1. Are you looking for support for advocates, ie. People with dd and families, across the state? And would that support be provided remotely?

We are focusing on MODDC supported activities. We have several large activities like Partners in Policymaking and the annual Disability Rights Legislative Day (DRLD), and other projects we fund that we would want supported. As people struggle with the use of technology in Council supported activities, then we would want to support them. That would be across the state and that support would most likely be provided remotely. That is an assumption but potential grantees may have other ideas. We are open to creative proposals that would consider other ideas.

2. If you could state in one sentence what you hope would be different after this work is completed, what would it be?

People with disabilities and stakeholders would be more comfortable and at ease with using technology in their advocacy; specifically, in MODDC supported activities.

For example, if we have someone participating in one of our Council supported activities, like a training or our Partners in Policymaking class. They would learn how to use technology through this project and complete the class through the support provided by this project. As a result of what they learn, then they might go on to testify remotely in the state legislature on a bill that is important to them or they might continue their advocacy work to serve on a board or commission; doing that work remotely. While this project focuses on providing support so people can learn technology and use it in Council supported activities; this project could really be a foundation for providing people the skills they need so people with disabilities and their family members can participate in advocacy through technology.

3. How many people do you anticipate will be supported for IT with this grant?

The number of people participating would be uncertain. The original idea is that every time the Council promotes an activity, it would be posted that if people need assistance with technology they would be provided contact information to obtain that assistance. For example, we strived to provide technology assistance with our Partners in Policymaking class this year; which would be a high demand activity for this particular project. This year we had approximately 8 people who needed support. They did not need any equipment or internet access. They needed assistance in learning how to use Zoom and a learning management system called Canvas. They needed assistance in how to set up their Canvas profile, how to submit a homework assignment, etc. A couple of participants needed some real foundational support like how to set up an email account and an easy way to remember their password; so they could eventually participate using Zoom and Canvas. Another Council activity provided as an example was Disability Rights Legislative Day (DRLD).

4. The lack of internet access is mentioned. Are you looking for proposals that address that in some way or are you acknowledging it as an issue?
It is both. We are acknowledging it as an issue. In addition, on page 8 of the NoFA document, there is a recommendation in the proposal to offer Zoom kits to include a hot spot and a tablet being sent to participants who need internet or a device. That is an idea to address this issue.

Amid COVID-19, a different project we currently fund addressed this issue; offering Zoom trainings via ‘host sites’. If there was lack of internet in a specific area, small groups of people in that region could come together, at one location to access the internet and technology in that room, so they could participate. This way a couple of people could come together at one host site, safely and socially distanced, to participate in a training online; using one Zoom link. So that is another creative idea, other than the Zoom kit. We are very open to creative proposals to support people to participate in our activities.

5. You have mentioned Canvas and Zoom. Are there other types of technology that you typically use in engaging participants?

The primary platform MODDC uses is Zoom. We do have one Council project that will provide an online training on education advocacy that will be available later this year. That project is using a learning management system called Thinkific. If someone wanted to contribute on a state department committee that MODDC supports, like the Transportation Task Force, it would be offered through WebEx.

6. Can you explain if there is a match requirement?

Yes. There is a match requirement. It is noted in the NoFA document on page 9. There is a poverty county and non-poverty county match. The grant match is up to the grantee as to how it is met. The grant match may consist of any resources such as office supplies, staff hours, mileage, volunteer hours, etc. Please refer to grant match requirements in the NoFA document on page 9.

7. You are wanting us to provide support to advocates who are all around the state who are participating in MODDC activities, but also to participate in other activities or just primarily through this? (In the NoFA) there is reference about which counties might be served in the grant. So do we select the counties we were wanting to serve and then there is an idea that outside of those counties we would also do outreach?

The stronger application would address statewide support. If there is a reason you want to focus on particular counties, I would suggest being specific in your application as to why you plan to approach the work in that way. We want to make certain that everyone in the state can participate through the use of technology. The stronger application would be to provide the project statewide.

It is assumed that a lot of the support in this project might be provided up front and would be proactive. For example, before a MODDC activity occurred, like the Partners in Policymaking class, a technology orientation might be provided where participants could learn and practice skills (ie. How to log on to zoom, learn how to use the Zoom features, learn how to log onto and navigate Canvas, etc.) or provide an online tutorial. This kind of proactive support would most likely help a majority of participants with a few others maybe needing additional support. Please keep in mind this is just an example and we would like to hear how grantees would approach the work in creative ways.

8. If we have any further questions is it possible to reach out and how do you want us to do that?

If it is a NoFA process question, you are more than welcome to email Katheryne Staeger-Wilson at kstaeger-wilson@moddcouncil.org. If your question is beyond the NoFA process I will not be able to answer. You are welcome to email me and ask if your question is something I feel comfortable answering.