

*Summary of potential costs and benefits:* The potential cost associated with this proposed priority is minimal while the benefits are significant. Grantees may anticipate costs associated with completing the application process in terms of staff time, copying, and mailing or delivery. The use of e-Application technology reduces mailing and copying costs significantly.

The benefits of the research infrastructure capacity building projects have been well established over the years in that similar projects have been completed. This proposed priority will generate new knowledge through a dissemination, utilization, training, and technical assistance project.

The benefit of this proposed priority and proposed applications and project requirements will be the establishment of a new DRRP projects that generates, disseminates, and promotes the use of new information that will improve the options for disabled individuals to perform regular activities in the community.

*Applicable Program Regulations:* 34 CFR part 350.

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**Note:** The official version of this document is 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.access.gpo.gov/nara/index.html>.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 84.133A, Disability Rehabilitation Research Project.)

**Program Authority:** 29 U.S.C. 762(g) and 764(a).

Dated: May 6, 2003.

**Robert H. Pasternack,**

*Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**RIN 1820-ZA23**

### National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

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

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed priorities.

**SUMMARY:** The Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services proposes priorities for up to seven awards under the Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTC) Program under the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR). The Assistant Secretary may use these priorities for competition in fiscal year (FY) 2003 and later years. We take this action to focus research attention on areas of national need. We intend these priorities to improve the rehabilitation services and outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

**DATES:** We must receive your comments on or before June 9, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** Address all comments about these proposed priorities to Donna Nangle, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3412, Switzer Building, Washington, DC 20202-2645. If you prefer to send your comments through the Internet, use the following address: [donna.nangle@ed.gov](mailto:donna.nangle@ed.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Donna Nangle. Telephone: (202) 205-5880.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the TDD number at (202) 205-4475 or via the Internet: [donna.nangle@ed.gov](mailto:donna.nangle@ed.gov).

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the contact person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Invitation To Comment

We invite you to submit comments regarding these proposed priorities.

We invite you to assist us in complying with the specific requirements of Executive Order 12866 and its overall requirement of reducing regulatory burden that might result from these proposed priorities. Please let us know of any further opportunities we should take to reduce potential costs or increase potential benefits while preserving the effective and efficient administration of the program.

During and after the comment period, you may inspect all public comments about these priorities in Room 3412, Switzer Building, 330 C Street SW., Washington, DC, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m., Eastern time, Monday through Friday of each week except Federal holidays.

#### Assistance to Individuals With Disabilities in Reviewing the Rulemaking Record

On request, we will supply an appropriate aid, such as a reader or print magnifier, to an individual with a disability who needs assistance to review the comments or other documents in the public rulemaking record for these proposed priorities. If you want to schedule an appointment for this type of aid, please contact the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

We will announce the final priorities in a notice in the **Federal Register**. We will determine the final priorities after considering responses to this notice and other information available to the Department. This notice does not preclude us from proposing or funding additional priorities, subject to meeting applicable rulemaking requirements.

**Note:** This notice does *not* solicit applications. In any year in which we choose to use these proposed priorities, we invite applications through a notice published in the **Federal Register**. When inviting applications we designate each priority as absolute, competitive preference, or invitational. 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 either (1) awarding additional points, depending on how well or the extent to which the application meets the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i)); or (2) selecting an application that meets the competitive priority over an application of comparable merit that does not meet the competitive priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(ii)).

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

**Note:** NIDRR supports the goals of President Bush's New Freedom Initiative (NFI). The NFI can be accessed on the Internet at the following site: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/freedominitiative/freedominitiative.html>.

These proposed priorities are in concert with NIDRR's Long-Range Plan (the Plan). The Plan is comprehensive