Administration for Community Living

National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research

Switzer Research Fellowships Program
HHS-2025-ACL-NIDILRR-SFGE-0110
02/03/2025

Table of Contents

ACL Center:
National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research

Funding Opportunity Title:
Switzer Research Fellowships Program

Announcement Type:
Initial

Funding Opportunity Number:
HHS-2025-ACL-NIDILRR-SFGE-0110

Primary CFDA Number:
93.433

Due Date for Letter of Intent:
01/08/2025

Due Date for Applications:
02/03/2025

Date for Informational Conference Call:
01/06/2025

Applications that fail to meet the application due date will not be reviewed and will receive no further consideration. You are strongly encouraged to submit your application a minimum of 3-5 days prior to the application closing date. Do not wait until the last day in the event you encounter technical difficulties, either on your end or, with https://www.grants.gov. Grants.gov can take up to 48 hours to notify you of a successful submission.

Executive Summary

Additional Overview Content/Executive Summary

The Administrator of the Administration for Community Living invites applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2025 for the Switzer Research Fellowships Program.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Priority:

The purpose of the Switzer Research Fellowships Program is to build research capacity by providing support to highly qualified individuals, including those with disabilities, to conduct high quality research on the experiences and outcomes of people with disabilities. Fellows must conduct original research in an area authorized by Section 204 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. Section 204 authorizes research toward knowledge, methods, procedures, or rehabilitation technology that maximizes the full inclusion and integration into society,

employment, independent living, family support, and economic and social self-sufficiency of people with disabilities, especially those with the highest support needs.

For Switzer Research Fellowships, NIDILRR wishes to receive applications from qualified individuals whose areas of interest fall within the scope of NIDILRR's outcome domains of community living and participation, health and function, and employment. For further information about these outcome domains and NIDILRR's research agenda and programs, applicants should consult NIDILRR's Long-Range Plan for Fiscal Years 2024-2028 (the Plan) when preparing their applications.

Applicants must demonstrate, in their original application, that people with disabilities from diverse racial and ethnic communities will be included in proposed samples in sufficient numbers to generate knowledge and products that are relevant to the racial and ethnic diversity of the population of people with disabilities being studied. The applicant must describe and justify, in their original application, the planned racial and ethnic distribution of people with disabilities who will participate in the proposed research project.

NIDILRR is particularly interested in receiving Switzer Research Fellowship applications from investigators with disabilities, and investigators from communities that are underrepresented in the extramural scientific workforce. Communities underrepresented in the extramural scientific workforce include Blacks/African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, American Indians and Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders (National Institutes of Health, 2020).

References:

National Institutes of Health (2020). Underrepresented Populations in the U.S. Biomedical, Clinical, Behavioral and Social Sciences Research Enterprise. https://diversity.nih.gov/about-us/population-underrepresented.

Executive Order 13985, 2021. 86 FR 7009. Pages 7009-7013. https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/01/25/2021-01753/advancing-racial-equity-and-support-for-underserved-communities-through-the-federal-government.

Statutory Authority

29 U.S.C. § 762(e)

II. Award Information

Funding Instrument Type:
G (Grant)

Estimated Total Funding:
$520,000

Expected Number of Awards:
6

Award Ceiling:
$90,000

Award Floor:

$80,000

Length of Project Period:
12-month project period and budget period

Additional Information on Project Periods and Explanation of 'Other'
The Award Ceiling (maximum award amount) for Distinguished Fellowships is $90,000. The Award Ceiling (maximum award amount) for Merit Fellowships is $80,000.

The Administration has requested funding for the NIDILRR program for FY 2025. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final Congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2026 from the list of approved but unfunded applicants from this competition.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

No entities are eligible for this award, only individuals are eligible to apply. If you are a non-USA citizen, you must provide documentation that you are eligible to receive research funding directly from an agency of the United States government.
Only individuals are eligible to apply for NIDILRR Switzer Research Fellowship grants. Institutions and organizations may not apply. Because the individual person rather than their institution is the applicant, the person who seeks the Fellowship signs the forms included in the application. Representatives of institutions do not sign anywhere on the application forms.

Applicants must: have training and experience that indicate a potential for engaging in scientific research related to improving the outcomes of individuals with disabilities.

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

To be eligible for a Merit Fellowship, individuals must be in the earlier stages of a career in research and have advanced professional training and/or experience in independent study in an area which is directly pertinent to disability and rehabilitation.

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

Because the award is made to the individual rather than their institution, institutional indirect costs may not be deducted from the award. Fellowship funds are taxable income.

Fellows must not, during the duration of the Fellowship award performance period, be direct recipients of Federal government grant funds in addition to those provided by the Fellowship grant. Fellows may, subject to compliance with their institution's policy on additional

employment, be the principal investigator of, or otherwise work on, Federal grants awarded to the Fellow's institution.

Potential applicants who receive certain Federal and state benefits are cautioned that acceptance of a Fellowship may adversely affect their eligibility for services such as In-Home Supportive Services under Supplemental Security Income Section 1619. This has occurred in the past because Fellowships are awarded directly to individuals rather than host institutions, and this can affect determinations of employment and income status.

Potential applicants who are not U.S. residents are cautioned that acceptance of a Fellowship may adversely affect their immigration or non- immigrant visa status. If you are not a citizen of the U.S., you may not be eligible to receive research funding directly from an agency of the U.S. government. Successful applicants who are not eligible to receive research funding directly from the U.S. government will not receive the Fellowship. Also, a U.S. Social Security Number (SSN) is required for completing and submitting the application materials. Fellowship applicants from other countries may be able to obtain a SSN through the following web site: http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10096.pdf.

Eligibility and Background Statement

Include the following information in your application in the form of an Eligibility and Background Statement:

- How you meet the requirements for either the Merit level or the Distinguished level of this Fellowship.
- How you will schedule the proposed research activities so that they can be completed in a one-year project period. NIDILRR expects Switzer Research Fellows to complete their proposed research projects within a one-year project period.
- A statement of whether or not you are a citizen of the U.S. If you are not a U.S. citizen, describe your status as a visitor to the U.S. and explain how that status permits you to accept this fellowship. Document your eligibility to receive research funding directly from an agency of the U.S. government. Include this documentation as an appendix. This documentation may include, for example, a photocopy of the pertinent section of your visa documentation, a passage from an official federal description of your type of visa, or a letter from the sponsor of your visa.
- If applicable, information about your disability status, or your background as a member of one or more communities that are underrepresented in the extramural scientific workforce.

Note: The contents of the eligibility and background statement are not subject to peer review. Reviewers will not review the contents of the eligibility and background statement as they evaluate your application.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement:
No

3. Responsiveness and Screening Criteria

Application Responsiveness Criteria
Applicants must propose to conduct an original research project that is ultimately aimed at improving outcomes among people with disabilities in one or more of the following outcome domains:

- Community Living and Participation
- Employment
- Health and Function

Application Screening Criteria
All applications will be screened for eligibility and will be rejected if they:

- Are submitted after the deadline;
- Request funding that exceeds $90,000 for Distinguished Fellowships or $80,000 for Merit Fellowships;
- Propose a project period that exceeds 12 months;
- Are submitted by an institution or organization rather than an individual person; or
- Propose a project or other activities that are outside the Priority as described in "Section I. Funding Opportunity Description" above.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package

Application materials can be obtained from https://www.grants.gov or https://www.acl.gov/grants/applying-grants.

Please note: ACL requires applications for all announcements to be submitted electronically through http://www.grants.gov in Workspace. Grants.gov Workspace is the standard way for organizations and individuals to apply for federal grants in Grants.gov. An overview and training on Grants.gov Workspace can be found here at:
https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html
The Grants.gov registration process can take several days. If you are not currently registered, please begin this process immediately. For assistance with https://www.grants.gov, please contact them at support@grants.gov or 800-518-4726 between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

- At the https://www.grants.gov website, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site, including the hours of operation. ACL strongly recommends that you do not wait until the application due date to begin the application process because of the time involved to complete the registration process.
- You must submit all documents electronically, including all information included on the SF424 and all necessary assurances and certifications.
- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement from https://www.grants.gov that contains https://www.grants.gov a tracking number. The Administration for Community Living will retrieve your application form from https://www.grants.gov.

If you have any questions about the programmatic or substantive requirements of this funding opportunity, please contact the competition manager:

U.S Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Community Living

Linda Vo
Linda.Vo@acl.hhs.gov

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Letter of Intent

Due Date for Letter Of Intent 01/08/2025

01/08/2025
Applicants are requested, but not required, to submit a letter of intent to apply for this funding opportunity. The letter of intent assists ACL in planning for the application independent review process. The purpose of the letter of intent is to allow our staff to estimate the number of independent reviewers needed and to avoid potential conflicts of interest in the review. Letters of intent should be sent to: Megan.Alvarado@acl.hhs.gov

In your email include:

- The funding opportunity number and title.
- The name and contact information for the project principal investigator.
- A brief description of the proposed activities.
- A list of key individuals and their organizations that will have a significant role in your project.
- A list of individuals whose selection as a peer reviewer might constitute a conflict of interest due to their involvement in the application development.

For further information regarding the LOI submission process, contact Megan Alvarado.

Project Narrative

The Project Narrative portion of your application is where you describe your proposed project and address each of the review criteria. The project narrative must be no longer than the equivalent of 24 pages, using the following standards:

- A page is 8.5" x 11" on one side only with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides;
- Double-space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all narrative text in the project narrative. You are not required to double space titles, headings, footnotes, references, captions, or text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs. Applicants who unnecessarily place narrative text in tables to avoid the double-spacing requirement run the risk of exceeding the page limit;
- Use a font that is not less than size 12 and is Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New or Arial;

- Include all critical information in the project narrative minimizing the need for additional appendices;
- Ensure that you attach PDF files only for any attachments to your application. While you are able to attach files to your application in formats other than PDF, non-PDF files are converted into PDF format before reviewers see and evaluate your application. The conversion to PDF format may not maintain your original formatting. Therefore, to ensure the integrity of your application documents we strongly recommend that you attach only PDF files as you submit your application.

NOTE: The page limit for the Project Narrative does not apply to the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424), the table of contents, the forms, the summary/abstract, the applicant's resume or CV, eligibility and background statement, references, letters of reference and support, human subjects narrative, data management plan, or the summary of involved individuals and organizations,

For project narratives that exceed 24 double-spaced pages, NIDILRR will instruct reviewers to disregard all of the content on the pages beyond the 24th page.

Table of Contents

The table of contents should show where and how the important sections of your proposal are organized. While the application will be submitted electronically, the reviewers may use printed copies during the review process. The table of contents will assist reviewers in more efficiently and effectively evaluating your application.

Summary/Abstract

The one-page abstract should be a comprehensive description of the whole project and not a description of the competency of the institution or Project Director/PI. It is not an executive summary. The abstract can be single-spaced.

Work Plan

Applicants must include a Project Work Plan as part of their project narrative. This Work Plan should include the project's overall goal, anticipated outcomes, key objectives, and the major tasks and action steps that will be pursued to achieve the goal and outcomes. For each major task and action step, the work plan should identify the timeframes involved (including start- and end-dates). Applicants may wish to use the provided "Project Work Plan - Sample Template" format as a reference and resource. Applicants can find the Sample Template for a Work Plan in the appendix section of this funding opportunity announcement.

References

Applicants should provide references for works cited in the Project Narrative. Applicants may provide references in any format (i.e., APA, AMA, MLA), though the formatting should be consistent.

Data Management Plan

You must provide a data management plan for your project. We will review the data management plan for compliance before making an award.

The data management plan is your plan for making your NIDILRR-funded data available to the public at the end of your grant. The Data Management Plan must include the following:

- A description of the types of data you will collect for your project.
- A description of how you will organize, store, and preserve your project data.
- A description of the metadata to be provided for useful analysis of the data by others. Metadata include descriptions and labels for variables and values in your dataset.
- A description of the data repository that you will use to make your data available to the public at the end of your grant. We recommend that you use the ICPSR as your data repository, but you may select a different data repository.
    - If you select a different data repository, you must provide information on how the data repository will provide long-term preservation and free public access to the project data.
- If applicable, describe why your data cannot be submitted to a data repository.
- A description of the informed consent process that will enable data sharing.
- Costs associated with data management can be included in your budget.

If you require technical assistance in preparing your data management plan for this application, contact ICPSR at ICPSR-help@umich.edu or 734-647-2200.

Summary of Involved Individuals and Organizations

Submit an appendix that lists every collaborating organization and every individual who is named to a professional role in the proposed project. These individuals should include staff, consultants, contractors, and advisory board members. We will use this information to screen for conflicts of interest with potential peer reviewers.

3. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Applications 02/03/2025

02/03/2025

Date for Informational Conference Call:
01/06/2025
The deadline for the submission of applications under this Funding Opportunity Announcement is noted above, and applications must be submitted electronically by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on that date. Applications that fail to meet the application due date will not be reviewed and will receive no further consideration.

Informational Conference Call:

An informational conference call will be held between 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. (Eastern time) on the date listed above for the informational conference call. Interested parties are invited to participate in the pre-application meeting to discuss the funding priority and to receive information and technical assistance. You must contact Megan.Alvarado@acl.hhs.gov in order to participate in this meeting. NIDILRR staff also will be available to provide information and technical assistance via individual phone consultations from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on the date

listed above. Requests for individual consultations during this one-hour window must be made in advance to Megan Alvarado.

4. Intergovernmental Review

This funding opportunity announcement is not subject to the requirements of Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

5. Funding Restrictions

Note: A recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) report has raised considerable concerns about grantees and contractors charging the Federal government for additional meals outside of the standard allowance for travel subsistence known as per diem expenses. Executive Orders on Promoting Efficient Spending (E.O. 13589) and Delivering Efficient, Effective and Accountable Government (E.O. 13576) have been issued and instruct Federal agencies to promote efficient spending. Therefore, if meals are to be charged in your proposal, applicants should understand such costs must meet the following criteria outlined in the Executive Orders and HHS Grants Policy Statement:

- Meals are generally unallowable except for the following:
    - For subjects and patients under study (usually a research program);
    - Where specifically approved as part of the project or program activity, e.g., in programs providing children's services (e.g., Headstart);
    - When an organization customarily provides meals to employees working beyond the normal workday, as a part of a formal compensation arrangement; and
    - As part of a per diem or subsistence allowance provided in conjunction with allowable travel.

The following updated sections 2 CFR 200.216 "Prohibition on certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment" became **effective on or after August 13, 2020**. Recommended Actions for any recipient that has received a loan, grant, or cooperative agreement **on or after August 13, 2020**:

- Develop a compliance plan to implement 2 CFR 200.216 regulation.
- Develop and maintain internal controls to ensure that your organization does not expend federal funds (in whole or in part) on covered equipment, services or systems.
- Determine through reasonable inquiry whether your organization currently uses "covered telecommunication" equipment, services, or systems and take necessary actions to comply with the regulation as quickly as is feasibly possible.

The following updated sections 2 CFR 200.216 "Prohibition on certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment" became **effective on or after August 13, 2020**.

Recommended Actions for any recipient that has received a loan, grant, or cooperative agreement **on or after August 13, 2020**:

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- Develop and maintain internal controls to ensure that your organization does not expend federal funds (in whole or in part) on covered equipment, services or systems.

- Determine through reasonable inquiry whether your organization currently uses “covered telecommunication” equipment, services, or systems and take necessary actions to comply with the regulation as quickly as is feasibly possible.

6. Other Submission Requirements

Protection of Human Subjects

Research activities involving human subjects under these programs are subject to Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects. **You do not need an assurance or IRB approval as a condition of applying for this competition.**

If you marked "Yes" for Item 3 on the Supplemental Information for SF 424, you must provide a human subjects "exempt research" or "nonexempt research" narrative. Insert the narrative(s) in the space provided.

If you have multiple projects and need to provide more than one narrative, please indicate which project each set of responses addresses.

A. Exempt Research Narrative. If you marked "Yes" for item 3a. and designated exemption number(s), provide the "exempt research" narrative. The narrative must contain sufficient information about the involvement of human subjects in the proposed research to allow a determination that the designated exemption(s) are appropriate. The narrative must be succinct. In addition, narratives are required for each participating partner if research is being conducted at other sites. The Exempt Research Narrative does not count toward the 24-page limit.

B. Nonexempt Research Narrative. If you marked "No" for item 3a., you must provide the "nonexempt research" narrative. The narrative must address the seven points listed on the form. Although no specific page limitation applies to this section of the application, be succinct. The Nonexempt Research Narrative does not count toward the 24-page limit.

Human Subject Requirements for HHS grants. If your proposed project(s) involves research on human subjects, you must comply with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Regulations (Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations Part 46) regarding the protection of human research subjects, unless that research is exempt as specified in the regulation. All awardees and their performance sites engaged in research involving human subjects must have or obtain:

(1) an assurance of compliance with the Regulations, and (2) initial and continuing approval of the research by an appropriately constituted and registered institutional review board. In order to obtain a Federal Wide Assurance (FWA) of Protection for Human Subjects, the applicant may complete an on-line application at the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) website or write to the OHRP for an application. To obtain a FWA, contact OHRP at: http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp.

V. Application Review Information

1. Criteria

Your application will be scored by members of a NIDILRR- administered peer review panel, who will assign a maximum of 100 points across the criteria listed below.

Quality and level of applicant's formal education
Maximum Points: 15

_____

Applicant's previous work experience.
Maximum Points: 20

_____

Recommendations of present or former supervisors or colleagues that include an indication of the applicant's ability to work creatively in scientific research.
Maximum Points: 15

_____

Importance of the problem to be investigated to the purpose of the Rehabilitation Act and the mission of the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR).
Maximum Points: 10

_____

The research hypotheses or related objectives and the methodology and design to be followed.
Maximum Points: 30

_____

Assurance of the availability of any necessary data resources, equipment, or institutional support, including technical consultation and support where appropriate, required to carry out the proposed activity.
Maximum Points: 10

_____

2. Review and Selection Process

Final award decisions will be made by the Administrator of ACL. In making these decisions, the Administrator's primary consideration will be the ranking of applications according to the scores assigned by the review panel. The Administrator may also consider the reasonableness of the estimated cost to the government, considering the available funding and anticipated results and the likelihood that the proposed project will result in the benefits expected. Under 45 CFR part

75, Section 205, item (3) history of performance is an item that is also reviewed. In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Administrator of ACL also requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Health and Human Services 45 CFR part 75.

3. Anticipated Announcement Award Date

The anticipated project period start date for this announcement is: 09/01/2025.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices

If your application is successful, we send you a Notice of Award (NOA), or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your NOA. If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we will notify you.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The award is subject to DHHS Administrative Requirements, which can be found in 45 CFR Part 75 and the Standard Terms and Conditions, included in the Notice of Award as well as implemented through the HHS Grants Policy Statement.

A standard term and condition of award will be included in the final notice of award; all applicants will be subject to a term and condition that applies the terms of 48 CFR section 3.908 to the award and requires the grantees inform their employee in writing of employee whistleblower rights and protections under 41 U.S.C. 4712 in the predominant native language of the workforce.

Applicants may follow their own procurement policies and procedures when contracting with Project Funds, but You must comply with the requirements of 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.317-200.326. Additionally, when using Project Funds to procure supplies and/or equipment, applicants are encouraged to purchase American-manufactured goods to the maximum extent practicable. American-manufactured goods are those products for which the cost of their component parts that were mined, produced, or manufactured in the United States exceeds 50 percent of the total cost of all their components. For further guidance regarding what constitutes an American-manufactured good (also known as a domestic end product), see 48 C.F.R. Part 25.

3. Reporting

If you are successful, you will have to submit financial and performance reports. To learn more about reporting, see Managing a Grant, funding requirements on our website.

Financial and performance reports

The terms and conditions in the Notice of Award will have information on performance and financial reports including:

- How often you will report
- Any required forms or formatting
- How to submit them

Complying with the Administration for Community Living (ACL) Public Access Plan

If you receive a grant under this opportunity, you must comply with ACL's Public Access Plan requirements for making your data and your publications accessible to the public.

4. FFATA and FSRS Reporting

The Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) requires data entry at the FFATA Subaward Reporting System (https://www.FSRS.gov) for all sub-awards and sub-contracts issued for $25,000 or more as well as addressing executive compensation for both grantee and sub-award organizations.

For further guidance please see the following

link: https://www.acl.gov/Funding_Opportunities/Grantee_Info/FFATA.aspx

VII. Agency Contacts

Project Officer
Linda Vo
(202) 795-7431
Linda.Vo@acl.hhs.gov.
National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research

Grants Management Specialist
Howard Nicholas
(202) 795-7275
Howard.nicholas@acl.hhs.gov
Office of Grants Management

VIII. Other Information

Application Elements:

- SF-424, required -- Application for Federal Assistance (See "Instructions for Completing Required Forms" for assistance).
- Eligibility and Background Statement.
- Resume or CV.
- Abstract.
- Project Narrative with Work Plan, required (See "Project Work Plan – Sample Template" for a formatting suggestions).
- Exempt Research Narrative or Non-Exempt Research Narrative.
- Supplemental Information Form for the SF-424.
- Summary of Involved Individuals and Organizations.
- Data Management Plan.
- Letters of Recommendations and/or Support.

The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (P.L. 104-13)

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The project description and Budget Narrative/Justification is approved under OMB control number 0985-0018. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 10 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed and reviewing the collection information.

Appendix

Instructions for Completing the "Supplemental Information for the SF-424" Form

1. Project Director. Name, address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address of the person to be contacted on matters involving this application. Items marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory.

2. **Novice Applicant.** Select "Not Applicable To This Program."

3a. Human Subjects Research. Check "**No**" if research activities involving human subjects are not planned at any time during the proposed project period. The remaining parts of Item 3 are then not applicable. Check "**Yes**" if research activities involving human subjects are planned at any time during the proposed project period, either at the applicant organization or at any other performance site or collaborating institution. Check "**Yes**" even if the research is exempt from the regulations for the protection of human subjects.

3b. Human Subjects Research. Check "**Yes**" if all the research activities proposed are designated to be exempt from the regulations. Check the exemption number(s) corresponding to one or more of the six exemption categories listed in I. B. "Exemptions." In addition, follow the instructions in II. A. "Exempt Research Narrative" below. Check "**No**" if some or all of the planned research activities are covered (not exempt). In addition, follow the instructions in II. B. "Nonexempt Research Narrative" in the attached page entitled "Definitions for U.S. Department of Education Supplemental Information for the SF-424."

3b. Human Subjects Assurance Number. If the applicant has an approved Federal Wide Assurance (FWA) on file with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, that covers the specific activity, insert the number in the space provided. **(A list of current FWAs is available at: http://ohrp .cit.nih.gov/search/search.aspx?styp=bsc).** If the applicant does not have an approved assurance on file with OHRP, enter "None." In this case, the applicant, by signature on the SF-424, is declaring that it will proceed to obtain the human subjects assurance upon request by the designated NIDILRR official. If the application is recommended/selected for funding, the designated NIDILRR official will request that the applicant obtain the assurance within 30 days after the specific formal request.

3c. Human Subjects Narratives. If applicable, please attach your "Exempt Research" or "Nonexempt Research" narrative to your submission of the Supplemental Information for the SF-424 form as instructed in item II, "Instructions for Exempt and Nonexempt Human Subjects Research Narratives," below.

Note about Institutional Review Board Approval. NIDILRR does not require certification of Institutional Review Board approval with the application. However, if an application that involves non-exempt human subjects research is selected for funding, the designated NIDILRR official will request that the applicant obtain and send the certification to NIDILRR within 30 days after the formal request.

I. Definitions and Exemptions

A. Definitions.

—Research
"a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge." Activities which meet this definition constitute research whether or not they are conducted or supported under a program that is considered research for other purposes. For example, some demonstration and service programs may include research activities.

—Human Subject
"a living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research obtains (1) data through intervention or interaction with the individual, or (2) identifiable private information." *(1) If an activity involves obtaining information about a living person by manipulating that person or that person's environment, or by communicating or interacting with the individual, as occurs with surveys and interviews, the definition of human subject is met. (2) If an activity involves obtaining private information about a living person in such a way that the information can be* ***directly or indirectly*** *linked to that individual), the definition of human subject is met.*

B. Exemptions.

Research activities in which the **only** involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following six categories of ***exemptions*** are not covered by the regulations:

(1) Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as (a) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (b) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods. If an educational practice is being introduced to the site and is not widely used for similar populations, it is not covered by this exemption.

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (a) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (b) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation. If the

subjects are children, exemption 2 applies only to research involving educational tests and observations of public behavior when the investigator(s) do not participate in the activities being observed. Exemption 2 does not apply if children are surveyed or interviewed or if the research involves observation of public behavior and the investigator(s) participate in the activities being observed. [Children are defined as persons who have not attained the legal age for consent to treatments or procedures involved in the research, under the applicable law or jurisdiction in which the research will be conducted.]

(3) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under section (2) above, if the human subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office; or federal statute(s) require(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter.

(4) Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects**.** [This exemption applies only to retrospective studies using data collected before the initiation of the research.]

(5) Research and demonstration projects which are conducted by or subject to the approval of department or agency heads, and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine: (a) public benefit or service programs; (b) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs; (c) possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or (d) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs. [The standards of this exemption are rarely met because it was designed to apply only to specific research conducted by the Social Security Administration and some Federal welfare benefits programs.]

(6) Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies, (a) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed or (b) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

II. Instructions for Exempt and Nonexempt Human Subjects Research Narratives

If you selected "Yes" for Item 3.b. of the Supplemental Information for the SF 424, you must attach a human subjects "exempt research" or "nonexempt research" narrative to the Supplemental Information for the SF-424 form. If you have multiple projects and need to provide more than one narrative, be sure to label each set of responses as to the project they address.

A. Exempt Research Narrative.

If you marked "Yes" for item 3.b. and designated exemption numbers(s), attach the "exempt

research" narrative to the Supplemental Information for the SF-424. The narrative must contain sufficient information about the involvement of human subjects in the proposed research to allow a determination by NIDILRR that the designated exemption(s) are appropriate. The narrative must be succinct.

B. Nonexempt Research Narrative.
If you marked "No" for item 3.b. you must attach the "nonexempt research" narrative to the Supplemental Information for the SF-424. The narrative must address the following seven points. Although no specific page limitation applies to this section of the application, be succinct.

(1) **Human Subjects Involvement and Characteristics**: Provide a detailed description of the proposed involvement of human subjects. Describe the characteristics of the subject population, including anticipated number, age range, and health status. Identify the criteria for inclusion or exclusion of any subpopulation. Explain the rationale for the involvement of special classes of subjects, such as children, children with disabilities, adults with disabilities, persons with mental disabilities, pregnant women, prisoners, institutionalized individuals, or others who are likely to be vulnerable

(2) **Sources of Materials**: Identify the sources of research material obtained from individually identifiable living human subjects in the form of specimens, records, or data. Indicate whether the material or data will be obtained specifically for research purposes or whether use will be made of existing specimens, records, or data.

(3) **Recruitment and Informed Consent**: Describe plans for the recruitment of subjects and the consent procedures to be followed. Include the circumstances under which consent will be sought and obtained, who will seek it, the nature of the information to be provided to prospective subjects, and the method of documenting consent. State if the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has authorized a modification or waiver of the elements of consent or the requirement for documentation of consent.

(4) **Potential Risks**: Describe potential risks (physical, psychological, social, legal, or other) and assess their likelihood and seriousness. Where appropriate, describe alternative treatments and procedures that might be advantageous to the subjects.

(5) **Protection Against Risk**: Describe the procedures for protecting against or minimizing potential risks, including risks to confidentiality, and assess their likely effectiveness. Where appropriate, discuss provisions for ensuring necessary medical or professional intervention in the event of adverse effects to the subjects. Also, where appropriate, describe the provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.

(6) **Importance of the Knowledge to be Gained**: Discuss the importance of the knowledge gained or to be gained as a result of the proposed research. Discuss why the risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits to subjects and in relation to the importance of the knowledge that may reasonably be expected to result.

(7) **Collaborating Site(s)**: If research involving human subjects will take place at one or more

collaborating sites or other performance sites, name the sites and briefly describe their involvement or role in the research.

Project Work Plan - Sample Template

NOTE : Applicants should provide a Project Work Plan as part of their project narrative. Below is a work plan template that you may use, if desired.

Goals:

Measurable Outcomes:

Timeline: Indicate with an "X" the project month in which each key task will start and the project month in which each key task will end.

Major objectives	Key Tasks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.	a.												
	b.												
	c.												
	d.												
	e.												
2.	a.												
	b.												
	c.												
	d.												
	e.												
3.	a.												
	b.												
	c.												
	d.												
	e.												
4.	a.												
	b.												
	c.												
	d.												
	e.												
5.	a.												
	b.												
	c.												
	d.												

	e.											
6.	a.											
	b.											
	c.											
	d.											
	e.											

NOTE: Please do not infer from this sample format that your work plan must have 6 major objectives.