

Notice of Funding Opportunity
Application due Wednesday, July 29, 2026



Administration for Community Living








National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR)

Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems National Data and Statistical Center

Opportunity number: HHS-2026-ACL-NIDILRR-SIMS-0218



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Before you begin

If you believe you are a good candidate for this funding opportunity, secure your [SAM.gov](#) and [Grants.gov](#) registrations now. If you are already registered, make sure your registrations are active and up to date.

SAM.gov registration (this can take several weeks)

You must have an active account with SAM.gov. This includes having a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

[See Step 2: Get Ready to Apply](#)

Grants.gov registration (this can take several days)

You must have an active Grants.gov registration. Doing so requires a Login.gov registration as well.

[See Step 2: Get Ready to Apply](#)

Apply by the application due date

Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, July 29, 2026.



To help you find what you need, this NOFO uses internal links. In Adobe Reader, you can go back to where you were by pressing Alt + Left Arrow (Windows) or Command + Left Arrow (Mac) on your keyboard.



Step 1:

Review the Opportunity

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Basic information

Administration for Community Living

National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR)

Summary

Research and technical assistance center that will advance medical rehabilitation by increasing the rigor and efficiency of scientific efforts to longitudinally assess the experience and outcomes of people with SCI.

Funding details

Type: Grant

Expected funding: \$800,000

Expected awards: 1

Funding range: \$800,000 to \$795,000 per budget period.

We plan to fund one award in five 12-month budget periods for a total five-year period of performance of September 1, 2026 to August 31, 2031.

Length of project period: 60-month project period with five 12-month budget periods.



Have questions?

See [Contacts and Support](#).

Key facts

Opportunity name:

Spinal Cord Injury (SCI)
Model Systems National
Data and Statistical Center

Opportunity number:

HHS-2026-ACL-NIDILRR-
SIMS-0218

Federal assistance listing:

93.433

Statutory authority:

Title II of the Rehabilitation
Act of 1973, as amended.
29 U.S.C. § 764(b)(4)

Key dates

Application deadline:

July 29, 2026

**Optional notice of
intent deadline:**

July 13, 2026

Expected start date:

September 1, 2026

Expected award date:

September 1, 2026

**Informational
conference call:**

July 7, 2026

Eligibility

Who can apply

Eligible applicants

Only these types of organizations may apply:

- States.
- Public or private agencies, including for-profit agencies.
- Public or private organizations, including for-profit organizations.
- Institutions of higher education.
- Indian tribes and tribal organizations.

Faith-based and community organizations that meet the eligibility requirements are eligible for awards under this funding opportunity.

Other eligibility requirements

You must propose to conduct a grant that will serve as the National Data and Statistical Center for the SCI Model Systems. Applicants must be responsive to the requirements that are described in the Program Description section.

Disqualifying factors

We will review your application to make sure it meets these responsiveness requirements.

We won't consider an application that:

- Is submitted after the [deadline](#).
- Is from an individual, including a sole proprietorship, or a foreign entity.
- Is received in paper format that didn't have a previously approved exemption from ACL.
- Proposes a budget that exceeds \$800,000 in any single budget year.
- Proposes a project period that exceeds 60 months.

Application limits

If you submit the same application more than once under this notice of funding opportunity (NOFO), we will only acknowledge the last on-time submission.

Cost sharing

This program has no cost-sharing requirement, meaning you do not need to contribute to the costs of this project.

If you choose to include cost-sharing funds, we won't consider it during review.

Cost sharing commitments

If awarded, you must provide the amount of cost-sharing funds you promised. We put these commitments in the Notice of Award.

If you don't provide your promised amount, we may decrease the amount of funding we give you or use other enforcement actions.

You'll have to include your cost-sharing funds when you fill out your [federal financial reports](#).

Post-award requirements

Before you apply, make sure you understand the requirements that come with an award.

See [Step 6: Learn What Happens After Award](#) for information on regulations that apply, reporting, and more.

Statutory authority

Title II of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. 29 U.S.C. § 764(b)(4).

Program description

Background

The number of Americans living with traumatic spinal cord injury (SCI) is approximately 309,000 people. More than 18,000 Americans experience a new spinal cord injury each year.^[1]

NIDILRR supports a variety of research projects that focus on the needs of people with SCI. These projects include the SCI Model System Centers funded through NIDILRR's Model Systems Program. The SCI Model System Centers establish and carry out innovative projects for the delivery, demonstration, and evaluation of comprehensive medical, vocational, and other rehabilitation services for people with SCI.

The SCI Model System Centers have developed a national, longitudinal database that contains information on more than 55,000 people injured since 1973. The SCI Model Systems National Database is the world's most extensive source of information available about the characteristics and life course of people with SCI. The National SCI Model Systems Database contains a sample that is largely representative of the national population of patients receiving inpatient rehabilitation for new onset of traumatic SCI.^[2]

The National SCI Model Systems Database also can be used to examine specific outcomes of SCI. NIDILRR seeks to continue and build upon this important source of data by funding a National Data and Statistical Center for the SCI Model Systems (National SCI Model Systems Data Center). This Data Center will maintain the National SCI Model Systems Database and improve the quality of information that is entered into it. Further technical information about the [SCIMS database can be found at the website](#).

The National SCI Model Systems Database is a collaborative project with participation by all of the SCI Model System Centers (there are currently 18 centers). The data for the National SCI Model Systems Database are collected by the SCI Model System Centers. The Directors of the SCI Model System Centers, in consultation with NIDILRR, determine the parameters of the National SCI Model Systems Database, including the number and type of variables to be examined and the criteria for including Model Systems patients in the database.

To maximize the generalizability of findings from the National SCI Model Systems Database, the SCI Model System Centers must achieve and maintain high rates of retention and successful follow-up with database participants. Accordingly, the central role of the National SCI Model Systems Data Center will be to work with SCI Model System Centers to increase follow-up rates and to promote data quality.

The purpose of this program

ACL's Administrator establishes this priority for the funding of a SCI Model Systems National Data and Statistical Center. This Data and Statistical Center will advance medical rehabilitation by increasing the rigor and efficiency of scientific efforts to longitudinally assess the experience and outcomes of people with SCI.

This priority is in alignment with:

- Executive Order 14212, on Establishing the [President's Make America Healthy Again Commission](#).
- The following [ACL strategic priorities](#):
 - Caregiving.
 - Connecting people to services.
 - Whole-person health.
 - Employment.

You are required to address the following requirements in your proposal:

- You must propose a SCI Model Systems National Data and Statistical Center grant that is designed to contribute to the following outcomes:
 - A high-quality longitudinal database that is available to generate new knowledge about the life trajectories, experiences, and outcomes of people with SCI. The SCI Model Systems National Data and Statistical Center must contribute to this outcome by maintaining the national longitudinal database for data submitted by each of the SCI Model Systems Centers (SCI Model Systems Database). This database must provide for confidentiality, quality control, and data-retrieval capabilities, using cost-effective and user-friendly technology.
 - High-quality, reliable data in the SCI Model Systems Database. The SCI Model Systems National Data and Statistical Center must contribute to this outcome by providing training and technical assistance to SCI Model Systems Centers on subject retention and data collection procedures, data entry methods, and appropriate use of study instruments, and by monitoring the quality of the data submitted by the SCI Model Systems Centers.
 - Efficient collection of data into the SCI Model Systems database. The SCI Model Systems National Data and Statistical Center must contribute to this outcome by establishing methods for SCI Model Systems Centers to randomly select 30 SCI patients from their annual census for enrollment into the SCI Model Systems database. This requirement corresponds with requirement (a) in the notice of funding opportunity for SCI Model Systems Centers applicants ([HHS-2026-ACL-NIDILRR-SIMS-0217](#)).

- Rigorous research conducted by SCI Model Systems Centers and all investigators who are analyzing data from the SCI Model Systems Database. The SCI Model Systems National Data and Statistical Center must contribute to this outcome by making statistical and other methodological consultation available for research projects that use the SCI Model Systems Database, as well as center-specific and collaborative projects of the SCI Model Systems Program.
- Enhanced continuity of the SCI Model Systems Database. The SCI Model Systems National Data and Statistical Center must contribute to this outcome by establishing, implementing and providing resources and mechanisms for continued collection of follow-up data from people who were enrolled by SCI Model Systems Centers that no longer receive Model Systems Program funding. These resources and mechanisms must focus on continued collection of data from at least three SCI Model Systems Centers that were previously funded, but that have not received subsequent funding under the Model Systems Program.
- Improved quality and efficiency of the SCI Model Systems Database operations through collaboration with the National Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems Data Center, the National Burn Model Systems Data Center, and the Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center (MSKTC).
- Increased use and impact of the SCI Model Systems Database on the population of people with SCI through continued and enhanced collaborations that promote synergy with other SCI research initiatives.
- Improved outcomes of the SCIMS through managing data, if requested, that is generated by module projects and collaborative projects that SCIMS centers are carrying out in fulfillment of their grant requirements.
- Improved performance of the SCIMS by maintaining and working with the SCIMS centers to develop and revise standard operating procedures that provide guidance for SCIMS operations.
- Increased public access to SCI data, ensuring the confidentiality and integrity of the dataset as well as promoting the use of the data to advance knowledge, in consultation with NIDILRR. The SCI Model Systems National Data and Statistical Center must ensure all resources are accessible, and that electronic materials are in full compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 794d) and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0/2/1 AA success criteria.
- Ongoing access to the tools and resources of the SCI Model Systems Data Center. The SCI Model Systems National Data and Statistical Center must contribute to this outcome by cooperating and collaborating with the previous SCI Model Systems National Data and Statistical Center in order to ensure the

smooth and orderly transition to a new Data Center grantee, if necessary. The new grantee, if applicable, must coordinate with NIDILRR and the previous grantee to ensure that SCI Model System Centers maintain access to Data Center tools and resources during the brief transition period.

Funding policies and limitations

Changes in HHS regulations

As of October 1, 2025, HHS adopted [2 CFR 200](#), with some exceptions included in [2 CFR 300](#). These regulations replace those in 45 CFR 75.

Policies

All activities proposed in your application and budget narrative must align with applicable law, including but not limited to statutes, executive orders, federal regulations, and applicable judicial holdings. Accordingly, discretionary awards shall not be used to fund, promote, encourage, subsidize, or facilitate: racial preferences or other forms of racial discrimination by the recipient, including activities where race or intentional proxies for race will be used as a selection criterion for employment or program participation; denial by the recipient of the sex binary in humans, or the belief that sex is a chosen or mutable characteristic; illegal immigration; or any other initiatives that compromise public safety. If an application does not align, the application will not receive funding to the extent permitted by law and applicable court orders.

- We will only make awards if this program receives funding. If Congress appropriates funds for this purpose, we will move forward with the review and award process.
- Support beyond the first budget period will depend on:
 - Appropriation of funds.
 - Satisfactory progress in meeting your project's objectives.
 - A decision that continued funding is in the government's best interest.
- If we receive more funding for this program, we will consider:
 - Funding more applicants.
 - Extending the period of performance.
 - Awarding supplemental funding.
- You may not use funds from this NOFO for any diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEI and DEIA) activities. This includes:
 - DEI- or DEIA-related research.
 - Activities that discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or other protected traits.

- Under this NOFO, you can't continue existing projects without expansion or new and innovative approaches.
- Meals are allowed only in limited circumstances linked to program activities, like during travel or when approved in advance by ACL. See Allowable Costs and Activities, Exhibit 4: Selected Items of Cost, Meals in the [HHS Grants Policy Statement](#).
- There are restrictions on certain telecommunications and video surveillance equipment. See [2 CFR 200.216](#) to make sure this does not apply to any proposed equipment in your application.

Unallowable costs

- Construction or major rehabilitation of buildings.
- For guidance on other types of costs that we restrict or do not allow, see General Provisions for Selected Items of Costs of the Uniform Guidance, [2 CFR 200.420](#).

Indirect costs

To charge indirect costs you can select one of two methods:

Method 1 – Approved rate. You currently have an indirect cost rate approved by your cognizant federal agency.

Method 2 – *De minimis* rate. If you do not have a current negotiated indirect cost rate, you may elect to charge a *de minimis* rate (see [2 CFR 200.414\(f\)](#)). This rate is 15% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). See the definition of MTDC ([2 CFR 200.1](#)). You can use this rate indefinitely.

You may not charge costs included in your indirect cost pool as direct costs.

Subawards

As the prime recipient, you must maintain a substantive role in the project. This means that you conduct funded activities and provide services necessary and integral to completing the project.

Monitoring your subrecipient's activities alone as described in [2 CFR 200.332](#) is not a substantive role.

We do not fund awards where your role is primarily a conduit for passing funds to other organizations unless that arrangement is authorized by statute.

All subrecipients must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) through the System for Award Management (SAM.gov).

Subrecipients must meet the [eligibility requirements](#) of this NOFO.

Salary rate limitation

The salary rate limitation in the current appropriations act applies to this program. You may not use awarded funds to pay a salary at a higher rate than the rate for Executive Level II.

For the Executive Level II salary, please see [the Office of Personnel Management information on executive and senior level employee pay](#).

The salary limitation reflects a person's base salary (including any portion of the salary that is paid with indirect costs). It does not include fringe benefits or any income the person is allowed to earn outside of the duties of the applicant organization.

This salary limitation also applies to subawards, contracts, and subcontracts under an ACL grant or cooperative agreement.

Program income

If you earn any money from your award-supported project activities (known as program income), you must use it for the purposes and under the conditions of the award. Find more about program income at [2 CFR 200.307](#).



Step 2: Get Ready to Apply

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Find the application package

The application package has all the forms you need to apply. You can search for it at [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) using opportunity number [HHS-2026-ACL-NIDILRR-SIMS-0218](https://www.grants.gov/award/HHS-2026-ACL-NIDILRR-SIMS-0218). Then select the Package tab.

We recommend that you select the **Subscribe button** from the View Grant Opportunity page for this NOFO to get updates.

You can also find materials at [Applying for Grants on ACL's website](#).

If you can't use Grants.gov to download application materials or have other technical difficulties, including issues with application submission, [contact Grants.gov](#) for assistance.

Get registered

SAM.gov

You must have an active account with SAM.gov to apply. SAM.gov registration can take several weeks. Begin that process today.

To register:

- Go to [SAM.gov Entity Registration](#) and select Get Started. From the same page, you can also select the Entity Registration Checklist for the information you will need to register.
- You must agree to the [financial assistance general certifications and representations \[PDF\]](#) specifically. Those for contracts are different.

When you register, you will also receive your required Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

Once you register:

- You will have to maintain your registration throughout the life of any award.
- If your organization has multiple UEIs, use the one associated with your physical location.

Grants.gov

You must also have an active account with [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). You can see step-by-step instructions at the Grants.gov [Quick Start Guide for Applicants](#).

Join the informational call

We will provide general information about this funding opportunity at an informational conference call. It will be held on:

- **Date:** July 7, 2026
- **Time:** 1 to 3 p.m. ET

You must register for this call in advance. Contact Megan.Alvarado@acl.hhs.gov to register for this call.



Step 3:

Build Your Application

In this step

Application contents and format

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Application contents and format

Applications include five main components. This section includes guidance on each.

Make sure you include each of these:

Component	Submission format
Project abstract	Use the Project Abstract Summary form.
Project narrative	Use the Project Narrative Attachment form
Budget narrative justification	Use the Budget Narrative Attachment form
Attachments	Insert each in the Other Attachments form.
Other required forms	Upload using each required form.

Required format

Required format for application contents.

Font: Times New Roman or Arial

Format: PDF

Size: 12-point font

Footnotes and text in graphics must be 12-point.

Spacing for project narrative main content: Double-spaced

Spacing for budget narrative: As needed

Spacing for project summary, tables, footnotes: Single-spaced.

Please note: Applicants who unnecessarily place project narrative text in tables or figures to avoid the double-spacing requirement run the risk of exceeding the page limit.

Margins: 1-inch

Include page numbers.

Project abstract

Page limit: 1

Provide a detailed yet concise description of your proposed project, activities, and intended outcomes. The abstract can be single- or double-spaced.

Project narrative

Page limit: 75 Pages

The project narrative is the most important part of the application. We use it as the primary basis to decide whether your project addresses the requirements described in the program description section of this NOFO. We also use the content narrative to review the merit of your project. The project narrative should give a clear and concise description of your project.

You should address these [merit review criteria](#) as you write your project narrative.

- Responsiveness to the priority.
- Alignment with ACL strategic priorities.
- Plan of operation.
- Design of training activities.
- Design of technical assistance activities.
- Plan of evaluation.
- Project staff.
- Adequacy and accessibility of resources.

Include all critical information in the project narrative and not in appendices.

Cite all of your sources in the project narrative.

We will instruct reviewers to disregard all content on the pages beyond the 75th page of your project narrative.

Work plan

You must provide a work plan for your project within your Project Narrative. The work plan connects your goals, anticipated outcomes, and the major tasks you are proposing.

The work plan must cover all years of the project period.

To complete your work plan, see the [project work plan sample template](#) on our website.

Budget justification narrative

Page limit: None

The budget narrative supports the information you provide in Standard Form 424-A. See [other required forms](#).

It includes added detail and justifies the costs you ask for. As you develop your budget, consider:

- If the costs are reasonable and consistent with your project's purpose and activities.
- The restrictions on spending funds. See [funding limitations](#).

Justify all the costs, including showing how you calculated them. To create your budget narrative, see the [sample format \[PDF\]](#) on our website.

You must submit a budget for each year of grant funding requested.

Attachments

You will upload attachments in [Grants.gov](#) using the Other Attachments Form.

Table of Contents

Page limit: None

The table of contents should show where and how the important sections of your proposal are organized. While you will submit your proposal electronically, the reviewers may use printed copies during the review process. The table of contents will assist reviewers as they evaluate your proposal.

References

Page Limit: None

You must provide references for works cited in the project narrative. You may provide references in any format (i.e., APA, AMA, MLA). The format must be consistent throughout the project narrative.

Vitae/biosketches of key personnel

Page limit: None

You must provide vitae or biosketches of key personnel for the project. The vitae or biosketches should include information that is relevant to your proposed project. You are encouraged to use the [NIH's biographical sketch format](#). This format gives reviewers a

concise description of your training, expertise, and productivity that is related to the proposed project.

Data management plan

Page limit: None

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.

Commitment letters

Page limit: None

You must include commitment letters from key individuals and organizations that will have a significant role in carrying out your project. A letter should explain their role and commitment to your project.

Summary of key individuals and organizations

Page limit: None

You must submit a list of key individuals and their organizations that will have a significant role in your project. This includes consultants and contractors.

We will use this information to screen for conflicts of interest with potential peer reviewers for your application.

Indirect cost rate agreement

Page limit: None

Please attach a copy of your current indirect cost rate agreement approved by the Department of Health and Human Services or another Federal agency.

Other required forms

You will need to complete some standard forms. Upload the standard forms listed below at [Grants.gov](https://www.Grants.gov). You can find them in the NOFO [application package](#) or review them and their instructions at [Grants.gov forms](#).

Forms	Submission Requirement
Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	With application.
Supplemental Information for the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance [PDF]	With application.
Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)	With application.
Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)	With application.
Project Narrative Attachment form	With application.
Attachments	With application.
Project/Performance Site Location(s)	With application.
Grants.gov Lobbying form (Certification Regarding Lobbying)	With application.
Project Abstract Summary	With application.

Important: Public information

When filling out your SF-424 form, pay attention to Box 15: Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project.

We share what you put there with [USAspending](#). This is where the public goes to learn how the federal government spends their money.

Instead of just a title, insert a short description of your project and what it will do.

[See instructions and examples \[PDF\]](#).



Step 4:

Learn About Review and Award

In this step

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Application review

Initial review

We review each application to make sure it meets the responsiveness requirements listed in the disqualification factors section. If your application does not meet these criteria, we will disqualify it and we will not move it to the merit review (scoring) phase.

If your application exceeds the page limit for the project narrative, we will instruct reviewers to not review the pages that exceed the page limit. See the [required format](#) section.

Merit review

A panel reviews all applications that pass the initial review. The members use the criteria and subcriteria below. Review criteria come primarily from NIDILRR's program regulations ([45 CFR 1330.24](#))

Criterion	Total number of points = 100
1. Responsiveness to the priority	20 points
2. Alignment with ACL Strategic Priorities	5 points
3. Plan of operation	25 points
4. Design of training activities	10 points
5. Design of technical assistance activities	15 points
6. Plan of evaluation	5 points
7. Project staff	15 points
8. Adequacy and accessibility of resources	5 points

Criteria

Responsiveness to the priority (Maximum points: 20)

- The extent to which the applicant addresses all requirements of the absolute or competitive priority.

Alignment with ACL Strategic priorities (Maximum points: 5)

- The extent to which the proposed project aligns with [ACL's strategic priorities](#) of Caregiving, Connecting people to services, Whole-person health, and Employment.

Plan of operation (Maximum points: 25)

- The adequacy of the plan of operation to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, and timelines for accomplishing project tasks.
- The adequacy of the plan of operation to provide for using resources, equipment, and personnel to achieve each objective.

Design of training activities (Maximum points: 10)

- The extent to which the proposed training materials are likely to be effective, including consideration of their quality, clarity, and variety.
- The extent to which the proposed training methods are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration.

Design of technical assistance activities (Maximum points: 15)

- The extent to which the methods for providing technical assistance are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration.
- The extent to which the information to be provided through technical assistance covers all of the relevant aspects of the subject matter.
- The extent to which the technical assistance is appropriate to the target population, including consideration of the knowledge level of the target population, needs of the target population, and format for providing information.

Plan of evaluation (Maximum points: 5)

- The extent to which the plan of evaluation provides for periodic assessment of progress toward:
 - Implementing the plan of operation.
 - Achieving the project's intended outcomes and expected impacts.
- The extent to which the plan evaluation will be used to improve the performance of the project through the feedback generated by its periodic assessments.

Project staff (Maximum points: 15)

- The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from people with disabilities, who may include but are not limited to people with disabilities who have the greatest support needs.
- The extent to which the key personnel and other key staff have appropriate training and experience in disciplines required to conduct all proposed activities.

Adequacy and accessibility of resources (Maximum points: 5)

- The extent to which the applicant is committed to provide adequate facilities, equipment, other resources, including administrative support, and laboratories, if appropriate.
- The extent to which the facilities, equipment, and other resources are appropriately accessible to individuals with disabilities who may use the facilities, equipment, and other resources of the project.

Risk review

Before making an award, we review the risk that you will mismanage federal funds or fail to complete the project objectives. We need to make sure you've handled any past federal awards well and demonstrated sound business practices.

We use [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) Responsibility/Qualification to check this history for all awards likely to be over \$250,000. We also check Exclusions.

If we find a significant risk, we may choose not to fund your application or to place specific conditions on the award.

You can see more details about risk review at [2 CFR 200.206](#).

Selection process

When making funding decisions, we consider:

- Merit review results. These are key in making decisions but are not the only factor.
- The larger portfolio of agency-funded projects, including project type and geographic distribution.
- The past performance of the applicant. We may choose not to fund applicants with management or financial problems.
- Reasonableness of proposed costs to the expected results and the likelihood you will achieve those results.
- Available funding.

We may:

- Fund applications in whole or in part.
- Fund applications at a lower amount than requested.
- Decide not to allow a prime recipient to subaward if they may not be able to monitor and manage subrecipients properly.
- Choose to fund no applications under this NOFO.

The ACL Administrator makes all final award decisions.

Before we make final funding decisions, ACL leadership will review all potential awards.

They will check for:

- Adherence to applicable laws.
- Alignment to agency priorities (see [Administration for Community Living's \(ACL\) Mission, Vision & Strategic Priorities](#)).

- To the extent allowed by law and court orders, we will give a funding preference to applications that align with agency priorities. Your application may receive this preference if it aligns with one or more of the following ACL strategic priorities: Caregiving, Connecting people to services, Whole-person health, and Employment.

Award notices

If you are successful, we will email a Notice of Award (NoA) to your authorized official. We will email you or write you a letter if your application is disqualified or unsuccessful.

The NoA is the only official award document. The NoA tells you about the amount of the award, important dates, and the terms and conditions you need to follow. Until you receive the NoA, you don't have permission to start work.

To see what is in a NoA, see an example on our [website \[PDF\]](#).



Step 5: Submit Your Application

In this step

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Application submission and deadlines

See [find the application package](#) to make sure you have everything you need.

Make sure you are current with SAM.gov and UEI requirements. See [get registered](#). You will have to maintain your registration throughout the life of any award.

Deadlines

Optional notice of intent

Due on Monday, July 13, 2026.

We ask that you let us know if you plan to apply for this opportunity. We do this to plan for the number of expert reviewers we will need to evaluate applications. You do not have to submit a notice of intent to apply.

Please email the notice 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.

Application

Due on Wednesday, July 29, 2026 at 11:59PM ET.

Grants.gov creates a date and time record when it receives the application. If you submit the same application more than once, we will accept the last on-time submission.

The grants management officer may extend an application due date based on emergency situations such as documented natural disasters or a verifiable widespread disruption of electric or [Grants.gov](#) service.

If you can't submit your application because of problems with Grants.gov, you will need verification for us to consider accepting your application. Call the [federal service desk](#) before the application due time and record your tracking number. Save your tracking number and any error messages you receive.

Submission methods

Grants.gov

You must submit your application through Grants.gov. See [get registered](#).

For instructions on how to submit in Grants.gov, see the [quick start guide for applicants](#).

Make sure that your application passes the Grants.gov validation checks or we may not get it. Do not encrypt, zip, or password protect any files. The link above will also help you learn how to create PDFs.

If you can't submit your application because of problems with Grants.gov, you will need verification for us to consider accepting your application. Call the [Federal Service Desk](#) before the application due time and record your tracking number. Save your tracking number and any error messages you receive.

See [contacts and support](#) if you need help.

Intergovernmental review

This NOFO is not subject to executive order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. No action is needed.

Application checklist

Make sure that you have everything you need to apply:

Component	How to Upload	Included in page limit?
<input type="checkbox"/> Project abstract	Use the Project Abstract Summary Form.	No
<input type="checkbox"/> Project narrative , including Work Plan	Use the Project Narrative Attachment form.	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> Budget justification narrative	Use the Budget Narrative Attachment form.	No
<input type="checkbox"/> Attachments	Insert each in a single Other Attachments form.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Table of contents		
<input type="checkbox"/> References		No
<input type="checkbox"/> Vitae/biosketches of key personnel		No
<input type="checkbox"/> Data management plan		No
<input type="checkbox"/> Commitment letters		No
<input type="checkbox"/> Summary of key individuals and organizations		No
<input type="checkbox"/> Indirect cost agreement		No
<input type="checkbox"/> Other required forms	Upload using each required form.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)		No
<input type="checkbox"/> Supplemental Information for the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance		No
<input type="checkbox"/> Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)		No
<input type="checkbox"/> Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)		No
<input type="checkbox"/> Project Narrative Attachment form		No
<input type="checkbox"/> Attachments		No

Component	How to Upload	Included in page limit?
<input type="checkbox"/> Project/Performance Site Location(s)		No
<input type="checkbox"/> Grants.gov Lobbying form (Certification Regarding Lobbying)		No
<input type="checkbox"/> Project Abstract Summary		No



Step 6: Learn What Happens After Award

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Post-award requirements and administration

Administrative and national policy requirements

There are important rules you need to know if you get an award. You must follow:

- All terms and conditions in the Notice of Award. You can find information at [managing a grant](#) on our website. We incorporate this NOFO by reference.
- The rules listed in [2 CFR 200](#), Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements, effective October 1, 2025. These replace those in 45 CFR 75, with some exceptions in 2 CFR 300.
- The HHS [Grants Policy Statement \(GPS\)](#). This document has terms and conditions tied to your award. If there are any exceptions to the GPS, they'll be listed in your Notice of Award.
- All federal statutes and regulations relevant to federal financial assistance, including those highlighted in the [HHS Grants Policy Statement](#), Appendix D: HHS Administrative and National Policy Requirements.
- All anti-discrimination laws: By applying for or accepting federal funds from HHS, recipients certify compliance with all federal antidiscrimination laws and these requirements and that complying with those laws is a material condition of receiving federal funding streams. Recipients are responsible for ensuring subrecipients, contractors, and partners also comply.
- The [ACL Public Access Policy \[PDF\]](#).
- All [regulations](#) for the protection of the rights, welfare, and wellbeing of human subjects involved in research conducted or supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [The HHS Office for Human Research Protections](#) has information and resources related to these important requirements.

Compliance and oversight

Recipients must demonstrate ongoing compliance with the [Administration for Community Living's \(ACL\) Mission, Vision & Strategic Priorities](#) through program design, implementation, performance reporting, fiscal management, and evaluation.

Failure to meaningfully align funded activities with applicable statutory authorities and agency priorities may result in corrective action, additional reporting requirements, enforcement actions, or other remedies consistent with 2 CFR Part 200 and the terms and conditions of the award.

Through alignment with these priorities, funded projects will help ensure that older adults and people with disabilities can live with dignity, independence, and full participation in the communities they call home.

Managing award changes

After award, either you or ACL may request changes. We manage these using the rules at 2 CFR 200 and 300, including [2 CFR 200.308](#) and [2 CFR 300.308](#).

Reporting

If your application is 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 form or formatting.
- How to submit them.

FFATA and FSRS reporting

The Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) requires:

- Data entry at the FFATA Subaward Reporting System for all sub-awards and sub-contracts you issue for \$30,000 or more.



Contacts and support

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Agency contacts

Program and eligibility

Radha Holavanahanni

Radha.Holavanahanni@acl.hhs.gov

Telephone: 202-795-7321

Financial and budget

Nicole Dunning

Nicole.Dunning1@acl.hhs.gov

Review process and application status

Radha Holavanahanni

Radha.Holavanahanni@acl.hhs.gov

Telephone: 202-795-7321

Help with systems

Grants.gov

Grants.gov provides 24/7 support. Hold on to your ticket number.

- Phone 1-800-518-4726
- Email support@Grants.gov.

SAM.gov

If you need help, you can

- Call 866-606-8220.
- Live chat with the [federal service desk](#).

Reference websites

- [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services \(HHS\)](#)
- [HHS Office For Human Research Protections](#)
- [Home Page | ACL Administration for Community Living](#)
- [Applying for Grants | ACL Administration for Community Living](#)
- [Application Tips | ACL Administration for Community Living](#)
- [How to Apply for a Competitive Grant | ACL Administration for Community Living](#)
- [Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\)](#)
- [United States Code \(U.S.C.\)](#)

Endnotes

1. National Spinal Cord Injury Statistical Center. 2024 Annual Statistical Report for the Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems. University of Alabama at Birmingham: Birmingham, Alabama.
<https://sites.uab.edu/nscisc> Last access: December 2025 ↑
2. Ketchum, J.M., Cuthbert, J.P., Deutsch, A. et al. (2018). Representativeness of the Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems National Database. *Spinal Cord* 56, 126–132. ↑