process. The Beacon Encore Project has also received a few referrals, leading to 2 actual participants, from support coordinators and vocational rehabilitation counselors. This is a resource which we hope to utilize more fully during the second year of grant support as community knowledge of Beacon Encore Project continues to grow.

The community partners will not receive remuneration of any kind as they have already allocated funds to this process. Any dedication of resources during this process has already been accounted for in their own budget process.

### **4. Summarize feedback from participants, families, professionals and other stakeholders during the current funded period. Explain how their feedback is used for evaluation analysis and in program design.**

Beacon Encore staff have found that the feedback received from all stakeholders has been generally very positive regarding the Beacon Encore Project. Referral sources have expressed excitement about new job development processes presented by CE . There seems to exist a feeling among educators and counselors that these new methods can be helpful to youth who had previously been falling through the cracks. We have used feedback from all parties, in real time, to individualize the CE process for each participant, which has helped us increase positive placement outcomes.

Through this feedback we have become aware that an increased effort is necessary in helping parents, business owners, and other natural supports better understand and embrace the full CE process. Throughout this first grant year period we have experienced parents and employers who

have shown a tendency to slip into expectations more aligned with traditional supported employment. Beacon is developing materials, including hand-outs and videos, targeting specific groups, such as educators, parents, and employers, in an effort to educate community members about CE. In Additional, Beacon hopes to engage more small businesses through membership in organizations such as Local First AZ.

**5. Summarize evaluation findings to date and level of satisfaction. Explain if the program is on track with proposed target numbers; if not, describe barriers to reaching target numbers. Data to include here include the number of self-advocates, family members, or professionals/others. Also state if any policy or procedures have been changed based on your program, and what this result will mean for families.**

With 63% (5 of 8) of eligible participants employed, we are slightly off of our target of 73% but enthused about the successes we have had. As mentioned earlier three of our employed members have achieved at least 20 hours of work per week, and all five have met the goal of 90+ days of continual employment. Beacon will also continue the process of Informational Interviewing with our three job-seekers who have yet to find employment. Until the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which necessitated a state wide shutdown of most businesses including the closing of Beacon main offices, we were on target with number of members served, which stands at 12. The last group of participants (numbered 13-15) which had been slated to begin on April 20<sup>th</sup> will now be delayed.

Beacon estimates that the number of people trained and/or educated through Beacon Encore program activities and outreach to average at least 9, for each individual Beacon Encore Project member who has at least finished the Discovery phase of CE. We expect that as we increase our successful placements that we can educate more community members through data sharing and marketing of success stories. We also will continue to participate in school job fairs and chamber events throughout the year.

We have also adapted our outreach strategy for small businesses heading into the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of grant funding. Beacon has added Local First AZ as a community partner, to promote CE through presentations and discussions with small business owners/managers.

In the second year of funding, the goal of Encore will be to serve 12 job-seekers, 2 at a time for two months in duration, intending to reach at least 10 hours of work per week initially, building to 20 hours per week post-high school. These changes will give participants more time in Discovery and Informational Interviewing phases of CE, allowing job-seekers an opportunity to take advantage of activities which increase self-advocacy skills and lead to better job placement outcomes. This will also allow the BES to develop a thorough employment plan that meets the participants' abilities and given supports. Once this plan is established, the BES is able to more efficiently determine the best environmental considerations for employment outcome. The Beacon Encore Project expects the benefits of these changes to uplift our participants, inevitably leading to more contented, less stressed environments for whole families.

**6. Describe proposed changes that will be planned for the second year, including program design, target numbers, collaborators, implementation, staffing, evaluation, and other activities.**

Originally, Encore planned to allow each participant up to 30 hours of Discovery over a three-week period, followed by up to 30 hours of Informational Interviews, again, over a three-week period. This proved to be a difficult task with many participants enrolled in school full-time. Beacon Encore will extend these two phases, Discovery and Informational Interviewing, to last an expected calendar month each. Encore estimates that most participants will require 15-30 hours in each phase. The Encore Project has identified a need to allow an extension of time for any participant within any phase of the CE process, when considering a given/developing disability-related need. Encore will be able to address the participants' needs better by overlapping the Discovery and Informational Interview phases and by extending the combined phases by two weeks. These changes will allow the flexibility necessary to implement the Encore member's CE plan successfully. We intend to serve at least 12 TAYIDD participants, with or without ALTCS, seeking at least 10 work hours per week, by the end of the 2020-21 grant year, to better ensure participants are able to receive the necessary time to transition to employment successfully. Encore will collaborate with other Beacon Transition programs to establish additional staff supports and to further the expansion of the Discovery Phase's key activities. Encore will also extend supports for job retention to beyond the initial 90 days of employment, by continuing to follow-up on participant's progress at the 6 month and annual date of employment. The Encore staff will provide follow-up supports by routinely assessing the Encore member's positive/negative changes in job duties and hours scheduled. BES will provide vocation-counseling on accommodation needs and/or ongoing educational needs related to CE process. Making these adjustment will ensure that participants are more likely to develop strong natural supports and maintain job security. Further, Beacon Encore plans to increase attempts at outreach to the small business community which are more likely to offer work opportunities to CE participants.

The Beacon Encore Project will add an additional administrative staff to the Encore team. This staff will be responsible for organizing Encore data relevant to the participants and his/her employment plan. Encore anticipates that this additional staff will allow the BES more time needed to develop the personalized encore employment plan. The Encore Assistant will also assist the BES with 6 month and annual follow-ups, as it relates to participant job retention.

**7. Describe effort to work in or promote the program in underserved or unserved areas of the state or with certain populations that are often overlooked.**

The Encore BES and staffing supports will promote our program through the participation in several transition fairs, small-business events, and through internal Beacon marketing programs. Beacon staff will promote the model of CE amongst case managers, employers, families, and educators of TAYIDD members. By strengthening our existing relationships with the school districts, with whom we partner, through successful placements and outreach, we can ensure that we are engaging the underserved youth in Pima County.

**8. Elaborate on sustainability efforts that show commitment from other sources of funds to fund the program post ADDPC funding.**

Beacon is currently negotiating with VR regarding a contract of service for Career Exploration. This initiative will make heavy use of CE models and techniques. Beyond the plan for an ongoing CE program at Beacon, we are sure the knowledge and experience gained will be of great use to the operation of our TTE (Transition to Employment) and Pre-ETS services – and, in fact, all of our transition and job development services. The Beacon Encore Project remains committed to raising community awareness of CE, and in developing best practices related to CE. Beacon is using our membership in First Local AZ and ongoing Beacon marketing efforts to foster deeper relationships with small businesses and local community members who are integral to the growth of CE in Arizona.

**9. Attachment 1: Provide an Implementation Plan that lists out sequentially the key activities to undertake in year 2. At a minimum, the implementation plan shall list the key task, the party that is responsible, when it will be completed (date) and by what method you will know completion is met (measurement).**

The Beacon Encore Project will know that tasks are completed and program goals are met through weekly program meetings where progress and barriers will be discussed by PM and BES. There are also monthly progress reports created by PM and BES, as well as quarterly reports generated by PM. Senior management will use progress reports to inform board members of program outcomes on a quarterly and yearly basis. Encore uses a customized website developed by Beacon IT to track all data related to participants and staff assignments.

Beacon's Encore Pilot Project timeline/milestones (Initial Projection) Project Year in Weeks

Tasks & Staff Responsible	1-4	5-8	9-12	10-12	13-16	17-22	23-27	28-31	32-35	36-39	40-44	45-48	49-52
<b>Implementation</b>													
Participants A, and B (BES)	D	II	R										
Participants C and D, (BES)			D	II	R								
Participants E and F (BES)					D	II	R						
Participants G and H, (BES)							D	II	R				
Participants I and J, (BES)									D	II	R		
Participants K and L (BES)											D	II	R
<b>Data and Evaluation</b>													
Daily case notes (BES)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Weekly program meetings (BES, PM)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Monthly progress reports (BES, PM)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Quarterly (90 day) outcome reports (PM)			X			X			X			X	
Participant satisfaction survey (BES, PM)				X		X		X		X		X	
End of year evaluation report (BES, PM)	X												
Legend: PM - Project Manager, BES - Beacon's Encore Employment Specialist, D - Discovery Phase begins, II - Informational Interviewing Phase begins, R-Retention Phase begins													

**10. Attachment 2: Provide a 12-month budget. Use the Budget Summary Form and provide a detail budget narrative for both requested dollars and match.**

Budget Request Form

Budget Request Form

Contractor Name: Beacon Group, Inc.

Contractor Address: 308 W. Glenn St. Tucson AZ 85705  
Street Address City State Zip

Project Name: Beacon Group Encore Project

Budget Category	Requested ADDPC Funds	Non-Federal Cash Match	Non-Federal In Kind Match	Total Program Cost
Personnel/Salaries	\$46,051.20		\$7,049.46	\$53,100.66
Fringe Benefits	\$9,010.76		\$6,919.44	\$15,930.20
Supplies / Operating Expenses	\$12,000.00			\$12,000.00
Travel	\$3,204.00		\$936.00	\$4,140.00
Rent or Cost of Space				
Contracted Services I Professional Services				
Administrative / Indirect Costs			\$8,517.09	\$8,517.09
Total Costs	\$70,265.96		\$23,421.99	\$93,687.95



It is understood that Non-Federal Funds identified in this budget will be used to match only ADDPC Federal Funds, and will not be used to match any other Federal Funds during the period of the ADDPC funded Project.

Additional description and background information shall be included as a budget narrative, including for match. The contractor agrees to submit additional background information to the ADDPC upon request.

Christopher McNamara

---

Name of Certifying Official

Vice President of Rehabilitation Services

---

Title of Certifying Official

### **Budget Narrative:**

Beacon's request to the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (ADDPC) is \$70,265.96 for the period of one year. The total budget for the Beacon's Encore Project is \$93,687.95. If awarded, ADDPC funds will be matched internally at Beacon by a non-federal in-kind match of \$23,421.99.

A. Personnel/Salaries \$53,100.66

Beacon's Encore Employment Specialist will spend 100% or approximately 2,080 hours of their time providing direct service to the participants. This individual's hourly rate is \$22.14 an hour and will be covered for the project year on the contract. The individual's annual salary is \$46,051.20.

Beacon Encore Assistant (BEA) will spend 100% or approximately 416 hours of their time providing administrative services to the BES. BEA will be responsible for performing office admin duties associated with Discovery, Informational Interview, and Retention phases of CE. This individual's hourly rate is \$13.25 an hour and will be covered for the project year on the contract. The individual's annual salary is \$5,512.00.

Beacon's Encore Project Manager will oversee the program and spend about 3% of their time supervising the Beacon's Encore Project Employment Specialist during the project year. This individual's annual salary is \$51,251.00, \$1,537.46 will be covered by non-federal in-kind match.

The total of \$7,049.46 will be a non-federal in-kind match for personnel salaries.

B. Fringe Benefits \$15,930.20

Beacon's fringe benefit rate is 30% for all personnel costs. This includes: FICA, workers compensation, unemployment, health insurance and other ancillary benefits, as well as an employer retirement contribution.

The Beacon's Encore Employment Specialist's fringe benefits will be covered at 100% for the project year on the contract totaling \$13,815.36, \$4,804.60 will be covered by non-federal in-kind match.

The Beacon's Encore Project Manager's fringe benefits will be covered at about 3% for the project year on the contract using non-federal, in-kind match totaling \$461.24. Total of \$461.24 will be covered by non-federal in-kind match.

The Beacon's Encore Assistant's fringe benefits will be covered at 100% for the project year on the contract totaling \$1,653.60, \$1,653.60 will be covered by non-federal in-kind match.

The total of \$6,919.44 will be a non-federal in-kind match for fringe benefits.

C. Supplies/Operating Expenses \$12,000.00

Job-Seeker/Employer Incentive Fund: Beacon's Encore Project will be reimbursing an employer who provides CE opportunities to a participant, up to \$1,000. Optionally, if a participant does not work directly for an employer, but is self-employed, Beacon's Encore Project will supply up to \$1,000 for start-up costs directly to the participant. Beacon's Encore Project will serve 12 participants throughout the project year. The total Job-Seeker/Employer Incentive Fund is up to \$12,000 for the project year and covered on the contract.

D. Travel \$4,140.00

Beacon's Encore Project will be reimbursing BES who will utilize his or her own vehicle for travel, for mileage at the standard rate of \$0.575/mile. Beacon's Encore Project estimates that the Employment Specialist will be traveling about 600 miles per month during the project year for this contract. The total for travel is  $0.575 \times 600 \times 12 = \$4,140.00$ . State of AZ travel reimbursement rate is .445, so \$3,204.00 will be covered on the contract and \$936.00 will be covered by non-federal in-kind match.

E. Rent or Cost of Space \$0

F. Contracted Services/Professional Services \$0

G. Administrative/Indirect Costs \$8,517.09

Beacon's Encore Project's administrative costs are calculated at 10% of the total expenses. Total expenses for this project are \$85,170.86. Beacon's Encore Project's administrative costs are covered with nonfederal in-kind match. These costs include the following departments: financial, accounting, information technology, human resources, and corporate office building. A more detailed list and Beacon's internal allocation policy is provided on the following pages.

Total \$93,687.95

**11. Attachment 3: Provide a list of key staff and briefly summarize their job responsibilities for this grant. List any training or certification required for staff in the upcoming year. Ensure personnel costs are appropriately allocated for in the Budget. Do not attach resumes.**

Beacon Employment Specialist (BES):

- Facilitating Discovery Phase with all program participants
- Develop participant's Encore employment plan
- Identifying potential employers in the participants' area(s) of interest
- Preparing participants on conducting Informational Interviews
- On-the-job support at the time of hire
- Submitting requisition forms for employer stipends
- Participant outcome tracking

Encore Assistant

- Generate lists of local businesses matching Encore participants' plans
- Track relevant data on participants
- Assist BES with creating accommodation tools; i.e. creating laminated task list
- Follow-up with employed participants on progress/needs
- Report follow-up concerns to BES

Encore Project Manager

- Encore Program Oversight
- Establishing protocols to ensure Encore Program initiatives extend to other programs
- Budget management
- Submitting reports to grantors
- Program Quality Control

The Customized Employment Specialist will collaborate with Beacon's Transition Staff to establish Discovery Phase Activities. The BES will, using information from Discovery, create a list of businesses to contact in order to set up Informational Interviews. The BES will attend Informational Interviews with participant and fulfill role of liaison between employer and job-seeker. BES will aid job-seeker and employer in negotiations with aim of creating customized job situation beneficial to all parties. BES will provide job retention support to job-seeker, through vocational assessments and counseling, while seeking to strengthen natural supports at place of work i.e. owners, managers, and fellow employees. Encore will provide

these retention supports to each employed participant for up to a year, working toward the extension of BES supports by the date of annual employment. BES will work with participants, families, and all stakeholders, to help foster environment where participant will likely increase self-advocacy skills. BES will record daily notes on all events related to Beacon Encore Project activities, seeking to create and use data to better serve participants. Encore Assistant will be responsible for performing office admin duties associated with Discovery, Informational Interview, and Retention phases of CE. PM will assist BES with generating monthly reports. Providing feedback and advice in weekly program meetings. PM will generate quarterly reports based on information provided by BES. PM will work in conjunction with BES to survey participants and make use of data gathered. PM will oversee project course and budget in order to ensure program goals are on track.