

Medical Rehabilitation Research Resource RFA-HD-25-001 (P50 Clinical Trial Optional)

Pre-submission Technical Assistance Webinar

Joe Bonner, PhD

National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research



*Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute
of Child Health and Human Development*

Disclosures/Disclaimer

- No disclosures



Agenda

- RFA Background, Objectives and Expectations
- Overview of Peer Review of Applications
- Timeline for Submission, Review, and Selection of Applications
- Questions and Answers





Part 1 – RFA Background, Objectives, and Expectations

RFA Background

- This RFA continues and evolves the Medical Rehabilitation Research Resource program.
- This RFA is informed by an RFI in July 2022, followed by an evaluation conducted with the National Advisory Board for Medical Rehabilitation Research.
- NICHD/NCMRR, NCCIH, NIBIB, NIDCD, and NINDS expect to fund 4 to 5 Medical Rehabilitation Research Centers (MRRCs) in the current cycle.
- It is expected that successful applicants will have the opportunity to apply for one (1) renewal, but subsequent renewals would require strong justification to show that the research topic remains significant and innovative.



Objectives and Expectations

- The goal of this initiative is to enhance the capability of medical rehabilitation investigators to understand mechanisms of functional recovery, develop therapeutic strategies, identify clinical care gaps, and improve the lives of people with disabilities.
- A successful center will contribute to medical rehabilitation research infrastructure by developing and disseminating techniques, data, theories, research programs, and expertise.



Application Structure

Each application will include a(n):

- Overall component
- Administrative Core (includes optional pilot program)
- Resource Core
- Research Project
- Community Engagement and Outreach Core



Medical Rehabilitation Research Center Topic Areas

- Applicants will propose a program of research and dissemination in a specific content area.
- The research project will fit the overarching mission of the MRRC and have the potential for broad impact in medical rehabilitation research.
- Applications that propose a single efficacy trial in a single condition, or in closely related conditions may be deemed non-responsive and withdrawn prior to review.
- Applications that only propose to collect demographic data on a disability population or community may be deemed non-responsive and withdrawn prior to review.



High Priority Topic Areas Will Receive Funding Priority

- Precision Rehabilitation
- Outcome Measures to Advance Clinical Research
- Digital Health Biomarkers for Rehabilitation
- Data Science for Rehabilitation
- Social Determinants of Health
- Health Promotion for People with Physical Disabilities
- Assistive and Rehabilitative Technologies
- Dissemination and Implementation Research



Optional Pilot Program

- Applicants may propose a nationwide pilot program to fund small grants to Early Stage Investigator or Investigators entering a new area of research
- The Pilot studies will have direct costs limited to \$35,000 per year for 1 year.
- Each center may request up to \$150,000 of Opportunity Pool funds per year, inclusive of all F&A costs, including subaward F&A costs. This is in addition to the \$750,000/year direct costs
- Optional Pilot Program will be within the Administrative Core



Inclusion of People with Lived Experience

- All applications must include a 2-page required attachment titled “Plan for Inclusion of People with Lived Experience” that details a plan to incorporate the experience and expertise of People with Lived Experience (PWLE) living with disabilities throughout the center programming.
- The plan must be included with the Overall component as an Other Attachment under the Research and Related Other Project Information (Overall).
- Applications that fail to include the 2-page required other attachment will be withdrawn prior to review.





Part 2 – Peer Review of Applications

Peer Review - 1

- NICHD Scientific Review Branch will coordinate the review of applications
 - Applications will be assigned to a special emphasis panel (SEP) - meeting roster will become part of an aggregate roster
 - Administrative Review based on [RFA-HD-25-001](#) requirements and [NIH peer review policy and procedures](#)
- Scientific Expertise
 - Collective expertise based on content of the applications received
 - At least 3 reviewers will be assigned to each application
 - Do not contact the members of the review panel ([NOT-OD-22-044](#))
- Post Submission Materials
 - NIH policy applies ([NOT-OD-19-083](#) and [NOT-OD-24-067](#))



Peer Review - 2

- NIH utilizes a 9-point rating scale (1 = exceptional; 9 = poor) for all applications
 - [Click here for the scale used for overall impact scores](#)
- Reviewers will provide a preliminary overall impact score, and impact score for each component, reflecting their assessment of the likelihood the project will exert a sustained, powerful influence on the research field
- For this RFA, preliminary overall impact scores will determine which applications will be discussed.
- Final impact score is released ~3 days after the review meeting ends. The summary statement can be found in your eRA Commons account ~30 days after the review
 - Impact scores are not provided for applications that are not discussed (ND)



Peer Review – Review of Components

- Overall Component will be scored on Overall Impact and Scored Review Criteria (Significance, Investigator(s), Innovation, Approach, and Environment)
- Research Project will be scored on Overall Impact and Scored Review Criteria (Significance, Investigator(s), Innovation, Approach, and Environment)
- Administrative Core, Resource Core, and Community Engagement and Outreach Core will each receive an overall impact score based on the factors in Section V of the RFA



Peer Review - 3

- Reviewers will consider the criteria described in section V of [RFA-HD-25-001](#) to determine scientific and technical merit
 - Read carefully and address questions in section V
 - If proposing a clinical trial, address specific questions related to the clinical trials



Review Criteria Specific to this RFA – Overall Component

- Overall Component, Significance
 - Does the application include people with lived experience (PWLE) in a way that informs the scientific aims of the application and increases or validates the potential impact of the application? Does the lived experience match the topic of the proposal? Are PWLE incorporated appropriately? Consider when and how often the lived experience is incorporated.
- Overall Component, Approach
 - Do all the components (i.e. research project, administrative core, resource core, community engagement and outreach core) of the research center present a coherent center with a high likelihood of advancing the field of rehabilitation research?
 - Are there clear advantages of conducting the center as an integrated effort rather than isolated components?
- See additional review criteria in RFA-HD-25-001



Review Criteria Specific to this RFA – Research Project, Significance

- Does the research project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field?
- If successful, will the research project facilitate future improvements in research, quality of care, and/or quality of life for people with disabilities or if successful, will the research project facilitate a better understanding of the mechanisms of rehabilitation?
- Does the research plan apply to diverse populations of people with physical disabilities, or apply to diverse primary conditions leading to physical disability, or apply across the lifespan and/or socio-economic spectrum, or apply across environments (rural, suburban, urban), or apply across locations (home, community, clinic, etc.), or have the potential to improve function for people with disabilities? If yes, does this add to the significance of the proposal?
- Will the research product or research data be in high demand from the rehabilitation research community?



Review Criteria Specific to this RFA – Administrative Core

Review Criteria specific to the Administrative Core of this RFA

- Are the Key personnel qualified for their roles, and have they previously demonstrated the ability to manage complex programs?
- Is there an effective plan for Center evaluation?
- Is there effective coordination among the Administrative Core and other Center components?
- If a pilot program is proposed, will the pilot program effectively identify, review and fund potentially impactful pilots?
- If a pilot program is proposed, does the pilot program include appropriate metrics for success?
- If a pilot program is proposed, does the pilot program provide appropriate support for the pilot PIs outside of the funding itself?



Review Criteria Specific to this RFA – Resource Core and Community Engagement and Outreach Core

Review Criteria specific to the Resource Core of this RFA

- Do the Key Personnel have the appropriate experience and skills to accomplish the proposed work?
- Is the method of resource sharing appropriate for the resource?
- Are the potential barriers to resource sharing effectively addressed?

Review Criteria specific to the Community Engagement and Outreach Core of this RFA

- Does the core have an effective and potentially impactful plan to conduct community and user outreach?
- Will the core effectively disseminate research findings to researchers, clinicians, and/or people with disabilities and their care partners as appropriate?
- Is the proposed plan to host one nationwide virtual or hybrid meeting in the topic of the center feasible and potentially impactful?



Peer Review Resources

- The Center for Scientific Review (CSR) has a series of webinars and videos to provide insight into NIH grant application review - [click here to see webinars and videos](#)
- [NICHD's Scientific Review Branch - click here](#)
- [Resources for using eRA Commons - click here](#)
- [Problems with submission process - click here](#)
- Always contact eRA Service desk for technical issues





Part 3 – Timeline for Submission, Review, and Selection of Applications

Key Dates

- Posted Date: April 03, 2024
- Open Date (Earliest Submission Date): June 30, 2024
- Letter of Intent Due Date: June 30, 2024 (Not required, nor binding)
- Application Due Date: July 30, 2024
- Review: November 2024
- Advisory Council: January 2025
- Earliest Start Date: April 2025





Part 4 – Question and Answer

Contact information

Scientific/Research Contact(s)

- Joe Bonner, PhD
NICHD
Telephone: 301-827-8303
Email: joe.bonner@nih.gov
- Merav Sabri
NIDCD - NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DEAFNESS AND
OTHER COMMUNICATION DISORDERS
Phone: (301) 827-0908
E-mail: merav.sabri@nih.gov
- Moria Fisher Bittmann
NIBIB - NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF BIOMEDICAL IMAGING
AND BIOENGINEERING
Phone: none
E-mail: moria.bittmann@nih.gov
- Daofen Chen
NINDS - NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF NEUROLOGICAL
DISORDERS AND STROKE
Phone: 301-496-9964
E-mail: daofen.chen@nih.gov

- Alex Tuttle, Ph.D.
National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health
(NCCIH)
Phone: 301-814-6115
Email: alex.tuttle@nih.gov

Peer Review Contact(s)

- Joanna Kubler-Kielb, PhD
NICHD
Telephone: 301-435-6916
Email: kielbj@mail.nih.gov

Financial/Grants Management Contact(s)

- Margaret Young
NICHD
Telephone: 301-642-4552
Email: margaret.young@nih.gov

