

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202-2575

**FY 2011 APPLICATION PACKAGE FOR NEW GRANTS
UNDER
THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY AND
REHABILITATION RESEARCH**

SPINAL CORD INJURY MODEL SYSTEMS

CFDA NUMBER: 84.133N-1



FORM APPROVED
OMB No. 1820-0027, EXP. DATE 03/31/2013
SF FORM 424, 1/31/2011

DATED MATERIAL - OPEN IMMEDIATELY
CLOSING DATE: August 8, 2011

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**SECTION
A**

DEAR APPLICANT LETTER

Dear Applicant:

The Secretary invites applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2011 for the Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems (CFDA 84.133N), authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, to fund demonstration projects that (a) provide comprehensive rehabilitation services to individuals with spinal cord injuries and (b) conduct spinal cord research, including clinical research and analysis of standardized data in collaboration with other related projects.

Each SCIMS center funded under this program must have a multidisciplinary system for providing rehabilitation services specifically designed to meet the special needs of individuals with SCI. Centers demonstrate and evaluate existing, new, and improved methods and equipment essential to the care, management, and rehabilitation of individuals with SCI. SCIMS centers maintain close working relationships with other governmental and voluntary institutions and organizations to unify and coordinate scientific efforts, encourage joint planning, and promote the interchange of data and reports among SCI researchers.

SCIMS Centers will be funded at varying amounts up to the maximum award based on the numbers of subjects eligible for follow-up in the existing database. Existing centers with significantly larger numbers of subjects will receive higher funding within the specified range, as determined by NIDRR after the applicant is selected for funding. Funding will be determined individually for each successful applicant, up to the maximum allowed, based upon the documented workload associated with the follow-up data collection, the other costs of the grant, and the overall budgetary limits of the program.

Successful applicants under the SCIMS Centers competition will be invited by letter to apply for funding as a lead center under the SCIMS Multi-Site Research Projects priority. Under this priority, we anticipate funding two collaborative, multi-site research projects in SCI research, with an estimated available funding level of *\$1.8 million*.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

This application kit contains information and the required forms for potential applicants to apply and be considered for a FY 2011 grant award under these competitions, including the published Federal Register notice dated June 9, 2011.

Potential applicants are advised to read the materials in this application package carefully. Please pay particular attention to the information on the types of organizations that are eligible to apply for these grants, how to prepare an application, the dollar amount for any year, the protection of human subjects, and the selection criteria. Applications must be responsive to the absolute priority in Section C and the statutory, regulatory, and general requirements for the SCIMS program in Section E. The application narrative should be written in the order of the selection criteria in Section F. The selection criteria will be used by the reviewers to evaluate each application.

The closing date (application deadline) is August 8, 2011.

The start date for new awards for the (FY) 2011 programs will be no later than October 1, 2011.

Include a one page abstract. The abstract is a critical component of the proposal, and it should describe the purpose, target population to be served during the project period, planned goals and objectives, proposed methodological approach, and anticipated project outcomes.

Award Amounts and Indirect Cost Rate

We will reject any application that proposes a budget exceeding the amount of \$489,000 for a single budget period of 12 months. The indirect cost rate is the applicant's federally negotiated rate.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

You **must** submit your application electronically using the Grants.gov Apply Site. See Section B, Notice Inviting Applications and Section J, Application Transmittal Instructions.

NOTE: You will be uploading sections of your application by heading. There is a heading for: (1) Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424); (2) Table of Contents; (3) Abstract; (4) ED Budget Information Non-Construction Programs (ED-524); (5) Budget Narrative; (6) Project Narrative; (7) General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Requirements – Section 427; (8) GG Lobbying Form (90-0013); (9) Faith Based Survey on EEO; (10) ED Supplemental Form for SF 424; (11) SF LLL Disclosure of Lobbying; and (12) Vitae/Bibliography/Letters of Support. There is a file size limitation to each section, and you may upload only one document under each heading. Therefore, in order to make sure that all of your materials are uploaded successfully, you will need to combine multiple original documents for a heading (e.g., letters, resumes) into a single document before uploading.

Electronic copies must be fully uploaded on the Grants.gov site by 4:30:00 pm, Washington DC time on the closing date, August 8, 2011. It may take up to several hours to complete this process. Please allow several hours or a full day to submit your application. If there is a submission error, you will need time to correct the error and resubmit. **We encourage you to read Section J – Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants**

PROGRAM REGULATIONS

These grants are subject to the requirements of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), in 34 CFR Parts 74, 75, 77, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 86, and 97, which set forth general rules affecting the submittal, review, grant award, and post-award administration for Department of Education grant programs.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Pre-Application Meeting: A pre-application meeting will be held between 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. on June 30, 2011 by teleconference. Interested parties are invited to participate in the pre-application meeting to discuss the funding priority and to receive information and technical assistance. You must contact Lynn Medley at Lynn.Medley@ed.gov by June 29, 2011 in order to participate in this meeting. NIDRR staff also will be available to provide information and technical assistance via individual phone consultations from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on June 30, 2011. Requests for individual consultations during this one hour window must be made in advance to Lynn Medley.

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If you have any questions about the information in this application package, please contact Lynn Medley at Lynn.Medley@ed.gov or by telephone at (202) 245-7338 or Marlene Spencer at Marlene.Spencer@ed.gov or by telephone at (202) 245-7532. Individuals who use a telecommunications device (TDD) may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., EST, Monday through Friday.

If you experience problems submitting your application through Grants.gov; please contact the Grants.gov Support Desk, toll free, at 1-800-518-4726.

Thank you for your interest in these programs.

Sincerely,

Sue Swenson,
Acting Director,
National Institute on Disability and
Rehabilitation Research

**SECTION
B**

**FEDERAL REGISTER NOTICE INVITING
APPLICATIONS FOR NEW AWARDS**

4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Spinal Cord Injury Model
Systems (SCIMS) Centers and SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative
Research Projects

AGENCY: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative
Services, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

Overview Information:

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation
Research (NIDRR)--Disability and Rehabilitation Research
Projects and Centers Program--Disability and Rehabilitation
Research Projects (DRRPs) and Special Projects and
Demonstrations for Spinal Cord Injury Program--Spinal Cord
Injury Model Systems (SCIMS) Centers and SCIMS Multi-Site
Collaborative Research Projects

Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year
(FY) 2011.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Numbers:

84.133N-1 and 84.133A-15.

Note: This notice invites applications for the first of
two related competitions and announces key information for
both competitions. For key dates and funding information

regarding each competition, see the chart in the Award Information section of this notice (chart).

Dates:

Applications Available: See chart.

Date of Pre-Application Meeting: June 30, 2011.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: See chart.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Programs: The competitions announced in this notice are conducted under two separate programs: the Special Projects and Demonstrations for Spinal Cord Injury Program (the SCIMS Centers program--84.133N-1 competition) and the Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRPs) program (the SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects--84.133A-15 competition).

Special Projects and Demonstrations for Spinal Cord Injuries Program

The SCIMS centers program is funded through the Special Projects and Demonstrations for Spinal Cord Injuries Program. This program provides assistance for projects that provide comprehensive rehabilitation services to individuals with spinal cord injuries and conducts spinal cord research, as specified in 34 CFR 359.10 and 359.11.

DRRP Program

The SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects are funded under the DRRP program. DRRPs are designed to improve the effectiveness of services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Rehabilitation Act) by developing methods, procedures, and rehabilitation technologies that advance a wide range of independent living and employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities, especially individuals with the most severe disabilities. DRRPs carry out one or more of the following types of activities, as specified and defined in 34 CFR 350.13 through 350.19: research, training, demonstration, development, dissemination, utilization, and technical assistance. An applicant for assistance under this program must demonstrate in its application how it will address, in whole or in part, the needs of individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds (34 CFR 350.40(a)). The approaches an applicant may take to meet this requirement are found in 34 CFR 350.40(b). Additional information on the DRRP program can be found at: www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/res-program.html#DRRP. Priorities: This notice includes three priorities, which correspond to the two competitions announced in this notice as follows:

Competition	Priority or Priorities
CFDA No. 84.133N-1	Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems (SCIMS) Centers
CFDA No. 84.133A-15	<u>Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems (SCIMS) Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects</u> <u>General Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRP) Requirements</u> priority

The SCIMS Centers and SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects priorities are from the notice of final priorities and selection criterion published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register. The General DRRP Requirements priority is from the notice of final priorities published in the Federal Register on April 28, 2006 (71 FR 25472).

Absolute Priority: For FY 2011 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applicants, these priorities are absolute priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), for each competition, we consider only applications that meet the applicable priority or priorities for that competition.

These priorities are:

1. Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems (SCIMS) Centers.

2. Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems (SCIMS) Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects.

3. General Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRP) Requirements priority.

Note: The full text of these priorities are included in the pertinent notices of final priority or priorities published in the Federal Register and in the application package for this program.

Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 760 and 764(a) and 764(b) (4).

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 86, and 97. (b) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR parts 350 and 359. (c) The notice of final priorities published in the Federal Register on April 28, 2006 (71 FR 25472). (d) The notice of final priorities and selection criterion for the SCIMS program and the DRRP program, published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to institutions of higher education only.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: See chart.

Estimated Range of Awards: See chart.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: See chart.

Maximum Award: See chart.

Estimated Number of Awards: See chart.

Project Period: See chart.

CFDA number and name	Applications available	Deadline for transmittal of application	Estimated Available Funds	Estimated range of awards	Estimated average size of awards	Maximum award (budget period of 12 months) ^{1, 2,}	Estimated number of awards	Project period
SCIMS Centers (84.133N-1)	June 6, 2011	August 8, 2011	\$6,500,000	\$439,000-\$489,000 ³	\$464,000	\$489,000 ⁴	14	Up to 60 months.
SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects	Letters inviting applications will be mailed to	The Department will establish the	\$1,800,000	\$850,00-900,000	\$900,000	\$900,000	2	Up to 60 months.

¹ We will reject any application that proposes a budget exceeding the Maximum Amount. The Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services may change the maximum amount through a notice published the Federal Register.

² The maximum amount includes direct and indirect costs.

³ SCIMS Centers will be funded at varying amounts up to the maximum award based on the numbers of SCIMS database participants from whom Centers must collect follow-up data. Centers that have previously been SCIMS grantees with significantly larger numbers of database participants will receive higher funding within the specified range, as determined by NIDRR after the applicant is selected for funding. Applicants should include in their budgets specific estimates of their costs for follow-up data collection. Funding will be determined individually for each successful applicant, up to the maximum allowed, based upon the documented workload associated with the follow-up data collection, the other costs of the grant, and the overall budgetary limits of the program.

⁴ SCIMS Centers must spend at least 15 percent of their annual budget on participating in at least one module project. Module projects are described in the notice of final priorities and selection criterion, published elsewhere in the Federal Register.

(84.133A-15)	each successful applicant of the SCIMS competition . Applications will be available online at the time of the mailing.	deadline date for the competition in the letter it provides to each eligible applicant under this notice.						
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Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants:

(a) For the SCIMS Centers Competition (84.133N-1): States; public or private agencies, including for-profit agencies; public or private organizations, including for-profit organizations; institutions of higher education; and Indian tribes and tribal organizations.

(b) For the SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects Competition (84.133A-15): Grantees under the FY 2011 SCIMS Centers competition. Successful grantees under the SCIMS competition will be invited by letter to apply for funding as a lead center under the SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects Competition.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: The SCIMS Centers Competition announced in this notice does not involve cost sharing or matching. The SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects Competition announced in this notice does require cost sharing (4 CFR 350.62(a)), which will be negotiated at the time of the grant award.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package: You can obtain an application package via the Internet or from the Education Publications Center (ED Pubs). To obtain a copy

via the Internet, use the following address:
www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/grantapps/index.html. To
obtain a copy from ED Pubs, write, fax, or call the
following: ED Pubs, U.S. Department of Education, P.O. Box
22207, Alexandria, VA 22304. Telephone, toll free: 1-877-
433-7827. FAX: (703) 605-6794. If you use a
telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), call, toll
free: 1-877-576-7734.

You can contact ED Pubs at its Web site, also:
www.EDPubs.gov or at its e-mail address:
edpubs@inet.ed.gov.

If you request an application from ED Pubs, be sure to
identify this competition as follows: CFDA numbers
84.133N-1 and 84.133A-15.

Individuals with disabilities can obtain a copy of the
application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille,
large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) by contacting
the person or team listed under Accessible Format in
section VIII of this notice.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission:
Requirements concerning the content of an application,
together with the forms you must submit, are in the
application package for this competition.

Page Limit: The application narrative (Part III of the application) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. For both competitions announced in this notice, we recommend that you limit Part III to the equivalent of no more than 100 pages, using the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.

- Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.

- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).

- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

The recommended page limit does not apply to Part I, the cover sheet; Part II, the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; Part IV, the assurances and certifications; or the one-page abstract, the resumes, the bibliography, or the letters of support. However, the page

limit does apply to all of the application narrative section (Part III).

The application package for each of the competitions announced in this notice will provide instructions for completing all components to be included in the application. Each application must include a cover sheet (Standard Form 424); budget requirements (ED Form 524) and narrative budget justification; other required forms; an abstract, Human Subjects narrative, Part III project narrative; resumes of staff; and other related materials, if applicable.

3. Submission Dates and Times:

Applications Available: See chart.

Date of Pre-Application Meeting: Interested parties are invited to participate in a pre-application meeting to discuss the funding priorities and to receive information and technical assistance through individual consultation. The pre-application meeting will be held on June 30, 2011. Interested parties may participate in this meeting by conference call between 10 a.m. and 12 noon. After the meeting, NIDRR staff also will be available from 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. on that same day to provide information and technical assistance through individual consultation.

For further information or to make arrangements to attend by conference call, or for an individual consultation, contact Lynn Medley, U.S. Department of Education, Potomac Center Plaza, room 5040, 550 12th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20202. Telephone (202) 245-7338 or by e-mail: Lynn.Medley@ed.gov

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: See chart.

Applications for grants under each of the competitions announced in this notice must be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site (Grants.gov). For information (including dates and times) about how to submit your application electronically, or in paper format by mail or hand delivery if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, please refer to section IV. 7. Other Submission Requirements of this notice.

We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements.

Individuals with disabilities who need an accommodation or auxiliary aid in connection with the application process should contact the person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice. If the Department provides an accommodation or auxiliary aid to an individual with a disability in connection with the application process, the individual's

application remains subject to all other requirements and limitations in this notice.

4. Intergovernmental Review: These programs are not subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79.

5. Funding Restrictions: We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section in this notice.

6. Data Universal Numbering System Number, Taxpayer Identification Number, and Central Contractor Registry: To do business with the Department of Education, you must--

a. Have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN);

b. Register both your DUNS number and TIN with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR), the Government's primary registrant database;

c. Provide your DUNS number and TIN on your application; and

d. Maintain an active CCR registration with current information while your application is under review by the Department and, if you are awarded a grant, during the project period.

You can obtain a DUNS number from Dun and Bradstreet. A DUNS number can be created within one business day.

If you are a corporate entity, agency, institution, or organization, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service. If you are an individual, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service or the Social Security Administration. If you need a new TIN, please allow 2-5 weeks for your TIN to become active.

The CCR registration process may take five or more business days to complete. If you are currently registered with the CCR, you may not need to make any changes. However, please make certain that the TIN associated with your DUNS number is correct. Also note that you will need to update your CCR registration on an annual basis. This may take three or more business days to complete.

In addition, if you are submitting your application via Grants.gov, you must (1) be designated by your organization as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and (2) register yourself with Grants.gov as an AOR. Details on these steps are outlined in the Grants.gov 3-Step Registration Guide (see www.grants.gov/section910/Grants.govRegistrationBrochure.pdf).

7. Other Submission Requirements. Applications for grants under these competitions must be submitted electronically unless you qualify for an exception to this

requirement in accordance with the instructions in this section.

a. Electronic Submission of Applications.

Applications for grants under the Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems (SCIMS) Centers and SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects, CFDA number 84.133N-1 and 84.133A-15, must be submitted electronically using the Governmentwide Grants.gov Apply site at www.Grants.gov. Through this site, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit your application. You may not e-mail an electronic copy of a grant application to us.

We will reject your application if you submit it in paper format unless, as described elsewhere in this section, you qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement and submit, no later than two weeks before the application deadline date, a written statement to the Department that you qualify for one of these exceptions. Further information regarding calculation of the date that is two weeks before the application deadline date is provided later in this section under Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement.

You may access the electronic grant application for Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems (SCIMS) Centers and SCIMS

Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects at www.Grants.gov. You must search for the downloadable application package for these competitions by the CFDA number. Do not include the CFDA number's alpha suffix in your search (e.g., search for 84.133, not 84.133N).

Please note the following:

- When you enter the Grants.gov site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site, as well as the hours of operation.

- Applications received by Grants.gov are date and time stamped. Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted and must be date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system no later than 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. Except as otherwise noted in this section, we will not accept your application if it is received--that is, date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system--after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements. When we retrieve your application from Grants.gov, we will notify you if we are rejecting your application because it was date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.

- The amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors, including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

- You should review and follow the Education Submission Procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov that are included in the application package for this competition to ensure that you submit your application in a timely manner to the Grants.gov system. You can also find the Education Submission Procedures pertaining to Grants.gov under News and Events on the Department's G5 system home page at <http://www.G5.gov>.

- You will not receive additional point value because you submit your application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, as described elsewhere in this section, and submit your application in paper format.

- You must submit all documents electronically, including all information you typically provide on the following forms: the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424), the Department of Education Supplemental

Information for SF 424, Budget Information–Non–Construction Programs (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications.

- You must upload any narrative sections and all other attachments to your application as files in a .PDF (Portable Document) format only. If you upload a file type other than a .PDF or submit a password-protected file, we will not review that material.

- Your electronic application must comply with any page-limit requirements described in this notice.

- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive from Grants.gov an automatic notification of receipt that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. (This notification indicates receipt by Grants.gov only, not receipt by the Department.) The Department then will retrieve your application from Grants.gov and send a second notification to you by e-mail. This second notification indicates that the Department has received your application and has assigned your application a PR/Award number (an ED-specified identifying number unique to your application).

- We may request that you provide us original signatures on forms at a later date.

Application Deadline Date Extension in Case of Technical Issues with the Grants.gov System: If you are experiencing

problems submitting your application through Grants.gov, please contact the Grants.gov Support Desk, toll free, at 1-800-518-4726. You must obtain a Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number and must keep a record of it.

If you are prevented from electronically submitting your application on the application deadline date because of technical problems with the Grants.gov system, we will grant you an extension until 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, the following business day to enable you to transmit your application electronically or by hand delivery. You also may mail your application by following the mailing instructions described elsewhere in this notice.

If you submit an application after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date, please contact the person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice and provide an explanation of the technical problem you experienced with Grants.gov, along with the Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number. We will accept your application if we can confirm that a technical problem occurred with the Grants.gov system and that that problem affected your ability to submit your application by 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. The

Department will contact you after a determination is made on whether your application will be accepted.

Note: The extensions to which we refer in this section apply only to the unavailability of, or technical problems with, the Grants.gov system. We will not grant you an extension if you failed to fully register to submit your application to Grants.gov before the application deadline date and time or if the technical problem you experienced is unrelated to the Grants.gov system.

Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement: You qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, and may submit your application in paper format, if you are unable to submit an application through the Grants.gov system because--

- You do not have access to the Internet; or
- You do not have the capacity to upload large

documents to the Grants.gov system;

and

- No later than two weeks before the application deadline date (14 calendar days or, if the fourteenth calendar day before the application deadline date falls on a Federal holiday, the next business day following the Federal holiday), you mail or fax a written statement to the Department, explaining which of the two grounds for an

exception prevent you from using the Internet to submit your application.

If you mail your written statement to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. If you fax your written statement to the Department, we must receive the faxed statement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.

Address and mail or fax your statement to: Lynn Medley, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 5140, PCP, Washington, DC 20202-2700. FAX: (202) 245-7323.

Your paper application must be submitted in accordance with the mail or hand delivery instructions described in this notice.

b. Submission of Paper Applications by Mail.

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you may mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier) your application to the Department. You must mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education

Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.133N-1 or 84.133A-15)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

You must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.
- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.
- (4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

If you mail your application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

- (1) A private metered postmark.
- (2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

If your application is postmarked after the application deadline date, we will not consider your application.

Note: The U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office.

c. Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery.

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you (or a courier service) may deliver your paper application to the Department by hand. You must deliver the original and two copies of your application by hand, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.133N-1 or 83.133A-15)
550 12th Street, SW.
Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza
Washington, DC 20202-4260

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

Note for Mail or Hand Delivery of Paper Applications: If you mail or hand deliver your application to the Department--

(1) You must indicate on the envelope and--if not provided by the Department--in Item 11 of the SF 424 the CFDA number, including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and

(2) The Application Control Center will mail to you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this notification within 15 business days

from the application deadline date, you should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

V. Application Review Information

1. Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for the SCIMS Centers competition are from 34 CFR 359.31, and are listed in the application package. The selection criteria for the SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects are from 34 CFR 75.210 of EDGAR, 34 CFR 350.54, and the criterion established in the NFP; these selection criteria will be listed in the application package for the SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects competition.

The Secretary is interested in hypothesis-driven research and development projects. To address this interest it is expected that applicants will articulate goals, objectives, and expected outcomes for the proposed research and development activities. It is critical that proposals describe expected public benefits, especially benefits for individuals with disabilities, and propose projects that are optimally designed to demonstrate outcomes that are consistent with the proposed goals. Applicants are encouraged to include information describing how they will measure outcomes, including the indicators

that will represent the end-result, the mechanisms that will be used to evaluate outcomes associated with specific problems or issues, and how the proposed activities will support new intervention approaches and strategies, including a discussion of measures of effectiveness.

Submission of this information is voluntary except where required by the selection criteria listed in the application package.

2. Review and Selection Process: We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary also requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Education (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

3. Special Conditions: Under 34 CFR 74.14 and 80.12, the Secretary may impose special conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 34 CFR parts 74 or 80, as applicable; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN). We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements: We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your

approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. Reporting: (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multi-year award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.

4. Performance Measures: To evaluate the overall success of its research program, NIDRR assesses the quality of its funded projects through a review of grantee performance and products. Each year, NIDRR examines a portion of its grantees to determine:

- The number of accomplishments (e.g., new or improved tools, methods, discoveries, standards, interventions, programs, or devices) developed or tested with NIDRR funding that have been judged by expert panels to be of high quality and to advance the field.
- The average number of publications per award based on NIDRR-funded research and development activities in refereed journals.
- The percentage of new NIDRR grants that assess the effectiveness of interventions, programs, and devices using rigorous methods.

NIDRR uses information submitted by grantees as part of their Annual Performance Reports (APRs) for these reviews.

Department of Education program performance reports, which include information on NIDRR programs, are available on the Department's Web site:

www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oeped/sas/index.html.

5. Continuation Awards: In making a continuation award, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.253, the extent to which a grantee has made "substantial progress toward meeting the objectives in its approved application." This consideration includes the review of a grantee's progress in meeting the targets and projected outcomes in

its approved application, and whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget. In making a continuation grant, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

VII. Agency Contacts

For Further Information Contact: Either Lynn Medley or Marlene Spencer as follows:

Lynn Medley, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 5140, PCP, Washington, DC 20202-2700. Telephone: (202) 245-7338 or by e-mail: Lynn.Medley@ed.gov.

Marlene Spencer, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 5133, PCP, Washington, DC 20202-2700. Telephone: (202) 245-7532 or by e-mail: Marlene.Spencer@ed.gov.

If you use a TDD call the FRS, toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

VIII. Other Information

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) by contacting the Grants and Contracts Services Team, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 5075, PCP, Washington, DC 20202-2550. Telephone: (202) 245-7363. If you use a TDD call the (Federal Relay Service) FRS, toll-free, at 1-800-877-8339.

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You may also access documents of the Department published in the Federal Register by using the article search feature at: www.federalregister.gov. Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Dated:

Alexa Posny,
Assistant Secretary for
Special Education and
Rehabilitative Services.

**SECTION
C**

FEDERAL REGISTER

FINAL PRIORITY NOTICE

4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[CFDA Numbers: 84.133N-1 and 84.133A-15]

Final Priorities and Selection Criterion; National
Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research
(NIDRR)--Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems (SCIMS) Centers
and SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects

AGENCY: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative
Services, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of final priorities and selection
criterion.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Secretary for Special Education and
Rehabilitative Services announces (1) a priority under the
Special Projects and Demonstrations for Spinal Cord
Injuries Program for SCIMS Centers (priority 1), and (2) a
priority and selection criterion for Disability and
Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRPs) that will serve as
the SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects
(priority 2). The Assistant Secretary may use one or more
of these priorities and selection criterion for
competitions in fiscal year (FY) 2011 and later years. We
take this action to focus attention on areas of national
need.

EFFECTIVE DATE: These priorities and selection criterion

are effective July 11, 2011.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lynn Medley, U.S.

Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room
5140, Potomac Center Plaza (PCP), Washington, DC 20202-
2700. Telephone: (202) 245-7338 or by e-mail:
lynn.medley@ed.gov.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf
(TDD), call the Federal Relay Service, toll free, at 1-800-
877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

This notice of final priorities and selection
criterion (NFP) is in concert with NIDRR's currently
approved Long-Range Plan (Plan). The Plan, which was
published in the Federal Register on February 15, 2006 (71
FR 8165), can be accessed on the Internet at the following
site:

www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/nidrr/policy.html.

Through the implementation of the Plan, NIDRR seeks
to: (1) improve the quality and utility of disability and
rehabilitation research; (2) foster an exchange of
expertise, information, and training to facilitate the
advancement of knowledge and understanding of the unique
needs of traditionally underserved populations; (3)
determine the best strategies and programs to improve

rehabilitation outcomes for underserved populations; (4) identify research gaps; (5) identify mechanisms of integrating research and practice; and (6) disseminate findings.

This notice proposes priorities and a selection criterion that NIDRR intends to use for competitions in FY 2011 and possibly later years. However, nothing precludes NIDRR from publishing additional priorities if needed. Furthermore, NIDRR is under no obligation to make an award using either of the priorities or the selection criterion. The decision to make an award will be based on the quality of applications received and available funding.

Purpose of Programs: The SCIMS centers are funded through the Special Projects and Demonstrations for SCI Program and the SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects are funded as DRRPs.

Special Projects and Demonstrations for Spinal Cord

Injuries Program

The SCIMS centers program is funded through the Special Projects and Demonstrations for Spinal Cord Injuries Program. This program provides assistance for projects that provide comprehensive rehabilitation services to individuals with spinal cord injuries, and conducts spinal cord research, as specified in 34 CFR 359.10 and

359.11.

Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRPs)

Program

The SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects are funded as DRRPs. DRRPs are designed to improve the effectiveness of services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act by developing methods, procedures, and rehabilitation technologies that advance a wide range of independent living and employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities, especially individuals with the most severe disabilities. DRRPs carry out one or more of the following types of activities, as specified and defined in 34 CFR 350.13 through 350.19: research, training, demonstration, development, dissemination, utilization, and technical assistance.

Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 760 and 764(a) and 764(b)(4).

Applicable Program Regulations: 34 CFR parts 350 and 359.

We published a notice of proposed priorities and selection criterion (NPP) for NIDRR's Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects and Centers Program in the Federal Register on March 22, 2011 (76 FR 15961). That notice contained background information and our reasons for proposing the SCIMS Center priority and the SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects priority and selection

criterion.

Public Comment: In response to our invitation in the NPP, nine parties submitted comments on the proposed priorities and selection criterion.

Generally, we do not address technical and other minor changes. In addition, we do not address general comments that raised concerns not directly related to the proposed priorities and selection criterion.

Analysis of Comments and Changes: An analysis of the comments and of any changes in the priorities and selection criterion since publication of the notice NPP follows. We discuss substantive issues under the priorities or selection criterion to which they pertain.

General

Comment: One commenter noted that the proposed priorities focus on acquired spinal cord injuries, and not on developmental disabilities or other conditions that affect the spinal cord. This commenter recommended that the priorities be expanded to include any conditions that affect the spinal cord and subsequent human physical activity and movement.

Discussion: We are establishing the SCIMS Centers priority under section 204(b)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act, the statutory authority for the Special Projects and

Demonstrations for Spinal Cord Injuries program. Section 204(b)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR part 359, the implementing regulations for this program, clearly specify a focus on spinal cord injury, and on services provided to individuals following a spinal cord injury. We are funding the SCIMS Centers priority under this statutory authority to build upon the specialized research capacity that NIDRR has established under the SCIMS program. NIDRR developed the SCIMS Collaborative Research Projects priority to capitalize on this specialized research capacity. Therefore, both of the priorities announced in this notice focus on spinal cord injuries, and not other conditions that affect the spinal cord and subsequent physical activity and movement, as suggested by the commenter.

Changes: None.

Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems (SCIMS) Centers funded under the Special Projects and Demonstrations for Spinal Cord Injuries

Comment: Six commenters asked whether applicants under the SCIMS Centers priority would be required to propose a module project in their proposals. Four of these commenters asked for clarification on the mechanism that will be used to develop and decide upon module projects.

Discussion: Applicants are not required to propose a specific collaborative module project that they will implement in their proposals. Collaborative research projects cannot be developed in a thoughtful manner without knowledge of the capacity, interests, and expertise of the participating collaborators. For this reason, the priority does not require the SCIMS Centers to develop a collaborative module project. Rather, each SCIMS Center is required to participate in at least one collaborative module. Accordingly, applicants must demonstrate their capacity to successfully engage in multi-site collaborative research. This capacity includes access to research participants, the ability to maintain data quality, and the ability to adhere to research protocols.

Following the announcement of new awards under this priority, SCIMS Centers that are interested in developing module projects may identify module topics, identify potential collaborators from among the other new SCIMS Centers, and develop research protocols for the potential modules. At the first SCIMS Project Directors' meeting, Project Directors will review, discuss, and decide upon specific module projects to implement. NIDRR staff will facilitate this post-award discussion and selection of module topics for implementation among new SCIMS Center

grantees. Once these module projects are agreed upon by the Project Directors, each SCIMS Center will be required to participate in at least one of the module projects.

Changes: NIDRR has modified the note under paragraph (d) of this priority to clearly indicate that applicants should not propose a specific module project in their application, and to clarify the mechanism that will be used to develop and decide upon the module projects in which the SCIMS Center grantees will participate.

Comment: Two commenters asked how NIDRR would assess applicants' capacity to participate in multi-site collaborative research.

Discussion: Because the SCIMS Centers will be funded under the Special Projects and Demonstrations for Spinal Cord Injuries program, the regulations in 34 CFR 359 apply. Under those regulations, peer reviewers will use selection criteria in 34 CFR 359.31 to evaluate the quality of applications under this program, including applicants' descriptions of their capacity to engage in collaborative research. Specifically, the peer review criteria under CFR 359.31(c) and (e) are directly applicable to the evaluation of applicants' capacity to engage in multi-site collaborative research.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter asked how NIDRR would assess applicants' capacity to enroll at least 30 participants per year in the database.

Discussion: Under the applicable program regulations for the Special Projects and Demonstrations for Spinal Cord Injuries program in 34 CFR 359, peer reviewers will use selection criteria under 34 CFR 359.31 to evaluate the quality of applications under this program, including proposed plans to recruit at least 30 participants per year into the SCIMS database. We expect applicants to describe their capacity to meet this minimum requirement in their applications so that peer reviews can assess this capacity under 34 CFR 359.31. In addition, we note NIDRR will continue to closely monitor the capacity of its funded SCIMS Centers to enroll the minimum number of participants into the SCIMS database each year of the project period.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter asked whether NIDRR intended to require applicants to budget "at least 15 percent" of its budget to participate in module projects, or if NIDRR intended to require applicants to budget "no more than 15 percent" for this activity.

Discussion: NIDRR intends paragraph (d)(2) of this priority to require that SCIMS Centers propose to spend at

least 15 percent of their annual budget on module participation.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter asked how applicants should describe their module participation in their proposed budgets.

Discussion: In order to meet paragraph (d) of the priority, a grantee must participate as a research collaborator in at least one module project. As discussed earlier in this Analysis of Comments and Changes section, we do not expect applicants to propose or describe a module project. Rather, we require applicants to propose to spend at least 15 percent of their annual budget on participating in a module project. Accordingly, the only information regarding participation in the module project that is needed in the application is a single line item for module participation that is at least 15 percent of the overall budget. No additional information is required.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter noted that the requirements under paragraph (c) of the priority are overly restrictive, in that they require projects to test both innovative approaches to treating SCI and innovative approaches to assessing outcomes. This commenter stated that it would be

more reasonable to require projects to test either innovative approaches to treating SCI or innovative approaches to assessing outcomes. This commenter also suggested that NIDRR broaden the types of possible research that can be proposed under this priority to include research that uses advanced methods to collect other information of clinical and/or scientific value that is of relevance to SCI.

Discussion: NIDRR agrees that the language in proposed paragraph (c) of the priority is overly restrictive and is changing the priority to require that applicants propose research to test innovative SCI treatments, or research to test innovative approaches to assessing outcomes of spinal cord injury.

In response to the second point raised by the commenter, NIDRR would like to maintain focus on the testing of interventions or the development of new outcomes measures and assessments. Through sustained funding of its SCIMS program, NIDRR has created a mature research infrastructure that will support the testing of interventions. NIDRR's emphasis on the testing of interventions and the development of measures to support that testing is intended to build upon this infrastructure to improve the outcomes of individuals with spinal cord

injury. For this reason, we decline to revise this requirement to broaden the types of research that can be supported under this priority.

Changes: NIDRR has made minor modifications to paragraph (c) of the priority to clarify that applicants can propose research to test innovative SCI treatments, or research to test innovative approaches to assessing outcomes of spinal cord injury.

Comment: None.

Discussion: Paragraph (c) of this priority states that each SCIMS Center must propose and conduct at least one, but no more than two, site-specific research projects. We intend this language to prohibit applicants from proposing and conducting more than two site-specific research projects. To avoid any confusion on this point, we believe it would be helpful to applicants to add language clearly stating that applicants who propose more than two site-specific research projects will be disqualified.

Changes: NIDRR has revised paragraph (c) of this priority by adding a sentence stating that applicants who propose more than two site-specific research projects will be disqualified.

SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects

Comment: One commenter asked NIDRR to expand the

eligibility criteria for serving as the lead applicant for one of the SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects, so that the two NIDRR-funded Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers on Secondary Conditions in Rehabilitation of Individuals with Spinal Cord Injury would be eligible to apply.

Discussion: NIDRR's SCIMS Centers program has evolved into a multi-site platform that can serve as a resource for testing promising interventions and building the evidence base for spinal cord injury rehabilitation. NIDRR has designed this priority to directly utilize this platform for collaborative research on interventions. Therefore, only SCIMS Centers are eligible to apply. These SCIMS Centers have direct access to individuals with SCI who will participate in the collaborative research. They also maintain comprehensive systems of clinical services for individuals with SCI. Applicants that are not SCIMS Centers will not have direct access to these resources, which are necessary for leading collaborative research within the SCIMS program. While only SCIMS Centers can apply as lead applicants for the SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research grants, applicants may include as part of their multi-site collaborative research project other SCI research sites that are not participating as a

SCIMS Center.

Changes: None.

FINAL PRIORITIES:

Priority 1--Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems Centers.

The Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services establishes a priority for the funding of Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems (SCIMS) centers of care (SCIMS Centers). The SCIMS Centers must provide comprehensive, multidisciplinary services to individuals with spinal cord injury (SCI) as a basis for conducting research that contributes to evidence-based rehabilitation interventions and clinical and practice guidelines. The SCIMS program is designed to generate new knowledge that can be used to improve outcomes of individuals with SCI in one or more domains identified in NIDRR's currently approved Long Range Plan, published in the Federal Register on February 15, 2006 (71 FR 8165): health and function, participation and community living, technology, and employment. Each SCIMS Center must contribute to this outcome by--

(a) Providing a multidisciplinary system of rehabilitation care specifically designed to meet the needs of individuals with SCI. The system must encompass a continuum of care, including emergency medical services,

acute care services, acute medical rehabilitation services, and post-acute services;

(b) Continuing the assessment of long-term outcomes of individuals with SCI by enrolling at least 30 subjects per year into the SCIMS database, following established protocols for the collection of enrollment and follow-up data on subjects;

(c) Proposing and conducting at least one, but no more than two, site-specific research projects to test innovative approaches to treating SCI or to assessing outcomes of individuals with SCI in one or more domains identified in the Plan: health and function, participation and community living, technology, and employment.

Note: Applicants who propose more than two site-specific research projects will be disqualified.

(d) Participating as research collaborators in at least one module project. Module projects are research collaborations with one or more other SCIMS Centers on topics of mutual interest and expertise. These module projects are carried out as part of the SCIMS Centers' activities. They are not part of the SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Projects, which are funded under a separate priority.

Note: Applicants should not propose a specific module

project in their application. While all SCIMS Center grantees are required to participate as research collaborators in at least one module project, they are not required to develop any module project on their own. Immediately following the announcement of new awards under this priority, those SCIMS Centers that are interested in developing module projects may identify module topics, identify potential collaborators from among the other new SCIMS Centers, and develop research protocols for the potential modules. At the first SCIMS Project Directors' meeting, Project Directors will review, discuss, and decide upon specific module projects to implement. NIDRR staff will facilitate this post-award discussion and negotiation among new SCIMS grantees. Once these module projects are agreed upon by the Project Directors, each SCIMS Center will be required to participate in at least one of them.

Each applicant under this priority must--

(1) Demonstrate, in its application, its capacity to successfully engage in multi-site collaborative research. This capacity includes access to research participants, the ability to maintain data quality, and the ability to adhere to research protocols; and

(2) Propose to spend at least 15 percent of its annual budget on participating in a module project, as

described in paragraph (d) of this priority;

(e) Addressing the needs of persons with disabilities including individuals from traditionally underserved populations;

(f) Coordinating with the NIDRR-funded Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center (MSKTC) to provide scientific results and information for dissemination to clinical and consumer audiences; and

(g) Ensuring participation of persons with disabilities in conducting SCIMS research.

Priority 2--Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems (SCIMS) Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects.

The Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services establishes a priority for the funding of Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRPs) to serve as Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems (SCIMS) multi-site collaborative research projects. To be eligible under this priority, an applicant must have received a grant under the SCIMS Centers priority (Proposed Priority 1 in this notice). Following completion of a competition using the SCIMS Centers priority, the Department will invite successful applicants under that competition to apply for funding under this SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects priority.

Each SCIMS multi-site collaborative research project must be designed to contribute to evidence-based rehabilitation interventions and clinical practice guidelines that improve the lives of individuals with spinal cord injury (SCI) through research, including the testing of approaches to treating SCI or the assessment of the outcomes of individuals with SCI. Each SCIMS multi-site collaborative research project must contribute to this outcome by--

(a) Collaborating with three or more of the NIDRR-funded SCIMS centers (for a minimum of four SCIMS sites). Applicants may also propose to include as part of their multi-site collaborative research project other SCI research sites that are not participating in a NIDRR-funded program;

(b) Conducting multi-site research on questions of significance to SCI rehabilitation, using clearly identified research designs. The research must focus on outcomes in one or more domains identified in NIDRR's currently approved Long Range Plan, published in the Federal Register on February 15, 2006 (71 FR 8165): health and function, participation and community living, technology, and employment;

(c) Demonstrating the capacity to carry out multi-

site collaborative research projects, including administrative capabilities, experience with management of multi-site research protocols, and demonstrated ability to maintain standards for quality and confidentiality of data gathered from multiple sites;

(d) Addressing the needs of people with disabilities, including individuals from traditionally underserved populations;

(e) Coordinating with the NIDRR-funded Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center (MSKTC) to provide scientific results and information for dissemination to clinical and consumer audiences; and

(f) Ensuring participation of individuals with disabilities in conducting SCIMS research.

Types of Priorities:

When inviting applications for a competition using one or more priorities, we designate the type of each priority as absolute, competitive preference, or invitational through a notice in the Federal Register. The effect of each type of priority follows:

Absolute priority: Under an absolute priority, we consider only applications that meet the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(3)).

Competitive preference priority: Under a competitive

preference priority, we give competitive preference to an application by (1) awarding additional points, depending on the extent to which the application meets the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i)); or (2) selecting an application that meets the priority over an application of comparable merit that does not meet the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(ii)).

Invitational priority: Under an invitational priority, we are particularly interested in applications that meet the priority. However, we do not give an application that meets the priority a preference over other applications (34 CFR 75.105(c)(1)).

SELECTION CRITERION:

In accordance with the provisions of 34 CFR 350.53 and 350.54 and in addition to the selection criteria specified in those sections, the Secretary will consider the following factor in evaluating applications submitted under the SCIMS Multi-Site Collaborative Research Projects priority:

The extent to which the applicant clearly documents its capacity to carry out a multi-site research project, including demonstrated administrative capabilities, experience with managing and following multi-site research protocols, and ability to maintain and meet standards for quality and confidentiality of data gathered from multiple

sites.

This notice does not preclude us from proposing additional priorities, requirements, definitions, or selection criteria, subject to meeting applicable rulemaking requirements.

Note: This notice does not solicit applications. In any year in which we choose to use these priorities, we invite applications through a notice in the Federal Register.

Executive Order 12866: This notice has been reviewed in accordance with Executive Order 12866. Under the terms of the order, we have assessed the potential costs and benefits of this final regulatory action.

The potential costs associated with this final regulatory action are those resulting from statutory requirements and those we have determined as necessary for administering this program effectively and efficiently.

In assessing the potential costs and benefits--both quantitative and qualitative--of this final regulatory action, we have determined that the benefits of the final priorities justify the costs.

Summary of potential costs and benefits:

The benefits of the Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects and Centers and the Special Projects and

Demonstrations for Spinal Cord Injuries Programs have been well established over the years in that similar projects have been completed successfully. These final priorities and selection criterion will generate new knowledge through research and development. Another benefit of these final priorities and selection criterion is that the establishment of new SCIMS Centers and the DRRPs conducting SCIMS multi-site research projects will generate new knowledge to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities. The new SCIMS Centers and the SCIMS multi-site research projects will generate, disseminate, and promote the use of new information that will improve the options for individuals with spinal cord injury to perform activities of their choice in the community.

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) by contacting the Grants and Contracts Services Team, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 5075, PCP, Washington, DC 20202-2550. Telephone: (202) 245-7363. If you use a TDD, call the FRS, toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

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Register. Free Internet access to the official edition of the Federal Register and the Code of Federal Regulations is available via the Federal Digital System at: www.gpo.gov/fdsys. At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the Federal Register, in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF). To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

You may also access documents of the Department published in the Federal Register by using the article search feature at: www.federalregister.gov. Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Dated:

Alexa Posny,
Assistant Secretary for
Special Education and
Rehabilitative Services.

**SECTION
D**

BACKGROUND STATEMENT

**From Notice of Proposed Priority, Published
in the Federal Register on March 22, 2011**

Background

The SCIMS program is designed to study the course of recovery and outcomes following the delivery of a coordinated system of care for individuals with SCI. For purposes of this program, SCI is defined as a clinically discernible degree of neurologic impairment of the spinal cord following a traumatic event. The Department currently supports 14 SCIMS centers through this program. These centers provide comprehensive rehabilitation services to individuals with SCI and conduct SCI research, including clinical research and community-based research.

There is a continued need for research to assist individuals who acquire and live with SCI. While SCI remains a low-incidence condition (estimates are that there are 12,000 newly acquired SCI in the U.S. each year), the number of people surviving SCI continues to grow, largely fueled by improved emergency and acute care (http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/sci/detail_sci.htm).

SCI are complex and likely to be long-term. Significant costs are associated with SCI because of recurring medical and rehabilitation needs, including home and vehicle modifications and personal assistants (Priebe et al., 2007). Increased survival rates of individuals with SCI have raised new research questions. For instance, research is needed to develop rehabilitation interventions that address functional challenges experienced by individuals with SCI who are aging (Field and Jette, 2007; Winkler, 2008). For example, "overuse syndrome" is a consequence of living with a SCI and manifests itself in degeneration of joints and chronic pain in the shoulders and neck and is associated with using the arms to propel a wheelchair or transfer from one place to another. Chronic pain can be a debilitating secondary condition to SCI, and effective, sustainable treatments remain elusive (Hauser and Gruen, 2009; Hosalkar, et al., 2009).

Since 1973, the SCIMS centers have collected and contributed information on common data elements for a centralized SCI database, referred to as the SCIMS database, which is maintained through a NIDRR-funded grant for a National Data and Statistical Center.

As of October 2010, the SCIMS database included initial information on 27,553 individuals, with follow-up information on 22,605 individuals, including 1,034 people who have provided information for more than 30 years. Further information about the SCIMS database, including inclusion criteria, can be found at the following Web site: <https://www.nscisc.uab.edu>.

The SCIMS program is the largest network of research centers devoted to SCI in the world. The low SCI incidence rate makes collaboration across SCIMS centers critical in order to involve investigators with the necessary expertise and to combine the number of subjects who are available for rigorous testing of interventions (Boulenguez & Vinay, 2009). The SCIMS program has evolved into a multi-site platform that can serve as a resource for testing promising interventions. NIDRR funds the SCIMS centers under the Special Projects and Demonstrations for SCI program, as well as separate DRRPs that

serve as SCIMS collaborative research projects. These efforts comprise the SCIMS program. Through the priorities proposed in this notice, the Department seeks to fund research and other work carried out under this program.

In accordance with section 204(b)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR part 359, Proposed Priority 1 would establish SCIMS centers that will build upon the work of the currently-funded SCIMS centers to provide rehabilitation services to individuals with SCI and conduct SCI research.

Proposed Priority 2, authorized under section 204(a) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR part 350, would provide for DRRPs to conduct multi-site research that contributes to evidence-based rehabilitation interventions and clinical practice guidelines that improve the lives of individuals with SCI. These projects are designed to serve the overall purpose of the DRRP program.

To be eligible under Priority 2, an applicant must have received a grant under Priority 1. The Department intends to announce the competition for Priority 2 awards after selecting grantees from the Priority 1 competition. Only successful applicants from the Priority 1 competition will be eligible to apply for awards under the Priority 2 competition.

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**SECTION
E**

**Statutory and Regulatory Requirements of
Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems**

Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems (SCIMS)

This program provides assistance for demonstration projects that—

(a) Provide comprehensive rehabilitation services to individuals with spinal cord injuries; and

(b) Conduct spinal cord research, including clinical research and the analysis of standardized data in collaboration with other related projects.

What activities must each recipient carry out under this program?

Each recipient, whether administering a project separately under this part or in coordination with other activities supported under title II of the Act, shall--

(a) Establish a multidisciplinary system of providing rehabilitation services specifically designed to meet the special needs of individuals with spinal cord injuries, including emergency medical services, acute care, vocational and other rehabilitation services, community and job placement, and long-term community follow up and health maintenance. The system must be established on an appropriate geographical basis that reflects patterns of patient flow, and must be administered in close coordination with similar programs of the Veterans Administration, the National Institutes of Health, and other public and private agencies and institutions where appropriate;

(b) Demonstrate and evaluate both the service and cost benefits of a regional service system to those individuals with spinal cord injuries who might be served within that system;

(c) Establish within the system a rehabilitation research environment for the achievement of new knowledge leading to the reduction and treatment of complications arising from spinal cord injury and the development of new techniques of medical management and rehabilitation;

(d) Demonstrate and evaluate the development and application of improved methods and equipment essential to the care, management, and rehabilitation of individuals with spinal cord injury;

(e) Demonstrate methods of community outreach and education for individuals with spinal cord injury in areas such as housing, transportation, recreation, employment, and other community activities;
and

(f) Address the needs of individuals with spinal cord injuries from minority backgrounds;

(g) Participate as directed by the Secretary in national studies of the benefits of a spinal cord injury service system by contributing to a national database and by other means as required by the Secretary.

**SECTION
F**

SELECTION CRITERIA

SELECTION CRITERIA

The Secretary uses the following criteria to evaluate an application from 34 CFR 359.

(a) Project design (20 points). The Secretary reviews each application to determine to what degree--

- (1) There is a clear description of how the objectives of the project relate to the purpose of the program;
- (2) The research is likely to produce new and useful information;
- (3) The need and target population are adequately defined;
- (4) The outcomes are likely to benefit the defined target population;
- (5) The research hypotheses are sound; and
- (6) The research methodology is sound in the sample design and selection, the data collection plan, the measurement instruments, and the data analysis plan.

(b) Service comprehensiveness (20 points). The Secretary reviews each application to determine to what degree--

- (1) The services to be provided within the project are comprehensive in scope, and include emergency medical services, intensive and acute medical care, rehabilitation management, psychosocial and community reintegration, and follow up;
- (2) A broad range of vocational and other rehabilitation services will be available to individuals with severe disabilities within the project; and
- (3) Services will be coordinated with those services provided by other appropriate community resources.

(c) Plan of operation (15 points). The Secretary reviews each application to determine to what degree--

- (1) There is an effective plan of operation that ensures proper and efficient administration of the project;
- (2) The applicant's planned use of its resources and personnel is likely to achieve each objective;
- (3) Collaboration between institutions, if proposed, is likely to be effective;
- (4) There is a clear description of how the applicant will include eligible project participants who have been traditionally underrepresented, such as--
 - (i) Members of racial or ethnic minority groups;
 - (ii) Women;
 - (iii) Individuals with disabilities; and
 - (iv) The elderly.

(d) Quality of key personnel (10 points). The Secretary reviews each application to determine to what degree--

(1) The principal investigator and other key staff have adequate training or experience, or both, in spinal cord injury care and rehabilitation and demonstrate appropriate potential to conduct the proposed research, demonstration, training, development, or dissemination activity;

(2) The principal investigator and other key staff are familiar with pertinent literature or methods, or both;

(3) All the disciplines necessary to establish the multidisciplinary system described in Sec. 359.11(a) are effectively represented;

(4) Commitments of staff time are adequate for the project; and

(5) The applicant is likely, as part of its non-discriminatory employment practices, to encourage applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that traditionally have been underrepresented, such as--

(i) Members of racial or ethnic minority groups;

(ii) Women;

(iii) Individuals with disabilities; and

(iv) The elderly.

(e) Adequacy of resources (10 points). The Secretary reviews each application to determine to what degree--

(1) The facilities planned for use are adequate;

(2) The equipment and supplies planned for use are adequate; and

(3) The commitment of the applicant to provide administrative and other necessary support is evident.

(f) Budget/cost effectiveness (10 points). The Secretary reviews each application to determine to what degree--

(1) The budget for the project is adequate to support the activities;

(2) The costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives of the project; and

(3) The budget for subcontracts (if required) is detailed and appropriate.

(g) Dissemination/utilization (5 points). The Secretary reviews each application to determine to what degree--

(1) There is a clearly defined plan for dissemination and utilization of project findings;

(2) The research results are likely to become available to others working in the field;

(3) The means to disseminate and promote utilization by others are defined; and

(4) The utilization approach is likely to address the defined need.

(h) Evaluation plan (10 points). The Secretary reviews each application to determine to what degree--

- (1) There is a mechanism to evaluate plans, progress, and results;
- (2) The evaluation methods and objectives are likely to produce data that are quantifiable; and
- (3) The evaluation results, where relevant, are likely to be assessed in a service setting.

**SECTION
G**

PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

Protection of Human Subjects

Research activities involving human subjects supported by awards under these programs are subject to Department of Education Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects. You do **not** need an assurance or IRB approval as a condition of applying for this competition.

If you marked "Yes" for Item 3 of Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424, you must provide a human subjects "exempt research" or "nonexempt research" narrative. Insert the narrative(s) in the space provided. If you have multiple projects and need to provide more than one narrative, please indicate which project each set of responses addresses.

A. Exempt Research Narrative. If you marked "Yes" for item 3 a. and designated exemption numbers(s), provide the "exempt research" narrative. The narrative must contain sufficient information about the involvement of human subjects in the proposed research to allow a determination by ED that the designated exemption(s) are appropriate. The narrative must be succinct. In addition, narratives are required for each participating partner if research is being conducted at other sites.

B. Nonexempt Research Narrative. If you marked "No" for item 3 a. you must provide the "nonexempt research" narrative. The narrative must address the seven points. Although no specific page limitation applies to this section of the application, be succinct.

Copies of the Department of Education regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects as well as other documents are available on the website below. For more information call (202) 260-3353 or go on-line the Protection of Human Subjects in research Web Site:

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/humansub.html>

**SECTION
H**

APPLICATION FORMAT

APPLICATION FORMAT

Applications for grants under this program must be submitted electronically using grants.gov by the closing date of August 8, 2011 unless you qualify for an exception to this requirement.

NOTE: You will be uploading sections of your application by heading. There is a heading for: (1) Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424); (2) Table of Contents; (3) Abstract; (4) ED Budget Information Non-Construction Programs (ED-524); (5) Budget Narrative; (6) Project Narrative; (7) General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Requirements – Section 427; (8) GG Lobbying Form (90-0013); (9) Faith Based Survey on EEO; (10) ED Supplemental Form for SF 424; (11) SF LLL Disclosure of Lobbying; and (12) Vitae/Bibliography/Letters of Support.

1. Application for Federal Assistance (Form SF 424)

- This form requires basic identifying information about the applicant and the application.
- Applicants should clearly indicate the CFDA number of the program **84.133N-1** in block 11. If this information is not provided, your application may be assigned and reviewed under a different program.

2. Table of Contents

- The Table of Contents shows where and how the important sections of your proposal are organized.
- While the application will be submitted electronically, the reviewers will use printed copies during the review process. The Table of Contents will assist them in more efficiently and effectively evaluating your application.
- Upload the Table of Contents to Optional Forms: Other Attachments.

3. Abstract

- The ONE-PAGE abstract should be a comprehensive description of what the whole (all years) project is, not a description of the competency of the institution or project director. It is not an executive summary. It can be single or double-spaced.
- Upload the Abstract to ED Abstract.

4. ED Budget Information Non-Construction Program (ED 524)

- Remember that you must provide complete budget information for each year of the proposed project. Use the Budget Narrative heading to upload.
- Please report on any Federal and Non-Federal funds that will be used.
- Specific instructions for completing the budget forms are provided within this application package.

Name: Enter the Name of the applicant organization(s) or institution(s) in the space provided.

Personnel (Line 1): Enter project personnel salaries and wages only. Include fees and expenses for consultants on line 6.

Fringe Benefits (Line 2): The institution's normal fringe benefits contribution may be charged to the program. Leave this line blank if fringe benefits applicable to direct salaries and wages are treated as part of the indirect cost.

Travel (Line 3): Indicate the travel costs of employees and participants only. Include travel of persons such as consultants and trainees on line 6.

Equipment (Line 4): Indicate the cost of tangible, non-expendable personal property that has a usefulness greater than one year and acquisition costs that are the lesser of the capitalization level established by the applicant entity for financial statement purposes or \$5,000 per article. Lower limits may be established to maintain consistency with the applicant's policy.

Supplies (line 5): Show all tangible personal property except that on line 4.

Contractual (line 6): The contractual category should include all costs specifically incurred with actions that the applicant takes in conjunction with an established internal procurement system. Include consultant fees, expenses, and travel costs in this category if the consultant's services are obtained through a written binding agreement or contract.

Construction (line 7): Not applicable.

Other (line 8): Indicate all direct costs not covered on lines 1-6. For example, include costs such as space rental, required fees,

honoraria and travel (where a contract is not in place for services), stipends, training, and communication and printing costs.

Total Direct Costs (line 9): The sum of lines 1-8.

Indirect Costs (line 10): There is no restricted indirect cost rate for this program. Use your institution's Federally negotiated rate.

Training Stipends (line 11): There are three types of projects that might include budget requests for stipends, tuition allowance, or other types of similar charges to support the objectives of the project:

- Fellowship or Scholarship Programs
- Educational Training Projects
- Projects where students receive tuition remission or other forms of compensation, as, or in lieu of wages.

Total Cost (line 12): This should equal to sum of lines 9-11 (total direct costs + indirect + stipends). The sum for column one, labeled *Project Year 1 (a)*, should also be equal to item 18a on the application cover sheet (SF Form 424).

Cost Share or Matching: If you are providing voluntary cost share or matching Please include this information on the ED Form 524, Section B – Budget Summary, Non-Federal Funds – Tab 2 and in your budget narrative.

5. Budget Narrative

- This part requires an itemized budget breakdown for the project year and the basis for estimating the costs of personnel salaries, benefits, project staff travel, materials and supplies, consultants and subcontracts, indirect costs and any other projected expenditures.
- Address Cost Share or Matching in a separate section of the budget narrative labeled “Cost Share or Matching”.
- Please provide an itemized budget breakdown for each project year.
- Upload the Budget Narrative to the Budget Narrative Section.

6. Project Narrative

- The application narrative responds to the Statutory, Regulatory and General SCIMS Requirements found in Section E and Selection Criteria found in Section F of this application package. The reviewers will use this section to evaluate your application.

- Upload the Project Narrative to the Project Narrative Section.

Each applicant is encouraged to limit the project narrative to the equivalent of no more than 100 pages, using the following standards:

- A “page” is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Double-space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs. Use a font that is either 12 point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New or Arial.
- Include all critical information in the program narrative, minimizing the need for additional appendices.
- Ensure that you attach **.PDF files only** for any attachments to your application. PDF files are the only Education approved file type accepted as detailed in the Federal Register application notice. Applicants must submit individual .PDF files only when attaching files to their application. Specifically, the Department will not accept any attachments that contain files within a file, such as PDF Portfolio files. Any attachments uploaded that are not .PDF files or are password protected files will not be read. If you need assistance converting your files to a .pdf format, please refer to this Grants.gov webpage with links to conversion programs:
http://www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp#pdf_conversion_programs

NOTE: The page limit does not apply to the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424); the budget narrative the assurances and certifications; or the one page abstract, the resumes, the bibliography, or the letters of support. However, the recommended page limit does apply to all of the project narrative section.

7. General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Requirements – Section 427

- Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs.

8. GG Lobbying Form (90-0013)

- Instructions for completing this form are included on the Grants.gov website.

9. Faith Based Survey on EEO

- Instructions for completing this form are included on the Grants.gov website.

10. ED Supplemental Form for SF 424

- Instructions for completing this form are included on the Grants.gov website.

11. SF LLL Disclosure of Lobbying

- Instructions for completing this form are included on the Grants.gov website.

12. Vitae/Bibliography/Letters of Support

- Vitae of staff or consultants should include the individual's title and role in the proposed project, and other information that is specifically pertinent to this proposed project. The budgets for all years should be included.
- If collaboration with another organization is involved in the proposed activity, the application should include assurances of participation by the other parties, including written agreements or assurances of cooperation.
- Upload the Vitae/Bibliography/Letters of Support to the Other Attachments – Optional Section.

**SECTION
I**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

DUNS NUMBER INSTRUCTIONS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. CAN I GET AN EXTENSION OF THE DUE DATE?

In the case of most competitions the answer is no. On rare occasions the Department of Education may extend a closing date for all applicants. If that occurs, a notice of the revised due date is published in the Federal Register, this extension identify who is eligible to apply for a given competition. There are no extensions or exceptions to the due date made for individual applicants. Additionally, there are provisions for extension for Grants.gov, per the guidance included in the application package.

2. WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE APPLICATION?

The application should include the following: (1) Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424); (2) Table of Contents; (3) Abstract; (4) ED Budget Information Non-Construction Programs (ED-524); (5) Budget Narrative; (6) Project Narrative; (7) General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Requirements – Section 427; (8) GG Lobbying Form (90-0013); (9) Faith Based Survey on EEO; (10) ED Supplemental Form for SF 424; (11) SF LLL Disclosure of Lobbying; and (12) Vitae/Bibliography/Letters of Support The budgets for all years, including a detailed budget narrative, should be included. If collaboration with another organization or individual is involved in any proposed activity, the application should include assurances of participation by the other parties, including written agreements or letters of cooperation. It is not useful to include general letters of support or endorsement in the application. If the applicant proposes to use unique tests or other measurement instruments that are not widely known in the field, it would be helpful to include the instrument in the application. Many applications contain voluminous appendices that are not helpful and in many cases cannot even be mailed to the reviewers. It is generally not helpful to include such things as brochures, general capability statements of collaborating organizations, maps, copies of publications, or descriptions of other projects completed by the applicant.

3. WHAT FORMAT SHOULD BE USED FOR THE APPLICATION?

NIDRR generally advises applicants to organize the project narrative to follow the selection criteria. The specific review criteria vary according to the specific programs and are contained in this application package. Additionally, applicants should provide clearly stated hypotheses, goals, objectives, expected outcomes, and public benefit of the research or development project. The application should be organized to provide a thorough description of the methods and target population(s) and supported by evidence of need for the project, as identified in the relevant literature; citations are useful and may strengthen the proposal. Specific information on the format can be found in the application format section of this application package.

4. ARE THERE PAGE LIMITS TO MY APPLICATION?

The application narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. We recommend that you limit the application narrative to the equivalent of no more than 100 pages, using the following standards: (1) A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides; (2) Double-space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs; (3) Use a font that is either 12 point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch); (4) Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New or Arial; and (5) Include all critical information in the program narrative, minimizing the need for additional appendices.

5. MAY I SUBMIT APPLICATIONS TO MORE THAN ONE OPEN NIDRR PROGRAM COMPETITION AT A TIME OR MORE THAN ONE APPLICATION TO A PARTICULAR PROGRAM COMPETITION?

Yes. You may submit more than one application in any given competition. You may submit to as many open competitions, for which an application is responsive to the program requirements. However, each competition is unique and the selection criteria will vary from one competition to another. It is important that each separate application include the required materials for that particular competition.

6. DO I NEED AN ABSTRACT AND WHAT SHOULD IT INCLUDE?

Yes, you do need an abstract. The abstract is used by both the peer reviewers and the program staff in the review and processing of the application. The ONE-PAGE abstract should be a comprehensive description of the project (all years), not a description of the competency of the institution or project director. It is not an executive summary. Upload to the ED Abstract.

7. WHAT IS THE ALLOWABLE INDIRECT COST RATE?

For the Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems Program (133N), applicants must have a current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement to charge indirect costs.. The maximum amount of the award includes both direct and indirect costs. The Department's Indirect Cost Group has more information on indirect cost rates on its Web site: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/fipao/abouticg.html>

8. CAN PROFIT MAKING BUSINESSES APPLY FOR GRANTS?

Yes; however, for-profit organizations will not be able to collect a fee or profit on the grant. It varies by program.

9. CAN INDIVIDUALS APPLY FOR GRANTS?

Individuals are not eligible to apply for Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems Program (133N).

10. CAN NIDRR STAFF ADVISE ME WHETHER MY PROJECT IS OF INTEREST TO NIDRR OR LIKELY TO BE FUNDED?

No. NIDRR staff can only advise you of the requirements of the program in which you propose to submit your application. However, staff cannot advise you of whether your subject area or proposed approach is likely to receive approval.

11. HOW SOON AFTER SUBMITTING MY APPLICATION CAN I FIND OUT IF IT WILL BE FUNDED?

The time from closing date to grant award date varies from program to program. Generally speaking, NIDRR endeavors to have awards made within six to seven months of the closing date. Unsuccessful applicants generally will be notified within that time frame as well. When NIDRR is able to release information on the status of grant applications, it will notify applicants by letter. The results of the peer review cannot be released except through this formal notification. This information is **not** posted on the NIDRR homepage or the Grants.gov or e-Application website.

12. WHAT START DATE SHOULD I USE ON MY APPLICATION?

For the purpose of estimating a project start date, the applicant should estimate approximately six to seven months from the closing date, preferably October 1. You must have a start date that allows you to complete an Annual Performance Report (APR) by May 31st with six month of activities to report on.

13. IF MY APPLICATION IS SUCCESSFUL, CAN I ASSUME I WILL GET THE REQUESTED BUDGET AMOUNT IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS?

No. Funding in subsequent years is subject to availability of funds and project performance.

14. WILL ALL APPROVED APPLICATIONS BE FUNDED?

No. Peer review panels can result in more applications being determined to be worthy of consideration for funding than available resources allow.. Unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to consider resubmitting applications in future competitions. Funded applications will be notified in the manner described in #12.

15. HOW DOES THE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS IMPACT ON MY APPLICATION?

Successful applicants with multi-year grants must submit an Annual Performance Report (APR) demonstrating and documenting their progress in meeting approved project objectives and their success in addressing the performance measures outlined in the Notice Inviting Applications. Grantees must also provide the most current financial and performance measure data for each year of the project. Grantees will also be required to submit a final performance report, 90 days after the end of the project period. For NIDRR, the APR is submitted electronically via a web-based system. This system is maintained by a contractor and grantees are notified after receiving an award with the appropriate URL and personal password to access the system. The contractor will also send a letter to the grantee informing them when and how to submit their APR. The Department will use the applicant's performance data for program management and administration, in such areas as determining new and continuation funding and planning technical assistance. Grantees are required to participate fully in any evaluation of the NIDRR program carried out by the Department of Education.

16. DO I HAVE TO INCLUDE COST SHARE/MATCHING IN MY APPLICATION?

No cost share is not required for this program. If you choose to share costs, include the information on the SF 424, ED 524, and the budget narrative.

17. WHAT DO I NEED TO DO ABOUT HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION IN MY RESEARCH?

If you are planning research involving human subjects at any time during the project period, you check "Yes" in the Human Subjects section of the ED supplement to the SF 424 form. If you checked "Yes," you need to indicate whether the research is exempt or not exempt from the protection of human subjects requirements of EDGAR part 97 and if you have an IRB number. You will need to fill out the human subjects narrative for each site where the research is being conducted. The program and the Department's human subjects staff review the applicant's response against the application itself to determine its accuracy. They contact you for additional information or clarification, if needed. More information can be found in the instructions for the SF 424 form and in this application package in the Human Subjects section.

18. MUST I SUBMIT MY APPLICATION VIA GRANTS.GOV?

Applications for grants for this competition must be submitted electronically using the Governmentwide Grants.gov Apply site at www.Grants.gov. Through this site, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it

offline, and then upload and submit your application. You may not e-mail an electronic copy of a grant application to us. **We will reject your application if you submit it in paper format unless you qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement and submit, no later than two weeks before the application deadline date, a written statement to the Department that you qualify for one of these exceptions.**

DUNS NUMBER INSTRUCTIONS

NOTE: Check with your fiscal office to see if your institution has an assigned DUNS before contacting Dun & Bradstreet

D-U-N-S No.: Please provide the applicant's D-U-N-S Number. You can obtain your D-U-N-S Number at no charge by calling **1-800-234-3867** or by completing a D-U-N-S Number Request Form. The form can be obtained via the Internet at the following URL:

http://www.dnb.com/US/duns_update/index.html

The D-U-N-S Number is a unique nine-digit number that does not convey any information about the recipient. A built in check digit helps assure the accuracy of the D-U-N-S Number. The ninth digit of each number is the check digit, which is mathematically related to the other digits. It lets computer systems determine if a D-U-N-S Number has been entered correctly.

Dun & Bradstreet, a global information services provider, has assigned D-U-N-S numbers to over 43 million companies worldwide. **Live help Monday-Friday 8am-6pm (EST) Dial 1.800.234.3867**

Note: Electronic submission via Grants.gov must use DUNS number your organization used when it registered in the Central Contractor Registry.

SECTION

J

GRANTS.GOV APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURES AND TIPS FOR APPLICANTS

APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ FIRST

U.S. Department of Education **Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants**

To facilitate your use of Grants.gov, this document includes important submission procedures you need to be aware of to ensure your application is received in a timely manner and accepted by the Department of Education.

ATTENTION – Adobe Forms and PDF Files Required

Applications submitted to Grants.gov for the Department of Education will be posted using Adobe forms. Therefore, applicants will need to download the latest version of Adobe reader (at least Adobe Reader 8.1.2). Information on computer and operating system compatibility with Adobe and links to download the latest version is available on Grants.gov. We strongly recommend that you review these details on www.Grants.gov before completing and submitting your application. In addition, applicants should submit their application a day or two in advance of the closing date as detailed below. Also, applicants are required to upload their attachments in .pdf format only. (See details below under “Attaching Files – Additional Tips.”) If you have any questions regarding this matter please email the Grants.gov Contact Center at support@grants.gov or call 1-800-518-4726.

Also, applicants should be aware that on October 11, 2010, Grants.gov implemented a new security build which requires each organization’s e-Biz POC (Point of Contact) update their Grants.gov registration. To complete this step, the e-Biz POC must have their DUNS number and CCR MPIN. We recommend this step be completed several days before application submission unless the e-Biz POC has already responded to this requirement. For more information on this topic, please visit this Grants.gov information link: <http://www.grants.gov/securitycommebiz/>.

- 1) **REGISTER EARLY** – Grants.gov registration may take five or more business days to complete. You may begin working on your application while completing the registration process, but you cannot submit an application until all of the Registration steps are complete. For detailed information on the Registration Steps, please go to: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp. [Note: Your organization will need to update its Central Contractor Registry (CCR) registration annually.]

- 2) **SUBMIT EARLY** – We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the last day to submit your application. Grants.gov will put a date/time stamp on your application and then process it after it is fully uploaded. The time it takes to upload an application will vary depending on a number of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection, and the time it takes Grants.gov to process the application will vary as well. If Grants.gov rejects your application (see step three below), you will need to resubmit successfully before 4:30:00 p.m. Washington, DC time on the deadline date.

Note: To submit successfully, you must provide the DUNS number on your application that was used when you registered as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) on Grants.gov. This DUNS number is typically the same number used when your organization registered with the CCR (Central Contractor Registry). If you do not enter the same DUNS number on your application as the DUNS you registered with, Grants.gov will reject your application.

- 3) **VERIFY SUBMISSION IS OK** – You will want to verify that Grants.gov and the Department of Education receive your Grants.gov submission timely and that it was validated successfully. To see the date/time your application was received, login to Grants.gov and click on the Track My Application link. For a successful submission, the date/time received should be earlier than 4:30:00 p.m. Washington, DC time, on the deadline date, AND the application status should be: Validated, Received by Agency, or Agency Tracking Number Assigned.

If the date/time received is later than 4:30:00 p.m. Washington, D.C. time, on the deadline date, your application is late. If your application has a status of “Received” it is still awaiting validation by Grants.gov. Once validation is complete, the status will either change to “Validated” or “Rejected with Errors.” If the status is “Rejected with Errors,” your application has not been received successfully. Some of the reasons Grants.gov may reject an application can be found on the Grants.gov site: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant_faqs.jsp#54. For more detailed information on troubleshooting Adobe errors, you can review the Adobe Reader Error Messages document at <http://www.grants.gov/assets/AdobeReaderErrorMessage.pdf>. If you discover your application is late or has been rejected, please see the instructions below. Note: You will receive a series of confirmations both online and via e-mail about the status of your application. Please do not rely solely on e-mail to confirm whether your application has been received timely and validated successfully.

Submission Problems – What should you do?

If you have problems submitting to Grants.gov before the closing date, please contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or <http://www.grants.gov/contactus/contactus.jsp>, or use the customer support available on the Web site: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant_help.jsp.

If electronic submission is optional and you have problems that you are unable to resolve before the deadline date and time for electronic applications, please follow the transmittal instructions for hard copy applications in the Federal Register notice and get a hard copy application postmarked by midnight on the deadline date.

If electronic submission is required, you must submit an electronic application before 4:30:00 p.m., unless you follow the procedures in the Federal Register notice and qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement and submit, no later than two weeks before the application deadline date, a written statement to the Department that you qualify for one of these exceptions. (See the Federal Register notice for detailed instructions.)

Helpful Hints When Working with Grants.gov

Please note, once you download an application from Grants.gov, you will be working offline and saving data on your computer. Please be sure to note where you are saving the Grants.gov file on your computer. You will need to logon to Grants.gov to upload and submit the application. **You must provide the DUNS number on your application that was used when you registered as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) on Grants.gov.**

Please go to http://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant_help.jsp for help with Grants.gov. For additional tips related to submitting grant applications, please refer to the Grants.gov Submit Application FAQs found on the Grants.gov http://www.grants.gov/help/submit_application_faqs.jsp.

Dial-Up Internet Connections

When using a dial up connection to upload and submit your application, it can take significantly longer than when you are connected to the Internet with a high-speed connection, e.g. cable modem/DSL/T1. While times will vary depending upon the size of your application, it can take a few minutes to a few hours to complete your grant submission using a dial up connection. **If you do not have access to a high-speed connection and electronic submission is required, you may want to consider following the instructions in the Federal Register notice to obtain an exception to the electronic submission requirement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.** (See the Federal Register notice for detailed instructions.)

MAC Users

For MAC compatibility information, review the Operating System Platform Compatibility Table at the following Grants.gov link:

http://www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp. **If electronic submission is required and you are concerned about your ability to submit electronically as a non-windows user, please follow instructions in the Federal Register notice to obtain an exception to the electronic submission requirement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.** (See the Federal Register notice for detailed instructions.)

Attaching Files – Additional Tips

Please note the following tips related to attaching files to your application, especially the requirement that applicants **only include .pdf files** in their application:

1. Ensure that you attach **.PDF files only** for any attachments to your application. PDF files are the only Education approved file type accepted as detailed in the Federal Register application notice. Applicants must submit individual .PDF files only when attaching files to their application. Specifically, the Department will not accept any attachments that contain files within a file, such as PDF Portfolio files. Any attachments uploaded that are not .PDF files or are password protected files will not be read. If you need assistance converting your files to a .pdf format, please refer to this Grants.gov webpage with links to conversion programs:
http://www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp#pdf_conversion_programs
2. Grants.gov cannot process an application that includes two or more files that have the same name within a grant submission. Therefore, each file uploaded to your application package should have a unique file name.
3. When attaching files, applicants should follow the guidelines established by Grants.gov on the size and content of file names. Uploaded files must be less than 50 characters, contain no spaces, no special characters (example: -, &, *, %, /, #, \) including periods (.), blank spaces and accent marks. Applications submitted that do not comply with the Grants.gov guidelines will be rejected at Grants.gov and not forwarded to the Department.
4. Applicants should limit the size of their file attachments. Documents submitted that contain graphics and/or scanned material often greatly increase the size of the file attachments and can result in difficulties opening the files. For reference, the average discretionary grant

application package totals 1 to 2 MB. Therefore, you may want to check the total size of your package before submission.

2/2011

APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAIL OR HAND DELIVERY IF A WAIVER HAS BEEN OBTAINED

Submission of Paper Applications by Mail.

If you submit your application in paper format by mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier), you must mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

By mail through the U.S. Postal Service:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA number 84.133N-1)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

Regardless of which address you use, you must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.
- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.
- (4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

If you mail your application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

- (1) A private metered postmark.
- (2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

If your application is postmarked after the application deadline date, we will not consider your application.

Note: The U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office.

c. Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery.

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you (or a courier service) may deliver your paper application to the Department by hand. You must deliver the original and two copies of your application by hand, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.133N-1)
550 12th Street, SW.
Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza
Washington, DC 20202-4260

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

Note for Mail or Hand Delivery of Paper Applications: If you mail or hand deliver your application to the Department--

- (1) You must indicate on the envelope and--if not provided by the Department--in Item 11 of the SF 424 the CFDA number, including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and
- (2) The Application Control Center will mail to you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this notification within 15 business days from the application deadline date, you should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

**SECTION
K**

REQUIRED FORMS

FORM INSTRUCTIONS

APPLICATION FORMS

All electronic and paper (if a waiver has been submitted and approved) applications submitted to NIDRR must include the following forms/parts:

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424)
- Table of Contents
- Abstract
- ED Budget Information Non-Construction Programs (ED-524)
- Budget Narrative
- Project Narrative
- General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Requirements – Section 427
- GG Lobbying Form (90-0013)
- Faith Based Survey on EEO
- ED Supplemental Form for SF 424
- SF LLL Disclosure of Lobbying
- Vitae/Bibliography/Letters of Support

A separate application must be submitted for each grant sought. No grant may be awarded unless the completed application forms have been received. All above forms are mandatory and must be submitted with the application, if an item does not appear to be relevant write "NA" for not applicable.

**SECTION
L**

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- Did you complete the registration process for Grants.gov for the mandatory electronic submission at **www.grants.gov**?

Does your application include each of the following?

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424) marked appropriately with **84.133N-1**. Download of correct package for **84.133N-1** applying electronically
- Priority Topic identified in the Descriptive Title in Block 11 of the SF 424?
- ED Budget Information Non-Construction Programs (ED form 524) with dollar amounts not exceeding the maximum in any year?
- Voluntary Cost Share or matching included both on the “B” side of the ED 524 and explained in the budget narrative for each year?
- Budget narrative for each year with arithmetic checked for accuracy
- Program narrative, including abstract and responses to the selection criteria
- Assurances and Certifications (from the forms list in section K)
- Correctly uploaded files to Grants.gov?
- Narrative on the Protection of Human Subjects?

Did you do each of the following?

- Submit application on or before August 8, 2011?
- Provide 1 original and 2 copies of the application if submitting by post, hand-delivery or carrier service (Although not required, 1 original and 9 copies are requested and a disk copy) – if you obtained a waiver?
- Fully complete the upload of your application and receive successful validation of the submission before 4:30:00 pm, Washington, D.C. time on the closing date?

PAPERWORK BURDEN STATEMENT

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1820-0027. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 200 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection.

If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4537. **If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to:** 84.133 Grant Program, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-2700.

GRANT APPLICATION RECEIPT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

If you fail to receive the notification of application within fifteen (15) days from the closing date, call:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
(202) 245-6288

GRANT AND CONTRACT FUNDING INFORMATION

The Department of Education provides information about grant and contract opportunities electronically in several ways:

ED Internet Home Page <http://www.ed.gov/>