



**NATIONAL CONSUMER SUPPORTER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER  
ORGANIZATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSUMER/PEER-RUN  
PROGRAMS – PHASE I**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR MINI-GRANTS**

The National Mental Health Association’s National Consumer Supporter Technical Assistance Center (NCSTAC) is funded through a grant from the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) within the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). NCSTAC announces the availability of grants for the establishment and development of consumer organizations.

NCSTAC is dedicated to improving the functioning and effectiveness of consumer organizations. A Consumer is defined as an individual 18 years of age or older with severe mental illness. CMHS recognizes that some consumers may choose to identify themselves with other terminology. Consumer Organizations are those controlled and managed by consumers and dedicated to the transformation of mental health services. They have boards of directors comprised of more than 50 percent consumers.

NCSTAC strengthens consumer organizations by providing technical assistance in the forms of:

- Assisting consumer/peer-run groups to obtain needed resources;
- Facilitating referrals to consumer/peer-run programs;
- Providing the necessary training, expertise and knowledge to consumers;
- Facilitating in the collection and dissemination of research findings, evaluation and data related to consumer/peer-run programs;
- Identifying, disseminating and applying best practices on consumer/peer run programs.

**Background**

In July, 2003 the President’s New Freedom Commission on Mental Health issued its report, “Achieving the Promise: Transforming Mental Health Care in America”. A main recommendation in the report was that services for persons with psychiatric disabilities must be consumer and family centered. A healthy organizational infrastructure is essential to the growth and expansion of consumer organizations. Keeping this in mind, NCSTAC has developed mini-grants to assist consumer groups in starting consumer-run organizations.

In previous years, NMHA’s National Consumer Supporter Technical Assistance Center provided mini-grants that addressed such issues as cultural competence and coalition building. In 2004, NCSTAC provided one-year mini-grants to entities wishing to become established, consumer organizations. This RFP is builds on this concept and has multiple

year funding. Three organizational establishment mini-grants of up to five thousand dollars per year are available.

### **Project Description**

**Organizational Establishment Mini-Grant:** NCSTAC will offer three grant awards of up to five thousand dollars per year for consumer groups interested in developing independent consumer-run organizations. The duration of the grant is up to three years.

Each year will have a specific focus.

- **Year One:** Organizational start-up activities. Topics will include identifying volunteer leaders (board members), strategic plans and budgets, and applying for tax-exempt status.
- **Year Two:** Funding consumer/peer-run organizations. Topics will include grant writing, developing community relationships (such as with United Way, faith-based communities, community foundations, consumer supporter organizations, and service providers) and membership development. A four-day grant-writing workshop will be held for grantees.
- **Year Three:** Managing, sustaining, and leveraging consumer organizations. Financial management, community collaboration, membership/capacity building and effective media/public/political relations will be emphasized.

After three years, grantees should have established a sustainable organizational base and be poised to assume leadership roles in their respective communities.

Examples of acceptable uses for the grant money include but are not limited to:

- a. Hosting a one-day training on starting a consumer organization.** NCSTAC will work with applicants to develop an agenda and to supply presenters, if necessary.
- b. Paying for start-up costs for the new organization.** This might include developing articles of incorporation, filing for 501c(3) status, and other legal expenses necessary to create an organization.
- c. Hosting a planning meeting on developing the mission and vision of a consumer organization.** Grantees may use money to cover staff time devoted to planning and implementing meetings devoted to developing the mission and vision of a consumer organization.
- d. Printing and design costs for marketing materials**
- e. Hiring of staff**

**Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** Upon announcement of the grant awards, NCSTAC staff will work with grantees to develop a Memorandum of Understanding which outlines the proposed activities, how and when grant moneys will be dispensed, protection of human subjects and any technical assistance needs to be addressed. In years two and three, the MOU will be modified and revised, if necessary.

### **Application process**

Any interested group of consumers within the United States and its territories may apply for the organizational establishment grants. Applicants for organizational establishment grants

will need to identify an existing organization that will act as the fiscal agent, a nonprofit organization that will receive and administer the funds for the grant.

Applicants must be submitted by fax or regular mail. In order to be scored, applications must include a cover sheet, application (no more than eight pages) and letter(s) of recommendation. Additional information on what to include in the application can be found in the following section, "Guidelines for Applicants".

Applications will be reviewed and scored based on the proposed goals and activities, the applicant's ability to achieve the proposed goals and activities, the applicant's ability to address issues of sustainability (long-term funding) and documentation of the need for a consumer organization in the applicant's locale. Applications will be reviewed and scored by a panel of representatives from consumer and consumer-supporter organizations.

**All applications must be received by Friday, February 4, 2005**

### **Grantee Responsibilities**

**Memorandum of Understanding:** All approved grantees are responsible for signing a Memorandum of Understanding which outlines the proposed activities, how they will be accomplished, protection of human subjects and a timeline for when the activities will occur.

**Meetings:** NCSTAC grantees will be required to attend a yearly meeting. In year two, the yearly meeting will include a grant writing workshop.

**Reports:** All grantees are required to submit to NCSTAC a quarterly progress report and a final report after three years. In addition, it is a requirement to submit quarterly financial reports describing all expenses incurred to achieve the approved grant objectives outlined in the scope of work. Adequate justification for all grant related expenses must be maintained by the grantee for review by the NMHA upon request. Reports must also describe outcomes related to grant goals and objectives.

### **Independent Audit Requirement**

Please be advised that as instructed by Federal regulations, any organization that has incurred more than \$300,000 in expenditures through all Federal grant or cooperative agreement funding instruments during one fiscal year is required by law to have a Federal A-133 Audit for the same period. This includes both federal awards made directly to an entity and sub-awards made through a direct grantee.

**Protection of Human Subjects Regulations:** Successful applicants will need to adhere to federal requirements and regulations regarding protection of human subjects. This subject will be described in detail in the Memorandum of Understanding. Additional information about Protection of Human Subjects Regulations can be obtained on the web at <http://ohrp.osophs.dhhs.gov>.

### **NCSTAC Responsibilities**

**Grant money:** Upon written request by the grantee, NCSTAC will reimburse the grantee for expenses incurred that meet all of the following requirements:

- Expense was incurred to further the approved objectives defined in the scope of work
- Expense is allowable under Federal OMB A133 guidelines
- Expense is reflected as part of the approved grant budget and budget expense line items have not been exceeded
- Appropriate justification is attached to the written request to show support for this expense as grant related and allowable
- The grantee is eligible to receive a direct Federal grant or contract award

These reimbursement requirements will also be restated as part of the agreed upon MOU for all successful grantees. If necessary, MOUs plans will be revised in years two and three.

**Record Keeping:** The designated NMHA Program Project Officer will be responsible for keeping records of applications, evaluations, notifications, and all other documents related to this grant process, including grantee reports during and after implementation. Therefore, if auditors request information regarding a grant process, they can go directly to the designated NMHA Program Project Officer.

**On-Site technical assistance:** When necessary, NCSTAC staff along with NMHA staff (as necessary or appropriate) will provide on-site consultation for grantees.

**Conference calls:** NCSTAC will offer periodic conference calls during the grant cycle for grantees to receive peer-to-peer assistance and support.

**On-going technical assistance:** NCSTAC staff will provide on-going technical assistance through phone-calls, emails and written materials.

**Travel Expenses:** For yearly meetings, NCSTAC will pay travel expenses for grantees.

## **GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS**

Applications should be **no more than eight pages** (typed, single-spaced, 12-point font, 1 inch margins) and should adhere to the following outline:

### **Organizational Establishment Grants: Phase I**

- I. **Cover Sheet (not included in page count):**
  - A. Proposed organization name
  - B. Contact person and title
  - C. Mailing address and phone, fax, and email contact
  - D. Name and address of fiscal agent
  - E. Summary (no longer than 10 lines) describing the proposed goals and activities of the proposed project.
  
- II. **Organizational Information (up to 3 pages)**

- A. Description of group seeking to establish a consumer organization.
- B. Explanation of need for the creation of a consumer organization in the given geographic area
- C. Description of steering committee or advisory committee that will guide the establishment of the new organization. This should include name and brief description of individuals on steering/advisory committee, and assurance that the eventual board will consist of more than 50% consumers.
- D. Brief description of the capacity of the fiscal agent

**III. Approach/Plan for Implementing Activities (up to 4 pages)**

- A. Proposed goals, work and activities for each of the three years. Activities must address issues of infrastructure (i.e. staffing, board development, office space etc.) and long-term funding as well as organizational programming.
- B. Implementation plan and timeline (activities and completion dates) – can be a chart
- C. Description of the capacity and experience of the individuals who will be responsible for implementing proposed work.
- D. Description of the impact the consumer organization will make on the community and its mental health systems.

**IV. Budget (1 page)**

- A. Proposed Budget showing expense and revenue line items per year
- B. Description of how grant money will be used
- C. Description of any other funds that may be used with grant funds for the purposes of the grant.

**V. Independent Audit Requirement**

Did your organization incur expenses that in total exceeded \$300,000 through federal grants, cooperative agreements or sub-awards during the last fiscal year?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES                      \_\_\_\_\_ NO

**VI. Letters of Recommendation (not included in page limit)**

A letter from the fiscal agent is required.

**Submit applications to:**

**Sara Thompson**

**Director, National Consumer Supporter Technical Assistance Center**

**National Mental Health Association**

**2001 N. Beauregard Street**

**Alexandria, VA 22311**

**Email: [sthompson@nmha.org](mailto:sthompson@nmha.org)**

**Phone: 703-838-7505 Fax: 703-684-5968**

**All applications must be received by Friday, February 4, 2005.**

**Award announcement will be made by February 25, 2005**

