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Comments regarding burden and/or the collection activity requirements should be directed to Katrina Ingalls at her e-mail address Katrina.Ingalls@ed.gov. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

[CFDA No.: 84.133F]

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research—Research Fellowships Program; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2004

Purpose of Program: The purpose of the Research Fellowships Program is to build research capacity by providing support to highly qualified individuals, including those who are individuals with disabilities, to conduct research about the rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities. Fellows may conduct original research in an area authorized by section 204 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. Fellows must address problems encountered by individuals in their daily lives that are due to the presence of a disabling condition, problems associated with the provision of rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities, and problems connected with the conduct of disability research.

The program provides two categories of Fellowships: Merit Fellowships and Distinguished Fellowships.

(a) To be eligible for a Distinguished Fellowship, an individual must have seven or more years of research experience in subject areas, methods, or techniques relevant to rehabilitation research and must have a doctorate, other terminal degree, or comparable academic qualifications.

(b) To be eligible for a Merit Fellowship, an individual must have either advanced professional training or

independent study experience in an area that is directly pertinent to disability and rehabilitation. In the most recent competitions, recipients of a Merit Fellowship had research experience at the doctoral level.

Applicants are not required to submit a budget with their proposal. These are one Full Time Equivalent (FTE) awards. The Fellow must work principally on the fellowship during the year. We define one FTE as equal to 40 hours per week. The Fellow cannot receive support through any other Federal Government grants during this period.

Eligible applicants: Only individuals who have advanced rehabilitation research training and experience in conducting scientific research related to the solution of rehabilitation problems of individuals with disabilities are eligible.

Note: Institutions are not eligible to be recipients of Fellowships.

Applications available: October 16, 2003.

Deadline for transmittal of applications: December 15, 2003.

Estimated available funds: The Administration has requested \$500,000 for this program for FY 2004. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

Maximum Award: Merit: \$45,000; Distinguished: \$55,000.

Note: Applicants must indicate whether they are applying for the Merit Fellowship: \$45,000, or the Distinguished Fellowship: \$55,000.

Estimated Number of Awards: 10.

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

Project Period: 12 months.

Page Limit: The application narrative (Part III of the application) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. You must limit Part III to the equivalent of no more than 24 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).

The page limit does not apply to Part I, the cover sheet; Part IV, the assurances and certifications; or the one-page abstract, the resumes, the bibliography, or the letters of support. However, you must include all of the application narrative in Part III.

We will reject your application if you apply these standards and exceed the page limit.

Note: Applicants must place their Social Security Number in Block #2 on the ED 424 form in place of the D-U-N-S Number.

Applicable Regulations: The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 81, 82, 85, and 97; and 34 CFR part 356, Disability and Rehabilitation Research Fellowships.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

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>.

The Research Fellowships Program is in concert with NIDRR's Long-Range Plan (Plan). The Plan is comprehensive and integrates many issues relating to disability and rehabilitation research topics. The Plan can be accessed on the Internet at the following site: <http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/index.html>.

Selection Criteria: In evaluating an application for a Fellowship under this competition, we use selection criteria chosen from the selection criteria in 34 CFR 356.30-32. The selection criteria to be used for this competition will be provided in the application package for this competition.

Application Procedures:

Note: Some of the procedures in these instructions for transmitting applications differ from those in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) (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 2004, the U.S. Department of Education is continuing to expand its pilot project of electronic submission of applications to include additional formula grant programs and additional discretionary grant competitions. The Research Fellowships Program—CFDA