

GREAT NEWS FROM OPWDD: THE RFP IS OUT!

Last week we wrote about our unique accomplishment in advancing the human right of legal capacity in New York—the state’s commitment to providing the supports we’ve developed over these past 9 years to enable New Yorkers with I/DD to exercise the right to make their own decisions and have them legally recognized. We knew we were on the way when OPWDD awarded us a \$4 million implementation grant in 2022, and we have spent these last 3 years designing and testing a statewide service delivery system for SDMNY facilitation services. We piloted and refined the use of mentors who were fully part of our team. We collaborated in the development of a data collection system that would be able to mesh with OPWDD and the Medicare billing system. We rethought and revised facilitator training to accommodate a potentially different, larger, and geographically diverse pool. We built a model with systems and materials that is ready to be turned over to an entity able to scale it up effectively to meet the need of everyone who wants facilitation services in New York.

The state believes we have done this successfully and has now issued an RFP (Request for Proposals) for an entity/contractor to take over our work beginning September 1. The RFP begins:

OPWDD is seeking a Contractor to develop and maintain a process to provide SDM Facilitation services to allow people with developmental disabilities the opportunity to make full use of SDM.

Bidders must have a minimum of 5 years’ experience in providing services to people with developmental disabilities or other people enrolled in Medicaid, at least 3 years of experience with people with I/DD, and the capacity and staffing to provide high-quality facilitation across the state to its diverse population. The proposal process is complex and rigorous, with a closing date of June 10. ([Click here for all the details.](#))

We cannot express how thrilled we are. This was our goal—and our dream—and we are so grateful to all the institutions and organizations that have helped make it possible, especially OPWDD, DDPC (now the NYS Council on Disabilities) and our first partners, The New York Alliance for Inclusion and Innovation and Disability Rights New York. We could not have moved to the historic commitment for state funding without the Legislature passing, and Governor Hochul signing, our groundbreaking SDMA legislation. We are grateful to our colleagues around the world who have thought and written about, piloted, and advocated for the human right of legal capacity, and from whom we have learned so much. Most of all, we are grateful to the Decision-Makers and their families with whom we have worked for believing in our dream and trusting us to make it a reality for them, and now for so many more.

THANKS TO OPWDD FOR TAKING THIS FINAL STEP, AND CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WHOLE SDMNY TEAM!

