

the current literature, demonstrating knowledge of the state-of-the art; (5 points)

(B) Each research hypothesis is theoretically sound and based on current knowledge; (6 points)

(C) Each sample population is appropriate and of sufficient size; (7 points)

(D) The data collection and measurement techniques are appropriate and likely to be effective; (7 points) and

(E) The data analysis methods are appropriate. (5 points)

(c) *Design of dissemination activities* (6 points).

(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 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 materials to be disseminated are likely to be effective and usable, including consideration of their quality, clarity, variety, and format. (2 points)

(ii) The extent to which the materials and information to be disseminated and the methods for dissemination are appropriate to the target population. (2 points)

(iii) The extent to which the information to be disseminated will be accessible to individuals with disabilities. (2 points)

(d) *Plan of operation* (10 points).

(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. (4 points)

(3) In addition, the Secretary also considers whether there is a clearly delineated plan for research management, with focus on quality controls for data collection, management of research protocols, and provisions for oversight at collaborating sites. (6 points)

(e) *Collaboration* (10 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of collaboration.

(2) In determining the quality of collaboration, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the applicant's proposed collaboration with one or more agencies, organizations, or

institutions is likely to be effective in achieving the relevant proposed activities of the project. (5 points)

(ii) The extent to which agencies, organizations, or institutions demonstrate a commitment to collaborate with the applicant. (5 points)

(f) *Adequacy and reasonableness of the budget* (5 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the adequacy and the reasonableness of the budget.

(2) In determining the adequacy and the reasonableness of the proposed budget, the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed project activities. (3 points)

(ii) The extent to which the applicant is of sufficient size, scope, and quality to effectively carry out the activities in an efficient manner. (2 points)

(g) *Plan of Evaluation* (8 points).

(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 provides for periodic assessment of a project's progress that is based on identified performance measures that—

(i) Are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and expected impacts on the target population; (4 points) and

(ii) Are objective, and quantifiable or qualitative, as appropriate. (4 points)

(h) *Project Staff* (6 points).

(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. (2 points)

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers one or more of the following:

(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. (2 points)

(ii) The extent to which the commitment of staff time is adequate to accomplish all the proposed activities of the project. (2 points)

(a) *Adequacy and accessibility of resources* (10 points).

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

(2) In determining the adequacy and accessibility of resources, the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

(i) The quality of an applicant's past performance in carrying out a grant. (2 points)

(ii) The extent to which the applicant has appropriate access to clinical populations and organizations representing individuals with disabilities to support advanced clinical rehabilitation research. (6 points)

(iii) 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. (2 points)

Pre-Application Meeting: Interested parties are invited to participate in a pre-application meeting to discuss the funding priorities and to receive technical assistance through individual consultation and information about the funding priorities. The pre-application meeting will be held on May 28, 2003 either in person or by conference call at the Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Switzer Building, room 3065, 330 C Street, SW., Washington, DC between 10 a.m. and 12 noon. NIDRR staff will also be available from 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. on that same day to provide technical assistance through individual consultation and information about the funding priority. For further information or to make arrangements to attend contact Donna Nangle, Switzer Building, room 3412, 330 C Street, SW., Washington, DC 20202. Telephone (202) 205-5880 or via Internet: donna.nangle@ed.gov.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call (202) 205-4475.

Assistance to Individuals With Disabilities at the Public Meetings

The meeting site is accessible to individuals with disabilities, and a sign language interpreter will be available. If you will need an auxiliary aid or service other than a sign language interpreter in order to participate in the meeting (*e.g.*, other interpreting service such as oral, cued speech, or tactile interpreter; assistive listening device; or materials in 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 this date, we may not be able to make available the requested auxiliary aid or service because of insufficient time to arrange it.