

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[CFDA No.: 84.133A-6]

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services; National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research-Disability Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRP) Program; Notice Inviting Applications for Fiscal Year (FY) 2003

Note to Applicants: This notice is a complete application package. Together with the statute authorizing the program and the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), this notice contains all of the information, application forms, and instructions you need to apply for a grant under this competition.

Purpose of the Program: The purpose of the DRRP program is to improve the effectiveness of services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (the Act), as amended. For FY 2003 the competition for new awards focuses on projects designed to meet the priority we describe in the PRIORITY section of this application notice. We intend this priority to improve rehabilitation services and outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

In order to provide applicants with a 60-day application period and to ensure that this grant is awarded before the end of FY 2003, NIDRR is inviting applications based on the proposed priority. NIDRR will publish the final priority as soon as possible after the comment period closes on May 16, 2003.

Depending upon the comments that NIDRR receives, the final priority may include revisions to the proposed priority. It is generally the policy of the Department of Education not to solicit applications before the publication of a final priority. However, in this case, it is essential to solicit applications on the basis of the proposed priority in order to allow applicants sufficient time to prepare applications of appropriate quality to be funded. Applicants are advised to begin to develop their applications based on the proposed priority. If changes are made in the final priority, applicants will be given an opportunity to revise or resubmit their applications.

The notice of proposed priority for collaborative research for Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems (TBIMS) requires the applicants to collaborate with the current TBIMS grantees. The National Rehabilitation Information Center has the contact information for the TBIMS grantees at <http://www.naric.com/search/pd/notice>. NIDRR's current TBIMS grantees are:

University of Alabama at Birmingham TBIMS; Northern California TBIMS of Care at Santa Clara Valley Medical Center (SCVMC); Rocky Mountain Regional Brain Injury System (RMRBIS) at Craig Hospital; Spaulding/Partners TBIMS at Harvard Medical School; Southeastern Michigan TBI System (SEMTBIS) at Wayne State University; Mayo Clinic TBIMS; TBIMS of Mississippi (TBIMSM) at Methodist Rehabilitation Center; JFK-Johnson Rehabilitation Institute TBIMS; New York TBIMS (NYTBIMS) at Mount Sinai School of Medicine; Carolinas TBI Rehabilitation and Research System (CTBIRRS) at Charlotte Mecklenburg Hospital Authority; Ohio Regional TBIMS at Ohio State University; Moss TBIMS at Albert Einstein Healthcare Network; University of Pittsburgh Brain Injury Model System (UPBI); North Texas TBIMS (NT-TBIMS) at University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center; TBIMS at Virginia Commonwealth University; and University of Washington TBIMS.

Eligible Applicants: Parties eligible to apply for grants under this program are States; public or private agencies, including for-profit agencies; public or private organizations, including for-profit organizations; institutions of higher education; and Indian tribes and tribal organizations.

Applications Available: May 14, 2003.

Deadline for Transmittal of

Applications: July 14, 2003.

Estimated Number of Awards: 2-3.

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

Maximum Award Amount: \$600,000.

Note: We will reject without consideration or evaluation any application that proposes a budget exceeding the stated maximum award amount in any year (See 34 CFR 75.104(b)).

Page Limit: The Secretary strongly recommends the following:

(1) A one-page abstract;

(2) An Application Narrative (*i.e.*, Part III that addresses selection criteria that will be used by reviewers in evaluating individual proposals) of no more than 75 numbered, double-spaced (no more than 3 lines per vertical inch) 8.5" x 11" pages (on one side only) with one inch margins (top, bottom, and sides). The application narrative page limit recommendation does not apply to: Part I—the electronically scannable form; Part II—the budget section (including the narrative budget justification); and Part IV—the assurances and certifications; and

(3) A font no smaller than a 12-point font and an average character density no greater than 14 characters per inch.

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 80, 81, 82, 85, 86 and 97, and (b) the program regulations 34 CFR part 350.

Priority

Collaborative Research Projects in Traumatic Brain Injury

This competition focuses on a project designed to meet the priority in the notice of proposed priority for this program, published in the **Federal Register** on April 16, 2003 (68 FR 18601).

For FY 2003, this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105 (c)(3) we consider only applications that meet this priority.

Selection Criteria

We use the following selection criteria to evaluate applications under this program.

The maximum score for all of these criteria is 100 points. The maximum score for each criterion is indicated in parentheses.

(a) *Responsiveness to an absolute or competitive priority* (5 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the responsiveness of the application to an absolute or competitive priority published in the **Federal Register**.

(2) In determining the application's responsiveness to the absolute or competitive priority, the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the applicant's proposed activities are likely to achieve the purposes of the absolute or competitive priority. (5 points)

(b) *Design of research activities* (40 points).

(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 extent to which the design is likely to be effective in accomplishing the objectives of the project, the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the research activities constitute a coherent, sustained approach to research in the field, including a substantial addition to the state-of-the art. (10 points)

(ii) 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