



Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental & Related Disabilities

The Autism Consortium of Texas (ACT) LEND seeks to train graduate students, practicing professionals, family members, and self-advocates in culturally-informed diagnosis, support, and advocacy for children with autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities throughout the Capital Region and Central Texas.

Apply Today

- 9-month program
- Includes coursework, seminars, research and presentation opportunities
- Mentorship
- Hands-on experiences in clinical or community-based settings
- Stipends available

LEND Core Disciplines

Applied Behavioral Analysis
Audiology
Family Leadership
Medicine
Nursing
Psychology
Self-advocacy
Social Work
Special Education
Speech-Language Pathology

Applicants should be graduate students enrolled in one of the core disciplines (or related disciplines) at The University of Texas at Austin, Baylor University, or Texas State during the 2024-2025 school year or be a self-advocate or family member of a person with autism or a related developmental disability.

**For more information, please visit:
<https://disabilitystudies.utexas.edu/act-lend>**

ACT LEND LTT Self-Advocate Application Due March 25th, 2024

Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) programs train and teach graduate students, family members of people with disabilities, and self-advocates on issues that affect people with disabilities. These issues include health, education, employment, and social service systems. The purpose of the LEND training program is to improve the health of infants, children, and adolescents with autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities (ASD/DD). The program accomplishes this by preparing trainees from different professional disciplines (for example, special education, social work, self-advocacy) to be leaders in their fields. LEND also teaches trainees how other professions work with ASD/DD.

Applications are now being accepted for the 2024-2025 ACT LEND Program as a Long-Term Trainee at The University of Texas at Austin. This application includes information about the program and instructions for how to apply. We will include at least one self-advocate in each trainee group. By self-advocate, we mean someone who is affected by autism or a developmental disability; and who wants to learn how to advocate for themselves and others. Each trainee will complete 300 hours of training and will receive a stipend totaling \$9,000. The 300 hours can be completed over 1 or 2 years. Individuals from diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply. Please visit our website if you would like more information: <https://disabilitystudies.utexas.edu/act-lend>

Applicants may be requested to attend a brief online interview before acceptance decisions are made. Successful applicants to the ACT LEND program will be notified by June 3, 2024.

ACT LEND Program Requirements

The Autism Consortium of Texas (ACT) LEND is based at the Steve Hicks School of Social Work at The University of Texas at Austin, in partnership with Baylor University. The ACT LEND Program provides training to graduate students, practicing professionals, family members and self-advocates. They learn about diagnosis, support, and advocacy for children with ASD/DD in the Capital Region and Central Texas.

Long-Term Trainees in this 9-month program must complete at least 300 hours of training and hands-on experiences. Self-advocates and family members can complete these hours over 1 or 2 years. All classes and seminars will be held on-site at the Steve Hicks School of Social Work at the University of Texas, at the J.J. Pickle Research Campus in Austin, at Field sites (days/times TBA), and/or virtually via video conferencing. In-person attendance (when offered) is required unless other arrangements are made. However, Baylor students may attend some events virtually but will also be required to attend some events in person.

300 Activity Hours Include:



coursework



seminars



research and
presentation
opportunities



mentorship



hands-on
experiences
in clinic or
community-
based settings



Curriculum and Training Requirements for Long term trainees:

- ❖ Mandatory Orientation during mid-August 2024 (TBA)
- ❖ Fall Course (Tuesdays 5:30-8:30 p.m.)
- ❖ Bi-weekly clinical sessions (alternate Fridays 2-5 p.m.)
- ❖ Spring weekly seminars (days/times TBA)
- ❖ A 100-hour clinical or community practicum
- ❖ Monthly meetings with your discipline training coordinator (including development of an individualized learning plan)
- ❖ Leadership conferences and workshops (days/times TBA)
- ❖ Meeting with a family mentor (minimum of 4 times/year)
- ❖ Engagement in a research or evaluation project
- ❖ Poster presentation of ACT LEND project on practicum or research activities at the end-of-year Open House held in May 2025

The following documents will be required for the online application:

Short Essay: Please attach a 1-2 page essay describing your experiences with ASD/DD. Please include:

- Any leadership, community, or advocacy experiences related to ASD/DD that you have had
- Your plans for applying your LEND training to support others including self-advocates, family members, and practicing professionals who support people with ASD/DD

Reference: Please attach one letter of reference from someone not related to you. This person should tell us why you would be a good choice for the ACT LEND Program. Letters should include contact information, how long they have known you, and any other information that may help in the selection process.

Possible references could include:



A work supervisor



A religious leader at your place of worship



A teacher or other staff person who understands your disability



Someone else in the community who knows about your interest in ASD/DD leadership

Applications are due by March 25th, 2024 at 11:59 p.m.

Applicants may be requested to attend a brief online interview before acceptance decisions are made. Successful applicants to the ACT LEND program will be notified by June 3, 2024.

To complete the online application, please go to:

<http://tinyurl.com/ACTLEND-SAapp-2024>

If you require assistance or have further questions, please contact:

***Program Director Dr. Sandy Magaña or
Administrative Program Coordinator Leslie Jackson,
MSW at ACTLEND@utexas.edu***