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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services Overview Information; National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR)—Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects and Centers Program—Field Initiated (FI) Projects; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Numbers: 84.133G-1 (Research) and 84.133G-2 (Development).

Dates: Applications Available: October 29, 2009.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: January 6, 2010.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purpose of the FI Projects program is to develop methods, procedures, and rehabilitation technology that maximize the full inclusion and integration into society, employment, independent living, family support, and economic and social self-sufficiency of individuals with disabilities, especially individuals with the most severe disabilities. Another purpose of the FI Projects program is to improve the effectiveness of services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

NIDRR makes two types of awards under the FI Projects program: Research

grants (CFDA 84.133G-1) and development grants (CFDA 84.133G-2).

In carrying out a research activity under an FI research grant, a grantee must identify one or more hypotheses or research questions and, based on the hypotheses or research questions identified, perform an intensive, systematic study directed toward producing (1) new scientific knowledge, or (2) better understanding of the subject, problem studied, or body of knowledge.

In carrying out a development activity under an FI project development grant, a grantee must use knowledge and understanding gained from research to create materials, devices, systems, or methods, including designing and developing prototypes and processes, that are beneficial to the target population. Target population means the group of individuals, organizations, or other entities expected to be affected by the project. There may be more than one target population because a project may affect those who receive services, provide services, or administer services.

Note: Different selection criteria are used for FI projects research grants (84.133G-1) and development grants (84.133G-2). Applicants must clearly indicate in the application whether they are applying for a research grant (84.133G-1) or a development grant (84.133G-2) and must address the selection criteria relevant for their grant type. Without exception, NIDRR will review each application based on the designation (*i.e.*, research (84.133G-1) or development (84.133G-2)) made by the applicant. Applications will be determined ineligible and will not be reviewed if they do not include a clear designation of research or development.

Note: This program is in concert with NIDRR's Long-Range Plan for FY 2005-2009 (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: <http://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 individuals with disabilities from traditionally underserved populations; (3) determine the best strategies and programs to improve rehabilitation outcomes for individuals with disabilities from underserved populations; (4) identify research gaps; (5) identify mechanisms of integrating research and practice; and (6) disseminate findings.

Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 764.

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 part 350.

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

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: The Administration has requested \$110,700,000 for NIDRR for FY 2010, of which we intend to use an estimated \$4,000,000 for the FI Projects competition. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$195,000-\$200,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$200,000.

Maximum Award: We will reject any application that proposes a budget exceeding \$200,000 for a single budget period of 12 months. The Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services may change the maximum amount through a notice published in the **Federal Register**.

Note: The maximum amount includes direct and indirect costs.

Estimated Number of Awards: 20.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Maximum Project Period: We will reject any application that proposes a project period exceeding 36 months. The Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services may change the maximum project period through a notice published in the **Federal Register**.

III. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants:* States; public or private agencies, including for-profit agencies; public or private organizations, including for-profit organizations; IHEs; and Indian tribes and tribal organizations.

2. *Cost Sharing or Matching:* Cost sharing is required by 34 CFR 350.62 and 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: <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/grantapps/index.html>. To obtain a copy from ED Pubs, write, fax, or call the following: Education Publications Center, P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794-1398. Telephone, toll free: 1-877-433-7827. FAX: (301) 470-1244. 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: <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html> 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 number 84.133G-1 or 84.133G-2.

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. We recommend that you limit Part III to the equivalent of no more than 50 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. You may single space 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. An application submitted in any other font (including Times Roman or Arial Narrow) will not be accepted.

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 recommended page limit

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

The application package 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 justification; other required forms; an abstract, Human Subjects narrative, Part III narrative; resumes of staff; and other related materials, if applicable.

3. Submission Dates and Times: Applications Available: October 29, 2009. Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: January 6, 2010.

Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted electronically using Electronic Grant Application System (e-Application) accessible through the Department's e-Grants site. 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. **6. Other Submission Requirements** in 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 in 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: This program is 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 of this notice.

6. Other Submission Requirements: Applications for grants under this competition 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 Field Initiated Projects program—CFDA Number 84.133G-1 (Research) or 84.133G-2 (Development) must be submitted electronically using e-

Application, accessible through the Department's e-Grants Web site at: <http://e-grants.ed.gov>.

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*.

While completing your electronic application, you will be entering data online that will be saved into a database. You may not e-mail an electronic copy of a grant application to us.

Please note the following:

- You must complete the electronic submission of your grant application by 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. E-Application will not accept an application for this competition after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process.
- The hours of operation of the e-Grants Web site are 6:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Wednesday; and 6:00 a.m. Thursday until 8:00 p.m. Sunday, Washington, DC time. Please note that, because of maintenance, the system is unavailable between 8:00 p.m. on Sundays and 6:00 a.m. on Mondays, and between 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays and 6:00 a.m. on Thursdays, Washington, DC time. Any modifications to these hours are posted on the e-Grants Web site.

- 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 attach any narrative sections of your application as files in a .DOC

(document), .RTF (rich text), or .PDF (Portable Document) format. If you upload a file type other than the three file types specified in this paragraph 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.

- Prior to submitting your electronic application, you may wish to print a copy of it for your records.

- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgment that will include a PR/Award number (an identifying number unique to your application).

- Within three working days after submitting your electronic application, fax a signed copy of the SF 424 to the Application Control Center after following these steps:

- (1) Print SF 424 from e-Application.

- (2) The applicant's Authorizing Representative must sign this form.

- (3) Place the PR/Award number in the upper right hand corner of the hard-copy signature page of the SF 424.

- (4) Fax the signed SF 424 to the Application Control Center at (202) 245-6272.

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

Application Deadline Date Extension in Case of e-Application Unavailability:

If you are prevented from electronically submitting your application on the application deadline date because e-Application is unavailable, we will grant you an extension of one business day to enable you to transmit your application electronically, by mail, or by hand delivery. We will grant this extension if—

- (1) You are a registered user of e-Application and you have initiated an electronic application for this competition; and

- (2)(a) E-Application is unavailable for 60 minutes or more between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date; or

- (b) E-Application is unavailable for any period of time between 3:30 p.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.

We must acknowledge and confirm these periods of unavailability before granting you an extension. To request this extension or to confirm our acknowledgment of any system unavailability, you may contact either (1) the person listed elsewhere in this notice under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** (see VII. Agency Contact) or (2) the e-Grants help desk at 1-888-336-

8930. If e-Application is unavailable due to technical problems with the system and, therefore, the application deadline is extended, an e-mail will be sent to all registered users who have initiated an e-Application. Extensions referred to in this section apply only to the unavailability of e-Application.

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 e-Application because—

- You do not have access to the Internet; or

- You do not have the capacity to upload large documents to e-Application; 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 prevents 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 6027, Potomac Center Plaza (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 [Applicants must identify either CFDA Number 84.133G-1 (Research) or 84.133G-2 (Development) depending on the designation of their proposed project.]), 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 [Applicants must identify either CFDA Number 84.133G-1 (Research) or 84.133G-2 (Development) depending on the designation of their proposed project.]), 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 grant 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 this competition are from 34 CFR 350.54 and 350.55 and are listed in the application package.

Note: There are two different sets of selection criteria for FI projects: One set to evaluate applications proposing to carry out research activities (CFDA 84.133G-1), and a second set to evaluate applications proposing to carry out development activities (CFDA 84.133G-2). Each applicant will be evaluated using the selection criteria for the type of project the applicant designates in its application.

2. *Review and Selection Process:* Additional factors we consider in selecting an application for an award are as follows:

The Secretary is interested in outcomes-oriented research or development projects that use rigorous scientific methodologies. To address this interest, applicants are encouraged to articulate goals, objectives, and expected outcomes for the proposed research or development activities. Proposals should describe how results and planned outputs are expected to contribute to advances in knowledge, improvements in policy and practice, and public benefits for individuals with disabilities. Applicants should propose projects that are designed to be consistent with these goals. We encourage applicants to include in their applications a description of how results will measure progress towards achievement of anticipated outcomes (including a discussion of measures of effectiveness), 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. Submission of the information identified in this section is voluntary, except where required by the selection criteria listed in the application package.

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:* 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 <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>.

Note: NIDRR will provide information by letter to grantees on how and when to submit the performance report.

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

- The percentage of newly awarded NIDRR projects that are multi-site, collaborative, controlled studies of interventions and programs.
- 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 grants that include studies funded by NIDRR that assess the effectiveness of interventions, programs, and devices using rigorous and appropriate methods.

Each grantee must annually report on its performance through NIDRR's Annual Performance Report (APR) form. NIDRR uses APR information submitted by grantees to assess progress on these measures.

VII. Agency Contact

For Further Information Contact: Contact either Lynn Medley or Marlene Spencer as follows: Lynn Medley, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 6027, 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 6026, PCP, Washington, DC 20202-2700. Telephone: (202) 245-7532 or by e-mail: Marlene.Spencer@ed.gov.

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

Electronic Access to This Document: 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) on the Internet at the following site: <http://www.ed.gov/news/fedregister>.

To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site. If you have questions about using PDF, call the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), toll free, at 1-888-293-6498; or in the Washington, DC, area at (202) 512-1530.

Note: The official version of this document is the document published in the **Federal Register**. Free Internet access to the official edition of the **Federal Register** and the Code of Federal Regulations is available on GPO Access at: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html>.

Delegation of Authority: The Secretary of Education has delegated authority to Andrew J. Pepin, Executive Administrator for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, to perform the functions of the Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

Dated: October 26, 2009.

Andrew J. Pepin,

Executive Administrator for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

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BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

Sunshine Act Notice

AGENCY: U.S. Election Assistance Commission.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting agenda.