

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

FY (enter year) APPLICATION PACKAGE FOR NEW GRANTS

UNDER
THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY AND REHABILITATION
RESEARCH

REHABILITATION ENGINEERING RESEARCH CENTERS (RERC)

(enter name of competition)

CFDA NUMBER: 84.133E-(enter schedule #)

FORM APPROVED



OMB No. 1820-0027, EXP. DATE xx/xx/xxxx
SF FORM 424, x/xx/xxxx

DATED MATERIAL - OPEN IMMEDIATELY
CLOSING DATE: (enter date)

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SECTION A

DEAR APPLICANT LETTER

(enter date)

Dear Applicant:

The Secretary invites applications for a new award in fiscal year (FY) (enter year) under the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers program, for a (enter name of priority) (CFDA Number - 84.133E-(enter the schedule number)).

NIDRR is seeking applications that address all elements of the priority, and that propose appropriate, high-quality research methodologies. It is critical that proposals describe expected public benefits, especially benefits for individuals with disabilities, and propose projects that are designed to demonstrate outcomes that are consistent with the proposed goals.

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

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

This application package contains information and the required forms for potential applicants to apply and be considered for a FY (enter year) grant award under this competition, including the published Federal Register notice dated (enter date). The background statement from the Notice of Proposed Priorities is in Section D.

The closing date (application deadline) is (enter date).

Potential applicants are advised to read the materials in this application package carefully. Please pay particular attention to the information contained in the Notice Inviting Applications on the eligible applicants and the dollar amount available for this competition, Section F – the Selection Criteria, Section G – Protection of Human Subjects, and Section H – Application Format and Instructions. Applications must be responsive to the absolute priority in Section C and the statutory, regulatory, and general requirements for the RRTC 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 the application.

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 \$(**enter amount**) for a single budget period of 12 months for the (**enter name**) of the priority (CFDA Number - 84.133E-(**enter schedule number**)). The indirect cost rate is your institution'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 revised closing date, (**enter date**). It may take up to several hours for this process. Please allow several hours or a full day to submit your application. If there is a submission error, additional time will be needed 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 **(enter date)** 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 **(enter name)** at **(enter email address)** by **(enter date)** 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 **(enter date)**. Requests for individual consultations during this one-hour window must be made in advance to **(enter name)**.

If you have any questions about the information in this application package, please contact **(enter name)** at **(enter email address)** or by telephone at **(enter telephone number)** or **(enter name)** at **(enter email address)** or by telephone at **(enter telephone number)**. 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 this program.

Sincerely,

(insert name)
Director,
National Institute on Disability and
Rehabilitation Research

SECTION B

**NOTICE INVITING APPLICATIONS FOR NEW
AWARDS**

INSERT PUBLISHED NOTICE INVITING APPLICATIONS FOR NEW
AWARDS

SECTION C

**NOTICE OF FINAL PRIORITY NOTICE
PUBLISHED: (ENTER DATE)**

INSERT PUBLISHED NOTICE OF FINAL PRIORITY

SECTION D

BACKGROUND STATEMENT

INSERT BACKGROUND STATEMENT

SECTION E

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS OF RERC'S

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs)

General Requirements of RERC program

RERCs carry out research or demonstration activities in support of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, by-

- Developing and disseminating innovative methods of applying advanced technology, scientific achievement, and psychological and social knowledge to : (a) solve rehabilitation problems and remove environmental barriers, and (b) study and evaluate new or emerging technologies, products, or environments and their effectiveness and benefits; or
- Demonstrating and disseminating: (a) innovative models for the delivery of cost-effective rehabilitation technology services to rural and urban areas; and (b) other scientific research to assist in meeting the employment and independent living needs of individuals with severe disabilities; and
- Facilitating service delivery systems change through: (a) the development, evaluation, and dissemination of innovative consumer-responsive and individual- and family-centered models for the delivery to both rural and urban areas of innovative, cost-effective rehabilitation technology services; and (b) other scientific research to assist in meeting the employment and independence needs of individuals with severe disabilities.

Each RERC must be operated by, or in collaboration with, one or more institutions of higher education or one or more nonprofit organizations.

Each RERC must provide training opportunities, in conjunction with institutions of higher education or nonprofit organizations, to assist individuals, including individuals with disabilities, to become rehabilitation technology researchers and practitioners.

Each RERC must emphasize the principles of universal design in its product research and development. Universal design is “the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design” (North Carolina State University, 1997.

http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/about_ud/udprinciplestext.htm).

Additional information on the RERCs can be found at:

<http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/index.html>.

RERC REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL RERC PRIORITIES

Under each priority, the RERC **must** be designed to contribute to the following outcomes:

(1) Increased technical and scientific knowledge base relevant to its designated priority research area. The RERC must contribute to this outcome by conducting high-quality, rigorous research and development projects.

(2) Innovative technologies, products, environments, performance guidelines, and monitoring and assessment tools applicable to its designated priority research area. The RERC must contribute to this outcome through the development and testing of these innovations.

(3) Improved research capacity in its designated priority research area. The RERC must contribute to this outcome by collaborating with the relevant industry, professional associations, and institutions of higher education.

(4) Improved focus on cutting edge developments in technologies within its designated priority research area. The RERC must contribute to this outcome by identifying and communicating with NIDRR and the field regarding trends and evolving product concepts related to its designated priority research area.

(5) Increased impact of research in the designated priority research area. The RERC must contribute to this outcome by providing technical assistance to public and private organizations, individuals with disabilities, and employers on policies, guidelines, and standards related to its designated priority research area.

(6) Increased transfer of RERC-developed technologies to the marketplace. The RERC must contribute to this outcome by developing and implementing a plan for ensuring that all technologies developed by the RERC are made available to the public. The technology transfer plan must be developed in the first year of the project period in consultation with the NIDRR-funded Disability Rehabilitation Research Project, Center on Knowledge Translation for Technology Transfer.

In addition, under each priority, the RERC must--

- Have the capability to design, build, and test prototype devices and assist in the transfer of successful solutions to relevant production and service delivery settings;
- Evaluate the efficacy and safety of its new products, instrumentation, or assistive devices;
- Provide as part of its proposal, and then implement, a plan that describes how it will include, as appropriate, individuals with disabilities or their representatives in all phases of its activities, including research, development, training, dissemination, and evaluation;
- Provide as part of its proposal, and then implement, in consultation with the NIDRR-funded National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR), a plan to disseminate its research results to individuals with disabilities, their representatives, disability

organizations, service providers, professional journals, manufacturers, and other interested parties;

- Conduct a state-of-the-science conference on its designated priority research area in the fourth year of the project period, and publish a comprehensive report on the final outcomes of the conference in the fifth year of the project period; and
- Coordinate research projects with other relevant projects, including NIDRR-funded projects, as identified through consultation with the NIDRR project officer.

SECTION F

SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection criteria that are listed in this section are taken directly from the Federal regulations for this NIDRR-administered program (C.F.R 350.54). They are a subset of all of the selection criteria that are available for NIDRR's use, and we provide them here as an example. For every grant competition that NIDRR administers under this program, NIDRR will choose the criteria that match the requirements of the specific priority that is being competed.

Selection Criteria

We use the following selection criteria to evaluate applications under RERC program. The maximum score for all of these criteria is 100 points. The maximum score for each criterion is indicated in parentheses.

(a) Importance of the problem (10 points total)

- (1) The Secretary considers the importance of the problem.
- (2) In determining the importance of the problem, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant clearly describes the need and target population.

(b) Design of research activities (25 points total).

- (1) The Secretary considers the extent to which the design of research activities is likely to be effective in accomplishing the objectives of the project.
- (2) In determining the quality of research activities, the Secretary considers the extent to which the methodology of each proposed research activity is meritorious, including consideration of the extent to which—
 - (A) The proposed design includes a comprehensive and informed review of the current literature, demonstrating knowledge of the state-of-the-art;
 - (B) Each research hypothesis is theoretically sound and based on current knowledge;
 - (C) Each sample population is appropriate and of sufficient size;
 - (D) The data collection and measurement techniques are appropriate and likely to be effective; and
 - (E) The data analysis methods are appropriate.

(c) Design of development activities (25 points total).

- (1) The Secretary considers the extent to which the design of development activities is likely to be effective in accomplishing the objectives of the project.
- (2) In determining the quality of development activities, the Secretary considers the extent to which the plan for development, clinical testing, and evaluation of new

devices and technology is likely to yield significant products or techniques, including consideration of the extent to which-

- (A) The proposed project will use the most effective and appropriate technology available in developing the new device or technique;
- (B) The proposed development is based on a sound conceptual model that demonstrates an awareness of the state-of-the-art in technology;
- (C) The new device or technique will be developed and tested in an appropriate environment;
- (D) The new device or technique is likely to be cost-effective and useful;
- (E) The new device or technique has the potential for commercial or private manufacture, marketing, and distribution of the product; and
- (F) The proposed development efforts include adequate quality controls and, as appropriate, repeated testing of products.

(d) Design of training activities (5 points total)

- (1) The Secretary considers the extent to which the design of training activities is likely to be effective in accomplishing the objectives of the project.
- (2) In determining the quality of training activities, the Secretary considers the extent to which the type, extent, and quality of the proposed clinical and laboratory research experience, including the opportunity to participate in advanced-level research, are likely to develop highly qualified researchers.

(e) Design of dissemination activities (5 points total)

- (1) The Secretary considers the extent to which the design of dissemination activities is likely to be effective in accomplishing the objectives of the project.
- (2) In determining the quality of dissemination activities, the Secretary considers the extent to which the materials to be disseminated are likely to be effective and usable, including consideration of their quality, clarity, variety, and format.

(f) Plan of operation. (5 points total)

- (1) The Secretary considers the quality of the plan of operation.
- (2) In determining the quality of the plan of operation, the Secretary considers the adequacy of the plan of operation to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, and timelines for accomplishing project tasks.

(g) Adequacy and reasonableness of the budget (4 points total)

- (1) The Secretary considers the adequacy and the reasonableness of the proposed budget.
- (2) In determining the adequacy and the reasonableness of the proposed budget, the Secretary considers the extent to which the budget for the project, including any subcontracts, is adequately justified to support the proposed project activities.

(h) Plan of evaluation (8 points total).

- (1) The Secretary considers the quality of the plan of evaluation.
- (2) In determining the quality of the plan of evaluation, the Secretary considers the extent to which the plan of evaluation will be used to improve the performance of the project through the feedback generated by its periodic assessments.

(i) Project staff (8 points total).

- (1) The Secretary considers the quality of the project staff.
- (2) In determining the quality of the project staff, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.
- (3) In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - (i) The extent to which the key personnel and other key staff have appropriate training and experience in disciplines required to conduct all proposed activities;

(ii) The extent to which the commitment of staff time is adequate to accomplish all the proposed activities of the project.

(j) Adequacy and accessibility of resources (5 points total).

(1) The Secretary considers the adequacy and accessibility of the applicant's resources to implement the proposed project.

In determining the adequacy and accessibility of resources, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the applicant is committed to provide adequate facilities, equipment, other resources, including administrative support, and laboratories, if appropriate;

(ii) The extent to which the facilities, equipment, and other resources are appropriately accessible to individuals with disabilities who may use the facilities, equipment, and other resources of the project.

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 AND INSTRUCTIONS

APPLICATION FORMAT AND INSTRUCTIONS

Applications for grants under this program must be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site (grants.gov) by the closing date unless you qualify for an exception to this requirement.

It is recommended that your electronic application (or paper application if you have requested and been approved for a waiver), be organized in the following manner and include the following:

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 only upload 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.

1. Application for Federal Assistance (Form SF 424)

This form requires basic identifying information about the applicant and the application.

Applicants should note that if there are multiple RERCs open to use the **RELEVANT** CFDA and Title from the NFP/NIA as the title.

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 Programs (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 Federal Funds in Section A – Budget Summary and Non-Federal Funds Section B – Budget Summary.

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 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: If you are providing voluntary cost share. 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 in a separate section of the budget narrative labeled “Cost Share”.

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 General Requirements of RRTC’s found in Section E and the 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 125 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 recommended page limit does not apply to the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424); the budget narrative, the forms; 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. 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
AND
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 will 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 project narrative should address the specific selection criteria for the competition. The specific review criteria vary according to the specific programs and are included in this application package. Additionally, applicants should provide clearly stated hypotheses or research questions, 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 Section H – Application Format and Instructions 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 125 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. 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. It can be single or double-spaced. Upload the Abstract to ED Abstract.

7. WHAT IS THE ALLOWABLE INDIRECT COST RATE?

For the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (133E) applicants must have a current indirect cost rate agreement to charge indirect costs to a grant. The maximum amount of the award includes both direct and indirect costs (ED Budget Information non-Construction programs (ED-524). The Department's Indirect Cost Group has more information on what you should know about 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.

9. CAN INDIVIDUALS APPLY FOR GRANTS?

Individuals are not eligible to apply for the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers Program.

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 as to whether or not your subject area or proposed approach is likely to receive approval.

11. HOW DO I ENSURE THAT MY APPLICATION WILL BE REVIEWED UNDER THE CORRECT COMPETITION?

Applicants must clearly include the competition title and CFDA number on the Standard Form 424, and include a project title that describes the project, based on the competition.

12. 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 makes awards within six to seven months after 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. This information is **not** posted on the NIDRR homepage or Grants.gov.

13. 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 a minimum of six month of activities to report on.

14. 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.

15. WILL ALL APPROVED APPLICATIONS BE FUNDED?

No. Peer review 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.

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

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 government-wide 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.**

19. HOW WILL I RECEIVE FUNDING FOR THE ADDITIONAL YEARS OF MY GRANT (CONTINUATION AWARD)?

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)

DUNS NUMBER INSTRUCTIONS

NOTE: Check with your fiscal office to see if your institution has an assigned DUN 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 SUBMISSION PROCEDURES AND
TIPS FOR APPLICANTS**

AND

APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

INSERT CURRENT GRANTS.GOV SUBMISSION PROCEDURES AND TIPS
FOR APPLICANTS

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 84.133E-(enter schedule number))
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.

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 84.133E-(enter schedule number))
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

VOLUNTARY LETTER OF INTENT

Notice of Intent to Apply:

Due to the open nature of the XXXX competition, and to assist with the selection of reviewers for this competition, NIDRR is requesting all potential applicants to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI). The submission is not mandatory and the content of the LOI will not be peer reviewed or otherwise used to rate an applicant's application.

Each LOI should be limited to a maximum of four pages and include the following information: (1) the title of the proposed project, which final priority will be addressed, the name of the company, the name of the Project Director or Principal Investigator (PI), and the names of partner institutions and entities; (2) a brief statement of the vision, goals, and objectives of the proposed project and a description of its activities at a sufficient level of detail to allow NIDRR to select potential peer reviewers; (3) a list of proposed project staff including the Project Director or PI and key personnel; (4) a list of individuals whose selection as a peer reviewer might constitute a conflict of interest due to involvement in proposal development, selection as an advisory board member, co-PI relationships, etc.; and (5) contact information for the Project Director or PI. Submission of a LOI is a prerequisite for eligibility to submit an application.

NIDRR will accept the optional LOI via surface mail, e-mail, or facsimile by (INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER). The LOI must be sent to: Surface mail: Person's Name, U.S. Department of Education, 550 12th Street, SW, room XXXX, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202; or fax (202) 245-7323; or e-mail: persons.name@ed.gov

For further information regarding the LOI requirement contact Person's Name at (202) 245-XXXX.

SECTION L

REQUIRED FORMS AND FORM INSTRUCTIONS

REQUIRED 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.

Instructions for each form are provided on the Grants.gov website.

SECTION M
APPLICATION CHECKLIST

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

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

Does your application include each of the following?

Cover page (SF 424) marked appropriately with **84.133E-(enter schedule number)**.
Download of correct package for **84.133E-(enter schedule number)** applying electronically

Priority Topic identified in the Descriptive Title in Block 12 of the SF 424

Budget form (ED form 524) with dollar amounts not exceeding the maximum in any year

Voluntary Cost Share included side “B” 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 on e-Application

Narrative on the Protection of Human Subjects

Did you do each of the following?

Submit application on or before **(insert closing date)**

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

Provide the required 1 original and 2 copies of the application if submitting by post, hand-delivery, or carrier service. (If possible, please also send 9 additional paper copies and a disk copy.)

Use the correct mailing address from Section J if submitting by post, hand-delivery or carrier service

PAPERWORK BURDEN STATEMENT

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 200 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefits (the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the program regulations under 34 CFR Parts 74-77, 80-86, and 97). Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1820-0027. Note: Please do not return the completed application to this address.