



# Autism Speaks Local Impact Grants

## Applicant Guidebook 2023

Since 2023, the Autism Speaks Local Impact Grants program has awarded over \$4 million to more than 500 organizations across the country and served tens of thousands of people with autism, their caregivers and families, teachers, therapists, and neurotypical peers.

**The Autism Speaks Local Impact Grant Program** accepts applications from non-profit, 501(c)3 organizations for grant awards up to \$5,000.

### **The focus of the Autism Speaks Local Impact Grants is threefold:**

- to promote local services that enhance the lives of those affected by autism spectrum disorders
- to expand the capacity to effectively serve the ASD community
- to increase the field of national service providers

Autism Speaks places a significant emphasis on the product or deliverable of each proposal to benefit the autism community beyond those participating in the program.

Deliverables include videos, manuals and curricula that may be shared across Autism Speaks media assets, including its website and social media channel, for the greater good of the autism community. In addition, Autism Speaks seeks proposals that provide opportunities for autistic individuals with varying levels of need. Careful consideration will also be given to applications that specifically address the needs of underserved communities, which can include rural towns, non-English speaking populations, and other vulnerable groups.

Beginning in September, we accept applications for programs to be funded in December. All information on the process and the current application cycle timeline can be found at [autismspeaks.org/autism-grants-service-providers](https://autismspeaks.org/autism-grants-service-providers).



## Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Can individuals apply for an Autism Speaks Local Impact Grant?**

**Answer:** No, only nonprofit organizations with a 501(c)(3) exempt status that have been in existence for at least one year may apply.

2. **Can organizations outside the United States apply?**

**Answer:** No, only organizations in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands may apply.

3. **What type of organization can apply?**

**Answer:** 501(c)(3) exempt organizations with at least three staff members (either paid or volunteer) may apply. We do not offer startup funding for new organizations.

4. **What requirements must an organization have to apply?**

**Answer:** The non-profit organization must have a federal tax ID number, at least three volunteer or paid staff members and an established infrastructure, which includes a physical location and a website.

5. **Can school districts apply?**

**Answer:** Yes, but we will not consider programs that should be legally funded by the school district under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). An example of an IDEA-funded program is the provision of assistive technology to students with autism.

6. **Can an organization that was funded previously through an Autism Speaks grant apply again this year?**

**Answer:** Yes, if it is for a different program than the one that was funded previously.

7. **Can funding go towards programs for individuals with other disabilities?**

**Answer:** Yes. Note: All funding must go only towards programs serving the majority individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

8. **What is the maximum amount an organization may request?**

**Answer:** \$5,000.

9. **How long is the grant period? Is it multi-year?**

**Answer:** The grant period is nine months, beginning the day the check is received.



10. **What type of funding do you provide?**

**Answer:** *We provide funding to support programs at existing nonprofit organizations in the following categories:*

**a. Education and Training**

- i. Building the field and scope of educators and other professionals who support individuals with autism, by providing continuing education and training*
- ii. Providing funding for consultation and hands on training to improve educational programs for individuals with autism*
- iii. Providing a specific service such as ABA, legal service, etc. to people with autism and the community*

**b. Recreation/Community Activities**

- i. Social skills training to provide peer modeling and inclusion with age-matched, typically developing peers; social learning; social relatedness; social awareness; and social communication. We fund both integrated and non-integrated programming.*
- ii. Recreation and athletic programs*
- iii. Equine programs*
- iv. Museums, arts, dance, and music programs*

**c. Young Adult/Adult Services**

- i. Pre-vocational and vocational training*
- ii. Transition planning*
- iii. Residential services*
- iv. Recreation programs specifically for adults*
- v. Life/Community integration skills*
- vi. Health/Safety*

**d. Sensory Equipment/Supportive Technology**

- i. iPads*
- ii. Smartboards*
- iii. Sensory equipment (occupational therapy equipment, toys, etc.)*
- iv. Equine therapy equipment*

**e. Summer Camp Scholarships**

- i. To offer tuition assistance for financially disadvantaged campers with autism ONLY for the summer of 2024*



11. **What are some things that you do not fund?**

**Answer:** We DO NOT fund the following:

- a. Endowment, debt reduction or fundraising activities
- b. Administrative salaries, i.e. those not directly working in the program for which you are requesting funding
- c. Food, apparel or equipment that can be donated in kind
- d. Renting or financing of buildings
- e. Startup funding for new organizations

12. **Do you fund staff salaries?**

**Answer:** Yes, for new or additional staff (or staff hours) who work directly with individuals with autism in a new or expanded program.

13. **Do you accept applications via e-mail or mail?**

**Answer:** No, we only accept applications through our [online form](#).

14. **When and how will organizations be notified of the result of their application?**

**Answer:** All applicants will be notified VIA EMAIL, prior to an announcement on Autism Speaks' social media platforms or on [autismspeaks.org](http://autismspeaks.org).

15. **What kind of reporting is required for awarded proposals?**

**Answer:** An online questionnaire will be emailed to the grantee's main point of contact and must be completed online by December 2024.

16. **How are applications reviewed?**

**Answer:** All applications are first reviewed internally to make sure guidelines are followed. Eligible ones are next passed onto location-based volunteer review committees who score each proposal and offer feedback to arrive at a final ranking. The top proposals in each location are recommended to Autism Speaks leadership for final approval.

18. **Will there be an opportunity to learn more about the process and ask questions of Autism Speaks staff?**

**Answer:** Yes! We will offer a free webinar to all interested applicants in mid-September. Information will be posted on the grants website referenced above. Local and national Autism Speaks staff are available via email throughout the process.