

American society. In particular, the increasing importance of poverty, isolation, and low educational levels—all of which are strongly correlated with minority status—as both causes and consequences of disability has important implications for how research is conducted and for the development of the capacity of researchers to conduct studies of these factors.

The LRP also commits NIDRR to advance the capacity for rigorous qualitative and quantitative research and use of state-of-the-art methodologies by providing advanced training for researchers, including those with disabilities and those from minority backgrounds; develop the capacity of researchers to explicate disability as a contextual phenomenon; and to prepare researchers to conduct disability studies that incorporate the cultural context of disability. The LRP also includes a specific provision for increasing the disability research capacity of institutions of higher education that serve primarily minority students. NIDRR has a history of and commitment to making research an inclusive, collaborative, and coordinated undertaking. Adherence to this principle has resulted in on-going capacity building efforts that involve training those who participate in all aspects of the disability and rehabilitation research field.

NIDRR recognizes the need to expand the scope of its capacity building activities to increase the participation of persons from minority backgrounds and to increase awareness of minority issues among all NIDRR researchers. NIDRR believes that the quality and benefits of research related to minorities with disabilities can be enhanced by providing information, training, collaborations, and linkages to expertise for both minority and other researchers in the disability field.

#### Priority:

The Secretary will establish a DRRP to improve the quality and utility of research related to minority individuals with disabilities by (a) building capacity of researchers, especially those from minority backgrounds, to conduct disability research, especially related to rehabilitation of minorities, and (b) enhancing knowledge and awareness of issues related to minority individuals with disabilities among disability and rehabilitation researchers generally. The project must:

(1) Identify barriers to collaboration and information exchange among minority entities, Indian tribes, and other disability researchers, especially NIDRR-funded projects and centers, and

develop strategies to overcome those barriers;

(2) Facilitate on-going communication, collaboration, and exchange of expertise between minority entities—including Indian tribes—and researchers, especially NIDRR grantees, to implement the strategies identified in paragraph (1); and

(3) Develop and provide training activities, including but not limited to conferences, workshops, in-service training, and distance education, that will: (a) expand knowledge about minorities with disabilities; (b) improve research skills and familiarity with appropriate methodologies, including the skills of researchers from minority populations; and (c) enhance the capacity for appropriate dissemination of information about and to underserved populations with disabilities.

#### Electronic Access to This Document

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<http://ocfo.ed.gov/fedreg.htm>

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<http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/index.html>

**Applicable Program Regulations:** 34 CFR Part 350.

**Program Authority:** 29 U.S.C. 760-762.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 84.133A, Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects)

Dated: May 25, 1999.

**Judith E. Heumann,**

*Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[CFDA No.: 84.133A-15]

### Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research; Notice Inviting Applications and Pre-application Meeting for a New Disability and Rehabilitation Research Project for Fiscal Year 1999

**SUMMARY:** This notice provides closing dates and other information regarding the transmittal of applications for a fiscal year 1999 competition by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research. The purpose of the Disability and Rehabilitation Research Project (DRRP) is to improve the effectiveness of services authorized under the Act. Section 21 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, requires that NIDRR reserve a portion of its appropriated funds for a fiscal year to carry out certain activities. Section 21(b)(2)(A) authorizes NIDRR to make awards to minority entities and Indian tribes to carry out activities authorized under Title II of the Act.

This notice also invites interested parties to participate in a pre-application meeting to discuss the funding priority and receive technical assistance through individual consultation and information about the funding priority. The pre-application meeting for the DRRP will be held on June 25, 1999 at the Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Room 3065, Switzer Building, 330 C Street, SW., Washington, DC between 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. NIDRR staff will also be available at this location from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. on that same day to provide technical assistance through individual consultation and information about the funding priority. For further information contact Dr. Constance Pledger, U.S. Department of Education, Room 3423, Switzer Building, 600 Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20202. Individuals who use a telecommunications device (TDD) may call the TDD number at (202) 205-5516. NIDRR will make alternate arrangements to accommodate interested parties who are unable to attend the pre-application meeting in person.

#### Assistance to Individuals With Disabilities at the Public Meeting

The meeting site is accessible to individuals with disabilities. If you will need an auxiliary aid or service to participate in the meeting (e.g., interpreting service, assistive listening

device, or materials in an alternate format), notify the contact person listed in this notice at least two weeks before the scheduled meeting date. Although we will attempt to meet a request we receive after that date, we may not be able to make available the requested auxiliary aid or service because of insufficient time to arrange it.

This notice supports the National Education Goal that calls for every adult American to possess the skills necessary to compete in a global economy.

*Deadline for Transmittal of*

*Applications:* July 13, 1999.

*Applications Available:* May 28, 1999.

*Maximum Award Amount Per Year:* \$500,000.

**Note:** The Secretary will reject without consideration or evaluation any application that proposes a project funding level that exceeds the stated maximum award amount per year (See 34 CFR 75.104(b)).

*Estimated Number of Awards:* 1.

**Note:** The estimates of funding level and awards in this notice do not bind the Department of Education to a specific level of funding or number of grants.

*Project Period:* 36 months.

*Eligible Applicants:* Parties eligible to apply for a grant under this program are minority entities and Indian tribes. Minority entities are defined as a Historically Black College or University (a Part B institution, as defined in Section 322(2) of the Higher Education Act of 1965), a Hispanic-serving institution of higher education, an American Indian tribal college or university, or another institution of higher education whose minority

student enrollment is at least 50 percent.

*Applicable Regulations:* (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), 34 CFR Parts 74, 75, 77, 80, 81, 82, 85, and 86; (b) Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects and Centers—34 CFR Part 350 (see particularly Subpart B). The notice of final funding priority on Building Capacity for Research on Underserved Populations with Disabilities is published elsewhere in this issue of the **Federal Register**.

*For Applications Contact:* The Grants and Contracts Service Team (GCST), Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., Switzer Building, 3317, Washington, D.C. 20202, or call (202) 205-8207. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the TDD number at (202) 205-9860. The preferred method for requesting information is to FAX your request to (202) 205-8717.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain a copy of the application package in an alternate format by contacting the GCST. However, the Department is not able to reproduce in an alternate format the standard forms included in the application package.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Donna Nangle, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., room 3418, Switzer Building, Washington, D.C. 20202-2645. Telephone: (202) 205-5880. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the TDD number at (202) 205-2742. Internet: Donna\_Nangle@ed.gov.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternate format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the contact person listed in the preceding paragraph.

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**Program Authority:** 29 U.S.C. 718.

Dated: May 25, 1999.

**Judith E. Heumann,**

*Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.*

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