

Philadelphia Autism Project Seed Award Application – EXAMPLE

Disclaimer: This application is provided only as an example to show the level of detail we expect for each question. It is meant to be a guide for applicants and should not be seen as the only type of project we will fund. All applications will be reviewed based on their own strengths, and funding decisions will depend on how well each project matches the Seed Award Initiative’s goals and requirements.

Thank you for your interest in applying for seed award funds. For information on eligibility requirements, important dates, and the review process, please visit the Seed Award Webpage. For questions or to contact someone from the Philadelphia Autism Project, please email phillyap@drexel.edu or call 267-582-0273.

1. Contact Information

- Name of Group (if applicable): Autism Initiative
- First Name: Jane
- Last Name: Doe
- Street Address: 123 Market Way
- City: Philadelphia
- State: PA
- Zip Code: 19104
- Phone Number: (215) 555 -1234
- Email Address: jane.doe@example.com

2. Would you describe your group/project as a grassroots project (a fairly new organization/project without a previously established network and/or resources) or a more experienced organization/group (have the organizational resources and structure in place to help you implement the project)?

- Grassroots
- Experienced
- Unsure

Previous Awardees

3. Have you/your organization ever received seed award funding from the Philadelphia Autism Project?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Program Merit and Strength

4. What do you aim to accomplish with the seed award funding?

Please describe what you plan to do with the funding and what specific outcomes you hope to achieve. For example, will the funding help you launch a new program, expand an existing initiative, create a resource, or reach a specific group in your community?

Our primary goal is to create a safe, autism-led support community for young adults ages 18-30, focusing on three core areas: social connections, career development, and community advocacy. We aim to bridge a crucial support gap by providing resources, peer-led workshops, and group sessions that empower participants to take ownership of their social and professional journeys. We hope that by building this peer network, we can reduce social isolation and improve access to employment resources, helping young adults feel more connected and supported in Philadelphia.

5. How will you carry out your program? Please include information about:

- a. The structure of the program**
- b. Number and length of group meetings/events**
- c. Frequency of group meetings/events**
- d. Number of individuals you anticipate participating, etc.**

Our program will consist of biweekly 90-minute sessions, scheduled over a period of four months. Each session will be structured to address specific topics, such as social skills development, career exploration, advocacy training, and community-building exercises. We plan to begin each session with a brief presentation by one of our facilitators, followed by group discussions and interactive workshops. Based on local interest, we anticipate engaging 15-20 participants each session, with an overall target of approximately 60 unique participants over the program duration. Sessions will be held at a centrally located community center with ADA-accessible facilities to ensure all participants can attend comfortably.

6. How will you measure success?

Please describe how you'll know if your project achieved what you hoped. For example:

- What signs or results will show your project was successful?*
- How will you gather this information (e.g., surveys, sign-in sheets, feedback conversations, photos, or observations)?*

After each session, participants will complete brief surveys to share their experiences, and we will track attendance rates over time. At the end of the program, we'll conduct in-depth interviews with willing participants to capture the program's impact on their personal and professional lives. Our target metrics include an 80% participant

satisfaction rate, measurable improvement in self-reported social skills, and increased awareness of employment resources. We'll also assess the level of engagement in community advocacy activities to gauge overall confidence and community involvement.

Community Impact

7. How are individuals on the Spectrum and/or their families leading or participating in activities?

Please describe how autistic individuals and/or their families are involved in your project. For example, are they helping design the activities, leading workshops, giving feedback to guide the project, or participating in events?

Our program is fully participant-led, with facilitators who are young adults on the spectrum sharing their lived experiences and insights. We prioritize creating a peer-led environment where autistic participants feel empowered to discuss their needs and challenges openly. Families will also be invited to join monthly forums to provide input and learn how to support their loved ones' journey within the group. These forums will give families a space to better understand the challenges autistic young adults face while building a stronger support system.

8. Why is your group or program needed?

Explain what gap, challenge, or community need your project addresses. For example, is it filling a service gap, responding to a request from the community, or meeting a need that isn't currently being met elsewhere?

Many young adults on the spectrum face a lack of community resources and social support as they transition out of formal education. Our program fills this gap by offering structured social and career guidance in a safe, supportive setting. Without such support, many young adults experience social isolation and struggle with employment, leading to significant challenges in their overall quality of life. By focusing on peer-led support, we offer a unique model that resonates with participants who might not feel comfortable in traditional programs. This project aims to address these gaps directly,

ensuring that autistic young adults in Philadelphia have the resources, skills, and community backing to lead fulfilling lives.

9. How do you plan to share information with individuals on the Spectrum and their families to participate in your group or program?

Please describe the ways you'll reach your audience. For example, will you use email newsletters, social media, flyers, community partners, word-of-mouth, or other methods?

We plan to use a multi-channel outreach strategy to connect with potential participants and their families. Our primary outreach will be through social media, specifically targeted ads on platforms popular with our age group, such as Instagram and Facebook. Additionally, we will coordinate with community centers, autism support groups, and educational institutions to distribute flyers and reach a broader audience.

10. Describe the population your support group, program, or event will serve (such as age, audience, Philadelphia neighborhood location, etc.).

Please include details about who will benefit from your project. For example, you might describe the age range, whether you are serving autistic individuals, family members, caregivers, or professionals, and any specific neighborhoods, communities, or groups you plan to reach.

Our program is designed to serve young adults on the autism spectrum, ages 18-30, who are living in the Philadelphia area. We specifically aim to reach individuals who may not have access to conventional support services and who are in need of structured support as they transition into adulthood. Many of our participants are likely to come from under-resourced neighborhoods, and we plan to focus our outreach efforts in these areas. Sessions will be held at an accessible location within Philadelphia to make attendance easier for participants from various parts of the city.

11. Does your project reach under-resourced populations? If so, please explain. If not, please identify what would help to do so.

Please describe whether your project serves groups that have traditionally had less access to services or opportunities. For example, this could include people from specific racial or ethnic communities, low-income neighborhoods, LGBTQ+ individuals, or others with limited access to resources. If your project does not currently reach these populations, please share what support, partnerships, or strategies would help you do so.

Yes. We are committed to making our program accessible to individuals from under-resourced backgrounds. To do so, we will provide transportation subsidies to alleviate

barriers related to travel. Additionally, we will collaborate with community-based organizations that specifically work with under-resourced communities to ensure the program reaches those who need it most.

Budget

12. How much funding are you requesting? (Required):

Award amounts depend on project needs and typically range from a few hundred dollars to \$1,000, with limited opportunities for additional funding. You are also expected to keep a record of all purchase receipts and invoices, should the Philadelphia Autism Project request them.

Amount: \$1,000

13. Provide a budget breakdown on how you plan to use the funds (Required):

Include costs for materials, supplies, staff time, venue rental, marketing, or other project expenses. Provide estimated amounts for each item.

- Venue rental for 8 sessions: \$400
- Program materials, supplies, and workshop tools: \$100
- Stipends for lead facilitators for program development and facilitation: \$400
- Transportation subsidies for participants to reduce travel barriers: \$100

14. Other Funding - Provide a list of other contributions and sources of support and matching funds for the project.

This could include grants, sponsorships, in-kind support (such as donated space, materials, or volunteer time), or matching funds from other organizations.

- Donation of refreshments from local cafes and restaurants to support participant engagement
- Pending grant application with the Philadelphia Foundation for \$2,000

Sustainability

15. What are the long-term plans for your group/program?

For example, how will your group/program continue beyond the funding received from the Philadelphia Autism Project? Are there other grant opportunities, community partnerships, or strategies you plan to pursue to keep your work going?

We aim to establish the Autism Initiative as a sustainable support network that will grow and evolve beyond the initial funding period. To ensure longevity, we will pursue partnerships with local businesses and autism-friendly employers who may be interested in supporting our career development initiatives. Additionally, we will seek out grants from local foundations and explore crowdfunding options to diversify our funding sources. Ultimately, we envision creating a permanent peer network that continues to empower young adults on the spectrum in Philadelphia.

16. What is the staff structure and personnel needed to sustain the project?

Please describe who is involved in your project and their roles, such as:

- *Who is leading or coordinating the project*
- *Who is helping plan or run activities or events*
- *Any volunteers, partners, or collaborators who support the work*

The project team will include two lead facilitators with lived experience on the autism spectrum who will manage sessions, conduct outreach, and handle program feedback. We will also have two volunteer program assistants to help with logistics, including set-up and session materials. Additionally, we'll consult regularly with a licensed social worker and an employment specialist, both of whom have offered to provide pro-bono guidance on structuring our workshops and career support activities.

17. Please list any other relevant information which you would like to share with the Seed Award Review Committee.

We're excited to create a lasting impact for young adults on the spectrum in Philadelphia. This seed funding would not only launch our program but also demonstrate the need and potential for future growth. We look forward to working with the Philadelphia Autism Project to make this vision a reality.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this application. For additional assistance or questions, please contact the Philadelphia Autism Project at phillyap@drexel.edu or (267) 582-0273.