

Federal Funding Opportunities for Disability and Rehabilitation Research

A Toolkit for Disability and
Rehabilitation Researchers

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INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE ON
DISABILITY RESEARCH

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Introduction

This toolkit provides a summary of current federal funding opportunities focused on disability and rehabilitation research to support researchers in identifying potential funding sources for their work. This document was created by the **Interagency Committee on Disability Research (ICDR)** which exists to promote collaboration and coordination of federal research related to disability, independent living, and rehabilitation.

While there are numerous federal definitions of disability, sometimes informed by specific statute that serves to provide access to programs or services, at the broadest level disability research conducted by the federal government encompasses a wide range of disabilities and impairments. The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), a civil rights law that was originally passed by Congress in 1990 as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and was later amended in 2008, defines someone with a disability as “any person who (i) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person’s major life activities; (ii) has a record of such an impairment; or (iii) is regarded as having such an impairment.”

Research in the area of disability and rehabilitation is essential to understand the challenges faced by people with disabilities to achieving full and inclusive participation in society. Research in disability and rehabilitation also helps to ensure interventions are developed that are evidence based, accessible, and relevant, and that achieve the best possible outcomes. It is imperative for disability and rehabilitation research to occur across government because government represents the many different sectors that influence daily life. This research-driven approach both

empowers people with disabilities to actively participate in all aspects of society and contributes to a more inclusive community for everyone.

About the ICDR

The ICDR was authorized by the amended 1973 Rehabilitation Act to coordinate federal research efforts surrounding disability, independent living, and rehabilitation research, to include assistive technology research and universal design. The ICDR's vision is to be widely recognized for facilitating and coordinating federal interagency efforts and for promoting collaborative relationships that maximize the best use of federal resources for disability, independent living, and rehabilitation research.

The **ICDR 2018–2021 Government-Wide Strategic Plan** outlines three goals:

Goal #1: Improve interagency coordination and collaboration in four thematic research areas: transition, economics of disability, accessibility, and disparities

Goal #2: Develop a government-wide inventory of disability, independent living, and rehabilitation research

Goal #3: Promote ongoing stakeholder input on gaps and priorities for disability, independent living, and rehabilitation research

Purpose and Content of the Toolkit

The purpose of this toolkit is to support disability and rehabilitation researchers in identifying potential funding sources for their work. It provides a list of federal agencies that fund disability and rehabilitation research, information about the topics they fund, links to program funding sites, as well as resources and tips for applicants. For every agency, keywords are listed in callout boxes with a magnifying glass icon. The keywords are intended to help interested researchers quickly identify the main topic areas, priorities, and target populations of disability and rehabilitation research funded by the agencies. These keywords are meant to be helpful but should not be considered exhaustive.

The Appendix provides snapshots of four grantees to illustrate how researchers have used available federal funding opportunities to support their disability and rehabilitation research, and how they have progressed through funding programs as their research has advanced and as they have moved through their careers.

The sections that follow provide details about federal agencies that provide funding opportunities focused on disability and rehabilitation research, listed in alphabetical order. Note that the following agencies are within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS): Administration for Community Living (ACL), Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Indian Health Service (IHS), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

Federal Funding Opportunities

Administration for Community Living

ACL was created around the fundamental principle that all people, regardless of age or disability, should be able to live independently and fully participate in their communities. ACL helps make this principle a reality for millions of Americans by advocating across the federal government for older adults, people with disabilities, and families and caregivers; funding services and supports provided by primarily by networks of community-based organizations; and investing in training, education, research and innovation.

For guidance
for applying for
NIDILRR grants
see *Grant Tips*.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY, INDEPENDENT LIVING, AND REHABILITATION RESEARCH

Part of the ACL, the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) is the federal government's primary disability research organization. NIDILRR's mission is to generate new knowledge and to promote its effective use to improve the abilities of individuals with disabilities to perform activities of their choice in the community, and to expand society's capacity to provide full opportunities and accommodations for individuals with disabilities. To accomplish its goals, NIDILRR invests in **applied research**



KEYWORDS

- ▶ Applied disability research
- ▶ Research and development, capacity building, and knowledge translation
- ▶ All disability types and all age groups
- ▶ Community living and participation, health and function, and employment outcomes

Agency research focus or outcome areas, populations of interest, and stages of career funded.

Agency	Research Focus/ Outcome Areas	Populations of Interest	Stages of Career Eligible for Funding
Administration for Community Living	Community living and participation Health and function Employment	All disability types All age groups	Doctoral Postdoctoral Junior faculty/scholar Mid- and late career
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	Public health	People with disabilities All ages	Eligibility varies by funding opportunity
Department of Defense	Biomedical research	Service members American public	Eligibility varies by funding opportunity
Department of Education	Education	People with disabilities All ages	Few grants that individuals can apply for directly; awarded institutions can award funds to individuals
Department of Veterans Affairs	Functional independence Quality of life Community participation	Veterans	Must be VA employee by time award is funded; can submit applications on promissory basis of VA employment
National Institutes of Health	Biomedical research, services research, rehabilitation	People with disabilities, including those with intersectional identities (i.e., race and disability, sex/ gender, and disability, etc.)	Doctoral Postdoctoral Junior faculty/scholar Mid- and late career
National Science Foundation	Fundamental research, STEM education, ¹ cognitive, behavioral, neuroscience, biomedical, engineering	People with disabilities of all ages	Doctoral Postdoctoral Junior faculty/scholar Mid- and late career
Social Security Administration	Retirement and disability	Not specified	Master Doctoral Postdoctoral Junior faculty/scholar

¹ STEM education is science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education.

and development, capacity building, and knowledge translation through its discretionary grant funding authorities.

NIDILRR plays a unique role in that its target population includes **all disability types and all age groups**. Whereas other federal research entities fund prevention, cure, and acute rehabilitation research, NIDILRR's research, development, and training activities are focused on the three more long-term interrelated domains of **community living and participation, health and function, and employment**. View NIDILRR's funding opportunities on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and on the [ACL website](#).

NIDILRR has several grant mechanisms:

- The **Disability and Rehabilitation Research Program (DRRP)** funds projects emphasizing research, development, dissemination, and technical assistance. DRRP projects generally do not provide training. Some projects are agency initiated whereas others are field initiated, with NIDILRR specifying the general area. NIDILRR funds several types of DRRP entities, including those listed below. The first four types are managed as separate programs and their hyperlinks point to a separate page for each program.
 - The **Knowledge Translation projects** help to ensure that knowledge generated by grantees is used or adopted by its intended users, especially persons with disabilities and their families. Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, and other organizations and/or agencies.
 - The **Model Systems programs** in spinal cord injury (SCIMS), traumatic brain injury (TBIMS), and burn injury (BMS) provide coordinated systems of rehabilitation care and conduct research on recovery and long-term outcomes. In addition, these centers serve as platforms for collaborative, multisite research, including research on interventions using randomized controlled

approaches. The programs also track Model Systems patients over time in large databases. Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, and other organizations and/or agencies.

- The **Americans with Disabilities Act National Network** projects provide information, guidance, and training on how to implement the ADA in order to support its mission to “assure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities.” The network funds 10 regional centers for providing information, training, and technical assistance to individuals, businesses, and agencies with rights and responsibilities under the ADA. Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, and other organizations and/or agencies.
- The **Section 21 program**, mandated by the Rehabilitation Act, requires NIDILRR to set aside 1% of its annual appropriations to address traditionally underserved populations. It focuses on research capacity building for minority entities, such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and institutions serving primarily Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian or Alaska Native students, and nonminority entities with an interest in improving understanding about the needs and outcomes of individuals with disabilities from minority populations. Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, and other organizations and/or agencies.
- **Individual research projects**
 - The purpose of the **Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center (RERC)** program is to improve the effectiveness of services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act by conducting advanced engineering research and development of innovative technologies designed to solve particular rehabilitation problems or remove environmental barriers. The emphasis of the projects is on technology transfer. Some projects are agency initiated whereas others are field initiated

in broad areas of rehabilitation engineering. RERCs also demonstrate and evaluate such technologies, facilitate service delivery systems changes, stimulate the production and distribution of equipment in the private sector, and provide training opportunities to enable individuals (including individuals with disabilities) to become researchers and practitioners of rehabilitation technology. Eligible applicants 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.

- **Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs)** are a program of investigator-initiated research intended to supplement NIDILRRs agency-directed research portfolio. These projects cross all of NIDILRR’s domains and generate new knowledge through research or development on a smaller scale relative to DRRP projects and Center grants. Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, and other organizations and/or agencies.
- **Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)** conduct coordinated, integrated, and advanced programs of research, training, information dissemination, and technical assistance in topical areas, outcome domains, and populations that are specified by NIDILRR. RRTCs conduct research to improve rehabilitation methodology and service delivery systems; improve health and functioning; and promote employment, independent living, family support, and economic and social self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities. They also provide training (including graduate, pre-service, and in-service training) to assist rehabilitation personnel to more effectively provide rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities. RRTCs serve as “national resource centers” on rehabilitation research for providers and for individuals with disabilities and their representatives. Eligible applicants are states; public or private agencies, including for-profit agencies; public or private organizations, including for-profit organizations; and institutions of higher education; and Indian tribes and tribal organizations.

- The **Advanced Rehabilitation Research and Training (ARRT)** program supports institutions of higher education, enabling them to provide postdoctoral training in disability and rehabilitation research. ARRT projects train disability and rehabilitation researchers with a particular focus on the three outcome domains: community living and participation, health and function, and employment. ARRT projects must provide interdisciplinary training to expand the academic pipeline for scientists with disabilities and other individuals underrepresented in the scientific workforce. The ARRT-MSI is focused on improving the capacity of minority-serving institutions (MSIs) to develop and support disability and rehabilitation research training opportunities.
- The **Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)** program funds projects that support small businesses' efforts to explore feasibility and develop or evaluate the commercialization potential of new technology products to improve the lives of persons with disabilities. Phase I focuses on the development of prototypes, models, and proofs-of-concept. Participation in Phase I is a prerequisite for competing for Phase II. Phase II focuses on substantial research and development toward bringing products to commercialization.
- The purpose of the **Switzer Research Fellowship Program** is to build research capacity by providing support to highly qualified individuals (rather than to institutions), including individuals with disabilities, to perform research on rehabilitation, independent living, and other experiences and outcomes of individuals with disabilities. Merit Fellowships are awarded to individuals in earlier stages of their careers in research. To be eligible for a Merit Fellowship, an individual must have either advanced professional training or experience in independent study in an area that is directly pertinent to disability and rehabilitation. Distinguished Fellowships require an individual to have 7 or more years of research experience in subject areas, methods, or techniques relevant to disability and rehabilitation research and to have a doctorate, other terminal degree, or comparable academic qualifications.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The CDC is the nation’s leading science-based, data-driven organization that protects the public’s health. It uses grants and cooperative agreements to fund research and nonresearch **public health** programs that advance the agency’s public health mission domestically and abroad to keep Americans safe and healthy where they work, live, and play. Funding is provided to **state and local governments, foreign ministries and associations, domestic nonprofits/educational institutions, and domestic for-profit groups**. Individuals are ineligible to apply for and cannot receive funding through CDC grants and/or cooperative agreements.

For information about CDC’s grant application process visit this *website on How to Apply*



KEYWORDS

- ▶ Public health
- ▶ State and local governments, foreign ministries and associations, domestic nonprofits/educational institutions, and domestic for-profit groups
- ▶ Birth defects and rare disorders, developmental disabilities, and disability across the lifespan

NATIONAL CENTER ON BIRTH DEFECTS AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

CDC’s National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD) strives to advance the health and well-being of the nation’s populations with **birth defects and rare disorders, developmental disabilities, and disability across the lifespan**. Funds are currently supporting surveillance, research, and prevention activities that address issues with the greatest public health burden and implementing strategies to improve health outcomes. Although NCBDDD’s efforts are broad and far-reaching, NCBDDD has identified four critical Center-level thematic areas:

- Saving babies through surveillance, research, and prevention of birth defects and infant disorders
- Helping children live to the fullest by understanding developmental disabilities
- Protecting people by preventing the complications of blood disorders
- Improving the health of people living with disabilities

View NCBDDD’s funding opportunities on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

Department of Defense

The Department of Defense (DoD) is responsible for ensuring national security and supervising U.S. military forces. Its health program research opportunities cover a wide variety of disciplines and topics, including amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), autism, breast cancer, epilepsy, lung cancer, ovarian cancer, tuberous sclerosis, and peer reviewed medical research. For current DoD funding deadlines and details, see the [list of open funding opportunities](#).

CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED MEDICAL RESEARCH PROGRAMS

The **Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP)** of DoD originated in 1992 via a Congressional appropriation to foster novel approaches to **biomedical research** in response to the expressed needs of its stakeholders: the



KEYWORDS

- ▶ Biomedical Research
- ▶ High-impact, high-risk, high-gain projects
- ▶ Innovative and impactful research
- ▶ New therapeutic approaches

American public, the military, and Congress. The CDMRP fills research gaps by funding **high-impact, high-risk and high-gain projects** that other agencies may not venture to fund. The CDRMRP funds research in specific topic areas and issues funding for **individual programs**. While individual programs are unique in their focus, all of the programs managed by the CDMRP share the common goal of advancing paradigm shifting research, solutions that will lead to cures or improvements in patient care, or breakthrough technologies and resources for clinical benefit. The CDMRP strives to transform healthcare for service members and the American public through **innovative and impactful research**. The individual programs listed below may be most relevant to disability and rehabilitation researchers.

For information about the DoD CDMRP application process visit this [*website on Funding Opportunities: How to Apply*](#)

- The overall objective of the **Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Research Program (ALSRP)** is to expedite the pathway from bench science to clinical trials for **new therapeutic approaches** aimed at controlling or curing ALS.
- Since its inception in 2007, **the Autism Research Program (ARP)** has funded innovative and impactful research with the ultimate goal of improving the lives of those living with autism spectrum disorder as they age. The ARP uses its areas of interest to focus its efforts on improving diagnosis across the lifespan, identifying promising treatment avenues, understanding physical and mental health issues encountered in autistic adults, and determining factors that will lead to the successful transition for young adults as they move into adulthood. Research leading to effective treatments in all of these areas has the potential to improve the quality of life for those with autism as well as their families and caregivers.
- The **DoD Peer Reviewed Orthopaedic Research Program (PRORP)** was established by Congress in fiscal year (FY) 2009 to support military-relevant, peer-reviewed

orthopaedic research with potential to provide short- and long-term healthcare solutions for the injured service member, veteran, and civilian.

- The **Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy Research Program (DMDRP)** aims to support discovery and development of therapeutics for Duchenne for military beneficiaries and the general public, from the characterization of pathophysiology through rigorous preclinical and clinical studies.
- The **Hearing Restoration Research Program (HRRP)** was initiated in 2017 to pursue promising, necessary research for treatment of burdensome and very prevalent auditory system injury. The HRRP funds innovative research that has the potential to maximize operational effectiveness, medical readiness, and quality of life for service members, veterans, and others living with significant auditory system injuries.
- The **Multiple Sclerosis Research Program (MSRP)** was established by Congress in FY 2009 to prevent, cure, reverse, or slow the progression of multiple sclerosis, and lessen the personal and societal impact of it. The program supports pioneering concepts and high-impact research relevant to the prevention, etiology, pathogenesis, assessment and treatment, and ultimate cure of multiple sclerosis for the benefit of service members, veterans, and the American public.
- The **Neurofibromatosis Research Program (NFRP)** was established in 1996 when the efforts of neurofibromatosis (NF) advocates led to a congressional appropriation to fund research in NF. The mission of the program is to promote research directed toward the understanding, diagnosis, and treatment of NF1, NF2, and schwannomatosis to enhance the quality of life for persons with these disorders that impact service members, veterans, and the general public.
- The **Orthotics and Prosthetics Outcomes Research Program (OPORP)** was established by Congress in 2014 to support research of exceptional scientific

merit with the potential to make a significant impact on improving the health and well-being of service members, veterans, and other individuals living with limb deficit. The OPORP supports research on outcomes-based best practices through analysis of prosthetic and/or orthotic device options that are clinically available. Research on the development of new devices or improvement of existing orthotic or prosthetic technology cannot be supported by the OPORP; however, development and employment of new approaches and tools for measuring outcomes is allowed and encouraged.

- The **Spinal Cord Injury Research Program (SCIRP)** was established by Congress in FY 2009, in part as a response to the high rates of spinal cord injury (SCI) observed in war fighters returning home from duty. The congressional intent was to establish a program to enhance the long-term care of wounded soldiers. To this end, the SCIRP has invested over \$200 million into research and development (R&D) efforts guided by the vision to advance the treatment and management of SCI and ameliorate its consequences relevant to injured service members.
- The mission of the **Toxic Exposures Research Program (TERP)** is to support impactful research aimed at identifying the cause and understanding the health outcomes, comorbidities, and pathological mechanisms associated with military-related toxic exposures to facilitate the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of the visible and invisible diseases and symptoms impacting service members, veterans, and the American public.
- In FY 2007, Congress appropriated funding for traumatic brain injury (TBI) and psychological health research in response to the TBIs sustained and psychological health issues experienced by our deployed forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. The current peer-reviewed **Traumatic Brain Injury and Psychological Health Research Program (TBIPHRP)** complements ongoing DoD efforts toward promoting a better standard of care for psychological

health and TBI in the areas of prevention, detection, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation. The program seeks to fund research to understand, prevent, assess, and treat psychological health conditions and/or TBIs—research that accelerates solutions to improve the health, well-being, and healthcare of service members, DoD beneficiaries, veterans, and the American public. Based on available funding and priority areas, TBIPHRP generally offers a range of mechanisms to accommodate research across the development spectrum. In addition, there may be mechanisms that offer support for independent investigators of all levels.

- The **Tuberous Sclerosis Complex Research Program (TSCRCP)** was established by Congress in FY 2002 to improve prevention strategies and treatments to lessen the impact of tuberous sclerosis complex (TSC) while striving for a cure. The program supports innovative and high-impact research that promotes discoveries in TSC, from mechanistic insights to clinical application across all ages, and fosters new ideas and investigators for the benefit of service members, their beneficiaries, and the American public.
- The **Vision Research Program (VRP)** was established by Congress in FY 2009 to fund impactful military-relevant vision research that has the potential to significantly improve the healthcare and well-being of service members, veterans, their family members and caregivers, and the American public.
- The mission of the **Military Operational Medicine Research Program (MOMRP)** is to develop effective biomedical countermeasures against operational stressors and to prevent physical and psychological injuries during training and operations in order to maximize the health, readiness, and performance of service members and their families, in support of the Army Human Performance Optimization and Enhancement, Human Dimension, Multi-Domain Battle, Army Big 6 Modernization Priorities, and the DoD Total Force Fitness concepts. Its continuing mission is to protect the whole service member—head-to-toe,

inside and out, across the operational spectrum. Science to service member is the focus. MOMRP supports cutting-edge biomedical research to develop and deliver military lifecycle products, capabilities and solutions addressing health and fitness to the service member in a relevant, timely manner. MOMRP research is focused on four research portfolios: environmental health and protection; injury prevention and reduction; physiological health and performance; and psychological health, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and resilience.

- **MOMRP Injury Prevention and Reduction** research develops models to predict the degree of injury from known threats, develops design guidelines and performance specifications for protective equipment, and identifies countermeasures to prevent or mitigate injury to the warrior. Key threats addressed by this research area include blast overpressure, blunt and penetrating trauma, musculoskeletal and training injuries, and neurosensory injury. This program addresses thoracic and pulmonary injury protection through modeling blast and blunt trauma, protection that prevents or reduces neurosensory injury, development of validated standards for performance to assess return to duty, and training doctrine based on physiological mechanisms that underlie musculoskeletal injury that identify and mitigate injury risks.



Did you know that federal agencies use different terminology for the proposal review process? **Check out the table below to learn more!**

Terminology for peer review process used by agencies to review grant proposal applications.

Agency	Proposal Review Process
Administration for Community Living	Peer review
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	Merit review
Department of Defense	Peer and programmatic review
Department of Education	Peer review
Department of Veterans Affairs	Scientific review
National Institutes of Health	Peer and programmatic review
National Science Foundation	Merit review
Social Security Administration	Peer and programmatic review

Department of Education

The mission of the Department of Education (ED) is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering **educational excellence and ensuring equal access**.

OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) understands the many challenges still facing individuals with disabilities and their families. Therefore, OSERS is committed to improving results and outcomes for **people with disabilities of all ages**.

For information about ED discretionary grant applications visit this *website on Getting Started with Discretionary Grant Applications*



KEYWORDS

- ▶ Educational excellence and equal access to education
- ▶ People with disabilities of all ages
- ▶ States; institutions of higher education and other nonprofit organizations
- ▶ Infants, toddlers, children, and youth with and at risk for disabilities
- ▶ Education/student outcomes
- ▶ Unsolicited applications

OSERS supports programs that serve millions of children, youth, and adults with disabilities. It is composed of two program components: Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

RSA provides leadership and resources to assist state and other agencies in providing vocational rehabilitation and other services to individuals with disabilities to maximize their employment, independence, and integration into the community and the competitive labor market. Through its **Disability Innovation Fund: Pathways to Partnerships**

Innovative Model Demonstration Project, RSA intends to fund multiple innovative model demonstration projects focused on the creation of systemic approaches to transition services, to pave clear and robust paths to independent living and competitive integrated employment opportunities for children and youth with disabilities.

OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

OSEP is dedicated to improving results for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities, ages birth through 21, by providing leadership and financial support to assist states and local districts. The **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA)** authorizes **formula grants to states** and **discretionary grants to institutions of higher education and other nonprofit organizations** to support research, demonstrations, technology and personnel development and **parent training and information centers**.

The ED's grant competitions open roughly between November and April. The number of discretionary grant opportunities depends on available funding from Congress, program competition cycles, and other program-specific factors. Grant competitions are not guaranteed to run annually. Explore the department's **open grant competitions**.

OSEP's **Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities Program** is the primary source of support for accessible technology and media-related activities under the IDEA. The program supports two broad categories of activities: accessible technology and educational media and materials. Technology activities are generally designed to promote the development, demonstration, and use of accessible technology. The technology component of the program also supports research on using technology to improve outcomes for students with disabilities, and technical assistance and dissemination activities to enhance the use of technology by students, parents, and teachers. Media and

materials activities focus on closed captioning, video description, timely provision of books and other educational materials in accessible formats, and other activities to improve access to education for students with disabilities.

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES/NATIONAL CENTER FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION RESEARCH

The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) is the statistics, research, and evaluation arm of the ED. Within IES, the National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER) supports rigorous research on **infants, toddlers, children, and youth with and at risk for disabilities** through advancing the understanding of and practices for teaching, learning, and organizing education systems. NCSER

supports such research through its research grants program to identify existing practices, programs, or policies that may be associated with student outcomes; develop new, or modify existing, interventions; evaluate the efficacy and effectiveness of fully developed interventions; and develop and validate measures and assessments.

To review the steps for applying for IES grants visit this [website on Funding Opportunities at IES](#)

NCSER supports the following **research and research training programs** with a focus on disability:

- NCSER has established long-term research portfolios under its **Special Education Research Grants Program**. This program accepts applications once per year. Application deadlines are announced in the Federal Register and on the IES website. The general categories of research, or research portfolios, covered under this program include cognitive and student learning; early intervention and early learning; educators and school-based service providers; families of children with disabilities; reading, writing, and language; STEM; social, emotional, and behavioral competence; systems, policy, and finance; and transition to postsecondary education, careers, and/or independent living.

- **Research Training in Special Education.** NCSER offers three special education **research training programs: Postdoctoral Research Training, Early Career Development and Mentoring,** and **Methods Training.** The purpose of the Postdoctoral Research Training program is to provide support for programs that prepare doctoral-level researchers to conduct high-quality special education and early intervention research that advances knowledge within the field and addresses issues important to policymakers and practitioners. The Early Career Development and Mentoring program provides support for an integrated research and career development plan for investigators who have established an interest in special education research, in the early stages of their academic careers, with the ultimate aim of launching independent research careers focused on learners with or at risk for disabilities. The Methods Training for Special Education Research program supports training of current education researchers to maintain and enhance their research and analysis skills to conduct rigorous and relevant research focused on learners with or at risk for disabilities.
- **Special Education R&D Center Program.** The **Special Education R&D Center Program** contributes to the solution of significant special education and early intervention problems in the United States. The R&D Centers engage in research, development, evaluation, and national leadership activities aimed at improving child outcomes through enhancements in the special education and early intervention systems. Each Center conducts a focused program of research in a specific topic area and works cooperatively with the Institute to provide relatively rapid research and scholarship on supplemental questions that emerge within the Center’s topic area and that are not being addressed adequately elsewhere. For the FY 2023 Special Education R&D Center program, IES invited applications for an R&D Center on Supporting Students with Disabilities in Postsecondary Education. The Postsecondary Center is responsible for developing a focused program of exploratory research and conducting national leadership and capacity building activities. The overarching

goal of the Postsecondary Center is to provide the evidence base and research capacity to address the most pressing needs of postsecondary students with disabilities.

IES also funds other programs that may be applicable to researchers who focus on disability and/or rehabilitation research.

- The ED/IES **Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR)** provides awards for the R&D of new, commercially viable education technology products. ED/IES SBIR emphasizes rigorous and relevant research for all projects, through cycles of iterative studies with end users (e.g., students, teachers) to inform refinements to prototypes and pilot studies to examine the promise of the finished products to lead to intended outcomes. Recent emerging technologies funded by the program include artificial intelligence or machine learning-based tutors that personalize learning, virtual and augmented reality-based interventions to engage students in learning academic content, platforms to organize data to inform decision-making, technologies to enable and facilitate remote learning and collaborative experiences, and assistive technologies to meet the needs of students with or at risk for disabilities.
- IES will consider **unsolicited applications** for research, evaluation, and statistics projects that would make significant contributions to the mission of the organization. Under this announcement, IES will consider applications for projects that are not eligible under the current fiscal year grant competitions, both open and closed, described at <https://ies.ed.gov/funding/>. The applicant must demonstrate that the project is not eligible under one of the current fiscal year grant competitions.

Department of Veterans Affairs

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is charged with providing lifelong healthcare to eligible and enrolled military veterans at VA Medical Centers and outpatient clinics located throughout the country, as well as through remote/virtual service delivery. The mission of the **VA Office of Research and Development (ORD)** is to improve the lives of veterans, and thereby the nation, through healthcare discovery and innovation. Its **five overarching strategic priorities** are to expand veterans' access to high-quality clinical trials; increase the substantial real-world impact of VA research; put VA data to work for veterans; actively promote diversity, equity, and inclusion; and build community through VA research.



KEYWORDS

- ▶ Research focused on veterans' healthcare needs
- ▶ Researchers must be VA employees
- ▶ Collaboration with academic institutions
- ▶ Functional independence, quality of life, and participation in their lives and community
- ▶ Clinical, preclinical, and applied rehabilitation research
- ▶ Research to be conducted in VA space and to be relevant to veterans

VA research is the only federal research program **focused entirely on veterans' healthcare needs**. ORD is an intramural funding program, meaning only VA employees can conduct research under VA's sponsorship. Additionally, VA has an extensive academic affiliate network, whereby **VA researchers often collaborate with their academic institutions**. Conducting research within VA's integrated healthcare system is an exceptional benefit as it allows VA researchers to identify the direct needs of veterans at chair- and bedside and to find discoveries and innovations directly in step with these needs, thus keeping the veteran at the center of healthcare from the very beginning. Information regarding all requests for applications, with specific instructions for

electronic submission, can be found on the ORD intranet. Non-VA employees interested in joining VA and conducting veteran-centric research, should contact the local VA research office (https://www.research.va.gov/about/national_directory/).

REHABILITATION RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT SERVICE

The VA Rehabilitation Research & Development Service (RR&D) supports studies to advance scientific knowledge and foster innovations to maximize veterans' **functional independence, quality of life, and participation in their lives and community**. Its goal is to integrate clinical, pre-clinical, and applied rehabilitation research to improve the health and wellbeing of veterans and the nation.

For guidance on conducting RR&D research, contact the Scientific Program Managers

- **Clinical studies** may investigate interventions, techniques, or devices designed to restore or replace sensorimotor or psychological function and return veterans' functional independence and quality of life. Injuries, disorders, and diseases with the potential to cause long-term impairment and disability in the veteran population are of interest, with emphasis on **functional outcomes at the level of the veteran**. Examples of clinical studies not appropriate for review by RR&D are those that evaluate the organization, cost, efficiency, or quality of care delivery at the provider or system level.
- **Preclinical studies** must demonstrate clear potential to translate findings to future clinical rehabilitation studies and care of veterans. Preclinical studies in animals may include molecular, cellular, or physiological mechanisms, but **only if linked to sensorimotor and behavioral outcomes**. Molecular and cellular studies can explore the mechanisms of action of a rehabilitative intervention, investigate the causes of differing responses, or promote an understanding of any potential adverse effects and ways these effects could be modulated to maximize recovery of function. Preclinical studies might also contribute to understanding the disease

process to identify novel rehabilitation targets or develop new rehabilitative approaches. Examples of preclinical studies not appropriate for review by RR&D include foundational studies **lacking interventions or behavioral outcomes that are pertinent to the animal.**

- **Applied studies** may develop medical products or technology prior to evaluating effectiveness in future clinical rehabilitation studies to improve the care of veterans. Applied studies may include features such as design optimization, mechanical or durability testing, safety testing, integration, biocompatibility or biostability testing, etc., if required to establish feasibility prior to human application. They must demonstrate a clear pathway for translation to the clinic.

Proposals are reviewed by subcommittees called Scientific Review Groups (SRGs). SRGs include the following: spinal cord injuries/disorders and neuropathic pain, regenerative rehabilitation medicine, brain health and injury, musculoskeletal health and function, sensory systems and communication disorders, behavioral health and social reintegration, rehabilitation engineering and prosthetics/orthotics, and chronic medical conditions and aging. Read **a description of the research portfolio associated with each SRG** and the types of applications they review.

To be eligible for funding, the awardee PI or Co-PIs must have a VA 5/8th salaried appointment when funded; promise of appointment from local VA medical center is sufficient to apply. **The proposed research must be conducted in a VA space, and it must be relevant to veterans.**

- In addition to Merit Awards (full studies), Career Development Awards, Center Awards, and Research Enhancement Award Program, RR&D funds **Small Projects in Rehab Research (SPiRE)**, which is high-risk/high-impact research intended for preliminary data collection and feasibility studies. Preference is given to early career investigators to fund small projects that can be completed in a 2-year period.

National Institutes of Health

The NIH is the largest **biomedical research** agency in the world. Its mission is to seek fundamental knowledge about the nature and behavior of living systems and the application of that knowledge to enhance health, lengthen life, and reduce illness and disability. NIH is made up of 27 Institutes and Centers, each with a specific research agenda, often focusing on particular diseases or body systems.

The NIH uses activity codes (e.g., R01, R43, etc.) to differentiate the wide variety of research-related programs it supports across its Institutes and Centers. Main types of grant funding include the following program groups:

■ Research grants:

R code series

■ Career development awards:

K code series

■ Individual fellowships:

F code series

■ Institutional training grants:

T code series

■ Program project/center grants:

P code series

■ Small Business Innovation Research

(SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Programs

See the full listing and description of grant types and **research training, career guidance, and strategy on NIH's Types of Grant Programs page.**



KEYWORDS

- ▶ Biomedical research
- ▶ Rehabilitation research
- ▶ Research grants
- ▶ Career development awards
- ▶ Fellowship and training grants
- ▶ Program project/center grants

For information about the NIH application process and helpful resources visit *this website For Applicants*

Researchers may also explore specific NIH Institutes and Centers to identify programs focused on disability and rehabilitation research. The Institutes and Centers listed below may be relevant. To find funding by Institute or Center, use the [NIH grant funding website](#).

FOGARTY INTERNATIONAL CENTER

The [Fogarty International Center \(FIC\)](#) is dedicated to advancing the NIH mission by supporting and facilitating global health research conducted by U.S. and international investigators, building partnerships between health research institutions in the United States and abroad, and training the next generation of scientists to address global health needs. FIC funds research on chronic, noncommunicable diseases and disorders, including mental health/illness, alcohol and drug addiction and abuse, and developmental disabilities, with the ultimate goal of implementing evidence-based interventions around the world.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR ADVANCING TRANSLATIONAL SCIENCES

The [National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences \(NCATS\)](#) was established to transform the translational process so that new treatments and cures for disease can be delivered to patients faster. Research funded by NCATS includes projects on epilepsy, autism, Down syndrome, neuropathic pain, and chronic fatigue syndrome, among others.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR COMPLEMENTARY AND INTEGRATIVE HEALTH

The [National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health \(NCCIH\)](#) conducts and supports research on the fundamental science, usefulness, and safety of complementary and integrative health approaches and their roles in improving health and healthcare. NCCIH funds research on complementary and integrative health

approaches to treat chronic pain and disability related to disorders such as multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease.

NATIONAL EYE INSTITUTE

The **National Eye Institute (NEI)** supports cutting-edge research projects that investigate new ways to prevent, treat, or even reverse vision loss. NEI also funds research on the role of the visual system in social communication disorders/disabilities such as autism.

NATIONAL HEART, LUNG, AND BLOOD INSTITUTE

The **National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI)** is the nation's leader in the prevention and treatment of heart, lung, blood, and sleep disorders. NHLBI conducts research on conditions that can lead to disability, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), stroke, atherosclerosis, and osteoporosis, as well as research on mechanisms to stimulate regeneration after injury to the brain or spinal cord.

NATIONAL HUMAN GENOME RESEARCH INSTITUTE

The **National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI)** is the driving force for advancing genomics research at NIH. NHGRI funds research to understand the genetic factors that impact on various intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs), including autism, Down syndrome, and Fragile X syndrome, which may inform the development of targeted interventions.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON AGING

The **National Institute on Aging (NIA)** leads a national program of research on the biomedical, social, and behavioral aspects of the aging process; the prevention of age-related diseases and disabilities; and the promotion of a better quality of life for all older Americans. NIA provides support for aging research, Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and COVID-19 research in older adults.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON ALCOHOL ABUSE AND ALCOHOLISM

The **National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)** aims to generate and disseminate fundamental knowledge about the effects of alcohol on health and well-being and apply that knowledge to improve diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of alcohol-related problems, including alcohol use disorder, across the lifespan. NIAAA funds research on developmental disabilities that may be caused by prenatal alcohol exposure, including the prevention of and interventions for fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, and alcohol use disorder in individuals with disabilities.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ARTHRITIS AND MUSCULOSKELETAL AND SKIN DISEASES

The **National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS)** supports research into the causes, treatment, and prevention of conditions that can cause disability, including arthritis, fibromyalgia, chronic musculoskeletal pain, and other musculoskeletal and skin diseases; the training of basic and clinical scientists to carry out this research; and the dissemination of information on research progress in these diseases.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF BIOMEDICAL IMAGING AND BIOENGINEERING

The **National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB)** seeks to transform through engineering the understanding of disease and its prevention, detection, diagnosis, and treatment. NIBIB's portfolio includes funding for rehabilitation and intervention research using bioengineering and biotechnologies.

EUNICE KENNEDY SHRIVER NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CHILD HEALTH AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

The **Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)** was founded to investigate human development throughout the entire life process, with a focus on understanding disabilities and important events that occur during pregnancy. NICHD's mission is to lead research and

training to understand human development, improve reproductive health, enhance the lives of children and adolescents, and optimize abilities for all. NICHD supports a program of research in IDD, including common and rare neuromuscular and neurodevelopmental disorders, such as Down, Fragile X, and Rett syndromes; inborn errors of metabolism; autism spectrum disorders; and conditions currently and soon-to-be detectable through newborn screening. NICHD has a long and recognized history of providing support for a diverse portfolio of research projects, contracts, training programs, and research centers dedicated to promoting the well-being of individuals with IDD at all stages of development. NICHD also supports research in learning disabilities and physical disabilities.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR MEDICAL REHABILITATION RESEARCH

The ADA and the subsequent NIH Amendments of 1990 (P.L. 101-613) provided for the establishment of the **National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research (NCMRR)** within the NICHD.

The general purpose of the Center is the conduct, support, and coordination of research and research training (including research on the development of orthotic and prosthetic devices), the dissemination of health information, and other programs with respect to the rehabilitation of individuals with physical disabilities resulting from diseases or disorders of the neurological, musculoskeletal, cardiovascular, pulmonary, or any other physiological system. It supports full range of rehabilitation research:

- Adaptation and plasticity
- Devices and technology development
- Rehabilitation diagnostics and interventions
- Chronic symptom management and secondary conditions
- Health services research
- Environmental factors

NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DEAFNESS AND OTHER COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

The **National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD)** conducts and supports biomedical research and research training on normal mechanisms as well as diseases, disorders, and disabilities related to hearing, balance, smell, taste, voice, speech, and language that affect 46 million Americans. Both intramural and extramural research and training programs encompass the full spectrum of scientific activities, including basic, clinical, and translational research. These studies answer fundamental scientific questions to prevent, screen, diagnose, and treat disorders of human communication.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DENTAL AND CRANIOFACIAL RESEARCH

The **National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR)** provides leadership for a national research program designed to understand, treat, and ultimately prevent the infectious and inherited craniofacial, oral, and dental diseases and disorders that compromise millions of human lives. NIDCR also conducts research on strategies to improve oral health for individuals with developmental disabilities, such as autism, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, and other cognitive disabilities that create challenges in accomplishing daily activities, especially self-care activities.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DIABETES AND DIGESTIVE AND KIDNEY DISEASES

The mission of the **National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK)** is to conduct and support medical research and research training and to disseminate science-based information on chronic conditions that can cause disability, including diabetes and other endocrine and metabolic diseases; digestive diseases, nutritional disorders, and obesity; and kidney, urologic, and hematologic diseases, to improve people's health and quality of life.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DRUG ABUSE

The mission of the **National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)** is to advance science on drug use and addiction and to apply that knowledge to improve individual and public health. NIDA's portfolio includes projects on comorbidities that commonly occur with substance use disorders, including chronic pain and mental illnesses, that can cause disability.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES

The **National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)** is expanding and accelerating its contributions to scientific knowledge of human health and the environment, and to the health and well-being of people everywhere. NIEHS supports research on environmental factors that may contribute to disabilities, including autism, neurodevelopmental disorders, psychiatric disorders, and autoimmune diseases, paving the way for future prevention and intervention.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF GENERAL MEDICAL SCIENCES

The **National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS)** supports basic research that increases understanding of biological processes and lays the foundation for advances in diagnosis and treatment of a variety of diseases and conditions, including intellectual and developmental disabilities and other conditions that can lead to disability.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH

The **National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)** provides national leadership dedicated to understanding, treating, and preventing mental illnesses through basic research on the brain and behavior and through clinical, epidemiological, and services research. NIMH also funds research on a variety of mental health conditions and disabilities, including attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, autism, bipolar disorder, depression, eating disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorder, PTSD, and schizophrenia, as well as the intersection of disability and mental health.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON MINORITY HEALTH AND HEALTH DISPARITIES

The **National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD)** leads scientific research to improve minority health and reduce health disparities. NIMHD funds research to understand and improve the health of individuals with disabilities from health disparity populations.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF NEUROLOGICAL DISORDERS AND STROKE

The mission of the **National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS)** is to seek fundamental knowledge about the brain and nervous system and to use that knowledge to reduce the burden for all people of neurological diseases and conditions, including those that can cause disability. Developmental brain conditions and disabilities such as autism, Rett syndrome, and tuberous sclerosis, as well as conditions that can cause physical disabilities such as Parkinson's disease or Huntington's disease, or dementia, such as Alzheimer's disease, are included. To accomplish this goal, NINDS supports and performs basic, translational, and clinical neuroscience research through grants-in-aid, contracts, and scientific meetings, and through research in its own laboratories, and clinics. NINDS also funds and conducts research training and career development programs to increase basic, translational, and clinical neuroscience expertise and ensure a vibrant, talented, and diverse work force, and it promotes the timely dissemination of scientific discoveries and their implications for neurological health to the public, health professionals, researchers, and policymakers.

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE

The **National Library of Medicine (NLM)** supports and conducts research, development, and training in biomedical informatics and health information technology. NLM-funded research projects include the use of electronic health records to improve care for patients, including diagnosis and interventions for various disabilities.



Commonly Asked About Federal Program Types

*Program types funded by NIH and NIDILRR
and names of the specific programs for each type.*

Program Type	Research	Career Development	Training	Fellowships
National Institutes of Health	R series	K series	T series	F series
National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research	DRRP RERC FIP RRTC	ARRT	RRTC	Switzer

National Science Foundation

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent federal agency created by Congress in 1950 “to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense...” NSF is vital because it supports basic research and people to create knowledge that transforms the future. With an annual budget of \$9.5 billion (FY 2023), the NSF is the funding source for approximately 25% of all federally supported basic research conducted by America’s colleges and universities. NSF has a number of programs to help improve STEM education for people with disabilities across the lifespan in school settings and out-of-school settings. In addition, NSF offers an array of programs supporting **rehabilitation research** in engineering to help empower and improve accessibility for people with disabilities. NSF research programs of interest are described in more detail below.

For guidance on preparing proposals to NSF see *Preparing Proposals*

The following programs in the **Directorate for STEM Education (EDU)** accept research and development proposals focused on individuals with disabilities:

- **EDU Core Research program** (ECR)
- **Discovery Research preK-12 program** (DRK-12)
- **Advancing Informal STEM Learning program** (AISL)



KEYWORDS

- ▶ Colleges and universities
- ▶ Fundamental engineering research
- ▶ Engineering biomechanics/ mechanobiology
- ▶ Integration of engineering and life sciences
- ▶ Interaction between humans and intelligent machines

- **Improving Undergraduate STEM Education program (IUSE)**
- **NSF Faculty Early Career Development program (CAREER)**

Interested applicants are encouraged to read the full program solicitations and reach out to the program contacts with specific questions about their proposal ideas. Consult the program pages for more details and submission instructions.

- NSF recently established a program focused on workplace equity for individuals with disabilities, **Workplace Equity for Persons with Disabilities in STEM and STEM Education**. This program supports fundamental, applied, and translational research that advances knowledge and practice about diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible STEM and STEM education workplaces and postsecondary training environments for persons with disabilities. Consult the program page for more details and submission instructions.
- The **Disability and Rehabilitation Engineering (DARE) program** supports fundamental engineering research that will improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities through the development of new technologies, devices, or software combined with advancement of knowledge regarding healthy or pathological human motion, or advancement in understanding of injury mechanisms. DARE-supported research may be directed toward the characterization, restoration, rehabilitation, and/or substitution of human functional ability or cognition, or to the interaction between persons with disabilities and their environment.
- The **Biomechanics and Mechanobiology (BMMB) program** supports fundamental research in biomechanics and mechanobiology. The program emphasizes multiscale mechanics approaches that integrate across molecular, cell, tissue, and organ domains in the study of organisms. Projects may include theoretical, computational, and experimental approaches. Projects relevant to rehabilitation are welcome.

- The **Engineering of Biomedical Systems (EBMS) program** supports research projects that integrate engineering and life sciences to solve biomedical problems and serve humanity in the long term. Areas include methods, models, and enabling tools applied to understand or control living systems; fundamental improvements in deriving information from cells, tissues, organs, and organ systems; and new approaches to the design of systems that include both living and nonliving components for eventual medical use. Fundamental advances in tissue engineering motivated by restoration of function are welcome.
- The **Mind, Machine and Motor Nexus (M3X) program** supports fundamental studies of bidirectional dynamic **interactions between humans and intelligent machines**. Interactions between humans and assistive devices are within the scope of M3X, but the focus of an M3X project should be on emergent behavior arising from dynamic interactions rather than on advances in rehabilitation technologies alone.

Other funding mechanisms not listed above that may also be applicable for disability and rehabilitation research are “**EARly-concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER) Proposal**,” “**Research Advanced by Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering (RAISE) Proposal**,” and “**Grant Opportunities for Academic Liaison with Industry (GOALI) Proposal**.”

Social Security Administration

The Social Security Administration (SSA) administers retirement, disability, survivor, and family benefits and enrolls individuals in Medicare. It also provides Social Security numbers, which are unique identifiers needed to work, handle financial transactions, and determine eligibility for certain government services.

For information on how to apply for SSA grants, see *How do I apply*

OFFICE OF RETIREMENT AND DISABILITY POLICY

The Office of Retirement and Disability Policy (ORDP) is the principal advisor to the Commissioner of Social Security on major policy issues. It also funds several extramural projects and grants, including the Retirement and Disability Research Consortium. Below is a list of the programs funded by ORDP.

- The **Undergraduate Fellowship Program**, administered by the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College, supports full-time paid summer research assistantships in a variety of disciplines, combining hands-on research experience with one-on-one mentoring from senior Center researchers.

- SSA's **Analyzing Relationships between Disability, Rehabilitation and Work (ARDRAW) Small Grant Program** (ARDRAW) is being recompeted in 2023. SSA will designate a new grant management organization to oversee a program to award 1-year \$15,000 stipends to graduate-level students to conduct supervised independent research designed to foster new analysis



KEYWORDS

- ▶ Retirement and disability policy
- ▶ Summer research assistantship
- ▶ Graduate-level research
- ▶ Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) programs

of work, rehabilitation, and disability issues, which may develop innovative and fresh perspectives on disability. ARDRAW focuses on research relevant to SSA's work incentives and employment supports—specifically rehabilitation, work, and the disability program. Once the new grant manager is named, ARDRAW will conduct regular solicitation of research proposals from individual graduate students.

- The **Interventional Cooperative Agreement Program (ICAP)** allows SSA to enter into cooperative agreements to collaborate with states, foundations, and other nonfederal groups and organizations that have the interest and ability to identify, operate, and evaluate interventional research related to the Disability Insurance (DI) and SSI programs. ICAP is an ongoing program that will request new applications for award on a regular basis. The research and interventions under this program have the following goals:
 - Eliminating the structural barriers for people with disabilities in the labor market, particularly for people of color and other underserved communities, to increase the likelihood of people receiving or applying for DI or SSI benefits
 - Increasing employment and self-sufficiency of individuals with disabilities, including people of color and underserved communities (whether beneficiaries, applicants, or potential applicants of the DI or SSI programs)
 - Coordinating planning between private and public human services agencies to improve the administration and effectiveness of the DI, SSI, and related programs
 - Assisting claimants in underserved communities to apply for or appeal decisions on claims for DI and SSI benefits
 - Conducting outreach to people with disabilities who are potentially eligible to receive SSI

- The **Retirement and Disability Research Consortium (RDRC)** helps SSA produce a large body of policy-relevant research on its programs. The agency broadly charges these research centers with planning, initiating, and maintaining a high-quality, multidisciplinary research program that covers retirement, disability, and Social Security program issues. The centers perform valuable research and evaluation of retirement, disability, and SSI programs and disability policy; disseminate results; provide training awards; and facilitate the use of SSA program data by outside researchers. The RDRC actively supports the agency's equity initiatives, through both training and research support. The RDRC also supports SSA's equity initiatives through funding for research projects undertaken by scholars from HBCUs and institutions serving students of color as well as projects focusing on underserved populations or racial or ethnic disparities.



Some agencies (e.g., NIH, NSF) offer supplements to principal investigators (PIs) who secure federal funding to help support diversity of the scientific workforce, including disability. There are specific requirements based on the type of grant.

Be sure to ask!

Other Federal Agencies

Other federal agencies may not have dedicated programs to fund disability and rehabilitation research but, depending on priorities and funding levels, may occasionally have available discretionary research grants related to disability and rehabilitation research. These agencies may include the following:

- **AHRQ** aims to produce evidence to make healthcare safer, higher quality, more accessible, equitable, and affordable, and to work within the HHS and with other partners to make sure that the evidence is understood and used. AHRQ invests in **Project ECHO** (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) to train and support primary care clinicians in rural communities to provide **specialized care** for their patients. The agency also funds several research programs relevant to individuals with disabilities, including the **Digital Healthcare Research Program** and the **Effective Health Care (EHC) Program**. AHRQ funding opportunities can be found on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and the [AHRQ website](https://www.aahrq.gov).
- The mission of the **Department of Transportation (DOT)** is to deliver the world's leading transportation system, serving the American people and economy through the safe, efficient, sustainable, and equitable movement of people and goods. One of DOT's strategic goals is to reduce inequities across the transportation systems and the communities they affect. DOT also works to support and engage people and communities to promote safe, affordable, accessible, and multimodal access to opportunities and services while reducing **transportation-related disparities**, adverse community impacts, and health effects. For example DOT has recently sponsored the **Inclusive Design Challenge** and the **Enhancing Mobility Innovation** program. View DOT's funding opportunities on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and on the [DOT Navigator](https://www.transportation.gov).
- **HRSA** funds programs that provide equitable healthcare to **people who are geographically isolated and economically or medically vulnerable**. They include

programs that deliver health services to people with HIV, pregnant women, mothers and their families, those with low incomes, residents of rural areas, American Indians and Alaska Natives, and those otherwise unable to access high-quality healthcare. HRSA programs also support health infrastructure, including through training of health professionals and distributing them to areas where they are needed most, providing financial support to healthcare providers, and advancing telehealth. In addition, HRSA oversees programs for providing discounts on prescription drugs to safety net providers; facilitating organ, bone marrow, and cord blood transplantation; compensating individuals injured by vaccination; and maintaining data on healthcare malpractice payments. View HRSA's funding opportunities on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and on the [HRSA website](#).

- The **IHS** is responsible for providing federal health services to **American Indians and Alaska Natives**. The provision of health services to members of federally recognized tribes grew out of the special government-to-government relationship between the federal government and Indian tribes. This relationship, established in 1787, is based on Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution and has been given form and substance by numerous treaties, laws, Supreme Court decisions, and Executive Orders. The IHS is the principal federal healthcare provider and health advocate for Indian people, and its goal is to raise their health status to the highest possible level. The IHS provides a comprehensive health service delivery system for approximately 2.6 million American Indians and Alaska Natives who belong to 574 federally recognized tribes in 37 states. View IHS's funding opportunities on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and on the [IHS website](#).
- The **Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)** seeks to advance, support, and empower America's museums, libraries, and related organizations through grant making, research, and policy development. IMLS has provided funding for several projects related to individuals with disabilities, including funding

to **increase accessibility and maximize inclusion** at museums and libraries throughout the nation. IMLS funding opportunities can be found on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and the [IMLS website](#).

- The **National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)** is an independent federal agency that is the largest funder of the arts and arts education in communities nationwide. One of the core functions of the NEA is funding research into the value and impact of the arts, including research on the **use of art to advance health and well-being for individuals with disabilities**. NEA Research Grants in the Arts funds research studies that investigate the value/impact of the arts, either as individual components of the U.S. arts ecology or as they interact with each other and/or with other domains of American life. NEA Research Labs funds transdisciplinary research teams grounded in the social and behavioral sciences, yielding empirical insights about the arts for the benefit of arts and non-arts sectors alike. NEA funding opportunities can be found on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).
- **SAMHSA** leads public health efforts to advance the **behavioral health** of the nation and to improve the lives of individuals living with mental and substance use disorders, and their families. SAMHSA's funding primarily focuses on direct service delivery. View SAMHSA's funding opportunities on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and on the [SAMHSA website](#).

Cross-Agency Funding Programs

Small Business Innovation Research & Small Business Technology Transfer

The Small Business Innovation Research (**SBIR**) and Small Business Technology Transfer (**STTR**) programs are implemented by several federal agencies and are coordinated by the Small Business Administration. The **SBIR program** is designed to encourage domestic small businesses to engage in federal research/ research and development (R/R&D) with the potential for commercialization. Through a competitive awards-based program, SBIR enables small businesses to explore their technological potential and provide the incentive to profit from its commercialization. The **STTR program** expands funding opportunities in the federal innovation arena. Central to the program is the expansion of the public/private sector partnership to include joint venture opportunities between small businesses and nonprofit research institutions. STTR's most important role is to bridge the gap between performance of basic science and commercialization of resulting innovations.

Given the programs' focus on innovation and commercialization of technology, disability and rehabilitation researchers may explore the programs' funding opportunities to support their R&D efforts for developing new products to improve the lives of persons with disabilities and others with rehabilitation needs.

PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

Each year, federal agencies with extramural R&D budgets that exceed \$100 million are required to allocate 3.2% (since FY 2017) of this extramural R&D budget to fund small businesses through the SBIR program. Federal agencies with extramural R&D budgets that exceed \$1 billion are required to reserve 0.45% (since FY 2016) of this

extramural R&D budget for the STTR program. Currently, 11¹ federal agencies participate in the SBIR program, and five² of those agencies also participate in the STTR program.

Each agency administers its own individual program within guidelines established by Congress. These agencies designate R&D topics in their solicitations and accept proposals from small businesses. Awards are made on a competitive basis after proposal evaluation.

ELIGIBILITY

Only U.S. small businesses are eligible to participate in the SBIR/STTR programs. A small business must meet the eligibility requirements set forth in **13 CFR 121.702 “What size and eligibility standards are applicable to the SBIR and STTR programs?”** at the time of Phase I and II awards, which specify the following criteria:

- Organized for profit, with a place of business located in the United States
- More than 50% owned and controlled by one or more individuals who are citizens or permanent resident aliens of the United States, or by other small business concerns that are each more than 50% owned and controlled by one or more individuals who are citizens or permanent resident aliens of the United States
- No more than 500 employees, including **affiliates**

¹ Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, Department of Energy (DOE), HHS, Department of Homeland Security, DOT, DoD, ED, Environmental Protection Agency, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), NSF.

² DOE, HHS, DoD, NASA, NSF.

PROGRAM PHASES

The program is structured in three phases:

- **Phase I.** The objective of Phase I is to establish the technical merit, feasibility, and commercial potential of the proposed R/R&D efforts and to determine the quality of performance of the small business awardee organization prior to providing further federal support in Phase II. SBIR/STTR Phase I awards are generally \$50,000–\$250,000 for 6 months (SBIR) or 1 year (STTR).
- **Phase II.** The objective of Phase II is to continue the R/R&D efforts initiated in Phase I. Funding is based on the results achieved in Phase I and the scientific and technical merit and commercial potential of the project proposed in Phase II. Typically, only Phase I awardees are eligible for a Phase II award. SBIR/STTR Phase II awards are generally \$750,000 for 2 years.
- **Phase III.** The objective of Phase III, where appropriate, is for the small business to pursue commercialization objectives resulting from the Phase I/II R/R&D activities. The SBIR/STTR programs do not fund Phase III. At some federal agencies, Phase III may involve follow-on non-SBIR/STTR funded R&D or production contracts for products, processes, or services intended for use by the U.S. Government.

FUNDING TOPICS AND ANNOUNCEMENT

To identify participating agencies and technology topic areas that agencies are interested in funding, see the [open funding webpage](#). For more information regarding a specific agency's award guidelines, please visit their solicitation and website.



*Agency databases and webpages
with information about funded projects.*

Agency	Agency Specific Program Database
Administration for Community Living	National Rehabilitation Information Center (NARIC)
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	CDC Award Data
Department of Defense	CDMPR Awards
Department of Education	National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials (NCRTM) RSA Programs Rehabilitation Services Administration
Department of Veterans Affairs	VA Research in Action
National Institutes of Health	NIH RePORTER
National Science Foundation	NSF Awards Search
Social Security Administration	n/a

Funded Research Projects

Disability and rehabilitation researchers may also review agencies' funding databases for guidance about what type of projects have been funded in the past through agencies' specific programs. (See table below for links to agency-specific program databases.) The information may provide insight into whether research topics and approaches meet the target agency's priority areas and eligibility requirements. Most agencies provide a database/list of the projects they have funded, and researchers should consult the agency-specific websites to identify projects. In addition, several cross-agency databases exist that enumerate government-funded research projects (listed on page 48).

Grants.gov

The Grants.gov program management office was established in 2002 as a part of the President's Management Agenda. Managed by HHS, Grants.gov is an E-Government initiative operating under the governance of the Office of Management and Budget. Under the President's Management Agenda, the Grants.gov program management office was chartered to deliver a system that provides a centralized location for grant seekers to find and apply for federal funding opportunities. Today, the **Grants.gov system** houses information on over 1,000 grant programs and receives grant applications for federal grant-making agencies. To find funded projects, select "Closed" and "Archived" under the "Opportunity Status" search criteria.

Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee Autism Research Database

The **Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC)** is a federal advisory committee charged with coordinating federal efforts and providing advice to the

HHS Secretary on issues related to autism spectrum disorder. The IACC Autism Research Portfolio Analysis Reports are intended to better inform the IACC and interested stakeholders about the U.S. autism research funding landscape. The **Autism Research Database** is an online companion database to the IACC Autism Research Portfolio Analysis Reports and includes autism research project information provided by collaborating federal and private funders in the United States. These data include the project title, principal investigator, annual funding amount, and project description for all projects included in the Portfolio Analysis Reports.

Interagency Rehabilitation and Disability Research Portfolio

The **Interagency Rehabilitation and Disability (IRAD) research portfolio** is a searchable database of government-funded research projects in the areas of disability, independent living, and rehabilitation research. IRAD is an interagency initiative headed by ACL's NIDILRR, in partnership with NIH, CDC, NSF, DoD, and VA. The purpose of IRAD is to provide a publicly available resource that enables analysis of the federal research portfolio in disability, independent living, and rehabilitation research. This resource will aid in collaboration and coordination of research activities across federal agencies as well as increase transparency and visibility for the public and legislative stakeholders. The IRAD research portfolio is a new database, with projects still being added. Content will be updated annually.

RePORTER

The **NIH RePORTER** is an electronic tool that allows users to search a repository of research projects from the past 25 years and access publications since 1980 and patents resulting from NIH funding. RePORTER includes information on research projects funded by the NIH, CDC, HRSA, VA, AHRQ, and ACL.

Appendix. Grantee Snapshots

The grantee snapshots below illustrate how some disability and rehabilitation researchers have used available funding opportunities from agencies listed in this toolkit to fund their research, and how they have progressed through funding programs as their research has advanced. The snapshots are intended to encourage researchers to explore different funders and programs to support their work.



Jesse Craig Dean, PhD

RESEARCH FOCUS: Apply engineering-based understanding of human movement to the development of effective rehabilitation techniques for clinical populations with limited functional mobility

2011–2013

AWARDEE ENTITY: Medical University of South Carolina

PROJECT TITLE: Development of a passive elastic exoskeleton for gait rehabilitation

FUNDING AGENCY: NIH/NICHHD

FUNDING PROGRAM: Exploratory/Developmental Grant (R21)

PROJECT AIM: Optimize the design of a passive elastic exoskeleton, and determine if healthy human subjects are able to adapt their walking patterns to the resultant mechanical assistance, as evidenced by significant decreases in muscle activity and energetic cost

TARGET POPULATION: SCI or stroke survivors

2012–2016

AWARDEE ENTITY: Ralph Johnson VA Medical Center

PROJECT TITLE: Post-stroke contributors to increased

energetic cost and decreased gait stability

FUNDING AGENCY: VA

FUNDING PROGRAM: Career Development Program – Panel II (RRD9)

PROJECT AIM: Investigate how post-stroke changes in neural control accuracy contribute to decreases in gait stability and increases in the energetic cost of walking, both factors that can reduce mobility; results to serve as the basis for the development of novel gait rehabilitation techniques

TARGET POPULATION: Veterans/stroke survivors

2016–2019

AWARDEE ENTITY: Medical University of South Carolina

PROJECT TITLE: Development of a novel rehabilitation device for the improvement of gait stability

FUNDING AGENCY: NSF

FUNDING PROGRAM: DARE Program

PROJECT AIM: Develop a device able to influence the step-by-step adjustments in step width that people use to keep their balance while walking

TARGET POPULATION: Stroke survivors

2017–2020

AWARDEE ENTITY: Medical University of South Carolina

PROJECT TITLE: Mechanism-based strategies to restore post-stroke gait stability through targeted motor adaptation

FUNDING AGENCY: NIH/NICHHD

FUNDING PROGRAM: Musculoskeletal Rehabilitation Sciences Study Section (MRS)

PROJECT AIM: Determine whether training with a novel force field has the potential to improve gait stability among stroke survivors

TARGET POPULATION: Stroke survivors

2017–2020

AWARDEE ENTITY: Ralph Johnson VA Medical Center

PROJECT TITLE: A novel mechanics-based intervention to improve post-stroke gait stability

FUNDING AGENCY: VA

FUNDING PROGRAM: Rehabilitation Engineering & Prosthetics/Orthotics (RRD5)

PROJECT AIM: Develop and conduct initial testing of a novel elastic force field designed to improve post-stroke gait stability through targeted motor learning

TARGET POPULATION: Veterans/stroke survivors

through the augmentation of sensory feedback

TARGET POPULATION: Veterans/stroke survivors

2021–2026

AWARDEE ENTITY: Medical University of South Carolina

PROJECT TITLE: Proactive and reactive perturbation training to reduce falls and improve gait stability in people with chronic stroke

FUNDING AGENCY: NIH/NICHD

FUNDING PROGRAM: MRS

PROJECT AIM: Investigate the use of novel methods of perturbation training to improve post-stroke gait stability, with the potential to serve as the basis for the development of novel gait rehabilitation techniques able to increase the quality of life for stroke survivors

TARGET POPULATION: Stroke survivors

2019–2023

AWARDEE ENTITY: Ralph Johnson VA Medical Center

PROJECT TITLE: Development of sensory augmentation methods to improve post-stroke gait stability

FUNDING AGENCY: VA

FUNDING PROGRAM: RRD5

PROJECT AIM: Develop and conduct initial clinical testing of a novel approach to improve post-stroke gait instability

Monika Mitra, PhD

RESEARCH FOCUS: Examining the healthcare experiences and health outcomes of people with disabilities, with a focus on the sexual and reproductive health of people with disabilities

2013–2016

AWARDEE ENTITY: University of Massachusetts Medical School Worcester

PROJECT TITLE: Health needs and barriers to perinatal care for women with mobility disabilities

FUNDING AGENCY: NIH/NICHD

FUNDING PROGRAM: Special Emphasis Panel (ZRG1-HDM-T[50]R)

PROJECT AIM: Document the existence of disparities in maternal outcomes and rates of complications among women with and without disabilities and develop recommendations for perinatal care for women with mobility disabilities

TARGET POPULATION: Pregnant women with mobility disabilities

2015–2019

AWARDEE ENTITY: Brandeis University

PROJECT TITLE: Improving pregnancy outcomes of women

with intellectual and developmental disabilities

FUNDING AGENCY: NIH/NICHD

FUNDING PROGRAM: Special Emphasis Panel (ZRG1-HDM-T[50]R)

PROJECT AIM: Determine whether there are disparities in maternal and infant outcomes, complications, and healthcare utilization and costs among women with and without IDD, and develop a set of practice recommendations for perinatal care for women with IDDs

TARGET POPULATION: Pregnant women with IDDs

2017–2022

AWARDEE ENTITY: Brandeis University

PROJECT TITLE: Pregnancy outcomes and experiences among deaf and hard of hearing women

FUNDING AGENCY: NIH/NICHD

FUNDING PROGRAM: Special Emphasis Panel (ZRG1-HDM-V[55])

PROJECT AIM: Determine whether there are disparities in maternal and infant outcomes, complications, and healthcare utilization and costs between women who are deaf or hard of hearing and women who are not, and develop a set of practice recommendations for perinatal care for women who are deaf and hard of hearing

TARGET POPULATION: Pregnant deaf and hard of hearing women

2020–2024

AWARDEE ENTITY: Brandeis University, Heller School for Social Policy and Management

PROJECT TITLE: Postdoctoral fellowship in disability and health policy

FUNDING AGENCY: ACL/NIDILRR

FUNDING PROGRAM: ARRTs

PROJECT AIM: Increase research capacity by recruiting and training six postdoctoral fellows in conducting intersectional disability and health research with a focus

on community stakeholder engagement and knowledge translation

TARGET POPULATION:
Postdoctoral fellows

2021–2024

AWARDEE ENTITY: Brandeis University, Heller School for Social Policy and Management

PROJECT TITLE: National Center for Disability and Pregnancy Research (NCDPR)

FUNDING AGENCY:
ACL/NIDILRR

FUNDING PROGRAM: DRRP

PROJECT AIM: Establish the NCDPR, a cross-disability initiative to address gaps in knowledge about pregnancy and disability, enhance the experience of pregnancy in women with disabilities, and promote optimal pregnancy-related outcomes for pregnant women with disabilities

TARGET POPULATION:
Pregnant women with disabilities

2021–2025

AWARDEE ENTITY: Brandeis University

PROJECT TITLE: Disparities in perinatal care and out-comes among Black women and Latinas with physical disabilities

FUNDING AGENCY: NIH/NICHHD

FUNDING PROGRAM: Healthcare and Health Disparities Study Section (HHD)

PROJECT AIM: Investigate pregnancy complications and outcomes among Black women and Latinas with physical disabilities, examine disparities in care, and create and disseminate practice recommendations to improve perinatal care for Black women and Latinas with physical disabilities

TARGET POPULATION:
Pregnant Black women and Latinas with physical disabilities

2023–2028

AWARDEE ENTITY: Brandeis University

PROJECT TITLE: Addressing sexual and reproductive healthcare disparities and barriers among adolescents and young adults with disabilities

FUNDING AGENCY: NIH/NICHHD

FUNDING PROGRAM: Special Emphasis Panel (ZHD1 DSR-R [50])

PROJECT AIM: Generate national, population-based estimates of sexual and reproductive health risks and outcomes among transition-age adolescents and young adults with disabilities, and examine their unmet needs and barriers to sexual and reproductive healthcare

TARGET POPULATION:
Adolescents and young adults with disabilities

James H. Rimmer, PhD

RESEARCH FOCUS: Exploring the use of new and emergent technologies in developing biobehavioral and environmental strategies to promote beneficial physical activity and healthy lifestyles (e.g., diet, mindfulness, self-care) in people with disabilities

2001–2004

AWARDEE ENTITY: University of Illinois at Chicago

PROJECT TITLE: *Effects of aerobic exercise in persons with stroke*

FUNDING AGENCY: NIH/NICHD

FUNDING PROGRAM: ZHD1-RRG-K(16)

PROJECT AIM: Assess the effects of aerobic exercise as a rehabilitation strategy for stroke survivors, focusing on fitness, safety, functional, cognitive, and quality of life outcomes

TARGET POPULATION: Stroke survivors

FUNDING AGENCY: NIH/NIA

FUNDING PROGRAM: Psychosocial Risk and Disease Prevention Study Section (PRDP)

PROJECT AIM: Test a multiple component intervention that blends exercise with nutrition and education aimed at enhancing self-efficacy and maintained functional status

TARGET POPULATION: Older adults with physical disability

access to recreational opportunities and physical activity for people with disabilities

TARGET POPULATION: People with disabilities

2005–2007

AWARDEE ENTITY: Exerstrider Products, Inc.

PROJECT TITLE: *Universal exercise kits for manual wheelchair users*

FUNDING AGENCY: NIH/NICHD

FUNDING PROGRAM: ZHD1-DSR-T(13)

PROJECT AIM: Design and validate lightweight, easily installed aftermarket accessory kits which convert the most popular cardiovascular exercise equipment (stationary exercise cycles) so that the machines can be used to provide beneficial exercise for persons with lower extremity mobility impairments

TARGET POPULATION: People with mobility disabilities

2002–2007

AWARDEE ENTITY: University of Illinois at Chicago

PROJECT TITLE: *Rehabilitation engineering research center on recreational technologies and exercise physiology benefiting persons with disabilities (RERC RecTech)*

FUNDING AGENCY: ACL/IDILRR

FUNDING PROGRAM: RERCs

PROJECT AIM: Research and develop initiatives to enhance

2002–2003

AWARDEE ENTITY: University of Illinois at Chicago

PROJECT TITLE: *Home vs. community exercise program compliance in older adults with physical disability*

2005–2010

AWARDEE ENTITY: University of Illinois at Chicago

PROJECT TITLE: **Building health empowerment zones for people with disabilities**

FUNDING AGENCY: NIH/NICHHD

FUNDING PROGRAM: Special Emphasis Panel (ZES1 LWJ-C [BE])

PROJECT AIM: Use a community-based participatory research model to improve access to the built environment for persons with mobility disabilities through a multilevel intervention involving partnerships between the University of Illinois at Chicago, the Illinois Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Project, the Chicago-based American Planning Association, and the Urban Transportation Planning Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago

TARGET POPULATION: People with mobility disabilities

2006–2009

AWARDEE ENTITY: University of Illinois at Chicago

PROJECT TITLE: **Personalized physical activity and nutrition intervention for overweight/obese adults with mobility disabilities**

FUNDING AGENCY: CDC/NCBDDD³

FUNDING PROGRAM: Special Emphasis Panel (ZCD1 ZDQ [11])

PROJECT AIM: Test a personalized intervention approach with telephone coaching support to achieve increases in physical activity participation, lower body mass index, and reduce healthcare utilization

TARGET POPULATION: Overweight/obese adults with mobility disabilities

2006–2009

AWARDEE ENTITY: University of Illinois at Chicago

PROJECT TITLE: **Reducing obesity and obesity-related secondary conditions in adolescents with disabilities**

FUNDING AGENCY: ACL/NIDILRR

FUNDING PROGRAM: DRRP

PROJECT AIM: Examine the antecedents and consequences of obesity in adolescents with disabilities; evaluate the validity and utility of an alternative approach for establishing more accurate cutoff points for overweight and obesity in adolescents with disabilities; develop a pilot intervention for

managing obesity among youth with physical and developmental disabilities; and develop working partnerships with community-based organizations to promote the reduction of obesity in youth with disabilities

TARGET POPULATION: Adolescents with physical and developmental disabilities

2007–2012

AWARDEE ENTITY: University of Illinois at Chicago

PROJECT TITLE: **Rehabilitation engineering research center on recreational technologies and exercise physiology benefiting persons with disabilities (RERC RecTech)**

FUNDING AGENCY: ACL/NIDILRR

FUNDING PROGRAM: RERCs

PROJECT AIM: Conduct a coordinated set of research, development, capacity building, and dissemination projects focused on facilitating and promoting healthier, more active lifestyles for people with disabilities

TARGET POPULATION: People with disabilities

3 National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities

2010–2015

AWARDEE ENTITY: The Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois

PROJECT TITLE: University of Illinois Chicago obesity research project on prevalence, adaptations, and knowledge translation in youth and young adults with disabilities from diverse race/ethnic backgrounds

FUNDING AGENCY: ACL/NIDILRR

FUNDING PROGRAM: DRRP

PROJECT AIM: Expand upon ongoing research on obesity in youth and young adults with disabilities (formerly funded under DRRP-I) by addressing significant gaps in the literature related to prevalence, risk factors, and consequences of obesity; successful and promising community-based strategies for obesity prevention; and knowledge translation issues that limit access to important research findings

TARGET POPULATION: Youth and young adults with disabilities

2012–2017

AWARDEE ENTITY: University of Alabama at Birmingham

PROJECT TITLE: Interactive exercise technologies and exercise physiology for people with disabilities

FUNDING AGENCY: ACL/NIDILRR

FUNDING PROGRAM: RERCs

PROJECT AIM: Conduct an advanced engineering research and development program using new and emerging technologies to address the high rates of physical inactivity in youths and adults with disabilities

TARGET POPULATION: People with physical disabilities

system, referred to as POWERS—Personalized Online Weight and Exercise Response System—to provide individualized physical activity and nutrition programming to geographically diverse children with low incidence disabilities, such as spina bifida

TARGET POPULATION: Children with disabilities

2013–2018

AWARDEE ENTITY: University of Alabama at Birmingham

PROJECT TITLE: Dose-response effects of transformative exercise in improving health and function in adults with stroke and multiple sclerosis

FUNDING AGENCY: ACL/NIDILRR

FUNDING PROGRAM: DRRP

PROJECT AIM: Conduct three overlapping studies focused on developing and implementing sustainable and effective approaches to improving health and function in people with stroke and multiple sclerosis

TARGET POPULATION: People with stroke and multiple sclerosis

2013–2016

AWARDEE ENTITY: University of Alabama at Birmingham

PROJECT TITLE: Internet based system for managing obesity in children with disabilities

FUNDING AGENCY: NIH/NICHD

FUNDING PROGRAM: PRDP

PROJECT AIM: Evaluate the potential for use of an Information and Communication Technology

2016–2022**AWARDEE ENTITY:** University of Alabama at Birmingham**PROJECT TITLE:** **Scale up evaluation of a physical activity program for adults with physical disability****FUNDING AGENCY:** NIH/NICHD**FUNDING PROGRAM:** Special Emphasis Panel (ZRG1-RPHB-W[55]R)**PROJECT AIM:** Test a remote, home-based exercise training and monitoring system specifically designed for adults with physical/mobility disability**TARGET POPULATION:** Adults with physical/mobility disability**PROJECT AIM:** Assess how much benefit patients get from an exercise rehabilitation program delivered over the Internet or telephone, as compared to the same exercise program in a clinic**TARGET POPULATION:** People with multiple sclerosis**2017–2022****AWARDEE ENTITY:** University of Alabama at Birmingham**PROJECT TITLE:** **Rehabilitation engineering research center on exercise and recreational technologies for people with disabilities⁴****FUNDING AGENCY:** ACL/NIDILRR**FUNDING PROGRAM:** RERCs**PROJECT AIM:** Conduct a set of R&D projects that span the socio-ecological model from community to clinic to address a multilevel set of barriers to participation in healthful exercise and recreation among adults with physical disabilities**TARGET POPULATION:** People with physical disabilities**2018–2023****AWARDEE ENTITY:** University of Alabama at Birmingham**PROJECT TITLE:** **Scale-up of an innovative, evidence-based movement-2-music (M2M) intervention for adults with physical/mobility disability⁵****FUNDING AGENCY:** ACL/NIDILRR**FUNDING PROGRAM:** DRRP**PROJECT AIM:** Examine the feasibility, efficacy, and effectiveness of an innovative, evidence-based intervention (Movement-2-Music, M2M©) for people with physical/mobility disabilities**TARGET POPULATION:** People with physical/mobility disabilities**2016–2023****AWARDEE ENTITY:** University of Alabama at Birmingham**PROJECT TITLE:** **Comparing clinic- and home-based exercise programs in adults with multiple sclerosis – The TEAMS study****FUNDING AGENCY:** Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)**FUNDING PROGRAM:** Treatment of multiple sclerosis**2021–2026****AWARDEE ENTITY:** National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability**PROJECT TITLE:** **National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability****FUNDING AGENCY:** CDC**FUNDING PROGRAM:** n/a (cooperative agreement)

⁴ Dr. James Rimmer and Dr. Mohanraj Thirumalai serve as PIs.

⁵ Dr. James Rimmer and Dr. Hui-Ju (Zoe) Young serve as PIs.

PROJECT AIM: Reduce health disparities in people with mobility disability (ML) by delivering a set of online adapted programs in health promotion and wellness that meet the unique needs of people with ML in a health-care-to-community/home wellness framework in order to help bridge this gap in the healthcare system.

TARGET POPULATION: People with mobility disabilities

2022–2027

AWARDEE ENTITY: University of Alabama at Birmingham

PROJECT TITLE: **Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Recreational, Sport, and Exercise Technologies for People with Disabilities**⁶

FUNDING AGENCY: ACL/NIDILRR

FUNDING PROGRAM: RRERCs

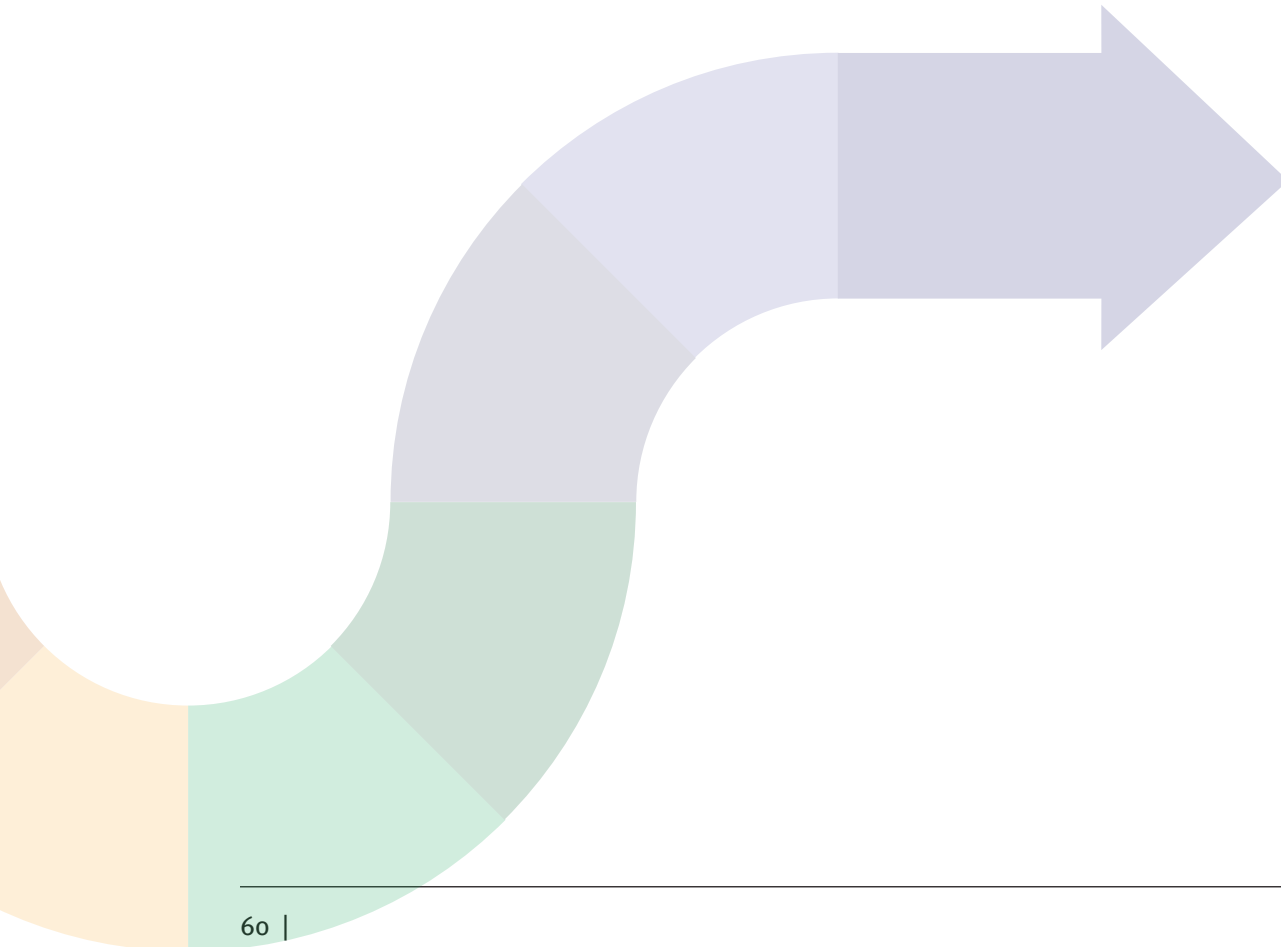
PROJECT AIM: Conduct several research and development

projects that span the socio-ecological model

to address a multilevel set of barriers to participation in healthful recreation, sport, and exercise among adults and children with disabilities

TARGET POPULATION: People with physical disabilities

⁶ Dr. Mohanraj Thirumalai and Dr. James Rimmer serve as PIs.



Jennifer Stevens-Lapsley, PhD

RESEARCH FOCUS: Identifying, integrating and advancing innovative evidence-based medicine rehabilitation solutions for older adults through highly effective research methods and partnerships

2016–2018

AWARDEE ENTITY: VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System

PROJECT TITLE: **Shifting rehabilitation paradigms in skilled nursing facilities**

FUNDING AGENCY: VA

FUNDING PROGRAM: RRDS

PROJECT AIM: Demonstrate feasibility of the “IntenSive Therapeutic Rehabilitation for Older skilled NursinG Home Residents” (I-STRONGER) program and determine its effectiveness in improving physical function

TARGET POPULATION: Older veterans following skilled nursing facility stay

2016–2021

AWARDEE ENTITY: VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System

PROJECT TITLE: **Improving rehabilitation outcomes after total hip arthroplasty**

FUNDING AGENCY: VA

FUNDING PROGRAM:

Musculoskeletal Health & Function

PROJECT AIM: Evaluate the effectiveness of a multimodal core stabilization program for movement pattern retraining on functional outcomes after total hip arthroplasty

TARGET POPULATION:

Veterans undergoing unilateral total hip arthroplasty

2016–2021

AWARDEE ENTITY: VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System

PROJECT TITLE: **Improving function in older veterans with hospital-associated deconditioning**

FUNDING AGENCY: VA

FUNDING PROGRAM: Chronic Medical Conditions & Aging

PROJECT AIM: Evaluate the effectiveness of a front-loaded, short duration, progressive high intensity rehabilitation intervention to address

functional deficits with deconditioning

TARGET POPULATION: Older veterans with deconditioning

2016–2021

AWARDEE ENTITY: University of Colorado Denver

PROJECT TITLE: **Progressing home health rehabilitation paradigms for older adults**

FUNDING AGENCY: NIH/ NICHD/NINR

FUNDING PROGRAM: MRS

PROJECT AIM: Evaluate the effectiveness of high-intensity home-based, interdisciplinary, multicomponent intervention that directly addresses functional deficits after acute hospitalization

TARGET POPULATION: Older adults following acute hospitalization

2017–2023

AWARDEE ENTITY: University of Colorado Denver

PROJECT TITLE: Movement pattern biofeedback training after total knee arthroplasty

FUNDING AGENCY: NIH/NIA

FUNDING PROGRAM: MRS

PROJECT AIM: Determine if the addition of a novel movement pattern rehabilitation training program improves functional movement pattern quality more than contemporary rehabilitation alone after unilateral total knee arthroplasty

TARGET POPULATION: Individuals who have received knee arthroplasty

2021–2026

AWARDEE ENTITY: University of Colorado Denver

PROJECT TITLE: Advancing rehabilitation paradigms for older adults in skilled nursing facilities

FUNDING AGENCY: NIH/NIA/NICHHD

FUNDING PROGRAM: MRS

PROJECT AIM: Implement high-intensity resistant rehabilitation to multiple skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) to further evaluate its effectiveness for patients admitted to SNFs following hospitalization, and evaluate processes, mechanisms, and determinants of successful implementation

TARGET POPULATION: Individuals in skilled nursing facilities

