

## Priorities

This competition focuses on projects designed to meet the priorities in the notice of proposed priorities for the programs published in the **Federal Register** on May 9, 2003. (**Note:** See individual priority for **Federal Register** cite.) Under 34 CFR 75.105 (c)(3) we consider only applications that meet one or more of the following priorities. A separate application is required for each priority area.

*Absolute Priority 1—Disability Demographics and Statistics Center* (84.133B–1) (68 FR 25004)

*Absolute Priority 2—Community Integration Outcomes Centers* (84.133B–5) (68 FR 25019)

*Absolute Priority 3—Health and Function Centers* (84.133B–7) (68 FR 25011)

## Selection Criteria

The selection criteria to evaluate applications under these priorities are included in the application package.

*For Applications Contact:* Education Publications Center (ED Pubs), PO 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), you may call (toll free): 1–877–576–7734.

You may also contact ED Pubs at its Web site: <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html>, or you may contact ED Pubs at its e-mail address: [edpubs@inet.ed.gov](mailto:edpubs@inet.ed.gov).

If you request an application from ED Pubs, be sure to identify these competitions as follows: CFDA number 84.133B–1, 84.133B–5, or 84.133B–7.

## Application Procedures

**NOTE:** Some of the procedures in these instructions for transmitting applications differ from those in the 34 CFR 75.102. Under the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553) the Department generally offers interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed regulations. However, these amendments make procedural changes only and do not establish new substantive policy. Therefore, under 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(A), the Secretary has determined that proposed rulemaking is not required.

### *Pilot Project for Electronic Submission of Applications*

In FY 2003, the U.S. Department of Education is continuing to expand its pilot project for electronic submission of applications to include additional formula grant programs and additional discretionary grant competitions. The Rehabilitation Research and Training

Centers (RRTC) program—CFDA #84.133B is one of the programs included in the pilot project. If you are an applicant under the RRTC program, you may submit your application to us in either electronic or paper format.

The pilot project involves the use of the Electronic Grant Application System (e-Application) portion of the Grant Administration and Payment System (GAPS). Users of e-Application will be entering data on-line while completing their applications. You may not e-mail a soft copy of a grant application to us. If you participate in this voluntary pilot project by submitting an application electronically, the data you enter on-line will be saved into a database. We request your participation in e-Application. We shall continue to evaluate its success and solicit suggestions for improvement.

If you participate in e-Application, please note the following:

- Your participation is voluntary.
- You will not receive any additional point value because you submit a grant application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you submit an application in paper format. When you enter the e-Application system, you will find information about its hours of operation.
- You may submit all documents electronically, including the Application for Federal Assistance (ED 424), Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications.
- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement, which 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 Application for Federal Assistance (ED 424) to the Application Control Center after following these steps:

- (1) Print ED 424 from the e-Application system.
- (2) The institution'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 ED 424.
- (4) Fax the signed ED 424 to the Application Control Center at (202) 260–1349.

• We may request that you give us original signatures on all other forms at a later date.

• *Closing Date Extension in Case of System Unavailability:* If you elect to participate in the e-Application pilot for the RRTC program and you are prevented from submitting your

application on the closing date because the e-Application system is unavailable, we will grant you an extension of one business day in order to transmit your application electronically, by mail, or by hand delivery. For us to grant this extension—

(1) You must be a registered user of e-Application, and have initiated an e-Application for this competition; and

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

(b) The e-Application system must be unavailable for any period of time during the last hour of operation (that is, for any period of time between 3:30 and 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time) on the deadline date. The Department must acknowledge and confirm these periods of unavailability before granting you an extension. To request this extension you must contact either (1) the person listed elsewhere in this notice under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** or (2) the e-GRANTS help desk at 1–888–336–8930.

You may access the electronic grant application for the RRTC program at: <http://e-grants.ed.gov>.

We have included additional information about the e-Application pilot project (*see* Parity Guidelines between Paper and Electronic Applications) in the application package.

*Pre-Application Meeting:* Interested parties are invited to participate in a pre-application meeting to discuss the funding priorities and to receive information and technical assistance through individual consultation about the funding priorities. The pre-application meeting will be held on June 27, 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 information and technical assistance through individual consultation 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](mailto:donna.nangle@ed.gov).

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